

Vienna Zocalo

Critical Crafting as a postcolonial strategy



Leading Fiber Innovation

Gesellschaft der Freunde
der bildenden Künste



Acknowledgments

This project would not have begun if not for Yosi Anaya's invitation.

The Vienna Zocalo is grateful for the advise of Soma Ahmad, April Bojorquez, Sabeth Buchmann, Nayari Castillo, Rafael Donnadío, Christian Feest, Tamara Friebe, Matthew Garcia, Viktor Garcia, Siria Gastelum, Jens Kastner, Jakob Lena Knebl, Christa Kreuzwieser, Silvia Eisenburger-Kunz, Irene Lucas, Wolfgang Meisinger, Österreichische HochschülerInnenschaft, Adrian Ancira Ortega, Marion von Osten, Barbara Plankensteiner, Andreas Pasqualini, Anna Pritz, Susanna Rostas, Rosario Granados Salinas, Eva Schöfer, Gabriele Reinharder-Schrammel, Alexander Schweder La, Dolores L. Taileres, Isabel Segrelles Vaello, Saúl Lopéz Velarde and Tom Waibel

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<http://viennazocalo.blogspot.com>

Font: Eureka by Peter Bilak

Distribution:

Academy of Fine Arts Vienna
Institute for Education in the Arts
Department for Fashion and Styles
Karl-Schweighofer-Gasse 3
1070 Vienna
Austria

The project "THE VIENNA ZOCALO. Critical Crafting as a postcolonial strategy" was presented at the "VI. International Biennial of Textile Art Mexico 2011" at the Galería Carlos Fuentes, J.J Herrera No. 6, Zona Centro, Xalapa.

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... to be continued.

Thoughts on decolonizing Fashion and Textile Studies

Elke Gaugele

1. How does the Department for Fashion and Styles practice postcolonialism?

In German-speaking countries Fashion and Textile Studies are just beginning to discuss postcolonial questions. To work on the decolonisation of the research field's "white epistemology" (Mignolo) we began – parallel to "Vienna Zocalo" – to research a further project: "The Regime of Materialization" which tries to critically and historically

decolonise specific colonial, imperial, national and inter-colonial textures in Germany and Austria. Historically speaking not only Fashion Theory, but Costume History and fashion magazines are an integral part of political and social space production. Fashion was pivotal for Western colonial "culturalisation" strategies. In his 1792 essay "On Fashions" philosopher Christian Garve defined fashion as a signifier of "culture of advanced nations". In 1806 the fashion magazine *Charis* wrote that "backward people might be recognisable through their 'mind and cultural sense'; their clothing would be static, they... would not 'be able to name fashion'" (*Charis*, 10). Mignolo states that "Modernity", "Occidentalism" and "Reason" were the tools implemented in colonialization, that defined the coloniality of power and produced the colonial difference (Mignolo, 29). Late 18th and 19th century's Costume History created cartographies for a colonial world order and thus became a political instrument for a spatial order. In Austria the Novara Expeditions (1857-59) mark a paradigmatic change towards a Darwinistic, scientific classification of the non-European world. Henceforward the anthropometric body measuring of "individuals of various human races" (Weisbach, X) becomes the new normative standard. Those measurement techniques and classifications are

also applied towards European self-ethnicising and to inter-differentiate racial/social/regional bodies in Austria and Germany. During the 19th century's last third those anthropometric body measurements also govern the academic discourse on clothing and body(ideals). In the mid of the 19th century Gottfried Semper (1860/63) linked space and textile by defining textile as architecture's origin: "culture's usual and verified development" (Semper, §60).

Textiles, cloth and clothing are a media through which nations were constructed. Textile material and handicraft have been symbolically charged and linked with semantics of origin, originality and authenticity. At the same time textiles became constituting signs of Western middle-class femininity and had been also part of the colonial strategies of white colonial women settlers. The essentialising and gendering of textiles was also pushed by differential feminism, coopted by the first and second feminist waves.

Modern western art theory drew new borders between visual art and applied art, as well as art and textile. The modernist genre involved a reductive, self-enclosing process and a paring down by each art of its medium to its essential qualities and the logic of its idiom (Maharaj, 92). As textile productions were excluded from visual

art classification this was also projected onto colonial mechanisms of exclusion towards productions of non-Western countries. Therefore textiles play an integral part in today's art discourse, when renegotiating a postcolonial art field. How the arts have been hunted back too their mediums, isolated, concentrated and defined by western modernism has been analysed by Sarat Maharaj at the beginning of the 1990s. His essay "Arachne's Genre: Towards Inter-Cultural Studies in Textiles" sketches a postcolonial perspective on textile art productions. In 2002 Maharaj was co-curator of Documenta 11, which, under Okwui Enwezor, negotiated mechanisms of Western art discourse. Based on the art discourses lead by Documenta 11+12 in 2002/07 it is possible to see that especially the re-negotiations of a Critique of Modernism and postcolonial art discourse are lead along a multiplicity of textile objects: "... as placed both between the world of 'genre tranché' and that of a 'mélange des genres'- and beyond them." (Maharaj, 93) Thus, at the beginning of the 21st century the historic differentiation between art and textile has become obsolete.

At the same time third wave feminism created "Craftivism". Yarn bombing, guerilla knitting, subversive stitching and D.I.Y. turned textile handicrafts into media of political activism and networking: "Craftivism

is the practice of engaged creativity, especially regarding political or social causes." (Greer)

Referring to these processes we operate at the Department for Fashion and Styles at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna with the concept of Critical Crafting. Critical Crafting means to reflect social processes in artistic productions and to design agency through artistic techniques, thus actively designing social participation.

And: we see an advanced postcolonial practice as central perspective of teaching textile design in schools, as we educate future teachers.

2. On which basic questions was the Vienna Zocalo project based?

In a way "Vienna Zocalo" it is a response to the host's, Yosi Anaya's, interest in ethnographic/ethnologic collections; due to her own postcolonial artistic-academic research on a "Museo del Imaginaria" in Mexico. This raises the questions:

How to inscribe "Textile Art" and "Critical Crafting" into a postcolonial discourse?

How to construct "Vienna Zocalo" and "Critical Crafting" as "Contact Zone" (Clifford; Pratt), as a space for postcolonial relations which allows the discussion of differences and governance within the relation of various agents: "spaces of colonial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality and intractable conflict." (Clifford 1997, 192)

In regard to Benedict Anderson's statement that nationalism is based on "Imagined Communities" we propose, that textiles are central for the imaginations of national identities, concepts of culture and narrations:

What role do textiles play in the Austro-Mexican colonial history?

Which Mexican/Latin American textiles are parts of Austrian museum collections – how were they collected? Which are the host museums? How/as what are they classified?

How were Austrian “Imagined Communities” and their influenced by Latin American/non-European textiles during the times of nation-state building; what are the associated artistic and cultural classifications and performances?

How were these objects instrumental for a national Austrian “culturalisation”; for dividing the fields of art and textile or establishing “textile art” or for the development of Costume History and Textile Studies in Austria?

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Khadija Carroll La

Virtual Zocalo:

An empty pedestal
come public space.

“Being in the Zocalo is to feel happy and proudly local and as such, in the post-modern era [...] a more complex sentiment, that springs from panoramic views of the past glimpsed unwittingly. Storeroom of nostalgia, site of protests, seas of (some) powers, confederation of out-and-out decline and of reshaped fears, the Zocalo is a must, the space that cannot be dispensed with. The work and daily life of the vast majority of Mexicans takes place far away from the Zocalo, but the same does not stand for the meaning of symbolic life, a monopoly that will prevail until the avenging distribution of a virtual Zocalo.”¹

The name Zocalo comes from the Socle, Sockel, or pedestal: an empty base awaiting the work of art. An ur-Socle was installed in Mexico City in 1843 in the center of the square, and waited for a monumental sculpture

to the Independence of Mexico, which didn't come (yet). Instead the significance of the public space 'of the Zocalo' accrued. It is the accretion of meanings, which Carlos Monsivais and Francis Alys also describe, that led to my identification of a Vienna Zocalo. The name also recalls The Vienna Circle, which further suited the project of presenting a young circle of artists emerging in Vienna. My teaching at the Academy in Vienna has in a broad sense taken the Vienna Circle's Wittgensteinian approach to language and things. Specifically the essays in this book seek to find a language for particular pieces of material culture. My title, The Vienna Zocalo, also refers to a place where the group represented in this book developed the typology of the Zocalo in Vienna, with a view to an exhibition in Xalapa. Like Vienna, Xalapa is a city without a Zocalo square, that place where everything social in Mexico typically happens. So with our research, writing, curatorial practice, performances, workshops, and exhibition we hoped to produce a place as open and vibrant as a Zocalo.

Much of the material for in this book was produced in the Vienna Zocalo, which especially looked to engage postcolonial discourses in Mexico. We considered place in various ways, our place in the textile department of the Vienna Academy meant all of us focused on fiber art as

¹ Carlos Monsivais, *The Historic Center of Mexico City*, Artes Graficas Palermo, Madrid, 2006, 32-33

a strategy with which to engage postcolonial discourses in Latin America. As medium, fiber art is defined here in its broadest sense to include textiles and ‘TEXTiles’, paper, documentation and representation of fabric in its social and cultural instrumentation.

One question I grappled with as I designed the courses that preceded this book was, how is a group of Vienna-based artists going to constitute a postcolonial strategy based on what they know about colonial Mexico? The first and perhaps most obvious strategy was to do research, to develop tactics from performance, meta-museology, Latin American literary genres like magic realism, appropriation, cross-cultural translation, participation and relational aesthetics, which are the theories and practices displayed in the Vienna Zocalo. As we developed our site-specific interventions further artistic strategies emerged. One set of these might be said to construct alternative histories by intervening in archives to reveal their inconsistencies. In critical and poetic installations, the Vienna Zocalo thus rewrites colonial history. Those are in turn reflected in the contributions to this book, which holds much of the research done by the individuals and groups working in the Vienna Zocalo.

From the very concrete history of Maximilian, Austria’s brief monarch of Mexico in 1864-1867, to the imagination of young artists at the Academy in Vienna today, in the following essays Vienna Zocalo represents a broad range of temporalities and discourses about Mexico. A second strain of strategies strongly represented in the group repurposes pop-culture and fashion to engage contemporary political debates about gender, immigration and migration, surveillance, exoticism, celebrity, and power.

Early on in our collaborative planning of the seminars Ruby Sircar put together a section on anthropofagia or cultural cannibalism, which became a leitmotif. In an essay that analyses Stephanova in relation to Oswald de Andrade, Aino Korvensyrjä writes critically about the long history cannibalism has in the Western fantasy of Mexico, one that we reflected on in readings by Montaigne, Rousseau, and others.

The mystical ritual of blood sacrifice is recast in Klemens Walhuber’s story Thin Air. In the classically Latin American genre of Magic Realism Walhuber’s short story is written from a delirious and almost astral or out-of-body perspective. Walhuber’s short story in this book

and sound sculpture is based on a mytho-poetic alpine narrative that links the Austrian landscape he grew up in with the ancient and mystically charged mountains of Mexico.

An interrogation of the farcically tragic establishment of an Austrian monarch in Mexico following the invitation from Napoleon III of France is another strategy the international group of artists working in the Vienna Zocalo took on. The Swedish artist Martin Martinsen builds a meta-museum dedicated to the pineapple as that fruit-symbol of the exoticism of Mexico for the European aristocracy. Maximilian von Mexico for instance used the pineapple as his imperial textile motif to which Martinsen gives a tongue-in-cheek homage.

There is a playfulness with which Martin Martinsen and Veronika Burger treat serious representations of power that characterizes their responses as subversive and highly entertaining. Martinsen’s short history of the pineapple’s introduction to Mexico by Maximilian casts him as “obsessed” with the exotic fruit. Farcical as it sounds this is both historically argued and sympathetically portrayed as it is finally revealed to the reader that Martinsen identifies pineapple obsession in himself.

Comparably Veronika Burger becomes a telenovela character called Vêrorose, based on a Mexican narrative formula. Her array of references for the genre in her contribution give a dizzying insight into her telenovela teaser, film stills, posters, and autograph cards. Using the work of Frantz Fanon and Erika Segre she parodies Austrian stereotypes in location and costuming and plays with formulas of fame and feminine heroism.

The art-research of the Vienna Zocalo read history against the grain of typical commentary on Maximilian and Charlotte of Mexico. Researching the botany collection made by the scientists who followed Maximilian on his journeys, fibre artist Diana Nenning screen printed drawings of Mexican plants named by Austrians and other archival visual material and suspends it in layer of semi transparent material.

In her essay on the reception history of a pre-contact Codex held in the Vienna Library Katherina Luksch leads the reader through the incommensurability faced by cross-cultural reading. In the exhibition Luksch's 'translation' of the Codex Vindobonensis conflates it into a conceptual art work using the ready-made printers' type-case. She thereby questions the nature of this visual

'text' collected by Cortes. Digitized for the first time and digitally repatriated during the exhibition, the codex's course as a gift between the powerful in Europe since Cortes is diagrammed by Luksch in a pendant drawing.

The colony of a colony that the Philippines was to Mexico is the locus of cultural exchanges that artist-architect duo Stephanie Misa and Oliver Cmyral research and represent in prints of these as yet largely undocumented histories. Through their prints and a live distillery of the Filipino-Mexican 'Tuba Fresca' drink that they operate in the gallery Cmyral and Misa invite the visitors to taste what is broadly taken as "the hispanization of the colonies" and reflect on the specific diasporas that the galleon and migration brought along the Filipino-Mexican axis.

Engaging with political activism in Mexico, Claudia Harich's 'Riot and Revolution Safety-airdress' and, multi-functional poncho' (i.e. the poncho can be worn, as a banner or skirt, anti-surveillance device or umbrella), are wearable devices to demonstrate resistance to migration laws. Opening 'Embassy of United Utopia' in the Vienna Zocalo Harich invites the visitors to become identified citizens of her United Utopia.

There are other art works included from the Vienna Zocalo that are not represented in this collection of essays. Mario Strk's sound piece is based on the absurd but provocative question of how to love a little cactus?

It thereby generated a revealing set of responses from both Viennese and Mexican participants, a process that he will continue in further field recordings and public programming during the course of the exhibition. Performance artist Julischka Stengele also presents a new work based on communication with the body and with language across cultures.

The individual projects presented in this section were developed over a year of art-research, in which these close readings of historical texts and objects provided the springboard for the site-specific interventions that each of these authors made for the WTA biennale.

Khadija Carroll La is a writer, academic, and artist who taught courses in preparation for this exhibition in the Department of Fashion and Styles at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Veiling Multiply- ismen

Veronika Burger

Multiply-ismen

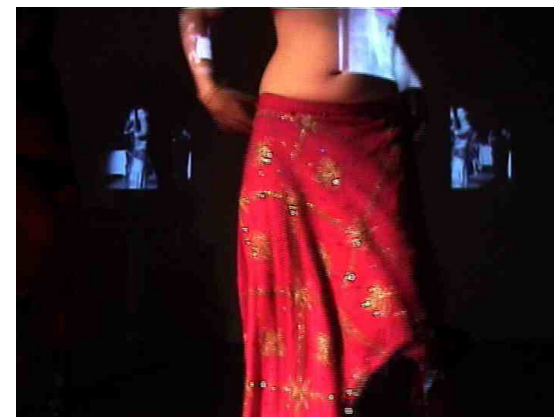
All the isms

The veil is a piece of clothing, worn almost exclusively by women that is intended to cover some parts of the head, face, neck and shoulders. However, I will show how it is also a social, political and artistic instrument. It is a symbol, an erotized object, a statement and a tool of communication, seen and used in everyday life as well as in shows, films, happenings and so on for over hundreds of years. Erica Segre, theorist of Hispanic visual culture, investigates the use, understanding,

and the conventions of the veil in Mexico. Her research focuses on the features of self-confidence and power. Frantz Fanon was a psychiatrist and philosopher, whose works remain influential in the fields of post-colonial studies and critical theory. He published various papers on the veil's political instrumentation and used the political situation of Algeria to illustrate his conclusions. In relation to Erica Segre, he seems not to be able to go further than displaying the veil as an erotized object and as a political tool. Katrina Daschner, a feminist Austrian artist, uses the veil as an important tool in her art and dance by playing with its power and by transforming and pushing the boundaries of its connotations as an object. The main focus of this paper lies in my rereading of these three positions. In addition to that, I give examples from Hollywood films, excerpts of artists' statements, and discuss works from Austria and Mexico.

Political instrumentation of the veil

The political instrumentation and multiplicity of symbolic uses for the veil is well described by Frantz Fanon in "Algeria Unveiled". The French invaded and captured Algeria in 1830. Between 1825 and 1847 50.000 French people immigrated to Algeria, but the



conquest was slow because of intense resistance from the Algerian people. The French made Algeria an integral part of France. The influence of the French colonization in Algeria especially impacted Algerian women. The veils worn by the women appeared to the colonists as a characteristic of Arab society.

The colonial administration defined their tactic as rescuing the women and eliminating the tradition of wearing the veil, which was a political symbol:

"Let's win over the women and the rest will follow. If we want to destroy the structure of Algerian society, its capacity for resistance, we must first of all conquer the women; we must go and find them behind the veil where they hide themselves and in the houses where the men keep them out of sight."

Algeria Unveiled- Frantz Fanon (p. 163)

At the beginning they used the strategy of public unveiling, thus celebrating the "rescue" of women publically. The occupying forces saw the psychological power vested in the veil worn by Algerian women. After each success, the authorities were strengthened in their conviction that Algerian woman would support Western penetration into native society. In fact, until 1955 only men were active elements in the Algerian

Revolution, then more and more women became involved in the war and in the revolutionary actions. Every veiled woman, every Algerian woman, became from this point on suspect. As a rebellion strategy, they learned how to hide grenades, guns, weapons under their veil and haik.

In the beginning the veil was a mechanism of resistance, but its social value also remained very strong. The veil was worn because tradition demanded a rigid separation of the sexes, but also because the occupier was bent on unveiling Algeria so the cloth rose to become a statement against colonialism. The colonists were incapable of grasping the motivations of the colonized.

Beyond that of a political tactic, in imperial circumstances, the dominant attitude appears to be a romantic exoticism, strongly tinged with sensuality and sexuality of third world women. The sexualized colonial view of women wearing the veil is masked in their liberation and in turn this is just a political tool, a paltry excuse to promise freedom and the opportunity of the rights of women.



In Fanon's Text, the shifting positions of the veil reveal it as another instrument for oppression at the beginning of the French conquest of Algeria and in the end, as a statement of the Algerian rebellion. In 1962 women suffrage became the law and in the same year the Algerian war ended with independence.

Fanon does not document the rural areas where women are often unveiled for example: the Kabyle woman, who except in large cities, never use the veil.

Hollywood, the Golden Age of Arabic Musicals- and Dancefilms of the 40s and 50s – exotic imaginations, spectacles and ways of looking

Salomé (USA 1953)

Director: William Dieterle

Stars: Rita Hayworth, Stewart Granger, Charles Laughton, Judith Anderson

Dance staged by Valerie Bettis

Rita's gowns by Jean Louis

Color, 103 min. running time

Dancing scene: Salomé dance with the seven veils (running time: 01:33:23 - 01:40:00)

"In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness. Woman displayed as sexual object is the leitmotif of erotic spectacle: from pin-ups to striptease, she holds the look, and plays to and signifies male desire. Mainstream film neatly combines spectacle and narrative. How in musical song-and-dance numbers interrupt the flow of the action. The presence of women is an indispensable element of spectacle in normal narrative film, yet her visual presence tends to work against the development of a story-line, to freeze the flow of action in moments of erotic contemplation." Laura Mulvey in Visual Pleasure and narrative cinema, p. 19

Carmelita Tropicana

What is left out in Laura Mulvey's Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema?

"Comedy is your weapon: Performance Artist Carmelita Tropicana's oppositional strategies."
Melanie Dorson

As an example of what is left out in Mulvey's Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema, I will describe a scene



from Carmelita Tropicana, where she is dancing with a veil. Carmelita, who is a cultural production herself, always appearing in character, defies notions of a fixed subjectivity. Her queer and cubana body is unstable and fragmented and appears in various forms of media (film, theater, more experimental performances), and is not limited to an one-performance persona in favor of queer self-making practices. She is using drag and is female, Latina, and alternative affirmative and doesn't fit into the Hollywood standard female beauty formula. The spectator can't identify with it and is left with a spectacle that affirms self-subjectivities that are both Latina and queer. These productions show us that identity politics does not need only to be rooted in essentializ notions of the self and simplistic understandings of resistance, but rather that it is essentially a politics of hybridity that works within and outside the dominant public view, and in doing so contests the ascendant racial, sexual and class strictures.

Salomé

What is seen in Salomé?

Hollywood was producing a lot of biblical epics and Orient fantasies at the time Salomé was made. The studios were

attempting to halt the rise of television by offering movie patrons these lavish Technicolor spectacles that allowed for eye-appealing sets and period costumes. The stage settings looked hand made and were not historical as they used buildings that weren't even from that time. Salomé doesn't make any effort of showing research in local dance or music. It is an imaginary view the West has of the East.

Rita Hayworth dances the dance of the seven veils in the most famous scene. It is a dance more reminiscent of ballet with modern dance movement than the original, which is rooted in belly dancing. What is more bizarre is that Rita Hayworth is trying to look exotic and erotic and she is obviously from the West, having blond hair and blue eyes.

Filling in the background dancers with exotic looking women that were black, from the east or even from other countries that had tall blondes was typical of Hollywood productions of that time. Dancing with the veil was more a new invention from the Western (Hollywood screenplay) than the way it really was in the original scene. The veil dance was traditionally used just for the entrance dancer.



The dance with the seven veils is fictional and is not rooted in any particular dance that it refers to. You see in this short clip an Eastern fantasy or better a Western fantasy about Eastern dance. The music in this part sounds more like a Flamenco inspired sound piece than Arabic folkloristic music. The dance scene doesn't develop any change or any influence on the main story telling of the movie, and stands alone as a spectacle. For a moment of the dance (the sexual impact of the performing) the woman takes the film into a no man's land outside its own time and space and demonstrates a good example of an erotic and sexualized view of women in classical Hollywood productions in the 1940s and 1950s.

Traditionally, the women were displayed in two different ways: as erotic objects for the characters within the screen story (in *Salomé*: Salome and Marcellus Fabius), and as an erotic object for the spectator within the audience, with a shifting tension between the looks on either side of the screen.

In *Salomé* for example, it is not a dance of someone who is self-confident of how she looks and appeals, it functions just as a desirable object itself. There is no direct glance or eye contact with the camera, which you often see in performances with erotic elements

and lust. It demonstrates, in the same moment, an empowerment of their audience about their situation and the awareness of being desired. Finally, it teases or flirts with this special moment in a humorous way while remaining completely aware of the situation.

I think that the awareness makes a difference in the performance. And in the way the camera frames a portrait of a dance scene, or in this case a woman. It also causes an overthinking of the representation of women by male desire and a desiring of spectatorship in the cinema. So I question what strategies are left to work with or against these structures and frames. And how are the possibilities to use these excursions into no man's land in a productive way and a more self-reflected and comedian way. What possibilities can be open with singing and dancing to influence the narrative and how to get over spectacle and narrative things happen and but them together as a narrative structure?

Hollywood, Musicals, Dance, Dance, Dance!

Singing and dancing brings out how people are related, it questions their friendship, it asks how they are living together, what relationship problems they might have and finally it delves into the subjects of sexuality and



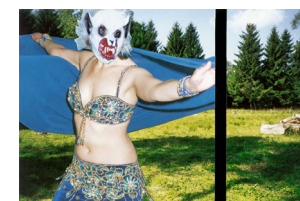
money. Musical scenes in films or even in telenovelas are usually used to escape reality. They all show seriousness about their business and present a constructed reality of themselves with well-calculated processes, failures and rehearsals. The beyond the scene-play in musical film is a good example of it. For me they all have in common a playfulness with reality and a teasing or flirting element. Telenovelas show more the impact of events on the characters, never what happens afterwards. What is very interesting for me is that in Latin America, very popular telenovelas become musicals afterwards.

I think singing and dancing in film, TV or in performances can be used as tool to push the boundaries and break with regular conventions, such as heteronormativity. It can also tell a different story, or even a plot from a co-existing reality while offering you possibilities to create a new order. It can question stability of viewing and expectations of gender and queerness as you see in Katrina Daschner's works. She is an artist that lives in Vienna and plays with the elements of Musicals and uses veils and masks as tools, in order to de-construct them and connote them new in a humorous and glamorous way. She acts in her videos with awareness of the camera, the view and her tools.

"A nominalist catachresis. I have admiration for that bold effort, especially for the ways in which it is linked with that other nominalist catachresis: value. To check psychologism. Anti-Oedipus uses the concept-metaphor of machines: Desire does not lack anything; it does not lack its object. It is, rather, the subject that is lacking in desire, or desire that lacks a fixed subject; there is no fixed subject except by repression. Desire and its object are a unity: it is the machine, as a machine of machine. Desire is machine, the object of desire also a connected machine, so that the product is lifted from the process of producing, and something detaches itself from producing to product and gives a leftover to the vagabond, nomad subject."
 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea*, p. 25

The golden age of Arabic dance and musical films happened at the same time as the classic Hollywood period with all of its stars and starlets in the 1940s and 1950s. It is obvious that the Arabic Dance Film was influenced by the big Hollywood movies and adopted costumes, topics and imagination of dances from the West. The famous women dance stars from this period were Tahiya Kârîôka, Naïma Akef, Sâmîya Gamâl, Nagwa Fuâd, Liz & Lyn, Hoda Shamseddîn, Hâgar Hamid and so on.

Why is the West especially fascinated with belly dance? How did the dance get to Europe and the USA? What



influence did belly dance have on the Western dance scene?

How was the dance visualized in Hollywood and Egypt during the Golden Age of the Arabic Dance Films in the 1940s and 50s?

Musicals, Hollywood, Dance Film, the Golden Age of the Arabic Dance Films, Telenovelas

One can often see the use of the 2-piece glamour cabaret costume in European and American dance scenes. The dance with the veil which is a very young form of belly dancing, is also quite popular. It used to be used only for the entrée for shows but now has become a popular centerpiece in many routines.

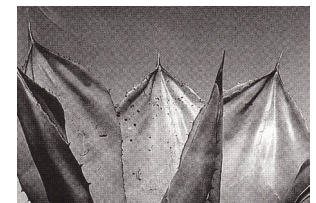
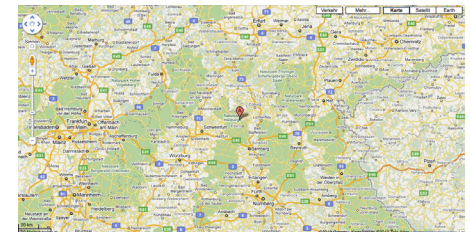
Since the 1970s the genre of Egyptian musical film vanished (one of the last productions: *Khalli bâlak min Zûzû ñ Pass auf Susu auf*, 1971 with Tahiya Kârîôka). Since the 1960s, television has influenced the cinema. On one side the Arabian films of the Golden Age were very influenced from American mainstream cinema. On the other side Hollywood cinema was very inspired by their imagination of the Orient and as a result, produced a lot of films with Orient touch in the first years.

They were more in the direction of fantasies and desire than based on site research (for example the movie poster of 1950s). The gossip surrounding the love life of Naima Akef was often discussed in the same way as Rita Hayworth's.

Many stars from musicals as well as stars from telenovelas have failed to develop their skills in movies or other genres or are not accepted by the audience to play different roles or characters that don't fit to the viewer's perception of their 'real roles' at the start of the play. On the other side it could be a starting point, for example Selma Hayek in *Teresa*. They could also be branded to one fixed role. The anti-reality of musical film appears for us not so dangerous in some ways.

It offers you fairy tales and well-known illusions. It doesn't offer you solutions of conflicts or functions often as a censorship of homosexuality and focuses on the show business and capital itself.

Even if you see rehearsals that are all well choreographed, the audience doesn't see something not planned or embarrassing. There is also a logic to making a film out of progress. For example, you will never see the slip of dancer during a routine if it's not planned. Even the force of gravity functions differently. What qualities



or influences do musicals have on narrative have on musical cinema? Singing and dancing in movies gives the audience illusionistic, fantastic and utopian moments in the story, especially when movements, voices and bodies included with costumes and glamorous settings come together in one single or solo number. In musicals and telenovelas the spectator can escape the reality. Singing and dancing brings up the question of who is related to who. It questions friendship, living situations, relationship problems and money.

Katrina Daschner

Naima and Naima (video 2006)

Katrina Daschner:

In the Video *Naima and Naima*, she sets up a few views of an Egyptian dance film from the 1940s (with the popular dance star Naïma Akef). Here Naïma plays a double role in original film as a belly dancer and a sailor Katrina Daschner has looped a clip from a film shot in Egypt in the forties – in the scene the actress Naima Akef plays the woman as well as the man.

"They represent platforms for projections in a world beyond heteronormative structures of relationships - in the literal sense. On one of her three map - pictures Daschner projects

a video having the queer desire as a theme: here a dancer and asailor are flirting intensely - in reality they are however identical. For this Daschner has looped a clip from a film shot in Egypt in the forties - in the relevant scene the actress Naima Akef plays the woman as well as the man."

Press review written by Nina Schedlmayer

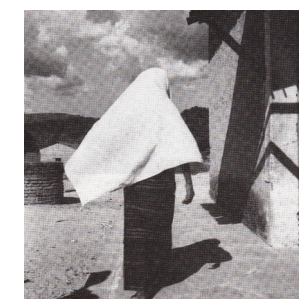
"Es geht darum, die Bilder zu verändern!" "I want to change the participation of pictures!"

Katrina Daschner

Her characters are costumed in a cabaret costume and Lucha Libre mummery, or with handmade masks or performing gender in movement, belly dancing and posing in an apparently beautiful and calm nature doing crazy or weird things that doesn't fit at all with the environment. In relation to the figures, the nature or normal acting environment/setting becomes strange and weird or even inappropriate. The figures (with veils or with a belly dance costume and masquerade of the face) are aware of the camera and confront the spectator with desire that doesn't fit to what we expected and don't fit to our heteronormality understandings.

abscene and prescene

The disharmony of the veil in the text of Erica Segre ñ shifts between ingratiating self-mortification and



alluring evasion, chaste modesty and carnal effrontery. It gives a completely different perspective on this cloth. The veil as sudarium, shroud and envelope/wrap signifies revelation and concealment, transparency and opacity, the embodied and the immaterial, the liminal and the universal, essence and appearance, the temporal and the timeless, depth and ephemerality, tacitlity and the intangible, the enclosed and the limitless – in a surfeit of always inferred but also always deferred content.

In this study, the veil stretches from the periphrases of sacred speech (lienzo of Veronica) and metaphysical exegeses, turning the commonplace cloth ñ the sábana (sheet), mantel (tablecloth), huipil and rebozo ñ into something with a different meaning. An example can be found in the description in Fanon's text. The veil is a common cloth and is used as architecture in the Mexican photography of the 19th and 20th century, for structuring the space and the interplaying between presence and absence of the human body. Curtains and drapery are used as scenic tools and barriers to conjure up the transport of illusions and functions as a simulation of the human body and performs as itself or even as a sculpture in the photography.

"Photography has been rehearsing this false unveiling from its inception as an offshoot of the graphic arts, ghosting specular expectations and spectating within the spectacle itself."

Erica Segre, Intersected Identities: Strategies of Visualisation in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-century Mexican Culture: Strategies of Visualisation in 19th- and 20th-century Mexico

The strengths of this study are Segre's visual and hermeneutical examinations that cover the problematic discourses ascribed to visual technology as well as a discussion of photography's poetical associations as an archeological fragment, a veil, and as a metaphor for human skin and space itself. Segre takes as its subject, photographic representations of objects, which form part of everyday life in Mexico such as in the photography of the veil and similar items such as the lienzo, rebozo, huipil, and sábana. The observations in this about the relationship between medium and content are particularly insightful as Segre shows Mexican Visual Culture. It shows how the aforementioned cloths have become a motif in Mexican photography, which also refers and relates to the medium of photography and shows that the veil is part of everyday life. She shows it in a sensual way, not only as just a spectacle of a piece of lust and eroticness.



Examples:

Antonio Reynoso's moving sculpture on hanging lines.

Mariana Yampolsky's nebulous bridal carapace
Fantasma is a facsimile in absentia of an eye-catching disappearance.

Manuel Álvarez Bravo's *Las lavanderas sobreentendidas* (the washerwomen implied), sheets hung out to dry over giant agaves overlay the monument-defining, death defying drapery of neo-classical sculpture.

Yolanda Andrade's *El martirio* (the martyrdom) 1987

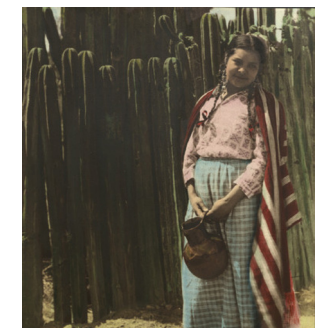
El velo negro (the black Veil/1975): with humorous portentousness, the swollen semi-permeable veil darkens the frame with the secret terror of an unknown thing. With its fine mesh, the veil bends and closes upon what it wants as the shadow of death precedes and envelops the subjects of photography's roving apprehensions.

In Marina Yampolsky's *ÑMadreì* (1980), the gauze-like huipil, heavy with child, helps to imagine the inside out. This reminds us of the veil's double: the membrane and photography's contemplation of its own membranous adhesion to the surface of things. Mexican photography introduces a point of incongruity as regards to the evidentiary exposure supposedly afforded by mechanical reproduction. In other words, it points to the black spot

that empties ontological form and disturbs habitual analogic thinking.

Lienzo ("canvas") is a sheet of cloth painted with indigenous Mesoamerican pictorial writing. The photography of Francisco de Zurbarán's *Veronicas* and their anonymous Mexican imitations has transposed the dialectic between deception and disillusionment of visionary painting. The privileged return of the motif of the Veil of the Veronica and its variation, the lienzo of the Guadalupeana, it intersects for Segre the photography's epistemology of appearance and the secular and religious dramaturgy of the immaterial and marvellous.

The lienzo of the Veronica, a consecrated relic carrying the material imprint of the divine visage, served in theological discourse to legitimize the production of images in opposition of Reformation iconoclasts. For example instead of the visage of a suffering Christ with half-closed eyes we see Zapata's death mask, which is a reproduction of a newspaper image on a lienzo. This mortuary shot of the rebellion leader has become a holy relic and a myth woven into cloth and bears the identity stamp *Hecho en México* (Made in Mexico) and shows how myths shift and are made in daily life.



soldaderas

The rebozo-shawl, which has become a subject of historical interest because of the doubts about its origins, was an obligatory garment for women since the sixteenth century. It is a mantle, which is used to cover the head and shoulders and to partially conceal the face.

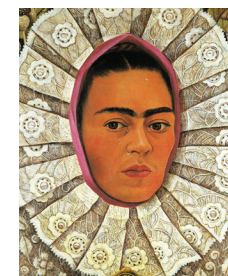
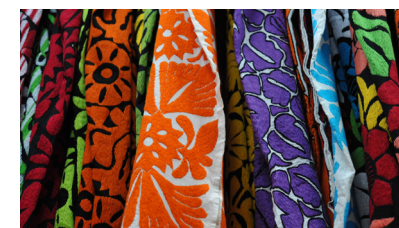
Rectangular in shape, rebozos vary in size from 1.5 meters to upwards of three meters, and can be made of cotton, wool, silk, or articele. They can be worn as scarves or shawls, and women often use them to carry children and shopping goods. It is a garment accessory women wear over their shoulders (over the dress or blouse). They range in value from inexpensive to hundreds of dollars. Rebozos are product of the intermingling of the cultures colonized by Spain. It is unknown whether the indigenous people of Mexico used them before the arrival of the Spanish, but the word does not appear in the Spanish language until the year 1562. They are made all over Mexico, but the rebozos of Michoacán, Oaxaca, Querétaro and San Luis Potosí are particularly prized. San Luis Potosí it is the home of the Otomí, people which are very famous for their weaving technique, and it is in Santa María del Río, San Luis Potosí that the Rebozo Carmelo, the most expensive rebozos are made. Chalinas

are flat rebozos with no design, and are only one colour. Often, rebozos with red, green, and white stripes are worn for Fiestas Patrias (*Aniversario de la Constitución, Natalicio de Benito Juárez, Día Del Trabajo, Grito de Dolores, Aniversario de la Independencia, Aniversario de la Revolución*).

The photographs of Augustín Casasola depict soldaderas, the female soldiers of the Mexican Revolution, wearing rebozos de bolita.

As a distinctly Mexican garment, the rebozo has been celebrated in the arts. The rebozo has been the subject of song and poem, and for example Frida Kahlo frequently painted portraits of herself wearing rebozos. It has also been used in Chicana arts: for example, it serves as the central metaphor of Sandra Cisneros's bildungsroman (education novel) *Caramelo*. And due to its folkloric nature, the rebozo is often used as part of the costume for performing Mexican folk dances.

"Once Eleuterio even accompanied an indecent version of the jarabe tapatio performed with a Tenancingo rebozo the colors of the Mexican flag, a hermaphrodite, and a burro – a filthy finale that brought down the house."
Sandra Cisneros *Caramelo* p. 162

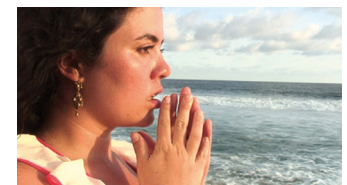


"Just like a good fotonovela or telenovela. Because she didn't know what else to do, Soledad chewed on the fringe of her rebozo. Oh, if only her mother were alive. She could have told her how to speak with her rebozo. How, for example, if a woman dips the fringe of her rebozo at the fountain when fetching water, this means – I am thinking of you. Or, how if she gathers her rebozo like a basket, and walks in front of the one she loves and accidentally lets the contents fall, if an orange and a piece of sugarance tumble out, that means, – Yes, I accept you as my novio. Or if a woman allows a man to take up the left end of her rebozo, she is saying, – I agree to run away with you. How in some parts of Mexico, when the rebozo is worn with the two tips over her back, crossed over her head, she is telling the world, – I am a widow. If she allows it to fall loose to her feet, – I am a woman of the street and my love must be paid with coins. Or knotted at the ends, – I wish to marry. And when she does marry, how her mother would place a pale blue rebozo on her head, meaning, – This daughter of mine is a virgin, I can vouch for it. But if she had her lady friend do it for her in her name, this meant, – Unused merchandise, well, who can say? Or perhaps in her old age she might instruct a daughter, – Now, don't forget, when I'm dead and my body is wrapped in my rebozos, it's a blue one on top, the black one beneath, because that's how it's done, my girl, But who was there to interpret the language of the rebozo to Soledad?" Sandra Cisneros Caramelo, p. 105

After the revolution the rebozo undergoes a rehabilitation and the salutary properties of the ordinary rebozo are celebrated in a kind of patriotic statement or a holy relic.

huipil, Tehuana = tehuana women

A huipil (blouse, dress) is a form of a Maya textile and tunic or blouse worn by indigenous Mayan, Zapotec and other women in Central to Southern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, and western Honduras, in the Northern part of Central America. The elaborate design and patterns of traditional woman's huipil may convey the wearer's village, marital status, and personal beliefs. They are usually made from two or three woven panels joined with decorative stitching, then doubled over and a hole is cut in the center panel for the hips (unless woven in during the weaving) and decorated with stitches. The sides are joined together with more decorative stitching allowing openings for the arms and in the more ceremonial pieces, ribbons run down the length of the sides of the middle panel, sometimes with the ribbon forming a serrated collar ornament with two loose lengths or ribbons in the front, often in two colors. The length of the huipil varies from a simple sleeveless top extending to the waist or slightly below



to knee- or calf-length tunic forming draping scapular sleeves of the width. Sometimes the cotton is heavy and coarse, sometimes so finely spun as to be filmy and semi-transparent. When the cloth is woven with a gauze technique, it is frequently net-like.

Tehuana = the tehuana women

Tehuantepec is also a film from Manuel Álvarez Bravo which is focusing on the Southern region's matriachal Zapotec Indian culture. This was a region, which had been favoured by hunters of spectacular autochthony in the Mexican arts. The Tehuana women, in particular, became a paragon of native seduction, mystery and cultural fecundity. The celebrated costume of the Tehuana included a nimbus-like huipil grande, a white headdress of lace resembling an inverted petticoat.

Kahlo took up the Tehuantepec costume as one of the key elements of her self-presentation, in her everyday dress and in her work. Her self-presentation in the costume of Isthmus of Tehuantepec's Zapotec women was a part of more generalized practice in which urban women who moved in Mexico City's cosmopolitan intellectual and artistic environments identified themselves with Mexico's regional popular cultures. Also Rosa Covarrubias

and Isabel Villasenor shared this project by assuming traditional dress. Within this urban milieu, the Zapotec culture of Tehantepec's isthmus occupied a significant place. The isthmus was considered a region where post-contact Mesoamerican civilization had escaped some of Spanish imperialism's pathological effects; and the gender conventions that structured economic and sexual relations were believed to have been particularly resistant to the systematic social reorganization undertaken by Ibero-Catholic colonization.

When Kahlo does the Tehuantepec dress, she alludes to a resilient indigenous tradition where women were believed to have maintained a strong economic and sexual autonomy, in spite of colonial history. Her presentation as a Tehuana straddling the borderland between national assertion and transnational exoticism is also inextricably entangled within the specific history of her husband Diego Rivera who scripted her role as a revolutionary Tehuana. Her integration with the Mexican people is evidenced by the fact that she had not worn a 'foreign' dress for twenty-two years. But her relationship to the Tehuantepec costume seems far more complex. Instead of Rivera's transhistorical emphasis on the fact that her public identity is both performative



and mutable, and criticizes the tension between national assertion and transnational exoticism. Indeed, she shuttles between cross-dressing as a man and dressing up as a Tehuana. Alternative manners of dress become metaphoric vehicles for articulating the conflicting structures of performative social identity in Kahlo's life word.

L.A. Coyotas

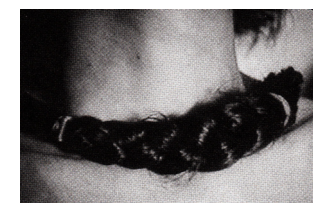
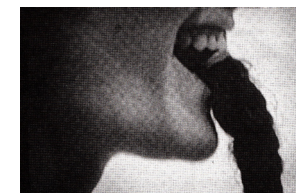
The veil represents and symbolizes her solidarity with the Chiapas movement. In representing, themselves as a fighter, women display the power of the returned gaze, as fully active agents. In these selected illustrations, women have chosen the veil as a means of focusing attention on their power.

No longer simply objects to be gazed upon, they (for example L.A. Coyotas) take up strong subject positions, challenging who speaks and what gets said about the object. These artists are very aware and sensitive about the colonizing strategies and pointing out what political lines have been drawn through definitions like multiplicity of cultural identities. They seek and perform new identities appropriate for their political practice.

The art-making practices of the women of Mujeres

de Maíz, Las Comadres Artistas, and L.A. Coyotas are informed by third-world feminist theory. Their understanding of new "subject configurations" is well explained by theorist Chela Sandoval's statement:

"What U.S. third world feminism demands is a new subjectivity, a political revision that denies any one ideology as the final answer, while instead positing a tactical, indeed a performative, subjectivity with the capacity to de- and re-center depending upon the kinds of oppression to be confronted, depending upon the history of the moment. This is what is required in the shift from enacting a hegemonic oppositional theory and practice to engaging in differential social movement, as performed, however unrecognized, over the last thirty years under U.S. third world feminist praxis."
Chela Sandoval, p. 117 *Gender on the Borderland*



Online resources

- Research Telenovelas:
<http://www.tele-novela.de/faszination.htm>
- Vivir un Poco (Entrada)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-5jU5ov49g>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2OAw0HoWlMo&NR=1>
- Gabriel y Gabriela (1982)
Entrada: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79dhAiNoXTk>
- Los Ricos Tambien Lloran (1979)//Entrada - Teaser
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TiXevytPUXA>
- Teresa: (with Salma Hayek)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7N32Ux9ZYqc>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAGwM6gLUak&NR=1>
- Salomé:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zGP-jd75bw>
- TV-Sender: Internetkanäle
<http://www.passion.de/>
<http://www.dramahome.net/>
<http://www.lateinamerikanachrichten.de/index.php?artikel/1029.html>
- Torre de Babel:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=385Ht09r3BU>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7HHudluCc4&feature=related> (6.23min death!)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FZiw3pdjnc&feature=related>
- Mulheres Apaixonadas
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWy_17oFYqw
- Edwarda Flur Gurolla
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FurbD4pzD2o>
- Salome ñ Dance of the seven veils (dancing scene) with Rita Hayworth
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjI8G6gA65w>
- My fair Lady
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3DBFiJisc4>
why cant be woman more like a man?
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6iktQ2yIRs&feature=related>
- my fair lady (es grünt so grün wenn Spaniens blüten blühen)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2Uyipo4e6Q>
- Sound of Music:
Trailer
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KuWsQSntFfo>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KuWsQSntFfo>
- Dschunglbook:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uBAku3Cwsgk>
Kitty/Dr. teach Mowgli (The Jungle Book action)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=flq68dJg8kI&feature=related>
- Mata Hari: Greta Garbo(Dancing Scene)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRoAbDuvIVc&playnext=1&list=PL1B794ADBB3BrF966&index=2>
- Kybele Women
<http://mak.makabylie.info/Declaration-of-Kamira-Nait-Sid>
<http://www.second-congress-matriarchal-studies.com/grasshoff.html>
- Selma Hayek Dancing Scene From Dusk till Dawn
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVVGKiYZoSM>
- From Dusk til Dawn Bar Fight Scene - Selma goes mad
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOGfN4gkv_I&playnext=1&list=PLBBF5B7CoE96Do71D&index=59
- Carmelita Tropicana
<http://carmelitatropicana.com/>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHcgTSKzygE&feature=related>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4je2tajoPWo>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgDOqhCkkZw>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3auUk7RMtM&feature=related>
- Tanzverein ISIS
<http://www.sumaya-tanz.de>
<http://tanzverein-isis.de>
- Majida Malak
<http://www.majidamalak.com/bienvenido.htm>
- Bahara
<http://www.bahara.at/>
- lifting the veil at cnn
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFn9ZpWn7SM>
- brut Wien
<http://www.brut-wien.at/start.php>
- Mexican huipils
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/citlali/4579588376/in/set-72157594380025164/>

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<http://www.flickr.com/photos/citlali/2076462584/>
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Telenovelas

V = Veronika Sabine Burger

W = Edwarda Flor Gurola

Interview at Dondrine, Kirchengasse

20, 1070 Vienna (Austria)

Tuesday, 07.12.2010, 18.00 - 19.15

V: ... So I was like Aahhh. I have seen you on show "Who shot the princess" on monday. And I thought, I know her, but I don't from where but I have seen her before... Ahhh

W: Doleres. This was the first time. Because I am friends with Katrina since ten years. She proposed that project to me. And it was so good to work with her. Also Katja is on it. The one who is also in the play. Who plays the subcommandete.

V: Who is dressed like a Wrestler?

W: And the subcommandante. The one I got married to at the end. She is also a performer and she was in Katrina's video as well.

V: I read it. You see everything is connected.

W: I started the connection. I have been here only for two months.

V: How long do you live here? You said that you have a flat...

18.17

V: It's the same in musicals. You can't play serious roles afterwards. That it is actually one of my questions. There is Selma Hayek. She did it. She managed the jump and went to the States. I have seen her in Teresa. Which is really awful....

W: It's so funny. She is the anti-hero-heroine. She was really bad. Really bitchy. She cheated on an older man. And then her life was awful, because of what she did. It was really big in Latin America.

V: How do you manage to have this jump? I read that you have played in 3 or 4 telenovelas.

W: No. First I started with my father. My father was a director at the theater. I was always around serious theater things. At one point he decided to make a play for children. What was really arty and crazy.

V: I saw the picture.

W: So I started acting. I started doing short films and stuff for school.

W: My first job as an actress. If they needed a girl. I was there. From there I went to castings. From there...

V: Yes

W: Si

W: Actually, to do what my father hated the most. He wouldn't let me do the commercial stuff. That was all too commercial for him. So I went that way. So I just



fucked a bit with him and played in a lot telenovelas. So there were 800 children at the casting and they need only twelve children to play in that. I got it. So I did Carrusel, when I was eight. From eight to ten I played in the first season and from ten to twelve, thirteen in the second season. I played what was called a pre-teen telenovela.

V: So afterwards you could chose what you want to play?

W: It was more. It was natural. Not all the children who started went to in the second one. The first director started to be the producer of the second one. We start doing telenovelas. It is very funny. When we started, children telenovelas were not very common.

W: There had been one with children just one in the 1970s. Carrusel was in 1988. So it's funny, because there is this circle that televisa does. First Televisa produced the telenovela for tv and afterwards they made a live play out of it. It was a very weird kind of thing. There is the need from the audience to see you (the telenovela stars) in flesh. No. It doesnt really matter what the play is about. Just the same actors of the telenovela are going in a tour. You know...

V: So do mean you are playing a kind of theater?

W: Yeah, a musical!

V: Oh yeah, musical stuff.

W: Musical stuff

V: So okay. First you have the telenovela and ...

W: And then you have the musical.

V: Then you have (or must) the opportunity to go an musical tour? So to play in real as a musical.

W: We went to Brasil, Santa Domingo, Puerto Rico. We were in the Mayovell Stadium in front of 25.000 people. 9000 People were waiting at the airport of us.

V: So does it often happend that can't make it out that you are different person? Or identify you as a character? That you are a private person? Is it really so hard?

W: Yeah, it is. You are in there own concious as your character. They relate to you, they cry with you. I was in a position of being a growing up teenager in front of the audience. They see me growing up. They believe more and more that they know me. Completly. Even now...

V: Is it always like *Schicksal*? What is *Schicksal* in English? The Fate? The Destiny? Is it the destiny of a children star? Maybe?

W: And also to become drug addict. And to be off.

V: And then she comes back again. And is beautiful and sing songs.

W: Exaclty. It's often like that. And also since Televisa announces that every Mexicans watches four or five hours daily. They have televisions while you eat you see the televisions when you go to bed.



V: When are the usually times when telenovelas are screened, on tv? So is it in the morning? Or is it everytime? Or is it a fixed scheudle? Or is it everytime?

W: Telenovelas? For children? They start like at four after school and lunch. So from four to ten. So six telenovelas going on or even half an hour once. There are two main channels: Televisa and the other one is Teviasteka.

V: That I heard. I just read about Televisa.

W: Televisa comes even from the 40s. It was developed from the radio. Televisa is much more powerful than Teviasteka. And i did all these two and with thirteen I said, I had enough and I went to England and I studied there.

V: Okay. What did you study?

W: I studied at school. Just normal school. In a boardingschool.

V: With your family? Or without?

W: No in a boardingschool. Si. Then I came back with seventeen or eighteen. And worked with Teviasteka. Because Teviasteka does sometimes more filmic things and have a kind of way with this apparat with the *ella apuntadores*. I used it a lot.

V: Is it true that you didn't know they play before?

W: It depends on what you want to know. You can read the script for the next the day in the evening before or just come and pop in your microphone and the *apuntadores*

tells you were to go, what to say and what to feel... (...)

18:43

W: With Artists. With Katrina I started these projects. Also I started working with some writers. There is a novel that was written for me. That's called Maude. I dont know if it's written in Germany. But I think it is, by Farinelli. So all that happened togehter before I did this play. To do this play for me was great I don't know why there is this boom of Telenovela everywhere?

W: They don't know much about. It's a phenomen. It all started with Radionovela. And then people just got used to it. There is either people who watch Televisa or Teviasteka. Televisa is cheaper. Its much more cheaper.

V: Is it more on public tv? Or is it in private tv? Is Teviasteka a private channel?

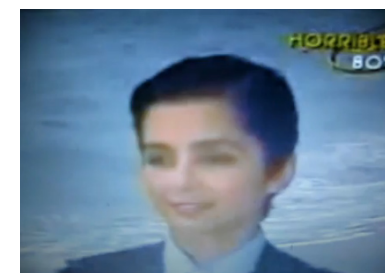
W: It's in public. Both are public. Television is such a shame that it is not used as an educational tool. Five minutes of Telenovela. Five minutes of Commercial. Five Minutes. Five Minutes. Actually you look at 25 minutes telenovela out of an hour.

V: It's like here.

W: Again and again and again. No. So yeah...

V: Gini invited you for this project (Who shot the princess?) How did they find you?

W: I met her. She was my partner with Katrina, when



we did Doleres. I met her. We did Doleres in Oaxaca. And we travel a little bit and we got to know each other a little and they separated but we kept doing it. And also we did

V: Did you see them performing in a band? They were great!

W: Yeah, SV Damenkraft came to Mexico.

V: They came to Mexico? Great.

W: Yeah, Great! I loved it!

V: Super! They had awesome short performances!

W: Super! It was like: what!? And Sabina, Tomka, Gini, Katrina and Christina....

V: It was not like she is better or she. It was like that I felt that all together were super! It was non-hierarchic. (...)

19:02

W: So with Gini we start doing this documentary. Because my father was one of the first, who brought Thomas Bernhard to Mexico. You know Thomas Bernhard?

V: Yes, sure.

W: We did *Theatermachen*, *Simplemty kompliziert* and started with Minetti. We didn't finish it. Actually that was the last play of my father. So we were talking about working together and what topics between Austria and Mexico could come. And we did this documentary. I can give it to you or Gini can. Which is teatro (?) and we

talked a lot about my father and talked with people who worked with him. And also we came here and actually we went...

V: Katka told me you wanted to arrange an exhibition here? And that it didn't work out?

W: Yeah, and so we did something here with the sisters of Bernhard and there is one man in Mexico that knew Bernhard and knew my father and more the differences of them and the points of view of Bernhard and Gurola in the context theatre and the topics of death, women overacting, genius man, loco and misunderstood. There were five topics we worked on. Nils also worked on with us. So we started our project. After we finished our project, I really said, "I would like to work in theater with you, but I knew it would be so far away. Spanish, German..."

V: I have to figure out that Spanish thing. (laughter)

W: But then I told her I would love to do a piece about Jelinek. And she said like you know Jelinek is so in right now and so difficult. So we wanted to do *Schneewittchen*. So we didn't get the rights for the script to play it.

V: The script?

W: Often the theaters are not allowed by the editors. But then it was so much better (laugh) because then we had to create a project. Of course we have to adapt it, because there is so hard text and stuff.

W: And then she told me about Martin Plattner, who



made the first three scenes of the play: the Snowwhite déjà vu, the infanta, the Charlotta and Maximilliam from Mexico and the Taco Shop with Frida Kahlo. That was really interesting for me, to talk about myself, some parts were really fiction some were not. To find out, Gini was actually the one who wrote the backbone of them and then we added the story telling, the part were I came out from the black scene to talk with the audience. No. We call them the story telling, because of the fairy tales. So interesting. So from that on we thought, we need a Mexico part in it. So we found Yoshua Buhorkez who is a great slam spoken word poet and a political activist. And also he needed work, so he started doing song scripts for telenovelas. (laugh)

V: (laugh) Perfect.

W: (laugh) Perfect. He was perfect for our project. It was like, nothing more could be more perfect. So we worked a little with him. So he sent staff and we adapted it. And so also Sabine speaks in Spanish in the play, which is so so so great, because she doesn't know one word in Spanish.

V: So how did she manage it? With cards?

W: No, she is such a great musician.

V: I know.

W: So that's how we managed it. So great, that I actually think about it that I want to come back here and work more.

V: I loved it, because the time passed and I didn't

recognized it because (together with Warda) so much to see...

W: Really. Like Ah Ah Ah

V: Really. It was not so easy to see everything, you really have to concentrate yourself. You have to work when you see it.

W: Yeah, I really like that when you have to work and to interact. You can't like be handed and cottoned on their mouth. No? I think...

V: I think you have to work with your brain. You have to see it. It's a lot to see there. I love the costumes and all the setting stuff. It was all so trashy and nice.

W: Si Si

V: And I always like the fact when the players are all equal. So in a way all equal. So, no...

W: Yeah.

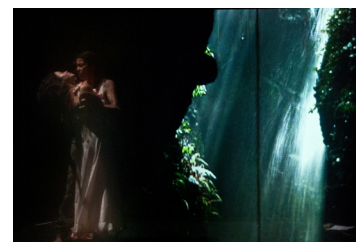
V: So, nobody falling apart or nobody is weak or so.

W: So the princess is each of us. Each of us.

V: It's true.

W: Our identities and our personalities are so strong and so different that of though I carried the weight of the boot in a way like...

V: But you did it in a very what is called sympathetic way. It was really good. It was not so overload, you played in a very natural way. Like you were just teasing or flirting



with this story-telling character. Yeah. (laugh) That's what I liked. It was very natural. It was not so over over played.

W: Yeah. Super.

V: It doesn't build up a hierarchy.

W: Ahhaa. Okay. Like I am the boss....

V: That's what I like.

W: And each of us did different stuff. Chris the hunter, the deathman was also doing the pyrotechnic stuff. Sabine arranged the music stuff. Katja was involved with the costumes. And Philippe was just being Philippe. (laugh) With this super...

V: So, how long do you rehearse for the play? Two months? Did you also do the plot in this time?

W: No, the story tellings we have more than six months, but I learned them but we completely changed them. (laugh) But in a way it was like for me to exercise memory, because I have also playing theater, Tschechow text, but I think this is the hardest part for me in textwise. The memory. Because there lots and lots of things, changing characters very quickly and do it like entertaining. But also like a bit honestly, I started when we were there we were also recording the whole day the jungle and the beach stuff, which you see in the videos.

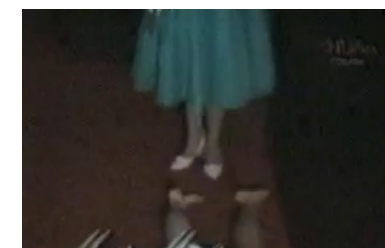
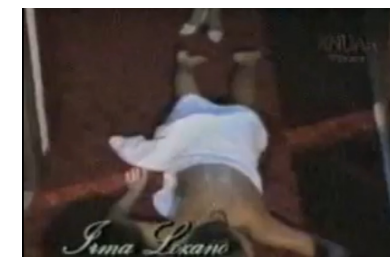
V: Yeah.

W: We did that in summer...

V: There this house, castle, villa,...

W: Yeah, that I loved! When we worked there, we had so much fun. It's the best way to work very hard in somewhere else. It's the best thing ever. Yeah, so we did that and then little by little people came on. We started from the beginning with the hunter and then with Maximiliano and then with Sabine and Katja. Actually Katja came just a month ago, Sabine also. So we were just every week people were coming in together. I also was kind of wondering with kind of these, and the cold party in Spanish.

W: The Spanish thing was the last of the whole thing, also to be translated for everyone and work with the subtitles. And also I find such a great way that you have here in a more German kind of work. The director has a dramaturg around him that can help him. Not an assistant. A dramaturg also helps him. I don't know what's going on there. Martin Zissler was the dramaturg with Gini that really help me. Not that Gini and I get into that look that so and so. So that we could get more opinions because you couldn't have an opinion if you didn't see the work. So they came to the rehearsals and work with us about the story tellings a lot. For example, about the way of saying it, is not clear enough or I don't understand your English enough in this part or you have to have this pose, because they knew the material so well. So, that was very interesting to work with a director that isn't mighty or that he is saying that he is the best thing going on. It was great to have this other



oppon. By the way I love you (pointing at my scissor earring). Supernice! I love it.

V: Yeah, I am a tailor as well. It's great. I lost it already and it come back.

W: Yeah?

V: Yeah, I lost it in New York and it came back to Austria.

W: Super. I just recently lost the ring Katka gave me and I found it today. And I was almost about it to vacuum clean it. You know, I was vacuum cleaning.

W: Hey, Que bien? Super. To talk about these means a lot to me. Because when you talk about these stuff that made you kind of inadequate in a way of. What am I? What I am not? To do theater, to do film or not. I've been doing this for twentythree years and I still don't know yet who takes me to different places. But I do feel that this is a point of ... Because of all I have done yet brings me to this point to do this. A combination of all kind of stuff that I have been doing. (...) I hope it's more.

V: I see it from the other part of it. You don't have to hide it or refuse it in some ways. I don't know yet. So for me it's like, I am an artist but I don't have an arty background or something like that. So, I have to work. A while ago I was very ashamed of that, not ashamed but in some way somebody could recognize it that I am from a worker background and not so much born into these arty things or could not talk like an artist or so. But you learn a lot.

W: And you put other stuff in your work, that arty party stuff don't know. Hopefully ;)

V: (laugh)

W: (laugh)

W: So I have to run. But let's keep on mailing.

Edwarda Flor Gurola was and is an Mexican telenovela star. Since ten years she works in collaboration with artists as a performer or actress and plays in various short films and performances (for example Dolores from Katrina Daschner, or on the side of Arnold Schwarzenegger in Collateral Damage) in national and international projects.

Soy tu fan (TV series Vanessa), 2010 *El infierno* (Gloria), 2010 *Cefalópodo* (Roberta), 2009 *Música de ambulancia* (short), 2008 *Reminiscencias* (short), 2006 *Sexo, amor y otras perversiones* *Hermana* (segment *ÑRecompensa*), 2003 *Ligerita* (short), 2002 *Collateral Damage* (Mexican Girl), 2001 *¿Y cómo es ÉL?* (short film/Julia), 2001 *Me la debes* (short/Marce), 1999 *Der süsse Duft des Todes* (Amiga), 1999 *Santitos* (Paloma), 1999 *La vida en el espejo* (TV series/ Diana Román Franco), 1999 *Perriférico* (short), 1998 *El evangelio de las Maravillas* (Tomas), 1994 *Mujer, casos de la vida real* (TV series), *Perdon por amor* (1994), 1992 *El abuelo y yo* (TV series/Yoya), 1989 *Carrusel* (TV series/ Carmen) (Episode #1.1 (1989) *Ö Carmen* as Edwina) 2005 Dolores, video from Katrina Daschner (as Dolores)

2006 *Los hacedores de teatro* (TV series documentary by Edwarda Flor Gurola)

2010 Performance at Brut (27.11./29.11./30.11/01.12. 2010) Gin/i Müller, Flor Edwarda Gurrola, Nils Olger u.a.

Who shot the Princess? Boxstop Telenovelas

Inspired by Latin-American Telenovelas and Elfriede Jelinek's Princess Plays, *Who shot the Princess? Boxstop Telenovelas* unveils a broad array of princess-projections of classic fairytale and historian figures, film divas, artists and rebels. At the centre of the piece is Mexican actress Flor Edwarda Gurrola who became a Latin-American TV star as a child with Telenovelas. She wanders through the different stages of her acting career in Mexico changing into various (un)dead princesses: As Infanta she will experience a Snow White déjà vu in the woods, as Carlota of Mexico she celebrates a fatal comeback with Emperor Maximilian, and as Frida Kahlo she actually doesn't want to be a part of it anymore. On the run from the TV business, she finally falls in love with a true rebel in a melodramatic *Pasión Rebelde*... Dimensions between Melodrama and Militancy are shifting, authors and languages are changing, death and the undead are moving along...

Regie, Text, Musik **Gin/i Müller** Schauspiel Flor **Edwarda Gurrola** Videobild **Nils Olger** Schauspiel, Musik **Sabine Marte** Schauspiel **Katia Tirado** Schauspiel **Chris Thaler** Schauspiel **Philipp Eisenmann** Bühne **Rupert Müller** Text **Martin Plattner**, **Tiosha Bojorquez** Stimme **Elfriede Jelinek** Produktion **Malin Brewi** Dramaturgische Beratung **Martin Zistler**, **Chris Standfest** Assistenz **Katka Csanyiova**, **Paula Pfoer**

Die EZLN – ihr Kampf und die Frauen

Claudia Harich

Pazifistische RebellInnen, nationalistische Gueriller@s, gewalttätige TerroristInnen oder einfach nur instrumentalisierende PopulistInnen und utopische TräumerInnen – die EZLN¹ und ihre Mitglieder wurden von diversen Medien oftmals ambivalent behandelt. Eines ist jedoch sicher: die Organisation hat zur Sichtbarmachung sozialer Probleme beigetragen und marginalisierten Gruppen zu internationalem Gehör verholfen. Sie wurde zum offiziellen ‚Sprachrohr der Unterdrückten‘ – der indigenen Bevölkerung Mexikos, der, dort dreifach benachteiligten Frauen, der, den Machisten verhassten Transgenderpersonen und Homosexuellen sowie der Ausgebeuteten und Besitzlosen. Der pfeifenrauchende, stets besturmhaubte Identitätsverschleiерer ‚Subcomandante Marcos‘² galt aufgrund unzähliger Publikationen lange als

Aushängeschild und wichtigster Repräsentant der EZLN. Doch in diesem Artikel soll nicht nur die Überfülle an Reden und Schriften des charismatischen Revolutionärs rezitiert und dadurch ein Bild der libertären, antikapitalistischen Befreiungsbewegung skizziert werden. Ziel ist es, die Organisation vor allem von der oftmals verborgenen weiblichen Perspektive zu betrachten.

„Es gibt einen Zeitpunkt um zu bitten, einen anderen zu fordern und einen, um zur Tat zu schreiten.“³

„¡Ya basta!“ Am 1. Jänner 1994 erreichte die Stimme der EZLN nach mehreren friedlichen Versuchen erstmals eine breite Öffentlichkeit, als sie in einer Kriegserklärung an die mexikanische Bundesregierung dazu aufrief, die Waffen für „Freiheit, Demokratie und Gerechtigkeit“ zu erheben. Die bereits 1983 begründete ‚Zapatistische Armee der Nationalen Befreiung‘ verfolgt seitdem das Ziel, die Lebensbedingungen der Armen, insbesondere der im mexikanischen Staat seit 500 Jahren unterdrückten indigenen Bevölkerung, zu verbessern. Dazu Mayor Ana Maria (1994): „Als wir friedlich kämpften, gab es schon viele Tote in den Dörfern, viele Indigenas sterben an Hunger oder Krankheit. Es ist, als wäre schon immer Krieg.“ (zit. n. Siller 2009: 43)



¹ Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (Zapatistische Armee der Nationalen Befreiung)

² Marcos (auch: ‚Delgado Cero‘) wurde dadurch ungewollt zur Ikone der Zapatistas, was im Widerspruch zu seinem Anspruch steht, austauschbarer Sprecher zu sein.

³ Marcos (auch: ‚Delgado Cero‘) wurde dadurch ungewollt zur Ikone der Zapatistas, was im Widerspruch zu seinem Anspruch steht, austauschbarer Sprecher zu sein.

Gefordert wurden und werden unter anderem Land, Nahrung, Unterkunft, Gesundheitsfürsorge, Bildung, Unabhängigkeit, Frieden, Kultur und das Recht auf Information für alle Menschen, ungeachtet klassifizierender Attribute. Zum ersten Mal in der postkolonialen Geschichte Mexikos sahen sich indigene Tzotziles, Tzeltales, Tojolabales, Choles, Mames und Zoques mit MestizInnen und andere Benachteiligte – Frauen wie auch Männer – vereint, um für „eine bessere Welt“ einzustehen.

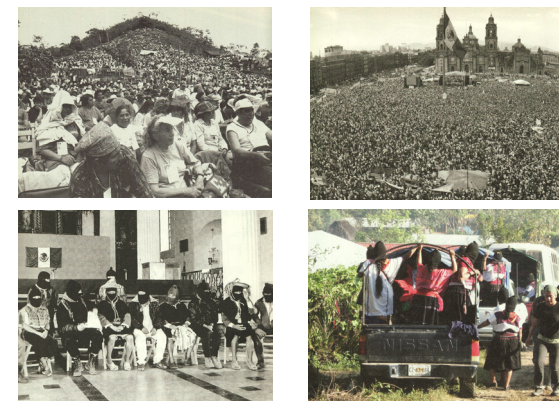
Zu Anfang wurde unter anderem der Dialog mit der Bundesregierung gesucht, wenn auch seit Beginn die Strategie mit der (Zivil)Gesellschaft zu kommunizieren und deren Anliegen durchzusetzen, als wichtigste Waffe galt. Mithilfe der Vermittlungsinstanz COCOPA⁴ wurde das Abkommen von San Andrés ausgearbeitet, welches Bestimmungen zur Anerkennung indigener Rechte sowie Vorschläge zu Autonomie und sozialen Reformen beinhaltet. Dieses wurde jedoch abgelehnt, worauf Unruhen und verschärfte Repression durch Militär sowie nie geahndete Massaker durch Paramilitärs folgten. Der Verhandlungsprozess mit der Regierung war gescheitert und die EZLN bestimmte das Volk zu ihrem einzigen Gesprächspartner, wobei besonderes Augenmerk darauf gelegt wurde, „immer dem Gespräch mit Indigenen, mit

Frauen und mit Jugendlichen Vorrang“⁵ zu geben.

„Kanäle (...) weben, damit die Worte auf allen Straßen des Widerstands reisen mögen“⁶.

Um nationale wie auch internationale Kommunikationsstrukturen aufzubauen und die Intentionen der EZLN zu verbreiten, wurden sowohl bürgerliche Medien genutzt als auch Alternativen dazu hervorgebracht – 2002 wurde etwa das klandestine ‚Radio Insurgente‘ ins Leben gerufen und 2003 die Zeitschrift ‚rebeldía‘ gegründet. Zudem diente das Internet seit Anbeginn als Plattform, oftmals kam es auch zu direkten Kontakten mit der Zivilgesellschaft. Zu frühen Beispielen zählen: Die erste große indigene Frauendemonstration in San Cristóbal, das ‚Nationale Indigene Forum‘⁷ oder das erste ‚interkontinentale Treffen gegen den Neoliberalismus‘ (alle im Jahr 1996) sowie die ‚Volksbefragung‘⁸ von 1999.

2001 wurde die seit 70 Jahren regierende PRI⁹ von der PAN¹⁰ abgelöst und die ZapatistInnen hofften erneut auf konstruktive Gespräche mit der Regierung. Eine ‚Marcha‘ zapatistischer Abgesandter brach unter enormer öffentlicher Resonanz nach Mexiko-Stadt auf, um die seit 1996 ausständige Gesetzesinitiative von San Andrés einzufordern. Beim Treffen mit dem parlamentarischen



⁴ Comisión de Concordia y Pacificación (Parlamentskommission für Versöhnung und Frieden)

⁵ Marcos zit. n. Muñoz 2004: 237

⁶ Erklärung der EZLN 1996, zit. n. Hamm, Marion (2005): Indymedia. Zur Verkettung von physikalischen und virtuellen Öffentlichkeiten. In: Raunig, Gerald/Wuggenig, Ulf (Hg.): Publicum. Theorien der Öffentlichkeit. Wien: Turia+Kant, 176.

⁷ Hier tätigte Comandanta Ramonas den legendären Ausspruch: „Nie wieder ein Mexiko ohne uns“ zit. n. Muñoz 2004: 112

⁸ Hierzu wurden 5000 Delegierte der EZLN (Frauen und Männer zu gleichen Teilen) in alle 32 Staaten der mexikanischen Föderation entsandt.

⁹ PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institucional)

¹⁰ PAN (Partido Acción Nacional)

Plenum der Regierung überraschte die EZLN: Nicht wie erwartet der Sub, sondern mit Comandanta Esther eine indigene zapatistische Frau, verkündete die zentrale Botschaft des CCRI¹¹. Sie sprach über die „dreifache Marginalisierung“ indigener, besitzloser Frauen sowie über die Notwendigkeit von Respekt, Diversität und einer sozialen Revolution in Anbetracht von Armut, Unterdrückung und Ausgrenzung im neoliberalen kapitalistischen System. Zwei Monate später wurde vom mexikanischen Senat eine konstitutionelle Reform indigener Angelegenheiten erlassen, jedoch ohne existenzielle Punkte des Abkommens zu berücksichtigen. Ab diesem Zeitpunkt nutzt die EZLN das „Schweigen als Strategie“ gegen fortgesetzte Ignoranz und Zurückweisung der als undemokratisch bezeichneten offiziellen Regierung Mexikos.

„Andere Revolutionäre sagen, sie würden die Macht ergreifen, aber sie tun nichts. Wir sagen, dass wir nicht die Macht ergreifen werden, und organisieren uns stattdessen.“¹²

Dieses Zitat von Leutnant Insurgente Gabriela veranschaulicht, dass es den Zapatistas nicht darum geht, einen, um die Macht konzentrierten Kampf zu führen und dadurch hegemoniale Herrschaftsstrategien vergangener Revolutionen oder heutiger Regierungen

zu duplizieren und so wertende und fragmentierende Gesetzmäßigkeiten von Staat, Kapital und Bürokratie zu reproduzieren. Ziel ist es, durch ein gleichberechtigtes Miteinander und kollektive Entscheidungsfindung eine antihierarchische Gesellschaftsordnung jenseits herkömmlicher Staatssysteme zu erstreiten, um dadurch bessere Lebensbedingungen für alle zu schaffen. Der Doktrin: „das Volk befiehlt und die Regierung gehorcht“¹³ folgend wurden 2003 die ‚Juntas der guten Regierung‘ geschaffen – eine Art Räteregierung nach anarchistischem Vorbild – durch welche Zuständigkeiten wie Bildung, Gesundheit, Handel und Landwirtschaft unabhängig von der Zentralregierung organisiert werden. Um erneuter Machtakкумуляtion und autoritären Strukturen vorzubeugen, dürfen Mitglieder der zapatistischen Generalkommandatur keine Funktionen in den Gemeinden übernehmen, zudem unterliegen alle Ämter einem obligatorischen Rotationsprinzip. Klar ist, dass allein durch solche Maßnahmen keine Immunisierung gegen Herrschafts- und Unterdrückungsmechanismen sowie informelle Hierarchien gewährleistet ist. Deshalb ist die Arbeit der EZLN ein prozesshaftes, von Veränderung geprägtes Tun, in dem sich einer der Leitsätze: „Preguntando caminamos“ (Fragend schreiten wir voran) manifestiert.



¹¹ CCRI (Comité Clandestino Revolucionario Indígena, Geheimes Indigenes Revolutionäres Komitee)

¹² Leutnant Insurgente Gabriela zitiert nach Muñoz 2004: 66

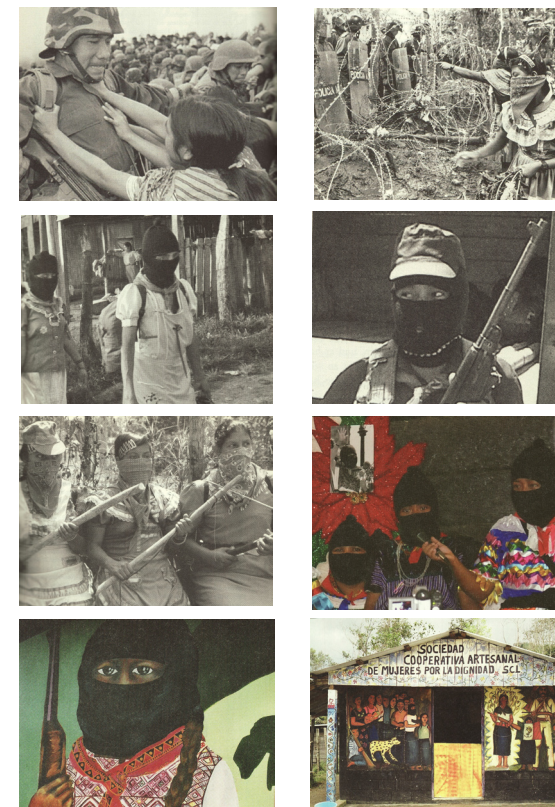
¹³ EZLN – ‚Versammlung der guten Regierung‘, La Garucha 2006

Eine erneute Stärkung des nationalstaatlichen Systems, als Abwehrreaktion gegen globalisiertes Kapital und ein entgrenztes Regime der Biomacht, ist heute zweifelsfrei nicht mehr zeitgemäß. Doch die Bewegung ist durch kritische (Selbst)Reflexion ständig im Umbruch

Die EZLN insistiert, dass ihr Kampf weder ethnisch noch nationalbeschränkt anzusehen ist. Doch nationalistische Rhetorik früher Tage, wie etwa Aufrufe „die mexikanische Nation von unten her neu aufzubauen“¹⁴ ließen die Unumstößlichkeit dieser Behauptung anzweifeln. Eine erneute Stärkung des nationalstaatlichen Systems als Abwehrreaktion gegen die Globalisierung von Macht und Unterdrückung ist allerdings mit weitblickenden emanzipatorischen Forderungen nicht kompatibel. Dies wurde von den Zapatistas erkannt und Ausschlüsse implizierende Aussagen revidiert. Angestrebt wird nun eine strategische Gesamtheit uneinheitlicher Widerständigkeit, in der sich verschiedene soziale und politische Kräfte vereinen, eine Multitude¹⁵, die alle einschließt, welche direkt oder indirekt durch das Kapital ausgebeutet werden, von ihm abhängig sind und sich gegen diesen Umstand formieren – „Eine Welt, in der viele Welten Platz haben. In der alle Welten Platz finden.“¹⁶

„Als wir merkten, dass die Frauen nicht teilnehmen durften, wir in den Versammlungen und Plena nicht ernst genommen wurden, dachte ich – was kann ich tun? So begann ich mitzumachen, zu reden und zu organisieren.“¹⁷

Die Zapatistas kämpfen gegen staatlichen Paternalismus und autoritäre Herrschaft, gegen rassistische und patriarchale Unterdrückungsmechanismen sowie gegen ein von Kapitalismus und neoliberaler Verwertungsökonomie dirigiertes Dasein. Ziel ist eine gleichberechtigte, demokratische Welt, in der Alle, selbstbestimmt und mit gleichen Rechten ausgestattet, solidarisch zusammenleben können. Diese Absicht impliziert jedoch, dass autoritär-patriarchale Gesellschaftsstrukturen, machistisches Dominanzverhalten und sexistische Stereotype in der angestrebten Gesellschaftsordnung keinen Platz finden können. Dieses Faktum musste und muss jedoch aufgrund oftmals unbewusst tradierter und durch Erziehung internalisierter Rollenmuster von den VertreterInnen beider Geschlechter erst realisiert und akzeptiert werden. Dazu Comandanta Maribel: „Dass wir Frauen ebenfalls unsere Meinung sagen, reden und Arbeiten ausführen können(...) hat uns und unsere Lebensgefährten [anfänglich] sehr erstaunt, weil sie uns viele Jahre nur das Gehorchen und Zuhören beigebracht



¹⁴ EZLN, 13. Stele, Juli 2003 zit.n. Muñoz 2004: 211

¹⁵ Hardt, Michael/Negri, Antonio (2002 [2000]): Empire. Die Neue Weltordnung. Frankfurt a. M.: Campus Verlag, 513.

¹⁶ Marcos 1997 in: Sieben Teile des Weltpuzzles

¹⁷ Comandanta Ramona zit. n. Siller, Nikola (2009): Das Recht glücklich zu sein. Münster: Zwischenzeit, 519.

haben.“¹⁸ Ähnlich beschreiben auch andere Compañeras Geringschätzung und geschlechterspezifische Aufgabenverteilung: „Als es die Organisation noch nicht gab, hatten wir nicht die Freiheit aus dem Haus zu gehen (...) [oder] das Recht ein Amt auszuführen. Wenn wir an Versammlungen teilnahmen, machten sich die Männer über die Frauen lustig (...) Die Frau arbeitete nur in der Küche und passte auf die Kinder und Tiere auf.“ Aufgrund solcher Verhältnisse waren zu Beginn nur sehr wenige Frauen in der EZLN tätig. Doch die aktive Partizipation der Veteraninnen inspirierte viele Indigenas, sich aktiv und in allen Ebenen der Organisation zu beteiligen. Der Prozentsatz an Comandantas sowie an ausgebildeten Kämpferinnen in der EZLN beläuft sich nun auf etwa jeweils dreißig. Neben dem stereotypen Bild der fügsamen Hausfrau wurden so schrittweise auch andere Identitätsentwürfe für Frauen möglich, es kam zu gesellschaftlicher Veränderung und zu internen Umdenkprozessen. Trotzdem sich vieles an der Situation der zapatistischen Frauen im Bezug auf Arbeitsbedingungen, Bildung, Gesundheit sowie im Hinblick auf respektvolles Zusammenleben in den Gemeinden sowie im Familienverband verbessert hat, bleibt noch viel zu tun.

„We were used to having two governments, that of our men and that of the state. We are now organising ourselves to learn more about our rights, educate our men and govern ourselves.“¹⁹

Frauen waren zwar seit den Anfängen in der EZLN aktiv²⁰, jedoch noch keine gleichberechtigten Gesprächspartnerinnen. Deshalb begannen die zapatistischen Frauen bereits im Vorfeld des Aufstandes ihre Rechte zu erstreiten. Dazu Marcos: „The first EZLN uprising was March, 1993 and was led by Zapatista women. There were no casualties, and they won.“²¹ Der Entwurf für das ‚revolutionäre Frauengesetz‘ entstand 1993 und wurde mit 1.1.1994 in die Direktiven der EZLN aufgenommen. In Anbetracht der Tatsache, dass Frauen aufgrund der Gesetzeslage und gesellschaftlicher Konvention lange mannigfaltiger Unterdrückung ausgesetzt waren, stellt es eine kleine Revolution in der Revolution dar. Neben dem Recht, sich aktiv am revolutionären Kampf und an Entscheidungen der Gemeinden betreffend beteiligen zu dürfen, sowie für alle dafür nötigen Ämter nominiert werden zu können, beinhaltet das Gesetz auch das Recht auf selbstbestimmte Familienplanung und freie Partnerwahl. Weiters sind das Recht auf Bildung, Gesundheitspflege, Arbeit und adäquate Entlohnung verankert und es enthält einen



¹⁸ Comandanta Maribel zit. n. Siller 2009: 47

¹⁹ Compañera Azucena Santys zit. n. Blanc et. Al. <http://www.mujereslibres.org/Articles/zapatismofeminine.htm>

²⁰ 1983 gab es nur zwei weibliche Mitglieder in einer kleinen Gruppe von insgesamt zehn Personen

²¹ Marcos 1994 zit. n. Rojas <https://webpace.utexas.edu/hcleaver/www/begin.html>

Passus, nach dem körperliche Gewalt an Frauen sowie versuchte oder vollzogene Vergewaltigung zu bestrafen sind. Seine Durchsetzung garantiert natürlich weder Schutz vor Unterdrückungsmechanismen gegenüber Frauen noch vor eingeschliffenen patriarchalen Verhaltensmustern. „Aufgrund der Tatsache, dass sie Zapatistinnen sind, sind zapatistische Frauen nicht automatisch frei, sie müssen noch viel erstreiten und gewinnen“²²

Zwei Jahre nach Erlass des Revolutionären Frauengesetzes sollte dieses aufgestockt und vervollständigt werden. Der Erweiterungsentwurf, welcher unter anderem eine Regelung für den Besitz und Erwerb von Boden und von Krediten sowie für gerechte Besitzverteilung nach Ehescheidungen und für alleinerziehende Mütter beinhaltet, wird in den Gemeinden zwar teilweise umgesetzt, er wurde jedoch nie offiziell anerkannt. Von Seiten der EZLN-Führung wird zwar beteuert, dass eine wirtschaftliche Unabhängigkeit von zapatistischen Frauen erstrebenswert ist, da „die Befreiung beziehungsweise die Emanzipation der Frau nicht von ihren materiellen Bedingungen zu trennen ist“²³ – es gibt beispielsweise von Frauen gegründete und geleitete Kooperativen für Frauen, die es ermöglichen eigenes Einkommen zu verdienen, Erfahrungen

im wirtschaftlichen Bereich zu sammeln und so Abhängigkeitsverhältnisse abzumildern – gleichzeitig wird jedoch eingestanden, dass es bis dahin noch ein weiter Weg sei.

„Jegliche Organisation braucht Mut und Kraft und Bewusstsein sowie Einigkeit, um das repressive System zu verändern.“²⁴

Zum Jahreswechsel 2007_2008 überzeugt, dass aufgrund globaler Ausbeutung und Diskriminierung nur ein gemeinsamer Kampf wirkungsvoll sei, lud die EZLN zum „Ersten Treffen der zapatistischen Frauen mit den Frauen der Welt. Anders als bei Frauenveranstaltungen in Europa oftmals üblich, waren bei dem dreitägigen internationalen Frauentreffen Männer nicht ausgeschlossen, sondern explizit eingeladen, „da der Feind auch keine Unterschiede macht und Frauen, Männer und Kinder gleichermaßen bedroht“²⁵.

Zapatistische Frauen betonen ihre Verbundenheit mit allen Frauen der Welt und dass sie nicht gegen, sondern mit den Männern kämpfen wollen. Dafür verlangen sie allerdings rechtliche und soziale Gleichstellung sowohl mit reichen und nicht-indigenen Frauen, als auch mit allen Männern. Dazu Comandanta Esther: „Deshalb sagen wir ganz klar, dass wenn wir Respekt



²² Rede zapatistischer Frauen während einer Demonstration in San Cristóbal (internat. Frauentag 1996) zit. n. Muñoz 2004: 105

²³ Marcos zit. n. Muñoz 2004: 255

²⁴ Comandanta Giselda zit. n. Siller 2009: 101

²⁵ Durita zit. n. Siller 2009: 27

für die Frauen verlangen, wir das nicht nur von den Neoliberalen fordern, sondern dass wir auch jene dazu zwingen werden, (...) [die mit uns] kämpfen und sich als Revolutionäre bezeichnen.“²⁶

Damit sich die nächste Generation diesen Respekt bereits von klein auf aneignet, werden in der Erziehung neben Gebräuchen und Traditionen auch Achtung vor Frauen, vor anderen Kulturen und vor divergenten Handlungsweisen weitergegeben – den Kindern wird von Anfang an gelehrt, Diversität freier Subjektivierung hegemonialer Homogenität vorzuziehen. Hierzu Compañera Esmeralda: „Als Mamas lehren wir sie, dass die Jungen und Mädchen die gleichen Rechte haben. Dass sie gleichermaßen dazu in der Lage sind, zivile, politische und militärische Aufgaben (...) zu übernehmen. Wir (...) zeigen [ihnen], dass wir kämpfen können, anleiten können, organisieren können.“ Durch die ‚andere Erziehung‘ werden kollektive Organisation, vorurteilsfreie Zusammenarbeit und Vorstellungen von Autonomie wie auch Taktiken des Widerstands weitergegeben, zudem beinhaltet sie Schulbildung für Alle, ungeachtet ihres Geschlechts oder ihrer sozialen Stellung in der Gemeinde. Die Reproduktionsarbeit, welche in zapatistischen Zusammenhängen immer noch fast gänzlich weiblich konnotiert ist, spielt also

im Kampf der EZLN eine fundamentale Rolle, weshalb sie konsequenterweise politischen und militärischen Aufgabenfeldern gleichgestellt ist²⁷.

Ohne die engagierte Mitarbeit der Frauen wäre der zapatistische Kampf in dieser Form nie möglich gewesen; sie haben definitiv eine Schlüsselrolle inne, ohne die, die Bewegung nicht zur jetzigen Ausprägung gelangen hätte können. In Wechselwirkung dazu hätten die Frauen ohne die, von ihnen erstrittene gesellschaftliche Modifikation und einer damit einhergehenden veränderten Haltung der Männer diese nur schwer mitgestalten können.

Die Zapatistinnen bestanden trotz initialer Widerstände aus den männerdominierten Reihen auf ihr Recht auf Selbstbestimmung, Mitsprache und Respekt. Von Beginn an koppelten sie die allgemeine Forderung nach Gleichheit und Gerechtigkeit an ihre emanzipatorischen Ansprüche Frauenangelegenheiten betreffend, was zu einer Redefinition von Demokratie im alltäglichen Bereich führte. Durch fortgesetztes insistieren auf ihre Rechte konnten sie die augenscheinliche Kontradiktion von gesamtgesellschaftlicher Befreiung und einer patriarchalen Hegemonie kommunizieren, was das Postulat nach uneingeschränkter Gleichstellung der Frau evident macht und bestätigt, dass es keine soziale



²⁶ Comandanta Esther zit n. Siller 2009: 115

²⁷ Vgl. hierzu Europa, wo schlechte Reputation von Reproduktionsarbeit einer freudvollen, produktiven Erziehung im Wege steht.

²⁸ Marcos: Erste Erklärung von La Realidad. Erste Erklärung von La Realidad, 1996

Revolution geben kann, solange Diskriminierung in irgendeiner Form bestehen bleibt.

„Es ist nicht notwendig, die Welt zu erobern. Es reicht, sie neu zu schaffen. Durch uns. Heute.“²⁸
Denn die Welten gehören uns! – Reclaim your lives
guarill@s!

Ungekürzten Text und weiterführende Literatur siehe:
<http://viennazocalo.blogspot.com>

²⁸ Marcos: Erste Erklärung von La Realidad. Erste Erklärung von La Realidad, 1996

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Aino Korvensyrjä

Primitivist Productions

- Cannibals on the Assembly Line, Avant-garde Amazons at Knitting Machines

What Is Primitivism?

The artistic avant-gardes of the early 20th century are closely linked to the 'discovery' and appropriation of 'primitive' forms of representation. Picasso was however not a pioneer to be influenced by the colonial 'discoveries'. According to Francis Connelly behind him is to be found a whole tradition of primitivism, situated inside the classical fine-arts tradition itself. The category of 'primitive art' was in fact well established in the 18th century Western academia. In the arts it served either

to legitimate or criticize the classical tradition.¹ The figure of the 'primitive' functioned analogically in the humanities: Michel de Montaigne evoked already in 1580 the cannibal to criticize European civilization as the true barbarity.²

In the arts primitivism was propelled by a desire to revitalize the fine-arts tradition by incorporating 'outside' elements on the periphery, the wild and the untamed. An exemplary formulation of this is to be found in Friedrich Schiller's idea of rejuvenation through deliberate regression in the essay *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1793-95).

Connelly describes the cannibalization of the 'outside' as a cultural expansion to which the development of modern Western art is intimately linked: In the progression of primitivism from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century, the boundaries of modern European culture were steadily extended as the voracious modern culture incorporated one 'primitive' style after another starting with its own historical 'primitives' and contemporary folk 'primitives' and moving on to more exotic 'others' of the Japanese, Oceanic, and the African.³

¹ According to Francis Connelly the 'primitive' as a category of artistic or cultural artefacts consisted essentially in the following attributes: grotesque, ornament, caricature, hieroglyph and the idol. See: Connelly, Frances O.: *The Sleep of Reason. Primitivism in Modern European Art and Aesthetics, 1725-1907*, University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999, 6.

² Montaigne, Michel de: 'On Cannibals' (orig. 'Des Cannibales', 1580).

³ Connelly refers here to Yuri Lotman's and Boris Uspenski's 'Theses on the Semiotic Study of Cultures (as applied to Slavic Texts)' in which the authors describe the active role of the outer, unorganized sphere as a culture-generating source that contrasts the regulated, culturally dead inner space. It serves as the germ of future culture as the not-yet-assimilated. See Connelly, 34-35.

An interest in the 'primitive' or folk traditions emerged however also elsewhere than in the centers of European or Angloamerican modernity. There a reading of cultural colonialism and cannibalization of the weaker by the more powerful one on the one side or of a blind escapism⁴ on the other side, gets obviously too simple. In the following I will briefly introduce three variants of neo-primitivism which could complicate our understanding of primitivism. The first one is a subversive textual production in Brazil, two latter ones are radical modes of textile production in the early twentieth century Russia.

The Barbarian on the Assembly Line: Andrade

'Tupi or not tupi, that is the question.'⁵ In 1928 the poet and writer Oswald de Andrade proposed cannibalism as a way of dealing with a post-colonial situation of Western cultural hegemony in his native Brazil. His 'Manifesto antropofago', a key text of Brazilian modernism called for a 'wild justice', an appropriation without respect and pity of the European heritage. The modernist movement grouped around Andrade took up the idea of cannibalism as a strategy of resistance which could incorporate the competence of the opponent.

For Andrade cannibalism was a general mechanism of cultural production, 'the only law in the world'⁶ that questioned individual authorship and originality. Resembling Dadaist and Surrealist texts the manifesto was itself an assemblage of various Western and Brazilian sources such as Freud, Nietzsche, Montaigne and Tupi poetry. Andrade's textual production connected hence directly to the novel possibilities of mechanical reproduction and dissemination via mass media of cultural artefacts. As much as a means of resisting the old (hegemony), antropofagy was indeed a tactics for tackling with the new (hegemony). The 1920s were a period of intense growth in the rapidly modernizing metropolis of São Paulo, Andrade's hometown. Newspapers, books, radio, telegraphy, photography and film brought the 'elsewhere' to the natives. From now on the power of hegemonic regimes would be closely bound to the mass media. As this could not be refused, Andrade proposed to gobble it up and use it as nourishment.

The program of antropofagy allied to a broader call in the 1920s to abolish divisions between high and low culture, elite art and popular forms, the foreign and the native. Various avant-gardes on both sides of the Atlantic demanded that modern literature and art find

⁴ Primitivism was (and is) more often than not also fueled by a wish to escape the responsibilities of reason and to allow for the imagination, emotion, the passions and the spiritual to appear.

⁵ Andrade, Oswald de: 'Cannibalist Manifesto' (orig. 'Manifesto antropofago', 1928), annotated translation by Leslie Bary, 39.

⁶ Ibid.

ways to incorporate the new mechanical, travelling signs – textual, visual and auditory – produced by cameras, typewriters and phonographs, and disseminated by the mass media. This was to be done not only in terms of subject matter but also of technique. In Latin America the demands were directed both against a class domination in form of exclusive High Art and against colonial forms of cultural domination.

Ruben Gallo describes how the dominant literary tradition in Latin America tried until the 1920s to preserve the arts from contamination by elements of 'vulgar' mechanization. Traditionalists like the Mexican novelist Mariano Azuela shunned the urban mass culture as crude and 'feminized' and defended a male connoted profession of quality literature.⁷ On the contrary Manuel Maples Arce called for a 'literature of typewriter and classified ads' in his *Manifesto Estridentista* in 1921.⁸ The Brazilian writer Mario de Andrade produced just that by treating words like 'industrial objects on an assembly line'⁹ in his poem 'Máquina de escrever' (1922) and incorporating various foreign materials from newspapers and magazines to his writing. In this context Oswald de Andrade's cannibal can be understood as no original Tupi but rather as a tropical mutation of

the 'technological barbarian' of Herman Keyserling.¹⁰

However Andrade belongs to the eurocentric tradition of primitivist cultural production at least in one regard. Andrade did stress the autonomous importance of the 'primitive' for the civilized man's idea of himself: 'Without us, Europe wouldn't even have its meager declaration of the rights of man.' Yet he often just seems to invert the relations between the 'primitive' and the 'civilized'. Benedito Nunes and Ruda Andrade claim that when Andrade called, in order to counter the cultural conservatives, for a return to a cannibalist matriarchy, he took the idea of the 'primitive' life directly from Montaigne. Montaigne's critique of European absolutism had inverted the places of the 'primitives' of the New World and the 'civilized' Europeans, Andrade similarly idealized a matriarchal past as a counterposition to Western (patriarchal) civilization and conferred the savages 'a revolutionary and utopic scope charged with poetic and mythical values'.¹¹

Ukrainian Peasant-Futurists

In preindustrial Russia (and/or Ukraine) several artistic avant-gardes turned to the domestic folk traditions. Kasimir Malevich and his followers 'went native' to

⁷ Gallo, Ruben: *Mexican Modernity. The Avant-garde and the Technological Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass. & London: The MIT Press, 2005, 76. Gallo notes that the typewriter as machine and female typewriters were the symbol of this lowly world of commerce.

⁸ Gallo, 92.

⁹ Gallo, 94.

¹⁰ For Keyserling, whom the manifesto cites by name and whose visit to São Paulo in 1929 was welcomed by the *Revista de antropofagia*, a soulless technical barbarism was the sign of the modern world. In Andrade's inverted utopia primitive man was to enjoy the fruits of modernization.

¹¹ Andrade, Ruda, 'Devoured History' in Moore, Elke and Giorgio Ronna (eds.), *Entre Pindorama. Zeitgenössische brasilianische Kunst und die Antropofagia*, Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, 2005, 56.

study folk traditions in the villages. The Suprematist formal language as well as the use of colour got deeply influenced by folk art. The artist group around Nathalia Gontcharova and Mikhail Larionov took its name from Alexandr Shevchenko's book *Neo-primitivism* (1913), which proposed a new style of modern painting fusing elements of Cézanne, Cubism and Futurism with traditional Russian folk art conventions and motifs, like the lubok print, embroideries, distaffs and icon painting.

One of the artists of the Russian avant-garde who went beyond merely appropriating folk art forms into artworks was Alexandra Exter. Firstly, she sought to introduce folk artists themselves into the fold of the avant-garde. One of the so-called Peasant-Futurists whom she admired was Hanna Sobachko-Shostak. Exter wrote on Sobachko-Shostak's work as geometric composition comparing it to abstract art.¹² She also organized exhibitions of Sobachko-Shostak's work.

Exter also sought to revitalize traditional cultural forms by introducing avant-garde innovations into artisan co-operatives. With two other women artists, E.I. Pribilskaya and Natalia Davidova, she facilitated joint projects between avant-garde artists and the folk artists, the so called Peasant-Futurists, from the villages of Skoptsi and

Verbovka near Kiev. Together they founded the artisan cooperative Verbovka Village Folk Centre. Its aim was to merge the arts and support the development of folk art by letting it feed on new sources. For the avant-garde it meant to get involved in the artisanal production of everyday goods. In 1915 Nina Genke-Meller became the chief artist of the Verbovka Village Folk Centre. Between 1915 and 1916 the co-operative produced embroideries and carpets based on Suprematist designs. Suprematists such as Kazimir Malevich, Nadezhda Udaltsova, Liubov Popova, Olga Rozanova, Ivan Puni, Ksenia Boguslavskaya and Ivan Kliun worked with the village artisans.¹³

In 1915, Davidova, Exter and Genke-Meller organized the *Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art of the South of Russia* in the Moscow Gallery Lemerrier 40. They exhibited works by the artisan women in Verbovka and Skoptsi, as well as carpets, pillows, shawls and belts that they had produced in accordance with designs of Popova, Malevich, Davidova, Genke-Meller, Ekster, Puni, Kliun, Pribilskaya, Yakulov, Rozanova, Vasilieva, Boguslavskaya and others. In 1917 Davidova and Genke organized the Second Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art with the Verbovka Group in Moscow in the Mikhailova Saloon followed by yet other exhibitions showcasing suprematist handicrafts.¹⁴

12 Exter, Alexandra: 'Eine Ausstellung decorativer Zeichnungen von Jelena N. Pribylskaja und Ganna Sobatschko. (1918, Auszug)' in Bowlt, John E.(ed): *Amazonen der Avantgarde: Alexandra Exter, Natalja Gontscharowa, Ljubow Popowa, Olga Rosanova, Warwara Stepanowa und Nadeschda Udaložowa* (on the Occasion of the exhibition *Amazonen der Avantgarde*, Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin 10 July - 17 October 1999), Berlin: Deutsche Guggenheim, 1999, 299-300.

13 See the short introduction to Exter's, Davidova's and Genke-Meller's work with the peasant artisans by Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker to *Avantgarde & Ukraine*, Braunschweig: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1993. Birnie Danzker's understanding of their activities is very different from the conservative reading which John Bowlt makes in his introductory catalogue essay to the *Amazonen der Avantgarde*. Bowlt describes Davidova's and her peers interest in reanimating popular arts and crafts as a neo-nationalist, neo-Russian conservative style brought about mostly by women against the older Realist literary tendency. Bowlt, John E.(ed): *Amazonen der Avantgarde: Alexandra Exter, Natalja Gontscharowa, Ljubow Popowa, Olga Rosanova, Warwara Stepanowa und Nadeschda Udaložowa*, Berlin: Deutsche Guggenheim, 1999, 27.

14 Douglas, Charlotte: 'Sechs (und einige weitere) Frauen der Russischen Avantgarde' in Bowlt, 1999, 48-49.

Productivism: Popova and Stepanova

Verbovka can be seen as a predecessor of the later efforts of the leading Constructivist artists Ljubov Popova and Varvara Stepanova to involve workers and peasants in the realisation of their designs.¹⁵ Within the Constructivist programme as it emerged from the debates on post-revolutionary art at INKhUK (Institute of Artistic Culture in Moscow) in 1921, in which Popova and Stepanova closely participated, the 'constructor' would replace the traditional artist. The individualism of the non-objective paintings and sculptural experiments of the preceding decade was to be abandoned to enter instead directly into Soviet industrial production. Artists were to use their technical expertise in form and material to produce useful objects for the new socialist collective and to participate in the design of the socialist everyday.¹⁶ This anti-art programme denounced contemplative concerns and the fetishising of aesthetic objects. Popova and Stepanova moved with their peers into typographic design including posters, textiles and fashion designs, to the design of furniture, theater sets and costumes and mass events in public space.¹⁷ True to the Productivist slogan 'from construction to production' Stepanova and Popova went to work at the First State Cotton-printing factory in Moscow in

1924. They designed striking geometric textile patterns that suited the industrial printing methods as well as comfortable clothing for ease of movement of workers. The employment of Popova and Stepanova at the industrial site was taken as a triumph for the Productivist cause. Their textiles were regarded as a prime example of an industrial art incorporated in the very fabric of the life of the masses. Osip Brik's evaluation of 'production of the textile print as the peak of artistic labour' as 'the only true path for productivist' demonstrate however according to Margareta Tupitsyn also the weakness of the productivist position.¹⁸ In the hostile environment of the NEP economic policy, Popova's and Stepanova's textile designs remained almost the only successful practical realizations of the productivist call. In other branches the practical experiments were few.¹⁹

Theoretised between 1921-23 at the INKhUK, Productivism as presented by Boris Arvatov and Brik was practically a radicalization of Constructivism. However it was not clear how exactly the artists were to co-operate with the workers in the factory. The NEP's reintroduction of free market elements, incentives for consumption and disciplinary measures to increase production, did not exactly establish a favourable climate to set up

¹⁵ Tupitsyn, Margarita, 'Being-in-Production: The Constructivist Code' in Tupitsyn, Margareta, Rodcenko & Popova: Defining Constructivism, London: Tate Publishing, 2009, 24.

¹⁶ Kiaer, Christina: 'His and Her Constructivism' in Tupitsyn 2009, 144.

¹⁷ Stepanova also wrote a kind of neoprimitivist, non-objective poetry aiming at 'primordial sounds from the early phase of the civilization', Bowlt 1999, 33. All in all my focus on textiles in this text hardly does justice to the multifaceted activities of Stepanova and Popova.

¹⁸ Tupitsyn in Tupitsyn 2009, 24.

¹⁹ Karl Ioganson managed to enter the Prokatchik rolling Mill in Moscow 1923-26 as a 'consultant' improving technical processes of metal finishing. See Roberts, John: 'Productivism and Its Contradictions. A Short History of Productivism', Third Text, Vol. 23, Issue 5, 2009, 527 – 536.

"experimental laboratories" or discussion groups for worker emancipation in the factories. The other problem was that entering factories the artist-intellectual risked becoming a tool of the NEP measures for worker coercion, efficiency and productivity increase measures as well as for promoting bourgeois consumption.²⁰

During the first year Stepanova worked at the First State Cotton-printing factory in Moscow she designed more than 150 different fabrics. About two dozen were put into production. However, Stepanova and Popova did not limit themselves with pattern designs. They wanted to engage themselves in the whole process of production: They wanted to contribute to the improvement the printing processes and the weaving and dying of the fabric. They attempted to define their role as Productivist artist-engineers, demanding of the administration that they be involved in production decisions and be allowed to work in the laboratories (this was never actually granted). They also demanded to contact tailors, fashion ateliers and magazines and work on promoting the products of the factory in the press, advertising and magazines as well as develop designs for window displays.²¹

Popova and Stepanova, not their male comrades, were

the only Constructivists to see their designs for everyday, utilitarian things distributed as mass-produced goods in the Soviet economy. But somewhat paradoxically the move to the textile factory took Popova and Stepanova 'backwards' to an area associated with bourgeois consumerism and femininity: fashion. Popova for example was well aware of the compromise to fashion the NEP policy was demanding of her. Indeed, concurrently with her textile-design work, she also drew dozens of fashionable Western style women's clothing designs. However besides this 'NEP compromise' she designed *prozodezhda* ('production clothes') of a totally different type. They were of a reduced style containing only the simplest geometric forms, were easily modifiable, androgynous and practical. These latter type of clothing can be seen aligned to the Constructivist agenda of geometrizing everyday life and people's movements.²²

Christina Kiaer notes that the everyday of the Constructivist was strongly feminine: Besides the Popova's and Stepanova's textile patterns Tatlin designed kitchen stoves and household items, Rodchenko posters for cookies and sweets.²³ With the Productivist move the avant-garde was "domesticated", brought home to be experienced by everyone. This can be seen a radical

20 Roberts 2009. Regardless of these dilemmas introduced by the NEP, Roberts sees it as the galvanizing force behind the practical development of Productivism.

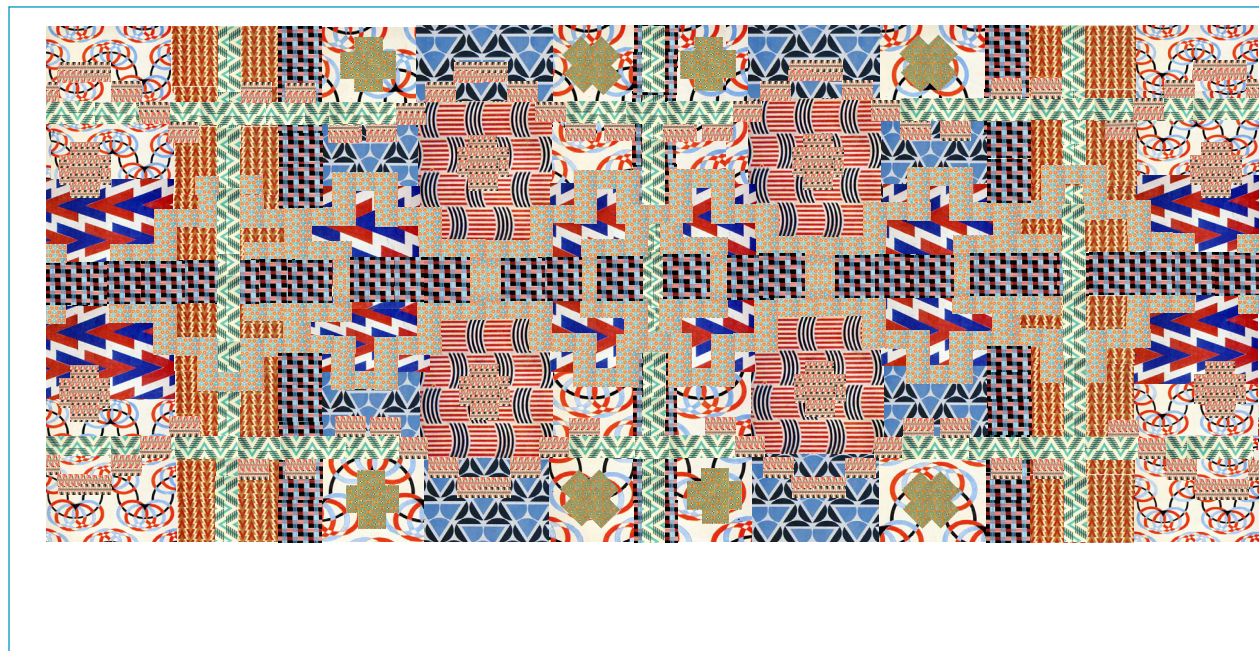
21 Kiaer in Tupitsyn 2009, 150-151.

22 For discussion of Popova's dress designs see Ibid., 150-155.

23 Ibid. 146.

form of “going native” on the side of reception or consumption, as was the move to the factory on the side of production. Moreover, the feminity of the everyday was as such not a problem for the progressive-egalitarian Constructivists, the problem were the dilemmas of consumer culture with which the domestic everyday was associated. However Popova and Stepanova also sought to genuinely critique and transform this everyday with their practical, androgynous *prozodezhda* (‘production clothes’) defined by straight lines and sharp angles and by their geometrical, simple fabric designs.

Popova stated that ‘not a single artistic success gave me such profound satisfaction as the sight of a peasant woman buying a piece of my fabric for a dress’²⁴. Despite of all the contradictions in intervening in the fields of production and consumption of everyday industrial goods at times of the NEP, it can be said that Stepanova’s and Popova’s solidarity with the ‘primitive’ went far beyond an attempt to revitalize art by integrating elements of ‘vulgar’ mechanized everyday culture into the realm of the aesthetic. When understood as a primitivism radicalized, their version of Productivism can be described as having sought to transform both fields, that of the ‘primitive’ and that of the ‘civilized’.



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Katharina Luksch

Regarding the Script of Others: On interpreting the Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus I

In 1811, Alexander von Humboldt made his way to Vienna, where he examined a pre-Columbian Mexican manuscript kept in the Imperial Library. 'Of all the Mexican manuscripts, which exist in the different libraries of Europe', he writes, 'that of Vienna is the oldest known ... [It] is very remarkable, on account of its beautiful preservation, and the great vividness of the colours, which distinguish the allegorical figures.' He then goes on to describe the manuscript, its material and some of the figures depicted, but admits that he somehow does not quite know what to make of it:

Though the number of the pages is equal to the number of years contained in a Mexican cycle, I have not been

able to discern any thing relative to the return of the four hieroglyphics, which distinguish the years ... we see nothing periodical; and, what is above all very striking, the dates ... are arranged in such a manner as to have no relation to the order in which they follow each other in the Mexican calendar. (Humboldt 1814: Plates XLVI-XLVIII)

By then, Humboldt, who had been travelling the Americas from 1799 to 1804 and spent the following years in Paris tirelessly writing up and publishing his accounts, was already one of the most famous men in Europe, a celebrated naturalist and acclaimed expert on matters of the New World – a reputation that has since hardly diminished on either side of the Atlantic.¹ The book he was apparently working on when visiting the Austrian capital is called *Vues des Cordillères et Monuments des Indigènes de l'Amérique*: a compilation of illustration plates and essays concerning picturesque views of nature, indigenous traditions, and several works of art, amongst which he discusses eight 'hieroglyphic paintings' stored in European Libraries. So before turning to the *Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus*, he had already gained profound knowledge of the Aztec calendar system and various aspects of pre-conquest cultures. We may therefore assume that his word was of some weight when he concluded:



¹ Expressions of admiration for Humboldt's contributions to the sciences range from praise by contemporary celebrities such as Charles Darwin and Simón Bolívar to an extensive list of species, geographical features, places and academic institutions named after him. Pratt (1992) argues that his writings indeed provided fundamental founding visions for the "reinvention" of America entailed by the end of Spanish colonial rule to European elites as well as those of Spanish America (pp. 109 – 140).

On casting our eyes over this shapeless writing of the Mexicans, it is self-evident, that the sciences would gain but little, if we should ever be enabled to decipher what a people, that had made so little progress in civilization, has recorded in these books. (ibid.)

It would be too facile to consider this simply a frustrated reaction to a failed attempt at translation. Indeed, Humboldt immediately adds that despite the obvious lack of ‘truths of much importance’ in both Mexican and ancient Egyptian texts (a frequently drawn comparison) they are worth being studied because

[t]he knowledge of these characters is intimately connected with the mythology, the manners, and the individual genius of nations; it throws light on the history of the ancient migrations of our species; and is highly interesting to the philosopher, presenting him, in the uniform progress of the language of signs in parts of the Earth the most remote from each other, an image of the first unfolding of the faculties of man. (ibid.)

Humboldt’s argument here is in perfect accordance with the prevalent diffusionist ideology of his time, taking for granted not only European cultural superiority but also a linear model of historical development that enables him to see in indigenous peoples (or what remains of

pre-conquest civilizations) the dawn of mankind itself. It thus becomes clear (or so it seems from a distance of two hundred years) that these few paragraphs dedicated to the Viennese Codex tell us at least as much about European scientific discourse at the beginning of the nineteenth century as about their actual subject, a Mexican manuscript. My aim here is not, however, to dismiss or devalue the Humboldtian view from a more recent perspective. Rather, I want to suggest that the different “readings” of the Codex over the course of the centuries of its exile in Europe, if not successful in their aim of actually translating it, have instead supplied it with a number of new “meanings” that express ideological changes in the attempts to approximate the Other.

II Turning one’s attention to the Codex Mexicanus raises a whole set of questions, the first probably being: what, actually, is it? The first Western account it (presumably²) appears in is the list of Cortés’ presents to Queen Juana and King Charles accompanying the first shipload of loot sent from New Spain of 1519 which numbers among its treasures ‘two books [of the kind] the Indians have’³. However, Gruzinski

² Since this Codex’s existence in Europe is documented before 1521 and the second shipment arrived only in 1522, it is assumed to be one of those Cortés’ list refers to. (cf. Lehmann & Smital 1929, pp. 8-9)

³ ‘mas dos libros delos que aca tienen los yndios’ (cited in Nowotny 1960, p. 24)

(1992, p. 13) remarks that ‘... historians refer to them as codices, but sixteenth-century Spaniards rightly called them “paintings”.’ This distinction between books and paintings is of considerable importance, because it emphasizes the frame of reference employed. Identifying an object as a book implies a fundamental similarity to European books: it is written; it can be read; it can be translated. Calling it a painting is something entirely different, since paintings are being looked at, interpreted, or talked about, but certainly not read in the same way as written text. Therefore the question arises whether one can speak of Mexican⁴ writing (or, for that matter, manuscripts) at all: Todorov (1985), for example, argues that their highly stylized drawings and pictographs record experience, not language, and that the absence of language-based writing in pre-conquest cultures is symptomatic of their technological inferiority to the Spaniards, which he ultimately holds responsible for their defeat.

Also, the picture manuscripts that have become known as codices (a term usually referring to the format of bound books, as opposed to the ancient Greek and Roman scrolls, and thus closely related to the rise of Christianity) are actually long strips of material folded like a harmonica, that would be completely unfolded,

perhaps even hung on walls, and could be read in various ways – “reading” here meaning that they most likely were used as a mnemonic system for reciting texts of a principally oral tradition (Gruzinski 1992, pp. 14-15; König 1997, pp. 99-100).

Such Eurocentric notions of a clear distinction between writing and painting, language-based writing, and the practice of reading inevitably limit the possibilities for cross-cultural understanding. Mixtec codices like the Viennese one in particular, with their amalgam of pictographs, ideographs, and phonetic signs of varying degrees of abstraction (cf. König 1997, p. 100), would frequently escape comparison to other non-European writing systems, such as Egyptian hieroglyphs or Chinese script.

At any rate, the fact that these screenfolds were named codices in spite of the ongoing confusion as to whether or not their authors may be considered literate⁵ indicates that the inhabitants of the New World had to be perceived as intellectual beings (as opposed to “savages”), however underdeveloped in their forms of expression. Of all the Mexican objects brought to Europe, the pictorial manuscripts received particular attention, given that books and writing were (and still



⁴ The Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus I specifically is now agreed to be a Mixtec document; however, since the sources quoted here do not necessarily specify or refer to pre-conquest cultures on a more general level, I am using the more common term “Mexican” as well.

⁵ For a discussion of recent scholarly debates on writing and literacy in pre-Hispanic America, see Grube & Arellano Hoffman (1997).

are) regarded as ‘hallmarks of civilization’ (Quiñones Keber 1995, p. 230). The comparatively well-documented history of the Codex Vindobonensis demonstrates the value attached to it: King Charles of Spain (the future Emperor Charles V) apparently gave it to his brother-in-law, Emanuel I of Portugal, who in turn presented the Italian cardinal Giulio de’ Medici with it. Giulio de’ Medici was elected Pope Clement VII in 1523 and died in 1534, passing the Codex on to his relative, cardinal Ippolito de’ Medici. After Ippolito’s death in 1535 it was owned by Nikolaus von Schönberg, Archbishop of Capua. Whoever inherited it next annotated the Codex with a Latin inscription dating from 1537 that recapitulates its owners so far. From then on until around 1650, when Job Ludolf saw it in Weimar and copied parts of it for Ole Worm’s cabinet of curiosities⁶ in Copenhagen, its history is not yet sufficiently explored. The last time the Codex was given as a present was in 1677, namely by John George I, Duke of Saxe-Eisenach, to Emperor Leopold I and thus to the Imperial Library in Vienna.⁷ (cf. Arellano Hoffmann & Schmidt 1997, pp. 400-402; Nowotny 1960, pp. 70-71)

Over the course of 18 years, the Codex had thus passed through the hands of some of the most powerful men in Europe at the time, obviously being held in high

esteem despite its illegibility. This is in stark contrast to the fervor with which the Spanish missionaries in Mexico at the same time were conducting their task of destroying all evidence of (and further possibility for) “idolatrous” practices, including the incineration of whole libraries and bans on indigenous bookmaking.⁸ Apparently the heretical threat emanating from such manuscripts applied only to the Mexicans yet to be converted, whereas Europeans (like the aforementioned Medici family, which showed great interest in New World artifacts) would welcome them into their collections of marvels and exotica. Those of course were soon to become institutionalized as cabinets of curiosities, the Renaissance precursors to modern museums. Studying the history of collecting might therefore also help to shed some light on the way that Europeans shaped their views of non-European cultures, even if examinations of concrete objects were seldom conducted before the beginning of what became ethnography.

III Translation has been defined as ‘[t]he interpretation of the meaning of a text in one language (the “source text”) and the production, in another language, of an equivalent text (the “target text”, or

⁶ These copies are mentioned in a short entry in the Museum Wormianum, a catalogue to Worm’s collection posthumously published in 1655, as ‘Hieroglyphica mexicana’; see Worm (1655, p. 384).

⁷ Which is where it is still hidden today (now Austrian National Library).

⁸ On the mutual influences of 16th-century discourses of idolatry and cannibalism, perception of indigenous material culture, and missionary activities, see Cummins (2002).

“translation”), which ostensibly communicates the same message’ (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin 2007, p. 215). Its inherent complexities are multiplied when not only the language, but also the notation system used is a different one, and the scarcity of pre-Hispanic documents that survived the conquest (only eight of which are, like the Codex Vindobonensis, Mixtec manuscripts) does not make its translation easier. Today, difficulties are increased even further by the lack of a commonly accepted methodology to which several academic disciplines, including archaeology, ethnography, art history, and linguistics, would contribute (cf. Noguez 1997, p. 139).

Among the main resources for examinations of pre-Hispanic culture in general are codices of the colonial period. From the very beginning of the Spanish invasion, the conquistadores and their missionary entourage were eager not only to destroy “idolatrous” artifacts (which goes for more or less every aspect of material culture they encountered), but in pursuing the Christianizing mission also to import their own forms of expression, both literal and pictorial. Books and images were important means of converting the “natives” as well as mapping and describing the New

World and its inhabitants to Europeans. They were also well suited to demonstrate not only the clash, but also the hybridization of two radically different cultures: colonial codices, produced either as annotated copies of older manuscripts (that is, redesigned in the format of European books and supplied with comments in Latin, Spanish, or Italian) or as collaborations between missionaries and indigenous artists, are fascinating documents of imperialist approaches to a conquered people and their culture.⁹ As this documentation took place at the very time its subject, the pre-Hispanic civilizations, were rapidly decreasing in size and losing their autonomy, those codices reflect the mingling of conservation and extinction, while at the same time they mark the beginning of the hybridized, mestizo identity that determines “Mexicanness” to this day. Undoubtedly these codices were an important factor in the processes of imperial meaning-making: ‘Since the colonial copies were consciously constructed, they reveal those aspects of indigenous culture that were incorporated to intrigue a European reader and elicit his admiration or stir his acquisitiveness.’ (Quiñones Keber 1995, pp. 232-233) Two of these aspects in particular would arouse scholarly interest, namely the famous Mexican calendar system, valued for its precision and sophistication¹⁰, and

⁹ Colonial codices have been discussed for various aspects and reasons; see, for example, Farago (ed., 1995); Gruzinski (1992); Todorov (1985).

¹⁰ The Mexican calendar, which he had already described in detail, is also haunting Humboldt’s review of the Viennese Codex (see cit. above).

mythology, in which early commentators believed to find similarities to forms and figures of Christian (or, for that matter, Greco-Roman) traditions.

Such similarities had to be explained, and thus the latter observation has led to surprisingly persistent diffusionist theories. The term “diffusionism” is used to describe the theory or, more often, implicit assumption, that most great achievements in the narrative of humanity’s march towards modernity, rather than having emerged independently in different places, were made only once and then distributed (diffused) to the rest of the world from their original birthplace. This theory, widely agreed upon through most of modern Western thought, has led generations of scholars to look for the origins of what the New World inexplicably seemed to hold in store for its explorers.¹¹ One early example for this approach is the claim that the indigenous peoples of Mexico were descendants of one of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, first made by the Dominican Diego Durán around 1580, who starts his *Historia* by stating

... that we can ultimately affirm them to be Jews by nature and [belong to the] Hebrew people, and I do not believe that by asserting this one would make a capital mistake, considering their way of life, their ceremonies,

their rites and superstitions, their auguries and hypocrisies, so related and close to those of the Jews that they differ from them in nothing (Durán 1880, p. 1, transl. K.L.).¹²

A similar desire to explain the development of pre-Hispanic cultures probably inspired the eighteenth-century assumption that religious beliefs in all parts of the world were originally allegories containing astronomic observations (cf. Steinle 1995, pp. 67-72). During the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the notion that the Mexican manuscripts’ contents were principally religious and that astronomy was the key to their interpretation remained prevalent. It also informs the beginning of modern discussion of the *Codex Vindobonensis*, as the works of Damian Kreichgauer show:

Because all these results were kept strictly secret, much more so than the religious mysteries, the priest-astronomers inscribed all necessary data in the spaces between a series of mythological images. Thus on the one hand, attention was distracted from the dates and on the other hand, the desired opportunity was provided to furnish the intervals recorded with sometimes three to four corrections in an inconspicuous manner. It is due to this latter fact that of the comprehensive Viennese manuscript’s rich contents not a single result has been found so far (Kreichgauer 1917, p.7, transl. K.L.).¹³

¹¹ Ironically, these assumptions themselves have their roots in colonialism: ‘The sixteenth-century Spanish debates about the nature of the New World Indians – Are they human? Can they receive the True Religion and, if so, can they be made slaves? – was a crucial part of the early formulation of diffusionism, because it entailed an attempt to conceptualize European expansion and explain why it was, somehow, natural, desirable, and profitable, and to conceptualize the societies that were being conquered and exploited, explaining why it was, again, natural for them to succumb and to provide Europeans with labor, land, and products.’ (Blaut 1993, p. 20)

¹² ‘...que podríamos ultimadamente afirmar ser naturalmente judíos y gente hebrea, y creo no incurriría en capital error el que lo afirmase, si considerado su modo de vivir, sus ceremonias, sus ritos y supersticiones, sus agüeros y hipocresías, tan emparentadas y propias de las de los judíos, que en ninguna cosa difieren...’

¹³ ‘Da alle diese Resultate strengstens geheimgehalten wurden, viel mehr als die religiösen Mysterien, so schrieben die Priester-Astronomen alle notwendigen Daten in die Zwischenräume einer Reihe von mythologischen Bildern ein. Damit war einerseits die Aufmerksamkeit von den Jahresdaten abgelenkt und andererseits erwünschte Gelegenheit gegeben, die aufgezeichneten Intervalle in unauffälliger Weise mit manchmal drei bis vier Korrekturen auszustatten. Diesem letzteren Umstand ist es zuzuschreiben, daß aus dem reichen Inhalt der großen Wiener Handschrift bisher nicht ein einziges Resultat gefunden wurde.’

Kreichgauer was convinced the Codex Vindobonensis contained astronomical information elaborately encrypted and that the interpreter's primary task therefore was to decipher its code. His interpretation was influential enough to have the codex named after him¹⁴ and to inspire the following generation's studies, especially those by Felix Röck:

My line of thought proved right and I could generally corroborate D. Kreichgauer's proposition that they were about astronomic records ... The picture manuscript can best be described as a scientific picture book containing in skillful encryption the entire knowledge of late ancient Toltec priests in the domain of calendar science and astronomy ... The Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus I presumably was a compendium used as basis for exams of Toltec hieratic pupils (Röck 1936, transl. K.L.).¹⁵

Later examinations, however, were to prove them wrong again. Notably Karl Anton Nowotny, originally one of Röck's students, has distanced himself from the latter's methods, and in pursuing his own extensive studies, contributed greatly to the development of more recent interpretations (cf. Steinle 1995, pp. 90-96). In his detailed commentary on the Codex Vindobonensis, he explains that '[t]he commentary limits itself to

drawing on sources and parallels while abandoning many obvious ideas. Premature interpretations hinder cognition ... for they foreclose further questioning of the material (Nowotny 1948, p. 176, transl. K.L.).¹⁶ Instead of astronomy, he takes 'mythical genealogies' for its main content, drawing on examinations of other codices and artifacts as well as ethnographic fieldwork. By the end of the twentieth century it was widely agreed that Mixtec codices mainly depicted genealogies, whether mythical or historical (and whether that difference makes a difference). Recent studies are still at variance over the codices' original purposes, assumptions ranging from historic records to propagandistic profiling of Mixtec elites to accounts of territorial division and allocation (cf. König 1997, pp. 129-130).

IV I have tried in this cursory review to show how a variety of meanings has been ascribed to the Viennese Codex by way of interpretation and attempts at translation as well as its recognition as an object of value. These "new meanings" have, in a way, replaced the "original meaning", which today we have no certain way of knowing. Regardless of its original content and purpose though, the Codex has been considered

¹⁴ Noguez (1993) lists 'Codex Kreichgauer' as one of its "other names".

¹⁵ 'Mein Gedankengang erwies sich als richtig und ich konnte die Behauptung D. Kreichgauers, dass es sich um chiffrierte astronomische Aufzeichnungen handle, im Allgemeinen vollauf bestätigen ... Die Bilderhandschrift kann am Besten als wissenschaftliches Bilderbuch bezeichnet werden, das in kunstvoller Chiffrierung das gesamte Wissen spätalttoltekischer Priester auf dem Gebiete der Kalenderwissenschaft und der Astronomie ... enthält ... Der Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus I war vermutlich ein Handbuch, das bei Prüfungen toltekischer Priesterzöglinge aus mehreren Fächern ... als Grundlage gedient haben mochte.'

¹⁶ 'Die Erläuterung beschränkt sich auf die Heranziehung von Quellen und Parallelen unter Verzicht auf viele naheliegende Einfälle. Voreilige Deutungen wirken ... erkenntnisemmend, da sie ein weiteres Befragen des Stoffes verhindern.'

relevant throughout its European history for reasons as diverse as the significations attached to it. Starting with Cortés who thought it fit to give it to his queen as part of a treasure greatly admired, it was handed on from monarch to pope to clergyman to emperor, accumulating symbolic weight with each station. In the course of its more recent reception history, it was known as a work of religious allegories, ritual calendar, encrypted astronomical knowledge, mythological genealogies, and historical accounts respectively. My point is that whatever was “really” recorded in it, during the last five hundred years other realities have imposed themselves on the original layers of significance. These realities, constituted by European reception and cognition based on certain (and, as history keeps on repeating, quite relative) conditions of possibility, are as much a part of the Codex’s significance today as the enigma it still holds for art historians, linguists, ethnographers, and others. Examining the aspects I have only been able to touch on might therefore be enlightening not only for the study of pre-Hispanic notation systems, but also for inquiries of modern European thought, specifically ideas about translation and interpretation, cultural differences, and colonialism.



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Martin Martinsen

Introducing the pineapple: From Austria to Mexico

This text will serve as a basic background for the Pineapple Museum in Xalapa, Mexico, and concentrate itself around the pineapple's presence in Mexico. It is my hope that it will give a clear image of how the tropical fruit, that is the pineapple, was "introduced" to the country by Maximilian I, Austrian emperor of Mexico. With that as the starting point for the country's pineapple history, I shall take a look at what status and worth the pineapple has in today's Mexico.

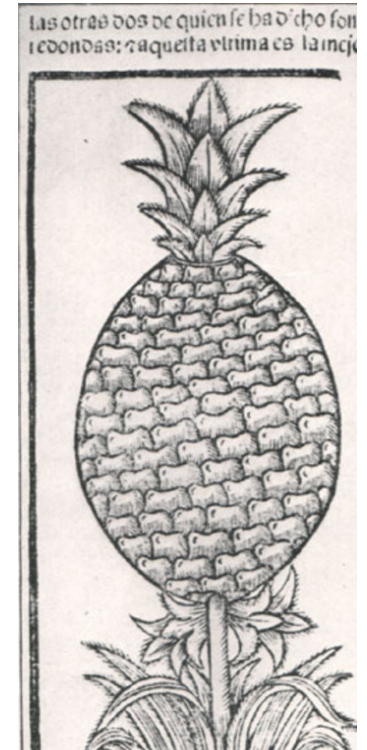
The first part of the text revolves around the introduction of the pineapple to Europe, and how it came to be a symbol of the exotic. This will include background facts concerning the fruit itself, and its many qualities, in medicine, food, etc. The purpose of this text is also for it to serve as a background for a pineapple museum, in relation to Maximilian and the pineapple in Mexico.

A short introduction to the pineapple

The pineapple (*Ananas comosus*) is a tropical fruit, perhaps the most tropical and exotic fruit of all. Its natural habitat is the humid climate of Brazil and Bolivia, the countries in which it originally started to flourish in the wild, though it is thought to be from the Paraná River in Paraguay. Nowadays this lovely delicacy has been spread throughout the world, and can be found in various products ranging from food items to cosmetic crèmes to toothpaste.

When I eat pineapple, I often start to bleed in the mouth. It stings even. This is because the pineapple contains an enzyme, bromelain, which has a protein-devouring effect and this leads to the pineapple sometimes causing serious irritation to the mucous membranes and skin. Then again, this enzyme is very good for digestion, which is why the pineapple can favorably be eaten as a side dish with a hefty piece of meat. The pineapple's sweet yellow flesh is also very rich in antioxidants, vitamin C as well as vitamin B.¹

Also worth noting is that the pollination of the hermaphrodite pineapple flowers, is carried out by hummingbirds. Even more noteworthy, perhaps, is that some varieties of pineapple plants, ones that only open their flowers at night, are pollinated by bats. The flowers



First known illustration of a pineapple, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, 1535

¹ Beauman, F., *Pineapple: King of Fruits*, London, UK: Vintage Books, 2005

of the plant later start forming into small berries. These grow and over time they fuse together into one soft yet solid piece of fruit, giving the pineapple its characteristic outer shell of bulges.²

The pineapple to Europe

Christopher Columbus was the first European to ever taste the pineapple. He did so on his second journey to the Caribbean region in 1493, and the location where he came into contact with the, to him, fascinating fruit, was Guadeloupe Island. The explorer and his seamen encountered a society of cannibals, who greeted them with slices of this new fragrant fruit, between pots and piles of human bones. Columbus' and the crew's first impression of the pineapple was so strong, that it only took around 20 years before the fruit was being imported to Europe. In 1516, King Ferdinand of Spain received a sole surviving pineapple from a shipment from the New World. He ate it and stated that it was the greatest thing he had ever tasted. Rumor grew, and the pineapple soon became a sought after status symbol. Due to the high price of sugarcane from the Middle East, and the fact that fresh fruit was a rarity at the time, the natural sweetness of the pineapple in combination of being a fruit, made it increasingly popular. More than

this though, the sheer exotic look of the pineapple made it outstandingly fashionable among the royalties of Europe. Perhaps the best description of the excitement the pineapple caused in the Old World is that by Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés. He writes the following in his publication from 1535, *Historia General y Natural de las Indias*:

“The pineapple [is unprecedented in] beauty of appearance, delicate fragrance, excellent flavor. So that of the five corporeal senses, the three which can be applied to fruits and even the fourth, that of touch, it shares these four things or senses excelling above all fruits.”

The British are the ones who are essentially responsible for bringing the exoticness of the pineapple to Europe. They started to ship it regularly in the middle of the seventeenth century, and it is thought they succeeded in growing it on English soil, with the help of advanced greenhouses before the beginning of the 1800s. However, it is a fact that the first person that grew the pineapple to perfection on European land, was a Dutch lady named Agnes Block, botanist and illustrator. For this groundbreaking step in the Europeanization of the King of fruits, she earned a medal.³ This ultimately led to a decline in the fruit's popularity, since it led to a loss of the general exotic feel of the fruit. It was only in

² Gunnar Carlquist, Josef Carlsson (ed.), *Svensk Uppslagsbok* (Swedish thesaurus), Malmö, Sweden: Förlagshuset Nordens Boktryckeri, 1947

³ Campbell S., *A History of Kitchen Gardening*, Singapore: Frances Lincoln, 2005

the remote parts of Russia, where, as late as the early twentieth century, pineapple and champagne remained the drink of highest status.

The British, who thought it resembled pinecones, gave the name pineapple to the fruit. However it was sweet, juicy even, hence the apple epithet. The word *Ananas*, which is the name of the pineapple in many languages, comes from a Tupian language in the region of Rio de Janeiro, more specifically from the word *nanas*, which translates into "excellent fruit".⁴ Though, a more interesting tale of the *ananas* name is this:

In the 1660s, when bananas were already a popular fruit from the New World, Europeans started to export yet another exotic specimen to their mother countries. Yes, the pineapple. [...] When loading the first shipment containing this new treat, the sailors only had boxes marked bananas to pack in. To avoid the confusion that would occur when unloading pineapples in boxes marked "bananas", they simply crossed over the first letter on all the boxes containing pineapples ([X]ANANAS)

Areas of use

The pineapple is mainly used in the food industry. Other than being consumed raw, "the king of fruits" is most of the time enjoyed in slices, which are canned.

Furthermore, the pineapple is also quite popular in juice form. In fact, pineapple juice is one of the main parts of a *piña colada*, a beloved exotic cocktail. Other pineapple food products include dried pineapple and even some mixtures of tea are known to include pineapple. The pineapple is also a very popular ingredient in desserts, most notably as the main feature in pineapple-upside-down-cake. Another popular dessert seems to be a form of ice cream plate, for which half a pineapple's flesh is scooped, thus creating the function of a bowl, from which the ice cream is then eaten.⁵ Yet another popular way of eating pineapple is on pizza.

The pineapple can further be used by taking advantage of the fibers in its leaves. In the Philippines, this is an old indigenous tradition. There, pineapple fibers are used to create *piña* (which is also the Spanish word for pineapple). In combination with either silk or polyester, this *piña* creates a fine textile fabric. This is a part of traditional Philippine clothing. Rougher fibers from the plant are used to construct rope. Even pulp for paper manufacturing can be extracted from the pineapple leaf. In the making of pineapple products, there is a large amount of material, i.e. the pineapple's leathery outside, which, one may think, is not used for anything at all. This is however quite an important source of fodder

⁴ Beauman, F., *Pineapple: King of Fruits*, London, UK: Vintage Books, 2005

⁵ John F. Kennedy and wife Jackie, had this as dessert at their wedding, LIFE photo archive hosted by Google, Keyword: Pineapple

for cattle, and many pineapple producing countries are economically dependant on it.⁶

Pineapple, magical fruit of the tropics

The pineapple has been known for a very long time among the indigenous people of South America for it's medicinal powers. For treatment of wounds or muscle strains, juice of the pineapple would be rubbed on the affected area and as a result mitigate the effect of the injury. When this came to the knowledge of the Europeans, they started conducting studies on the fruit. It would take up until 1891 before scientists could successfully isolate and extract the substance, which gave the pineapple its healing powers, from the pineapple's stem. It is actually the bromelain, the earlier mentioned enzyme that functions as a curing force. It does so, in the way that it stops the inflammatory process of the body. The protein devouring ability attacks and relieves the effects of the inflammation.

Inflammation is the body's own way of treating injuries, but when this process gets out of control and can not be shut down the pineapple bromelain has shown to be effective. Recent tests conducted with the enzyme on muscles, organs, joints and other tissue have shown an effect of easing the inflammatory sequence. This has

been proven quite useful with diseases, which in their initial state are fueled by inflammation, diseases such as arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease and even cancer. Additionally, bromelain is said to prevent hay fever.⁷

The pineapple to Mexico

Among the colonial empires of the nineteenth century textiles had always been an important measure of power. Both economically when it came to trading, as well as having a textile of specific quality and look that would represent your own nation's influence in the New World. When Ferdinand Maximilian of the Hapsburgs was to become emperor of Mexico, it was therefore of great importance what kind of textile was to become his Mexican one, and what kind of pattern he would apply upon it. When he knew he would spend his time in a faraway and exotic country, the choice of the oh so important motif for the Austrian colonial textile pattern fell upon a design based on the most exotic of all the fruits, the pineapple. In Austria's and in Maximilian's eyes, Mexico was viewed as quite the exotic location and the pineapple would be a perfect representation of this, the fruit that was, and had been for centuries, regarded as a symbol of the exotic.

With all his colonial furniture upholstered in the



Ferdinand Maximilian's bedroom wallpaper (detail)

⁶ Bartholomew, D. P., Paull, R. E., Rohrbach, K. G., The Pineapple: Botany, production and uses, UK: Biddles ltd. 2003

⁷ Vukovic, L., Better Nutrition, Pineapple Power (article), El Segundo, US: Active Interest Media, July or, 2007

pineapple fabric to represent the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the New World, Maximilian disembarked in Veracruz. Only to realize however, that the pineapple scarcely existed in Mexico at the time.

Ferdinand Maximilian and his history with the pineapple

Before Ferdinand Maximilian's name was given the addition "of Mexico", he was the Commander in Chief of the Austrian Imperial Navy. This meant, of course, that he got to travel the world. Among other places, he was more than a few times in Brazil. It was there that he first came in contact with the pineapple, one may assume. If one looks at how he later came to use the image of the pineapple, it would perhaps be appropriate to describe him as obsessed.

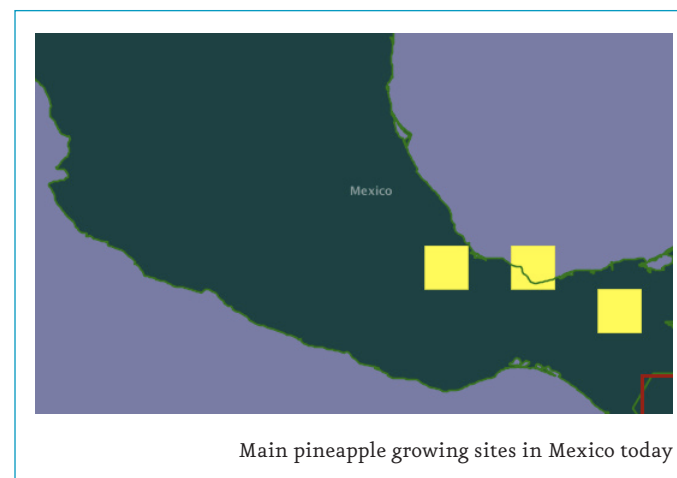
The castle in Trieste, Miramar, which Maximilian had constructed as a home for himself and his wife Charlotte in the middle of the nineteenth century, would more or less be made into a monument to his favorite fruit. Chests and drawers with carved pineapple panels, botany patterned textile wallpaper with the pineapple as the crystal clear center along with the naval symbol of the anchor, pineapple shaped furniture upholstered with pineapple patterns, everywhere a pineapple.

1859 was the first time he was offered the imperial throne of Mexico. He humbly turned down the opportunity, stating that he "strongly pined after an adventurous botanical expedition in the Brazilian forests". One might guess he wanted to reunite in the wild with the fruit he had come to call his.

Four years later though, he did become emperor of Mexico, and, as stated, he brought the pineapple with him.

The pineapple in current Mexico

These days the pineapple situation in Mexico is quite the opposite compared it to when Maximilian brought his furnishings there. Since the Austrian emperors execution in 1867, the pineapple industry in Mexico has grown immensely. The country is currently the seventh largest producer of pineapple in the world, that is approximately 540 000 tonnes of fresh fruit are produced annually.⁸ The main type of pineapple grown in Mexico is Smooth Cayenne, a spineless variation, with smooth leaves. Its flesh is pale yellow and it is rich in sweetness and acids. This pineapple sort is the one most grown worldwide. Veracruz, the region where Maximilian first came with his pineapple furniture, is now responsible for 70 % of the nations total pineapple



Main pineapple growing sites in Mexico today

⁸ Rebolledo, M.A., III International Pineapple Symposium, The Pineapple in Mexico: Current Status and Prospects (article), Thailand: ISHS Acta Horticulturae, 2000

production, the other main pineapple regions being Oaxaca and Tabasco. The fruit is mainly eaten within the borders of the country. Just around five percent are exported, primarily to the United States and Canada. A quarter of the production gets made into juice, and the remaining part is sold as fresh fruit in Mexico.

These days the pineapple is somewhat of a symbol for Mexico. It can be found on tourist guides, and even Frida Kahlo has included the pineapple in a still life painting of fruits. The town of Loma Bonita in the Oaxaca region calls itself “the Pineapple Capital of the World”, on account of being the area that enjoys most pineapple exports in the country.

Mexican cuisine frequently uses the pineapple in a variety of ways, be it in classical Oaxacan dishes such as “pineapple chicken”, or in salsas or sweet desserts. This frequent usage of pineapple in the Mexican food proves extra interesting when one considers that UNESCO in 2010 named the traditional Mexican cuisine part of the world heritage,⁹ which means that not only are the particular dishes protected, but hence the pineapples, for being a major ingredient in them.

Summary of the pineapple

Since the pineapples were first introduced to Europeans,

people have distinguished the fruit as a symbol of the exotic. As an acknowledgement of this, when Ferdinand Maximilian of the Habsburgs was to become emperor in a country he thought to be exotic, i.e. Mexico, he chose the pineapple as the symbol of his empire. Only to find the pineapple to be scarcely existent in the country. Today, Mexico is a main pineapple provider in the world, and the pineapple in Mexico is moreover under protection of the UN.

Appendix – Myself and the pineapple

In Sweden, where I come from, it is easy at a very young age to get a rather ambivalent relationship to the pineapple. This is because of one dish, very often served in the school cafeteria. This mockery of cooking of which I speak, consists of smoked pork, cream, melted cheese and, as the icing on the cake, canned pineapple slices. All of these ingredients mixed together in a casserole. It took a long time, I was well into my late teens, before I realized the full potential of the pineapple in Sweden. If I am not mistaken, there was a particular sequence of events in a movie that went like this: Greta Garbo walked into a room, brushed the snow from her hat, dug down in her picnic basket, pulled up a pineapple, raised it triumphantly over her head and proclaimed:

"Look! The tropics in the Snow!"¹⁰ There and then I became fascinated with the symbol of the pineapple, as an exotic element in the cold Nordic everyday, to cut a slice of pineapple to go with your morning coffee. I also have several memories of pineapples being given to me as a gift; I possess quite a few pineapple related items (knives, clothes, wallet); I often will buy a pineapple from the lack of anything to do. If you look at how I've come to use and collect the image of the pineapple, it would perhaps be appropriate to describe me as obsessed.

⁹ UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

¹⁰ "Two-Faced Woman", dir. George Cukor, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1941

A Colony of a Colony an excerpt.

Stephanie Misa

I. Following the Macabebe Trail

"These pro-American Filipinos were natives of Macabebe, Pampanga Province, in the central plains of Luzon Island. They had originally been loyal to Spain.

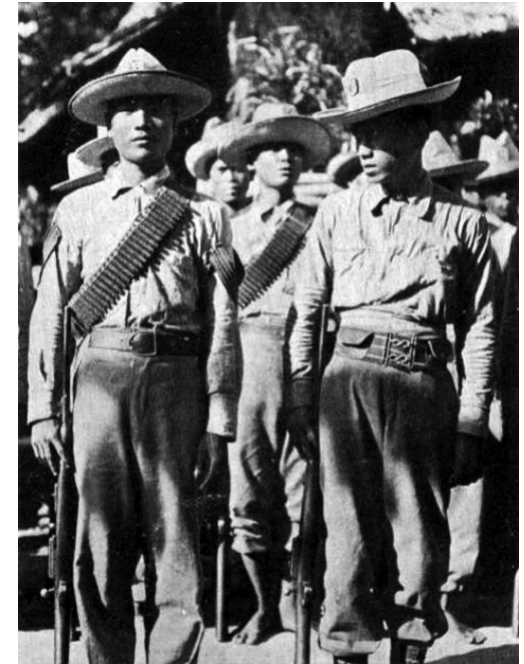
The US Army organized Special Forces officered by Americans but manned by Filipinos. The first unit of this type was experimental, one company of 100 Macabebes enlisted on Sept. 10, 1899, for a term of 3 months and led by 1Lt. Matthew Batson, U.S. Army. It was experimental in the sense that Batson's superiors - including Brig. Gen. Arthur C. MacArthur, Jr. - did not trust any Filipino enough to arm them; Batson had used the Macabebes

as guides and interpreters earlier, and was convinced of Macabebe loyalty. The experiment proved successful, with the Macabebes fiercely loyal to their new masters. The Macabebes were believed to be descendants of Mexican Yaqui Indians who were brought to the Philippines by Spain. "¹

The quote above is from my old high school history book. Last year, I worked on a project that analyzed periods in Philippine history as recorded in my old schoolbook. The work tries to highlight how Filipino issues regarding culture, identity, politics and history are strategically invisible from textbook conversations. The *Macabebe* quote encapsulated this for me. This text is my attempt to trace what could be one of the most neglected facets of the Filipino Identity: its *Mexicaness*. Drawing from accumulated research and stories, this text is an attempt to illustrate how inevitably undocumented histories seep into the pages of historical canon.

II. The Macabebes

The Macabebes who came so conspicuously into prominence during the Rebellion of 1896 are the inhabitants of the town of Macabebe and its dependent wards, situated in Lower Pampanga, near the Hagonoy River. As John Foreman observes in his ethnographical sketch of the Philippine Islands in 1892:



Macabebe Scouts

Photo published in Harper's Weekly, Dec. 23, 1899.

¹ Dumindin Arnaldo, *The Philippine- American War 1899- 1902*, as taken from Teodoro Agoncillo's *History of the Filipino People* (1969).

"They are the only Filipinos who have persistently and systematically opposed the revolutionary faction of their own free will, without bribe or extraneous influence. No one seems to be able to explain exactly why they should have adopted this course. They aided the Spaniards against the rebels, and also the Americans against the insurgents. All I have been able to learn of them in the locality is that they keep exclusively to themselves, and have little sympathy for, and no cordial intercourse with, the natives of other towns, either in their own province or elsewhere. A generation ago the Macabebes had a bad reputation for their petty piratical depredations around the north shore of Manila Bay and the several mouths of the Hagonoy River, and it is possible that their exclusiveness results from their consciousness of having been shunned by the more reputable inhabitants. The total population of Macabebe is about 14,000." ²

Also known as *Voluntarios de Macabebes* (by the Spaniards), Macabebe Scouts (by the American colonial government), and "Little Macks" (by General Frederick Funston), among other appellations, the Macabebes were bantered about by mainstream historians for their ingratiating role as mercenaries of the Spaniards and later the Americans. Insulted as "dugong aso" — canine blood, for being dog-like in serving their masters, they have defied proper classification. "They have been treated as a breed apart," wrote Katoks Tayag, "as though they were a race by themselves. Many Pampangos, especially during the

early years, distanced themselves from them, referring to the Macabebes as though they are not Pampangos."³

In fact, the standard opinion today, even among the Macabebes themselves is Teodoro Agoncillo's in *History of the Filipino*, which was first published in 1960 and remains a popular standard textbook in many Filipino Universities, Argoncillo argues that they descended from the Yaqui Indians of Mexico (North America, not the adjacent town of Mexico Pampanga). There are even opinions that suggest the Macabebes are descendants of the Sepoys brought in by British ships during the British Occupation of 1762. ⁴

1571

The first mention of the Macabebes, as distinct from and not necessarily *Kapampangan* (from the Philippine Region of Pampanga), was during the arrival of Legázpi in Manila, circa 1571 in the *Battle of Bancusay*. Defiant and uncompromising, ironically, they were then far from being 'dugong aso' as they would be regarded centuries later.

Miguel Lopez de Legázpi led the Spanish expedition that successfully established a colonial foothold in the Philippines after several failed attempts. He founded Cebu, the first Spanish city, in 1565 and in 1572, Legázpi



Macabebe Scouts patrolling the Rio Grande de Pampanga, published in Harper's Bazaar 1899.

² Foreman, John: *The Philippine Islands. : A historical, Geographical, Ethnographical, Social and Commercial Sketch of the Philippine Archipelago and its Political Dependencies*. London 1892

³ Tayag, Katoks: *Recollections and Digressions*, Manila, Philippines Philambank Club, 1985

⁴ Dizon, Lino L.: *Macabebes: 1571 – 1901: More than a Footnote in History*

moved the Spanish capital to Manila.

By accepting the Spaniards, the Tagalogs of Manila had lost the alliance they incipiently had with the neighboring Macabebes, then headed by a chieftain known as Bambalito, Banku or Tarik Soliman (often confused with the Tagalog Rajah Soliman). In his *Estadismo de las Islas Filipinas* en 1800, Fr. Joaquin Martinez de Zuñiga wrote about him and the Macabebes' auspicious encounter with history:

"Soon after the occupation of Manila by Miguel Lopez de Legázpi, the natives of Macabebe, a town of this province and those of Hagonoy, Bulacan who are neighbors, went to Tondo, entered the sandbar of Bancusay and went to the house of Lacandola, chieftain of Tondo. They mocked the latter for becoming a vassal of the Spaniards. They tried to persuade him to a revolt. The pleas of the visitors were not necessary because Lacandola did not like being under anybody's yoke but he feared the consequences of revolt. Finally, they agreed that the Pampangos would declare war against the Spaniards and if they could slay 40 Spaniards, the natives of Tondo and Manila would take their side. Legázpi, who was aware of the arrival of these Pampangos but who did not notice any hostility in their acts, thought that they wanted to make peace overtures with him and therefore sent two Spaniards to have them escorted to his palace and to assure them of his peaceful intentions. The

chieftain of the Macabebes upon hearing of the coming of the ambassadors of Legázpi stood up and, unsheathing his sword and waving his weapon, forcefully said:

"May the Sun severe my body in halves, and may disgrace befall me before the eyes of my wives that they might abhor me if at any time I had been friend of the Spaniards." Having sworn this oath, he left the room and as a mark of greater valor did not go down by the stairs but jumped out of the window; then went to his boat and told the Spaniards that he would wait for them in the sandbar of Bancusay.

When Legázpi learned of the warlike intentions of the natives, he sent his chief of staff, Martin de Goiti, with a force of 80 Spaniards in nine small boats to Bancusay. The Macabebe chieftain did as he had said. He waited for the Spaniards and then fearlessly attacked them with his squadron of small boats. But he soon fell dead when hit by a bullet and his followers, seeing their leader killed, fled.⁵

A Macabebe named Nakabebe

There is not a clear documentation in Philippine history of an exiled group of Yaqui Indians brought to the Philippines, though there are written accounts of Mexicans identified as *infidentes* (rebels) shipped by galleon for exile to the Philippines or the Marianas Island. One of these exiles was a Yaqui Indian chief, captured from the Sonora mountains, named Nakabebe.



⁵ Zuñiga, Fr. Joaquin Martinez de, *Estadismo de las Islas Filipinas* en 1800

As Floro L. Mercene narrates in *Manila Men in the New World*:

"Bundled on the galleon with his followers, Nakabeba settled in the area of Macabebe in Pampanga. Banishment was one of the options frequently applied by the crown to rid itself of infidentes. According to the degree of dangerousness, the prisoners from Mexico were sent to Cuba, Puerto Rico, the African prison in Cuenta, the Marianas, and the Philippines. Many Mexican insurgents spent their prison terms in the Philippines. There were also cases of South American rebels sent to the Philippines by the way of San Blas and Acapulco. In 1814, the Governor of Marianas refused to accept infedentes that arrived on the galleon *Fernando Rey* because of their great threat to security. The galleon commander was compelled to bring the prisoners to Manila. Faced with the prospect of no longer returning to Mexico, many exiles began a family or set up businesses in the Philippines."⁶

Mercene insinuates that the town of Macabebe was perhaps named after the infamous Nakabeba. Mercene also mentions two towns in Pampanga that bear the same name as two another Mexican toponymic places – Guagua (and there is a Guagua in Mexico, indeed) and Mexico itself – to perhaps support the theory of a Yaqui settlement in Macabebe. Though, much like the town of Macabebe, Guagua (a name traced to the Kapampangan

word “wawa”, meaning mouth of a river, and is how name Guagua is remains pronounced) is a pre-colonial settlement that appeared in historical document in 1571. The other, the unlikely named town of Mexico, Pampanga, also appears to evidence a strong Mexican – Kapampangan connection; but literary annals place that the pre-colonial Capangpañgan region was named “Masicu”, then renamed Mexico, to honor the North American City of a similar name.

III. A Colony of a Colony

"The Viceroy of New Spain was the highest colonial official in all the territory, from the Ismuth of Panama on the South, Northward to and including New Mexico, Texas and California and embracing the lands between Louisiana and the Pacific Ocean which now constitute the Southwestern portion of the United States. The Viceroyalty of New Spain proper, therefore, may be said to have extended from Guatemala to Louisiana and Oregon. It was the captain-general that the viceroy came into closest relation to Spain's continental projects. As the military and naval representative of the king, he was called upon to cooperate in plans of imperial defense, he might be called upon at any time to send aid in men and money. Even the distant Philippines had to be provided for against foreign attacks and in that case it fell upon the Viceroy of New Spain to supply and organize the necessary supplies, ships and men".⁷

⁶ Mercene, Floro L.: *Manila Men in the New World: Filipino Migration to Mexico and the America's from the Sixteenth Century*. University of the Philippines Press, 2007

⁷ Smith, Donald E.: *The Viceroy of New Spain*. University Press of California Berkley 1913

The Philippines was not formally organized as a Spanish colony until 1565 when Philip II appointed Miguel Lopez de Legázpi the first Governor-General. Legázpi, then the civil governor of Mexico City, was commissioned by the viceroy of Mexico Luis de Velasco in 1564 to lead an expedition to the Spice Islands, where previous explorers Ferdinand Magellan and Ruy Lopez de Villalobos had landed in 1521 and 1543. On November 21, 1564, five ships and 500 soldiers sailed from the port of Barra de Navidad, New Spain, towards the Philippine Islands. Probably half of Legázpi's crew was composed of Mexicans: creoles like the Salcedos, meztizos and Aztec indios. The majority of the military reinforcements and colonists sent to the Philippines during the first two centuries were Mexicans. The first group of 300 that reached Cebu in 1567 was commanded by Felipe de Salcedo. The second group of 200 reached Panay in 1570, just before Martin de Goiti sailed for the conquest of Manila. Another military group that reached Manila in 1575 was composed of 140 Spaniards and 38 Mexicans, all recruited in Mexico. Much later, prisoners from Mexico were sent to the islands in exile. The total number of Mexicans that immigrated to the Philippines has not been fixed, but in the two centuries and a half of contact we can safely assume that this figure reached several thousands.⁸

Legázpi selected Manila for the capital of the colony in 1571 because of its fine natural harbor and the rich lands surrounding the city that could supply it with produce. The Spanish though did not immediately develop the trade potential of the Philippine's agricultural or mineral resources. The colony was administered from Mexico and its commerce centered on the galleon trade between Canton and Acapulco in which Manila functioned secondarily as an *entrepot*. Smaller Chinese junks brought silk and porcelain from Canton to Manila where the cargoes were re-loaded on galleons bound for Acapulco and the Spanish colonies in the Americas. The Chinese goods were paid for in Mexican silver.

"From the very beginning of their imperial adventure in Southeast Asia, the Spanish conquistadores adhered to the strategy of colonization which differed significantly from those implemented by the Westerners elsewhere in the region. The Portuguese, Dutch and British prior to the 19th Century persistently attempted to confine their activities to matters of trade, to refrain from undue interference in the internal affairs of the indigenous states, to avoid prolonged exhaustive wars, to eschew costly administrative entanglements, and thereby maximize commercial profits. The Spaniards, by contrast, were committed to the comprehensive program of territorial expansion, economic exploitation, Christian conversion and cultural

⁸ Quirino, Carlos: "The Mexican Connection", Mexican-Philippine Historical Relations Symposium, New York 1997

change. As in their earlier American conquista, the Spanish adventurers seem to have been driven to the Philippines by a curious amalgam of religious and secular motives.”⁹

From 1565 to 1815, a period of 250 years coinciding with the commercial interaction between Manila and Acapulco, “the links between the two countries bordering the Pacific Ocean were so close”, Carlos Quirino says, “that they have given rise to the claim that the Philippines was indeed a former colony of Mexico”.¹⁰

The Cultural Cargo of the Manila-Acapulco Galleons

The most enduring link between Mexico and the Philippines were the galleons that sailed almost annually between Acapulco and Manila. Starting in June of 1565 with the San Pedro, one of Legázpi’s fleet, the ship returned to Mexico with Fray Andrés de Urdaneta delineating the return route across the vast Pacific. The San Pedro carried a small quantity of spices and gold gathered in Cebu and northern Mindanao, thus initiating the long history of trade between the two countries. The ship going east became known as the *Nao de China* -- to this day among Mexicans, while those going west were termed *Nao de Acapulco*. The former brought the luxury items of the orient to the New World and Spain, such as

porcelain wares of the Ming dynasty, brocades and silk from China, spices from the Moluccas, perfumes from Arabia, rugs from Persia, fine muslins from Madras, pearls from Sulu, and the famed *manton de Manila*, which, despite the name, were in reality silk shawls woven in the southeastern coasts of China. In exchange, the New World poured millions of its wealth into the Far East in the form of the silver coins known as “pieces-of-eight,” turned out by the Mexican and Peruvian mints.

In 1573, after the untimely death of Miguel Lopez de Legázpi, the viceroy of New Spain, Don Martin Enriquez, conveys his concern to King Philip II about Spain’s tenuous hold on the Islands and encourages a stronger colonial presence:

‘As for the question of helping the Filipinas islands, I have up to this time adhered to the instructions which your Majesty has ordered to be given me. Since I came here, I have never failed in any year to send a ship or ships with reinforcements and munitions; but sea and land and climate have their effect, and the number of men is constantly diminished; so that, although people are regularly sent thither, they are actually but little increased in numbers. The object and plan which should be pursued in matters yonder I do not know; but, whatever it may be, people are

⁹ Reed, Robert R.: *Colonial Manila: the Context of Hispanic Urbanism and Process of Morphogenesis*. University of California Publications, University of California Press Vol 22, 1978

¹⁰ Ibid 8

necessary, for the islands are many. As for the mainland of China, it is so large a land and so thickly settled that one of its hundred divisions, according to report, is as big as half the world itself. It is learned from the Chinese that they admit strangers only with reluctance to their land. For this reason, more and better soldiers would be needful than those who could go from this land, for those born here are but little used to hardship—although it is also understood that the people of China, in spite of possessing weapons, horses, and artillery, are but little superior in valor to the Indians. Commercial relations are now beginning to be established with the Chinese; but until this is definitely completed the hopes of the merchants here will not rise, in spite of all I do and contrive with them to encourage and spur them on; for, to tell the truth, no certain information comes of a nature to induce them to go. And one of the difficulties consequent upon this commerce and intercourse is, that neither from this land nor from España, so far as can now be learned, can anything be exported thither which they do not already possess. They have an abundance of silks, and linen likewise, according to report. Cloths, on account of the heat prevalent in the country, they neither use nor value. Sugar exists in great abundance. Wax, drugs, and cotton are superabundant in the islands, whither the Chinese go to obtain them by barter. And thus, to make a long matter short, the commerce with that land must be carried on with silver, which they value above all other things; and I am uncertain whether your Majesty will consent to this on account of

having to send it to a foreign kingdom. I beg your Majesty to consider all these matters, to inform me concerning them, and to give explicit orders to the person in charge here so that no mistakes may be made.”¹¹ (December 5, 1573)

Of the 108 galleons that crossed the Pacific in two centuries and a half, the actual number built for that purpose probably totaled less than half – that is, about 50 vessels in all. The majority of the 108 made more than one round-trip voyage, while a score foundered on their maiden voyage. Hence, of the approximately 50 galleons constructed for the Manila-Acapulco run, about 15 were built in Mexico, five were built in other countries, and the rest were made in Philippine shipyards. The provinces of Jalisco and Guerrero on the Pacific coast undoubtedly supplied most of the galleons built in Mexico, especially during the first 50 or 60 years of its history.

In Benito Legarda's, *After the Galleons* he traces the economic history of the Philippine Islands from the time of the arrival of Miguel Gomez de Legázpi's expedition in 1565 to the independence from the metropolis in 1898. Legarda studies the Philippines' evolution from an archipelago inhabited by almost self-sufficient communities to the era when it became an agricultural export economy dependent on external trade to meet domestic needs.

¹¹ Blair, E.H. and Robertson, J.A. : *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1803 Volume III, 1569-1576*. BiblioBazaar, 2006

Fifteenth-century Chinese and Muslim (Persian and Arab) merchants frequented the archipelago's coastal areas, attracting a population that established settlements dependent on sedentary agriculture and craft production. These communities, called "barangays," traded among themselves and with the rest of Southeast Asia and China. Slaves, beeswax and gold were exchanged for porcelain, iron, lead, tin, silks, etc. This early connection with China plays a crucial role in Philippine history, as this was the draw of the Islands, and easy gateway to the good of the Orient. The presence of the Spaniards dramatically changed the position of the Philippines with respect to the Asian continent and placed the Islands as one of the crucial points in the global economy created by the galleon trade. In a letter to the viceroy of New Spain from Guido de Laveçaris, the second Spanish Governor-General of the Philippines (he succeeded Legázpi in 1572 as governor), he writes on the establishment of the Manila galleon trade:

I am very glad that your Excellency adjusted matters by ordering the return of the negroes and Indians who had been carried from this land; for all of us were very anxious as to the number that we were to send hereafter in the ships which should leave these regions. May our Lord

prosper your Excellency's life so that it may be of service to our Lord and to his Majesty, as it has been thus far.

In this voyage our men seized two Chinese junks laden with merchandise, plundered all the goods, and brought here one of the laden junks and four Chinese. Afterward these Chinese, together with the others, who had remained in those islands where they had been seized, were sent back, so that they might return to their own country. I was exceedingly sorry that such an injury should be inflicted upon men who had neither offended us nor given us occasion to justify this action; and what grieves me most in this affair is the news which the Chinese will carry to their own country about us, and about the good deeds which were done to them, and which they saw done to others, for our credit in China.

As a result, most excellent Sir, the commerce between us and these Moros of Lucon has come to a standstill, on account of the ill-treatment that they have received at our hands. They carried back to their land all that they could, and in so doing they caused us no little injury; for we had a share in the commerce maintained with them, since the Moros brought and sold to us provisions. This suited us well, for already there was no other place where we could settle in this neighborhood except Lucon; but now I do not know what plan and arrangement can be made. May our Lord adjust matters as it pleases Him best, for certainly there is need of it.

A few days ago I went to the island of Cubu to set free some friendly Indians whom some soldiers had seized in a village which had paid tribute, and which held a deed of security. It was very difficult to get them back, for they had been sold and were already among the Indians. This cost me no little labor; but our Lord, who helps good intentions, favored me, and all the Indians were returned to their village at my expense. This success caused much joy and satisfaction among the Indians of the neighborhood.

Your Excellency should also try to send all the married men who can possibly come. For with the existence of settled communities the natives of this land will feel more secure, and the married Spaniards will devote themselves to sowing and raising the products of the land; but, if married men do not come, order and harmony will be lacking, as they have been hitherto.

*The recent arrival of married men caused great joy among all the natives of these islands, for they do not feel safe with us—saying that we do not intend to remain in the land, since we do not bring our wives with us. Up to this time they have mistrusted us much; but, on seeing the arrival of women, they have become somewhat reassured. If your Excellency orders many to come, and if a community of married people is established, the natives will become totally reconciled and will serve us better.*¹² (1575)

The arrival of the women signaled not only a firmer settlement of the new Spanish Colony, but also the start of the cultural trade that would inevitably follow.

IV. An Undocumented Diaspora

Tomás de Comyn, general manager of the *Compañía Real de Filipinas*, in 1810 estimated that out of a total population of 2,515,406 in the Philippines, “the European Spaniards, and Spanish creoles and mestizos do not exceed 4,000 persons of both sexes and all ages, and the distinct castes or modifications known in America under the name of mulatto, quarteroons, etc., although found in the Philippine Islands, are generally confounded in the three classes of pure Indians, Chinese mestizos and Chinese.”¹³ In other words, the Mexicans who had arrived in the previous century had so intermingled with the local population that distinctions of origin had been forgotten by the nineteenth century. The Mexicans who came with Legázpi and aboard succeeding vessels had blended with the local residents so well that their country of origin had been erased from memory.¹⁴

¹² Ibid 11

¹³ Gibson, Charles: “Spain and the New World”, *Spain in America*, 2006

¹⁴ Ibid 8

Katharina Petru

Mexikoplatz is lying

In 1956 Mexikoplatz was christened in remembrance of the Mexican intervention against the occupation of “Austria-Germany” in 1938 – addressed to the League of Nations. The plaque of the memorial states:

*„Mexiko war im März 1938 das einzige Land, das vor dem Völkerbund offiziellen Protest gegen den gewaltsamen Anschluß Österreichs an das nationalsozialistische Deutsche Reich einlegte. Zum Gedenken an diesen Akt hat die Stadt Wien diesem Platz den Namen Mexiko-Platz verliehen.“
("In March 1938 Mexico was the only country which protested - addressed to the League of Nations - against the violent occupation of Austria by National Socialist Germany. In commemoration to this act the City of Vienna has conferred to this place the name Mexikoplatz.")*

Donor of the memorial and therefore the commemorative plaque was the City of Vienna. The memorial was presented in 1985 by then Vienna Mayor Helmut Zilk and the Mexican Ambassador Roberto De Rosenzweig-Diaz (see: Nachkriegsjustiz: nachkriegsjustiz.at).

In 2008 the repetitive Austrian historiographic victim myth was temporarily (10.04.2008 – 14.04.2009) and on site questioned by Marko Lulic through the sculpture “99,3” - which stands for the consenting election in which the affiliation/occupation was decided in (see: Kunst im öffentlichen Raum Wien: koer.or.at).

In the eighties and early nineties Mexikoplatz operated as informal, illegal market and was politically and

medially criminalised as “East- Tourist-Discourse” (see: Gastarbajteri Virtuelle Ausstellung: gastarbajteri.at).

Besides urban planning interests and classifications like “EU Aim 2 – Development Area (see: Ziel 2 Wien Interaktiv: zielzwien.at) classifieds like Wiener Zeitung currently ask about the “almost forgotten place” (see: Wiener Zeitung: wienerzeitung.at). Coinciding with answering, targeted othering along habitation and migration takes place.

Questions addressing memory.

A political medium

Do shapes of colonialism and Nazism reflect their ancient interweaving in the memorial? How does history face us at places of memory? How does colonial, Nazi heritage retell itself in forms of memory? How does this retroact at society, assuming that mediation of memory is also mediation of knowledge. In this cohesion, which meaning has the question: “Colonialism - a project not yet completed?” And to ask further: Nazism – also a project not yet completed?

„Die erinnerte Vergangenheit mag eine bloße Konstruktion, eine Verfälschung, eine Illusion sein,

aber sie ist eine Wahrnehmung, die intuitiv und subjektiv für wahr genommen wird.“ (Assman, pp. 9).
 ("The remembered past may be merely a construction, a distortion, an illusion, but it is a perception that intuitively and subjectively is assumed to be true.")

Mexikoplatz with its lying memorial, is distinctive for an Austrian memoryculture of dominant, nazist paradigms. Nevertheless - suppressions and discontinuities tell something about what isn't said, about what wants to be displaced, what wants to be forgotten. Vacancies indicate those continuing paradigms.

Continuing to have an effect, colonial and Nazi structures are described by Hito Steyerl as correlated echos.

„Echos der kolonialen Biopolitik, etwa in der nationalsozialistischen Vernichtungspolitik (..)“ (see: Steyerl, p.43). ("Echoes of the Colonial biopolitics, e.g. in the National Socialist annihilation politics.")

My theses assumes, that these echoes are twice perceptible in forms of commemoration / memorials, arguing that colonialism and Nazism are both biopolitical forms of physical and psychic obliteration.

"So soll Hitler beispielsweise beeindruckt gewesen sein, dass sich schon nach kurzer Zeit kaum noch jemand

an den Genozid der Armenier erinnern konnte" (see: ibid., S. 40). ("Allegedly Hitler was impressed, because after a short time hardly anyone could remember the genocide of the Armenian population.")

To what extend are biopolitical effects, as part of an collective "can't remember", still readable respective perceptible in shapes of a memorial? What options for action does one have for a critical questioning and account for the past which these effects are ensuing?

Options for action. Conflict

„Ohne kritische Auseinandersetzung gäbe es keine Zukunft der Erinnerung“ so Volkhard Knigge (p. 22), Leiter der Gedenkstätte Buchenwald. ("Without a critical contention there would be no future of Memory so Volkhard Knigge, Head of the Shoa-Memorial Buchenwald.")

How could a critical contention with Colonial and Nazi history in concrete memorial look like?

Welche Bedeutung kommt hier der ortsspezifischen Kunst zu, welche nach Miwon Kwon (p. 96) dazu beitragen kann „verdrängte Geschichten hervorzuholen“. (What meaning/importance has site-specific art which can conduce to discuss displaced stories, asks Miwon Kwon.)

Site-specific critical contention could be constituted

by an (anti-)memorial as for instance the temporary sculpture "99,3" by Marko Lulic at Mexikoplatz. An antimemorial refers to the original memorial and is - in most cases - located in close proximity. The public process of commemoration can be reflected and questioned a new.

"Erinnern soll reflektiert und öffentlich neu befragt werden" (see: Jochmann, pp.22). ("The Process of memory should be reflected and be questioned anew publicly.")

Reading and viewing habits are going to be erupted.

Oliver Marchart (p. 432) betont:

"Entscheidend ist, dass Public Art nicht deshalb öffentlich ist, weil sie ihren Ort in einem urbanistisch zu bestimmenden öffentlichen Raum hat, sondern weil sie im Medium des Konfliktes stattfindet. Öffentlichkeit entsteht nur im Moment konfliktueller Auseinandersetzung" (see: ibid., a.a.O.). (Oliver Marchart states: "It is crucial that public art isn't public because of its place in an urban to assigned space, but rather because it occurs in the media of conflict. Public accrues only in a moment of conflict contention.")

An interrogative contention with processes of commemoration thus have a determining role to come to terms with the past. A site-specific artistic strategy, which questions (post)colonial, (Post)Nazi structures in circumstances /conditions like: inside - outside,

perpetrator - victim, narrational gaps, faded out historiography, etc. could thus - through a moment of conflict, where publicity accrues – reveal and shift these circumstances/conditions.

Bringing the conflict back

Where is the anti-memorial at Mexikoplatz now? What does this again say about the current constitution of Austria's memoryculture and especially about the administration of it on a local political level, if art here contradicts in a temporary scope - "a Project of Remembrance in the Commemorative Year 2008, financed by KOER and presented by City Councillor of Cultural Affairs (see: Wien. at Magistrat der Stadt Wien: Archivmeldung der Rathauskorrespondenz, 10.04.2008, wien.gv.at).

In the verbatim speech of Vienna's mayor Michael Häupl from the protocol of the Governmental Declaration 2001 at all events it says the following:

"Politisches Gestalten heißt auch, Verpflichtungen zu erkennen und danach zu handeln. (...) Wien hat sich, wie auch die Republik Österreich, den dunklen Kapiteln seiner Vergangenheit in Tat und Wort zu stellen. (...) Österreich, das sich jahrelang als erstes Opfer des Nationalsozialismus dargestellt hat, hat aus seiner tatsächlich aktiven Beteiligung an den Verbrechen dieses Regimes die Verpflichtung, sofort und rasch zu handeln. (...) Als Zweites ist uns die Verpflichtung auferlegt, kommenden Generationen alles Wissen über die größte Unfassbarkeit der Menschheit, die Shoah, zur Verfügung zu stellen. (...) Unserer Generation ist es auferlegt, dieses Gesamtbild der Geschichte zu rekonstruieren. Das "Nie wieder!" wendet sich sowohl an die Vergangenheit als auch an die Zukunft. Denn ohne Wissen um die Vergangenheit, bleibt es eine hohle Phrase. (...)"
("Political shaping also means to realize obligations and act accordingly. (...) Vienna, like the Republic of Austria, has to deal intensely with the dark chapters of its past by word and deed. (...) Austria which since long has declared itself as the first victim of the National Socialism has, because of its indeed active involvement on the crimes of that Regime, the commitment to act immediately and swiftly. (...) Secondly we have the obligation to provide all the knowledge about the biggest inconceivability, the Shoa, for the coming future generations (...) It is imposed to our generation, to reconstruct this general view of history. The "Never Again!" concerns the past as well as the future. Because without knowledge about the past, it remains just platitudes.")

Yes.

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Klemens Waldhuber

Thin air

It has been raining half of the night. The soil under my naked feet is soaking wet as I make my way through the high grass. I put on my jacket knowing that I will take it off again soon because the first ascent will claim some sweat. Still, to escape the fresh morning air I increase my speed. Soon the open field changes into a bright wood. An almost invisible path, a deer's track struggles against the constant incline and leads me upwards. The sun did not succeed yet to climb across the opposing mountain range. I wonder if she is going to rise today at all because instead of getting clearer the world around me keeps to thicken in the dense coniferous forest. All around me there are waterdrops dripping off the trees hitting branches and the ground. A light breeze is playing with my hair. I try to adapt my footfalls to this heavy atmosphere, not to disturb the trees. My walk becomes more cautious, the path becomes soggy and

more slippery until I reach a place where a downhill streamlet oozes away into the ground. Following the water to its origin partly moss-covered boulders appear in the wood in my proximity. Finally I perceive a yellow gleam through the trunks in front of me. A several meters high rock face is illuminated by the first rays of light that beam over the treetops to the mountainside. I greet the disk with a smile and halt for a second. So the sacrifice was worth it, leaving bed before dawn. At the foot of the wall lies the source. The water impetuously breaks out and running over red stone carves its way down to the valley.

After I have cleaned my feet in the well from mud I search for a way to overcome the weather-beaten block. A few minutes south I find an opening in the crag and another path which seems to lead through the twilight up to the summit.

Out of the passage steps an indigene in traditional clothing. He looks at me silently with raineyes. I feel that this mountain I set foot on without permission belongs to him. However he is not indignant, not up to mischief. His eyes tell me "I know you and I know why you are here, for I am you and you originate in my creation." As he lifts the lightning in his right hand skywards grey

clouds accumulate. I offer him an apple, a piece of bread and a cigarette. It has been raining sufficiently today.

Amongst the stone it is cold and wet and still I have this comfortable feeling of security in here. "A nice place of refuge", but I cannot linger. With every step the desire to reach the peak increases. The crack develops a pull that makes me become ever more hurried. I almost slip on the slick stone slabs once, twice, thrice, I stumble into sunlight. Intensely blinking I try to find out in my dazzlement what kind of new world I have entered. The forest made way for a grass-covered slope that stretches in front of me and joins the now cloudless sky. As I turn around the gorge I got out of has vanished in dense fog. The more distance I gain to the lush valleys my way has taken its starting point in the more unpleasant the landscape around me becomes. Where used to be trees are now crippled beings, where used to be grass, is now dry earth and stones. At the same time my body is attempting to cope with the lower oxygen concentration in the air. With every movement I loose a bit more energy than before, the ascent gets more difficult.

Midmorning I reach the edge of a high plateau. At the far side of this huge plate rise two mountains. The right summit surmounts the other one.

The indigene is waiting for me at the foot of an archaic step pyramid that towers in the middle of the flat. With a wave of his hand he indicates me to follow him and starts to climb up to the two temple buildings on the topmost platform.

“No“, I think to myself, “this is not the right way.“

I cross the plateau and set about ascending the highest peak. Rough scree makes it complicated to walk and makes me feel the first signs of tiredness. Due to carelessness I slip and scrape my knee. A blood stain forms on the fabric of my trousers. Perhaps it would have been better to clamber that temple, would have cost me less effort. However when I look back now the pyramid is gone.

Breathing gets increasingly difficult, my limbs are like lead, but especially this strain creates the challenge of the climbing. It is not about getting closer to a god, but to achieve this physical goal. My lungs are giving me a hard time and the sound of drums I actually don't want to notice emerges from the flat. It is just a massive heap of rock which has been formed over an incredibly long period of time. In this moment the mountain does not have a name and has no purpose but belonging to me. His qualities shall become mine and his height shall heighten me.

And before this thought is finished I feel my strength returning, I gather myself. My pace quickens and becomes more confident again. My breathing goes back to normal. Soon I leave the talus behind me and walk and climb once more on solid ground. Light-footed like a mountain goat I overcome the barren landscape neglecting all hallucinations and thoughts.

In that way I reach the summit just as the sun reaches its highest point. The last fifty metres I run towards the goal. I roar at the sky to express my feeling of elation and exhaustion but the sky takes it serenely. Gasping I fall down on my knees and wipe away the sweat on my forehead with the back of my hand. Then it gets silent up here. No sound is audible in this place I can overlook the whole world from. No wind, no animal, no human being – no life exists here. That is when I realize how irrelevant my presence is to the mountain. I do not dominate this mountain, he dominates me. He does not need me, it is rather me who needs him. In this place I can only be a quiet visitor, a worshipper but not a power holder.

The indigene approaches me from behind and puts his hand on my shoulder. I observe one part of me detaching from myself and following him to a plain rock where

this I lies down on his back. Using a knife made of stone the indigene opens the chest, removes the palpitating heart and lifts it up to the sun. Finally he carries the body to the abyss and throws it down.

I watch it falling until it gets swallowed by the mountain.

Es hat die halbe Nacht lang geregnet. Der Wiesenboden unter meinen nackten Füßen trieft vor Feuchtigkeit, als ich mir einen Weg durch das fast kniehohes Gras bahne. Ich habe die Jacke übergezogen, in dem Wissen mich ihrer bald wieder entledigen zu müssen, da das erste Stück des Aufstiegs sicherlich den einen oder anderen Schweißtropfen fordern wird. Um dennoch der Kühle der morgendlichen Luft entgegenzuwirken, beschleunige ich meinen Schritt. Schon weicht das offene Feld einem lichten Wald. Ein fast unsichtbarer Weg, ein Rehsteig kämpft gegen das stetig ansteigende Gefälle an und leitet mich voran. Die Sonne hat es noch immer nicht geschafft, über die gegenüberliegende Gebirgskette emporzuklettern. Fast frage ich mich, ob sie heute aufgehen wird, denn anstatt heller zu werden,

verdichtet sich die Welt um mich herum zunehmend im eng gedrängten Nadelwald. Einzig das Auftreffen der Wassertropfen auf den Ästen und der Erde erfüllt meine Ohren, begleitet von einer Brise, die meine Haare umspielt. Ich versuche meine Schritte an diese drückende Stille anzupassen, nicht die Ruhe der Bäume zu stören. Mein Gang wird immer behutsamer, der Boden immer rutschiger und feuchter, bis ich an eine Stelle komme, an welcher mir ein Bach bergabwärts entgegenkommt und vor meinen Füßen in der Erde versickert. Dem Wasser zu seinem Ursprung folgend, tauchen ringsherum im Gehölz immer wieder vereinzelt teils von Moos überwachsene Gesteinsbrocken auf. Schließlich erkenne ich vor mir zwischen den Stämmen einen gelben Schimmer. Eine mehrere Meter hoch aufragende Felswand wird von den ersten Sonnenstrahlen erleuchtet, die an dieser Stelle über die Baumwipfel hinweg an die Flanke dringen. Ich grüße die Scheibe mit einem Lächeln und halte einen Moment inne. Also hat sich das Opfer doch gelohnt, bereits vor Morgengrauen das Bett zu verlassen. Am Fuße der Mauer entspringt die Quelle, die sich ungestüm über roten Stein sprudelnd ihren Weg ins Tal bahnt. Nachdem ich meine Füße im kalten Wasser vom Lehm gesäubert habe, suche ich einen Weg, das verwitterte Hindernis zu überwinden. Etwas weiter südlich finde

ich eine Öffnung im Fels und einen Weg, der durchs Zwielicht in Richtung Gipfel zu führen scheint.

Aus dem Durchgang tritt ein Indigener in traditioneller Kleidung. Er sieht mich stumm mit Regenaugen an. Ich fühle, dass dies sein Berg ist, den ich ohne zu fragen betreten habe. Aber er zürnt mir nicht, er ist mir wohlgesonnen. Sein Blick sagt mir, »Ich kenne dich und ich weiß, weshalb du hier bist, denn ich bin du und du entstammst meiner Schöpfung.« Als er den Blitz in seiner Rechten zum Himmel streckt, ziehen sich graue Wolken zusammen. Ich opfere ihm einen Apfel, ein Stück Brot und eine Zigarette. Es hat heute schon genug geregnet.

Zwischen dem Gestein ist es kalt und feucht und trotzdem strahlt es Geborgenheit aus. »Ein schöner Zufluchtsort«, allerdings kann ich nicht verweilen. Ich spüre, wie es mich mit jedem Schritt mehr auf die Spitze des Berges zieht. Die Spalte entwickelt einen regelrechten Sog, der mich immer hastiger werden lässt. Fast rutsche ich auf den glatten Steinplatten aus, einmal, zweimal, dreimal, da stolpere ich ins Sonnenlicht. Blinzelnd versuche ich in meiner Verwirrung zu erkennen, in welche neue Welt ich eingetreten bin. Der Wald ist einem grasbewachsenen Hang gewichen, der sich vor mir erstreckt und auf den nun wolkenlosen Himmel trifft. Als ich mich umdrehe,

ist die Felsschlucht, aus der ich gekommen bin, in dichtem Nebel verschwunden.

Je weiter ich mich von den satten Tälern entferne, in welchen mein Weg seinen Ausgangspunkt genommen hat, desto unwirtlicher wird die Landschaft um mich. Wo früher noch Bäume waren, stehen jetzt verkrüppelte Wesen, wo früher noch Gras war, da ist jetzt trockene Erde und Stein. Gleichzeitig spüre ich, wie mein Körper versucht, sich an die geringere Sauerstoffkonzentration in der Luft, zu gewöhnen. Jede Bewegung kostet schon mehr Kraft als zuvor, der Aufstieg wird beschwerlicher. Mitte Vormittag gelange ich an den Rand eines Hochplateaus. Gegenüber am anderen Ende dieses gigantischen Tellers erheben sich zwei Berge. Der rechte Gipfel überragt den anderen.

In der Mitte der Ebene wächst eine altertümliche Stufenpyramide aus dem Boden, an deren Fuße der Indigene auf mich wartet. Er deutet mir mit einer Handbewegung ihm zu folgen und beginnt zu den beiden Tempelhäusern auf der obersten Plattform emporzusteigen.

»Nein«, denke ich mir, »Das ist nicht der richtige Weg.« Ich überquere das Plateau und mache mich daran, die

höchste Spitze zu erklimmen. Grobes Geröll erschwert den Aufstieg und lässt mich die erste Müdigkeit spüren. Auf Grund einer Unachtsamkeit rutsche ich aus und schlage mir das rechte Knie auf. Ein Blutfleck entsteht auf dem Stoff meiner Hose. Vielleicht wäre es besser gewesen den Tempel hinaufzusteigen, es hätte mich jedenfalls weniger Anstrengung gekostet. Wenn ich mich allerdings jetzt umsehe, ist er verschwunden.

Das Atmen fällt mir immer schwerer, meine Glieder sind schwer wie Blei, doch gerade dieser Kraftaufwand macht die Wanderung zu einer Herausforderung. Es geht mir nicht darum, einem Gott näher zu kommen, sondern dieses physische Ziel zu erreichen. Meine Lunge macht mir zunehmend Probleme und Trommeln, die ich eigentlich nicht hören will, dringen von der Ebene herauf.

Es ist nur eine riesige Gesteinsmasse, die über unvorstellbar lange Zeit geformt wurde. Der Berg hat in diesem Augenblick keinen Namen und keinen anderen Sinn, als mir zu gehören, nicht umgekehrt. Seine Eigenschaften sollen meine werden und seine Höhe soll mir zu Höhe verhelfen.

Und ehe dieser Gedanke zu Ende gedacht ist, spüre ich, wie die Kraft zurückkehrt und mich erneut beflügelt. Mein Schritt wird schneller und sicherer und meine

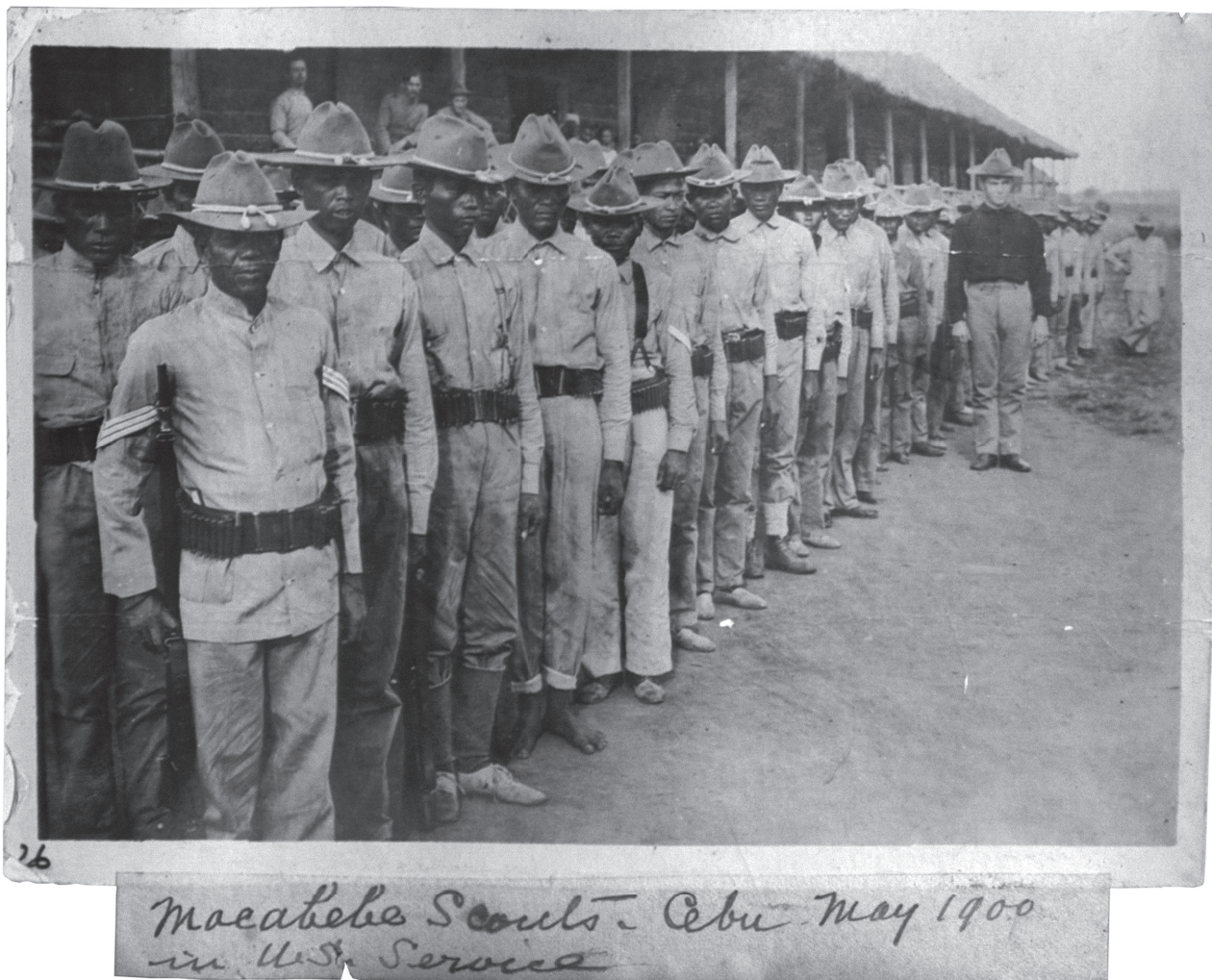
Atmung normalisiert sich. Bald habe ich die Schutthalde hinter mich gebracht und gehe und klettere wieder auf festem Untergrund. Leichtfüßig wie eine Bergziege überwinde ich die karge Landschaft, lasse mich nicht mehr ablenken durch Halluzinationen oder Gedanken.

So erreiche ich den Gipfel, gerade als auch die Sonne in ihrem höchsten Punkt steht. Auf den letzten fünfzig Metern renne ich dem Ziel entgegen. Ich brülle gegen den Himmel an, um meinem Überwältigt-Sein Ausdruck zu verleihen, doch der Himmel nimmt es gelassen. Nach Luft ringend, falle ich auf die Knie und wische mir mit dem Handrücken den Schweiß von der Stirn. Schließlich wird es still hier oben. Kein Geräusch dringt an diesen Ort, von welchem aus ich die ganze Welt überblicken kann. Kein Wind, kein Tier, kein Mensch - kein Leben existiert hier. Und da wird mir klar, wie unbedeutend meine Anwesenheit für den Berg doch ist. Nicht ich beherrsche diesen Berg, vielmehr beherrscht er mich. Nicht er braucht mich, ich brauche ihn. Ich kann an diesem Ort nur stiller Besucher und Huldiger sein, aber kein Machthaber.

Der Indigene tritt von hinten an mich heran und legt seine Hand auf meine Schulter. Ich beobachte, wie

sich ein Teil von mir löst und ihm zu einer Felsplatte folgt, auf der dieses Ich sich rücklings bettet. Mit einem steinernen Messer öffnet der Indigene den Brustkorb, entnimmt das schlagende Herz und hält es der Sonne entgegen. Anschließend trägt er den Leib an den Abgrund und wirft ihn hinab.

Ich sehe, wie der Körper fällt und vom Berg verschluckt wird.

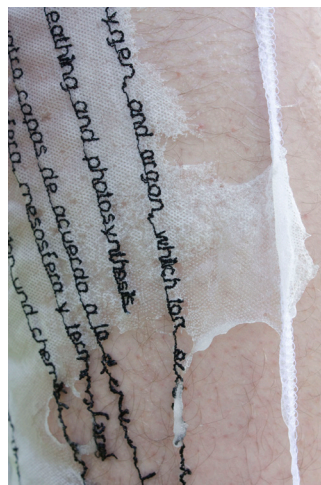


Oliver Cmyral & Stephanie Misa

A Colony of a Colony

Drawing from research, historical documents and archives, *A Colony of a Colony* traces out a narrative of the immigration and cultural exchange between the Philippines and Mexico during the height of the Spanish Empire and the Manila Galleon Trade. Many of these interactions tend to fall under the general category of “Hispanization”, versus an acknowledgment of distinct pre-Spanish origins that not only survived colonization but translocated. *A Colony of a Colony* attempts to reframe the story and create gaps wide enough that the ambiguity of historical documentation is reconsidered.

"What remains undisclosed is the cultural cargo these galleon frigates brought with them every year from 1565 to 1815, a period of 250 years coinciding with the commercial interaction between Manila and Acapulco, the links between the two countries bordering the Pacific Ocean were so close that they have given rise to the claim that the Philippines was indeed a former colony of Mexico"
Carlos Quirino



Eva Greisberger & Johanna Messner

"I am here. Those three words contain all that can be said"*

The photo series "I am here. Those three words contain all that can be said" deals with the temporary dissolution of fabric on skin.

The used material is water soluble fabric for creating a simple t-shirt and trousers.

The material is embroidered with text on air, dampness, atmosphere and clouds.

Water as the destructive force turns the embroidered sentences into an irregular pattern of unreadable words. The pictures should tell the story of a never ending process of the arising and disappearing of all being.

*(Green, René: Ongoing Becomings. Retrospective 1989-2009. Zürich: 2009)



Application for global citizenship of United Utopia

Applicants data

Given name(s) _____

Surname(s) _____

Date of birth _____

Place of birth _____

Nationality(s) _____

Gender
(female / male / trans / inter / utopian)

Following information is not required:

Registered address, social security number, health insurance company, document number, certificate of work activity, income certificate, criminal record, medical report, denomination

Place and date _____

Signature of issuing
Stamp by competent authority

For the global citizenship of United Utopia no application for extension is necessary, it is permanent.

To obtain the global citizenship of United Utopia no fees are charged.

To obtain the global citizenship of United Utopia there is no minimum salary required.

To obtain the global citizenship of United Utopia there is no declaration of liability of third parties necessary.

To obtain the global citizenship of United Utopia no integration agreements or similar arrangements are required.

To obtain the global citizenship of United Utopia no interview with a legitimating authority is required.

Providing incorrect information will have no consequence and will not be prosecuted.

PERMANENT RESIDENT CARD to cross borders and stay anywhere without restrictions

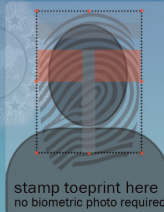
NAME _____

Birthdate
(un)important _____

Citizenship
(un)important _____

Sex
(un)important ☐ fem ☐ male ☐ trans ☐ inter ☐ utopian

Validity
transnational, unlimited



Signature _____

Card proves global citizenship of the Free World Republic UNITED UTOPIA and authorizes holder to cross all borders and stay anywhere without restrictions.

Further information and card-download for new members or duplicates:
facebook.com/unitedutopia

Claudia Harich

Embassy of
the Free World
Republic,
'United Utopia',
"A world where many
worlds fit in"

The USA as well as Europe set up walls to defend themselves from the dreaded 'Other'. For 'foreigners' it is often already difficult to enter these states without passing through long tourist-visa processes or needing the financial backing of a third party co-signer. Transferring the center of their lives to the United States or to Europe becomes almost impossible for people from the 'outside' without having specifically requested additional qualifications and / or fixed job commitments from reputable companies with an affirmed minimum salary. Due to continuously tightening asylum laws even this option is increasingly suppressed. (At the moment there are about 11 million Mexicans living in the United States, more than a half of them are 'ILLEGALS', without papers and therefore without health insurance).

**Become a member of United Utopia and holder
of the Permanent Resident Card in 10 steps:**



In response to the world's alarming societal situation – in this case especially the highly unjust migration policies that by blindly following an inhuman capitalist doctrine generate exclusions rather than mobility – inspired me to devise the concept of the 'Self-Service-Embassy' of the free World Republic United Utopia. With the 'realization of the impossible' new conceptual spaces that are necessary for an open and equal society shall be developed.

At the 'self-service-embassy' installation people can go through a formal process to become citizens of the conceived non-hegemonic, autonomous world republic 'United Utopia'. Subsequently all participants receive an especially designed „Permanent Resident Card” which is supposed to authorize the holder to cross all borders and stay anywhere without restriction or time limit. The application, its positive dispatch as well as the issuing of the card itself will be accomplished by the visitors themselves, without the need of any legitimating authority. The audience, by directly interacting with the installation, thus becomes an integral part of a 'live performance' that results in a change of roles: the visitor switches from a passive recipient to a self-empowered producer. The fictive abolishment of existing

structures within the protected setting of an exhibition may activate a communication process and initiate the participants to question internalized patterns of thought. To enlarge the radius I have installed a website (facebook.com/UnitedUtopia) where all those interested can download the card and become member of 'United Utopia' independently of the exhibition.



**Further information and card-download for new
members or duplicates: facebook.com/UnitedUtopia**



Claudia Harich

Multifunctional Poncho

The 'poncho' is woven out of black plastic sheets (truck tarpaulin) and has a transparent double layered collar which is intended as a display space. Because of its shape the collar also provides a formal reference to graphical applications on traditional Mexican ponchos. In the transparent plastic tab information can be inserted in order to communicate with the immediate environment without speaking a word which can be via signs, the symbolism of colours or through written information.

It is a multi-functional object and can be used as a poncho, as a banner or as a skirt. If opened up and kept over head it can also be used as a guarding material against aerially carried out surveillance or simply as an umbrella.

The poncho protects, covers, depersonalizes and therefore also has martial traits. It can be seen as diametrically opposed piece to the transparent 'riot and revolution safety-airdress'.





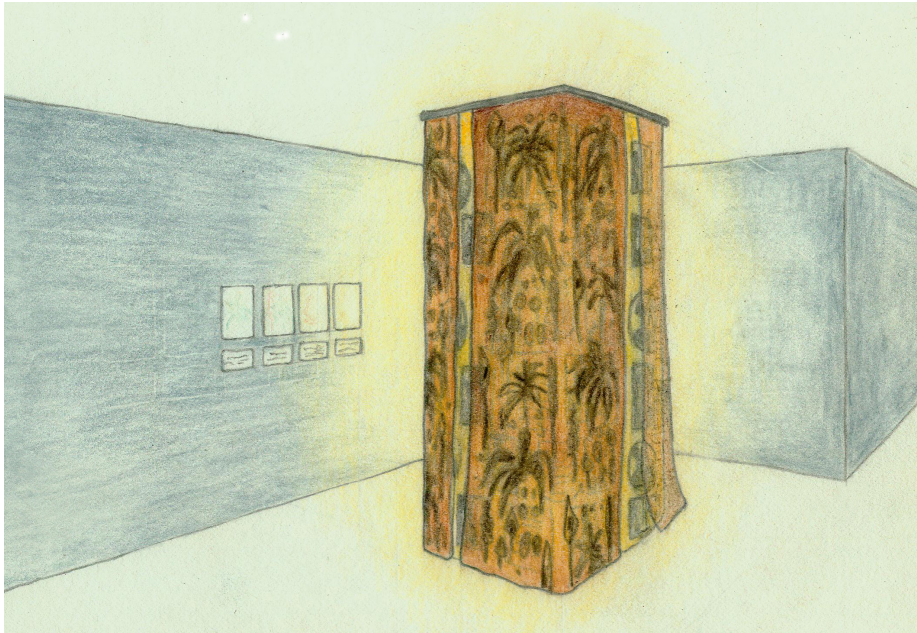
Claudia Harich

Riot and Revolution Safety Air-dress:

The dress is made of transparent plastic film. Concerning the materiality a visual connection is made to the shields, carried by police forces on demonstrations. But the ‚self-protection-dress‘ can only be seen as a symbolic implementation of a ‚passive weapon‘ because of the damageable material used. The transparency of the material, which allows a direct view of the underlying bare torso, further highlights the vulnerability of the human body. In that way non-violence and openness should be signalled.

The masculine-muscle-like dents at the front of the dress can be seen as both a reference to the protective vests of riot police, as well as an allusion to patriarchal society. But as just these parts are not inflatable, it is a parody of the special forces ‘Ninja Turtle equipment’ as well as one of an anachronistic male dominance. Furthermore, it should confuse prevailing codes of internalized symbolic order.

The side flaps offer the possibility to attach needed tools (like megaphone, device to inflate the dress etc.) – thus the wearable gets an interface between human and machine. As the side-connections are adjustable in width and length almost everyone can wear the dress – its use isn’t limited to a particular gender or a particular size.



Diana Nenning

Layers of History Maximilian and the Mexican Adventure

History consists of stories that express the view of one or several narrators. To approach history on the one hand it is necessary to look at those individually, on the other hand one should observe their interaction.

Looking for information about Maximilian and

his so called “Mexican Adventure”, the Second Mexican Empire and its history, many different perspectives can be found.

On the one hand there is the story of the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian, portrayed as a fanciful, sensible and intellectual dreamer, who wanted to create an Empire that was perfect for everybody, but who was misled by empty promises and cheating and came to a wrong decision that led him and many others into a disaster. On the other hand there is Maximilian the scientist, who was enthusiastic enough for Botany

to find new species on his own. Other botanists named several plants after him. The Museum of Natural History in Vienna holds a beautiful collection of artistic illustrations of botanic discoveries made by Austrian scientists, including many plants of the Arum family (Araceae) which can be found in Veracruz and which were first described and named by the botanist H. W. Schott, who came to Mexico following Maximilian.

A completely different insight into the history of Maximilian in Mexico is provided by a look on the numbers of people that were involved into the political struggles, Austrians, Belgians, French and Mexicans. Besides the hard facts there is the description of the situation in Mexico in contemporary newspapers which shaped the public opinion.

There are many other layers of history that could be added too, to get a comprehensive picture of it. Preferably that should be perspectives of different countries, winners and losers.

“Layers of History” refers to those different views of the same history. The observer can on the one hand concentrate on a single layer, push others aside or on the other hand look at the overlay and interference.



Julia Alexandra Soteris Riederer

“no longer – not yet”

“no longer – not yet” is a textile art work that is continuously being refined and altered in form and design. At the moment the object/garment consists of 900m colored string sewn together using a sewing machine. The object’s organic character in combination with the material’s inflexibility allow for it to be worn both as a dress and a sculpture on the body.

An important aspect of this project is performativity. As I understand my own artistic involvement first of all as a work in progress that develops precisely through interaction with other participants who do not necessarily have an artistic background/access, it emphasizes a kind of gateway between art, communication and clothing.

For this project, everyone is invited to bring materials like string or textiles which I integrate in my work on site. I am also visiting inhabitants of Xalapa at home to communicate my work to them and also to ask them for additional material. It is an experiment that is actively engaging people in Xalapa, initiating cultural exchange by means artistic as well as communicational.

Marianne Sorge

kitsch 'n' veil

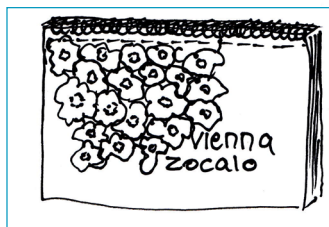
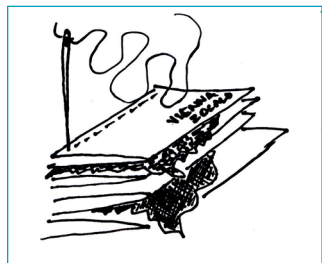
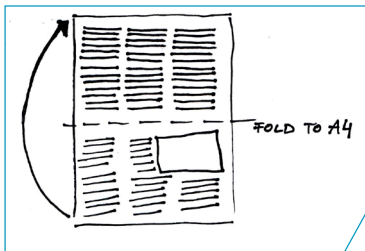
I once read an article which claimed kitsch to be the kit that holds everything together that would fall apart otherwise. While I believe this to be smashingly adequate I also think that kitsch works in a veiling way as well. All these nice patterns, flowers and animals and bright colors distract us from seeing what is right in front of us in every aspect of society. It's rather the hollywood-like effect than the content that draws our attention.

I designed this publication to work on two levels. On the one hand the publication aims to be the space where essays, art works and cvs are interwoven by design but also by the overall theme 'Critical Crafting as a postcolonial strategy'. So the publication is complementarily thought as a textile object. Traditional Austrian and later also Mexican scarf patterns are used in this book to veil part of the articles and hence force the readers to 'unveil' before they are able to read. Using the example of lifting a bridal veil I chose the book's format to be landscape and that it would be tied on top.

But to unveil one page means also to veil the one before: We all use kitsch. We all are a hybrid network of veilers.

- I PRINT THE PUBLICATION'S DOCUMENT ON A3, USING ANY KIND OF PAPER YOU'D PREFER.
- II FOLD THE SHEETS TO A4. PRINTED SIDE ON THE OUTSIDE.
- III FIND ANY FABRIC THAT SUITS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF KITSCH – LACES, FLOWER PATTERNS ETC. – AND RIP OFF SLICES SIZED A4 OR SMALLER
- IV NOW COMPOSE FABRICS AND PAPER SHEETS
– BE SURE TO HAVE THE FOLD ON THE DOWN SIDE.
- V YOU CAN NOW SUE YOUR VERY OWN ART WORK TOGETHER
– EITHER BY HAND OR MACHINE, OR BOTH WHICH IS WHAT I DID.

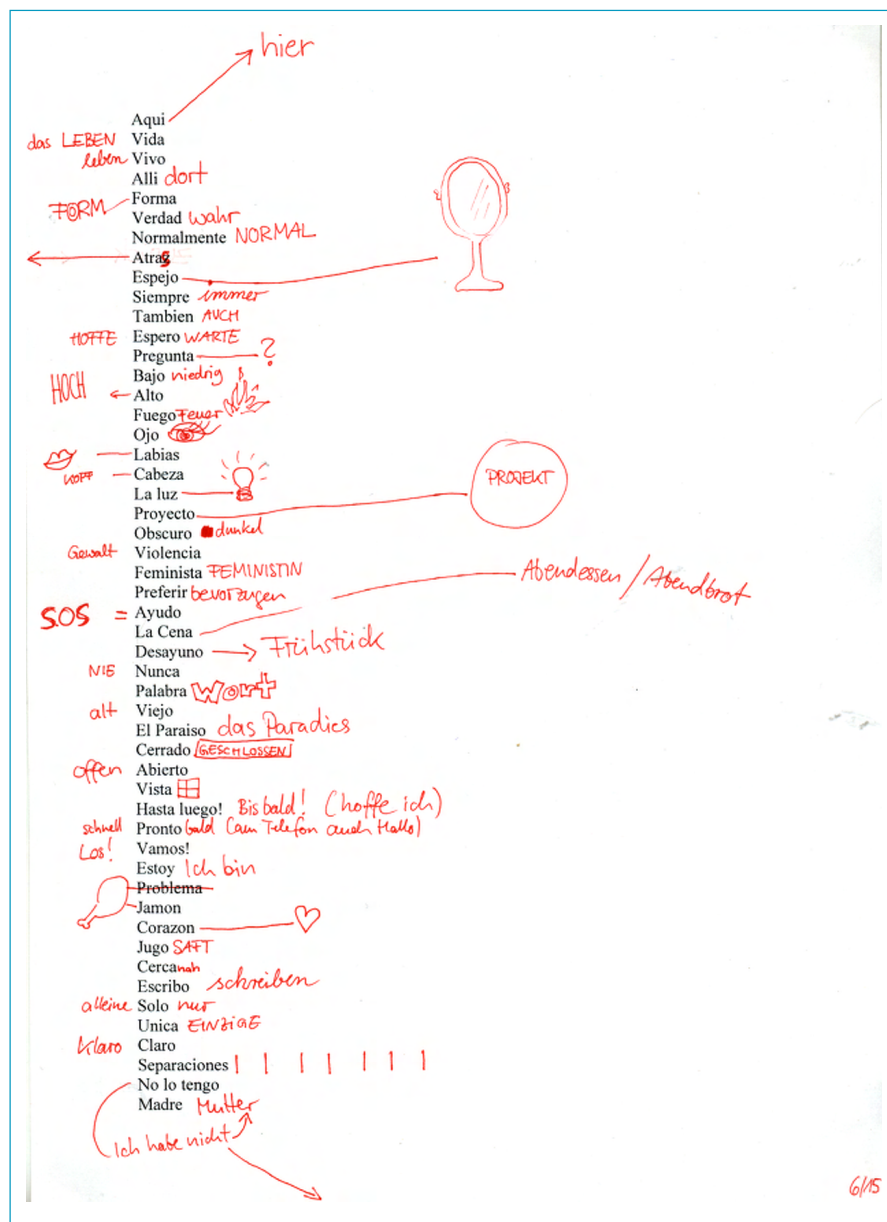
DON'T FORGET TO DO THE SEAM ON TOP OF THE LANDSCAPED DESIGN.
- VI HAVE FUN AND SHOW OFF WITH YOUR UNIQUE DESIGN.
– POST A PIC OF YOUR OWN MASTER PIECE ON VIENNA ZOCALO ON FACEBOOK IF YOU LIKE (it).



language

When I entered the Mexican Border I did not know a single word of Spanish. I had never been taught in French or Italian as well. The only languages I could speak were English and German. Travelling under that condition to a country where hardly anybody speaks English, is truly a challenging and mind changing experience. I had been educated in the English language from a young age and until I came to Mexico I had never been somewhere, where I could not make myself understandable with words. Putting myself in that situation, I realised what an immense power comes along with the knowledge of a certain language or better language at all. It opens whole new worlds or shuts them down completely.

On the following page there is a list of different palabras and phrases which I learnt *en la calle* during my viaje through Mexico in 2010. I set myself the task to write down all the words I would remember four weeks after I had returned to *Alemania*. The list contains of 481 words, numbers and phrases. First I started to write them down as they came to mind, later I tried to group them while writing.



Warum? Padre Vater → Ist halt so
 De Donde? WOHER / VON WO
 Lluvia
 Indigena
 Rio
 Como se llama? Wie heißt?
 Papel
 Idioma SPRACHE
 Ya schon
 Pan
 Pero ABER!
 Pajaro
 Burro
 Loro Papagei
 Mariposa
 PTERO Cavallo
 Crocodillo
 Pez FISCH
 Mosquito 622222
 Gato KATZE
 Schildkröte Tortuga
 Puerco SCHWEIN
 Animales
 Camarones lecker: GARNELEN
 Filete de pescado Fischfilet
 Hühner Pollo (nur zum Essen, sonst gallina)
 Res REIS
 Papas, papas fritas KARTOFFELN, POMMES
 Arroz
 Chile Chilli + CHILE
 Manzana
 Platano
 Sandia WASSERMELONE
 Durazno him... Pfirsich o. Nektarine?
 Naranja ORANGE
 Fresa
 Guayaba Gu
 Paleta Eis am Stk:
 Helado Speiseeis
 Chocolate
 Canela
 Cansado müde
 Nuez Nüsse
 Leche Milch
 Granola Müsl
 Limon Limette
 Pay
 Queso KÄSE
 Agua, agua pura klares Wasser zum Trinken
 Vino

RIO GRANDE
 Schmetterling
 7/15

BIER
 Cerveza
 Pelo
 SKN Piel HAUT
 Pie PPPP
 Persona
 Yo
 Mi mir
 Me mein } oder anders herum
 Soy
 Tu DU
 Te Dein
 Sie Usted
 Nosotros uns oder WIR
 DEINE Su ICHRE
 Colores
 Flores
 Arbol
 Tule
 La mar das Meer
 La montana die Berge
 La playa der Strand
 El sol
 La luna Mond
 Estrella
 HÄNGEMATTE Hamaca
 Regadera Dusche
 Recamara Schlafzimmer
 KLO Banjo BAD
 Sanitario nur feiner
 Autobus
 Camion Bus
 Lancha Boot
 El Tren ZUUUUUG
 Avion Flugzeug
 TICKET Boleto
 Metro U-BAHN
 Metrobus Schienebus
 Mas
 Menos weniger
 Mejor
 Con mit
 Sin ohne
 Poco wenig
 Poquito sehr wenig
 Pequeno super wenig / winzig
 Chico
 Grande GRÖß
 Lento langsam
 Rapido schnell
 Pacio ruhig / langsam
 Tranquillo

FARBEN
 mein Lieblingsbaum mit dicken rissigen Blättern
 MEHR!
 8/15

Muy *muy muy muy muy muy*

Mucho

Demasiado

Importante

Interesante

Diferente

Fuerte

Economic

Caro

Bonito, bonita

Buen, bueno

Bien

Feo *hässlich*

Mal

Libre

Peligroso

Dulce

Picante

Rico *lecker*

Fantastico

Chido

Poetica

Facil

Difficil

Calor

Frio *heiß*

Fresco

Nuevo

Joven

Sensitivo

😊 — Gracioso

Tradicional

(por) la Manana

(por) la noche

tarde, mas tarde *später, viceeeel später*

hora

ultimo hora

minuto

dia, dias

semana, semanas

mes

ano, anos

hoy

ayer

ahora

desde

antes

despues

todo *ALLE, TOTAL, JEDER*

nada

vielleicht talvez

9/15

hola

a veces

un otra vez

igual

similar

otra

lunes

miercoles

viernes

sabado

domingo

marzo

avril

mayo

junio

julio

mujer, mujeres

hombre, hombres

Chicka, chickas

Guapa

Nino, ninos

Amigo, amiga, amigos

Buscando

Necesito *brauchen*

Quiero

Quisiero

Tengo

Siento

Creo

Hablo, habla

Comprar

Caminar *gehen*

Mantar

Aprender

Dormir

Trabajar

Encontrar

reisen Viajar

Conosir, conosco

Esperar

Probar

Gusto

Hambre

Comida, Comida Corrida

*Mittags-Menü im Angebot
+ RIESIG +*

Vestido

Dinero

Mercado

Cucina

Celular

Telefono

Bolsa

10/15

Bolsita 

Nombre

Vacacione

Machismo

Trabajo

Estudiante

Seguridad

Suerte

Dolor SCHMERZ

Viaje

Cultura

Imagines

Arte visual

Arte Actual

Arte contemporaneo

Video

Performance

Museo

Fotografia

Galeria

Querpo

Natura

Familia

Masa

Botello

Llegada

Beso, Besito, Besote

Amor

Te quiero

Momento

Vi

Veo SEHEN

Bailando

Fiesta

Coco

Para

Derecho

De la recha rechts

A la izquierda

Sur

Norte

Esquina

Quadras

Calle

Casa

Pueblo

Ciudad

Colonia, Colonia populares → slums

Zocalo

Centro

Es

links

Bezirke

M/15

Esto

Este

Esta

En

De

A

Ingles

Aleman

Alemana

Gringo, Gringa

Chilango

Americano

Espanol

Zapotec

Japon

Mejico

Paiz

Mundo

Me gusta mucho (Ich dich auch)

Me gustas tu

Que tal?

Como estas?

Quando

Quando vale?

Que

Donde

Lo siento

Disculpa me

Por favor

Gracias

Muchas gracias

Con permiso

No entiendo

No se ICH WEIS NICHT

Muy bien

Bienvenido

Prohibito

SCHWARZ

Negro

Blanco

Verde

Verduras GEMÜSE

Ensalada SALAT

Rojos

Amarillo

Azul

Un, una, uno

Dos

Tres

Quatro

Cinco

Seis

JULISCHKA

M/15

- 7 Siete
- 8 Ocho
- 9 Nueve
- 10 Diez
- 11 Once
- 12 Doce
- 13 Trece?
- 14 Quince
- 15 Dieciseis
- 16 Diecisiete
- 17 Dieciocho
- 18 Veinte
- 19 El Viento
- 20 treinta
- 21 treinta y uno
- 22 treinta y dos
- 23 treinta y tres
- 24 treinta y cuatro
- 25 treinta y cinco
- 26 treinta y seis
- 27 treinta y siete
- 28 treinta y ocho
- 29 treinta y nueve
- 30 cuarenta
- 31 cincuenta
- 32 sesenta
- 33 setenta
- 34 ochenta
- 35 noventa
- 36 cien

→ der Wind vienes (Manu Chao)



mariscos → Meeresfrüchte

Im Dezember 2010 machte ich einen Online-Sprachtest. Ich habe die Stufe "Spanisch A1" nicht erreicht.

Sie haben 43% der Fragen RICHTIG beantwortet.

Um Stufe **A1** zu erreichen, müssen Sie mindestens **70%** aller Fragen richtig beantworten

13/15

1. - Hola, me llamo Sandra. ¿Tú, cómo te llama?
a) llamo
b) llaman
c) llamas
d) llamas
2. - ¿Quiénes son los "Beatles"?
- Un grupo inglés.
a) es
b) son
c) seas
d) somos
3. - ¿Qué se dice "Tisch" en español?
- Se dice "mesa".
a) Qué
b) Dónde
c) Cómo
d) Que
4. - Y Mariano, ¿en qué trabaja?
- Mariano es empleada del Banco Santander.
a) secretaria
b) veterinario
c) empleado
d) profesor
5. - Pedro vive en México, pero sus padres viven en Argentina.
a) viven
b) vivo
c) vos
d) vives
6. - ¿Cuál es tu número de teléfono?
a) está
b) tienen
c) hay
d) es
7. - Ana tiene unos niños muy guapos.
a) guapos
b) guapas
c) guapo
d) guapa
8. - En Valladolid está una iglesia muy bonita.
a) es
b) hay
c) son
d) está
9. - Perdona, ¿dónde están el Teatro Real?
a) está
b) están
c) hay
d) es
10. - ¿Te gusta cocinar?
- Pues la verdad es que no. Prefiero ir a un restaurante.
a) gustan / Prefiero
b) gusta / Prefiero
c) gusta / Prefiero
d) gustan / Prefiero
11. - Esta tarde soyamos un partido de fútbol, ¿te vienes?
a) jugamos
b) jugáis
c) tocáis
d) tocamos
12. - Buenos días, señora. ¿Qué desea?
- Tiene queso manchego?
a) Deme
b) Tiene
c) Quiero
d) Como
13. - Un kilo de tomates, por favor.
- ¿Cómo los quiere?
- No muy verdes.
a) las
b) los
c) la
d) los
14. - ¿Qué tal está el pollo?
- Está muy rico.
a) mucho
b) poco
c) muy
d) demasiado
15. - No me gustan los centros comerciales.
- Yo tampoco.

14/14



Mario Strk

How to Love a Little Cactus?

Audio collage “embodying the conflict of speaking for others”; mixed media: mp3 player with headset

I asked myself the question ‘How to love a little cactus?’ for the past weeks and months.

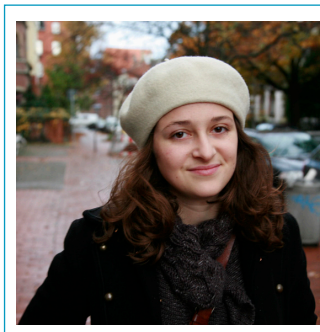
mario strk how to love a little cactus • 99

Angelika Stephanie Böhm

Born in Traunstein, Bavaria (Germany) in 1981, she now lives and studies in Vienna, Austria. After graduating from the University of Augsburg in 2007, she now studies Education in the Arts as well as Graphic Arts and Printmaking Techniques under Gunter Damisch, both at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna

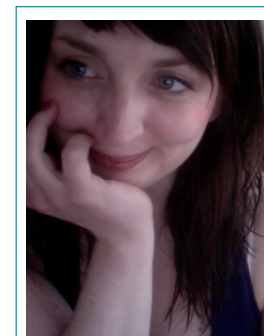
She mainly focuses on expressive paintings of humans (portrait), creatures and environment. Her artistic efforts include acrylic painting, drawing, textiles, teaching, transferring of projects and exhibitions in Austria and Germany.

www.STEPHESH.com



Marlies Brommer

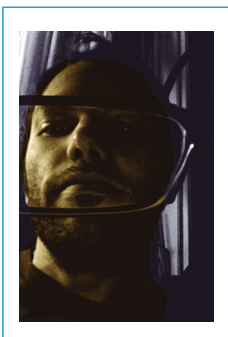
Born 1987 in Vienna, Austria. After studying Comparative Literature at the University of Vienna for one term she now attends the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna to study Fashion & Styles and Design & Context both at the Institute for Education in the Arts.



Veronika Burger

From 2001 to 2006 Veronika studied sculpture and New Media at Vienna Art School. Previously working as a tailor and as a stage designer she now studies Transmedia Art at the University of Applied Arts Vienna as well as Performative Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Internship at the Performance Archive „The Franklin Furnace Institute“ in New York (US) in 2009 and participation in the artist-in-residency program „PAF“ (FRA). She is currently working as a teacher for Media Art at the Vienna Art School.

Since 2006 Suzie Léger and Veronika are working on a performance collaboration called {above-}over. In February 2010 she, among other Austrian female artists, initiated the weekly performance salon „SHOWESQUE“ in Vienna (AUT). Her art work deals with identity, social- and political changes, film- and musical references, issues of gender, sound and dance and performance, and the question of how performance can be archived and presented.



Oliver Cmyral

Oliver Cmyral, born in 1976 in Vienna, Austria currently works in the Architectural field with a focus on Exhibition Design besides studying Architecture at the Technical University in Vienna. His recent BA project was the design of a Fundación to house the works of Mimmo Jodice in Naples, Italy. Professionally he is part of a team responsible for the architectural implementation of a number of temporary and permanent exhibitions in Austria such as; “Der Dombau von St. Stephan” (Wien Museum), Geo Data City (Planungswerkstatt), Brennpunkt (Heizungsmuseum Wien); and worked as project leader on the following exhibits: “Die 60er. Beatles, Pille und Revolte” (Schallaburg) and “Erobern – Entdecken” (Niederösterreichische Landesausstellung, Kulturfabrik Hainburg). He lives and works in Vienna, Austria.

Born 1983 in London. Lives and works in Vienna. Studied at the University of Edinburgh between 2001-2005. Since 2006 studies at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna under Prof. Dorit Margreiter and Pawel Althamer. Recent exhibitions and screenings include FILMIKI, Curated by_Vienna (2010) at Gallery Dana Charkasi, Der schaffende Mensch Styrian Autumn Festival (2010) at Schloss Trautenfels, Wiggle (2010) at the MAK - Austrian Museum of Applied Arts in Vienna, Welches Leben? (2010) curated by Sabine Breitweiser and Project Projection (2009) curated by Matthias Michalka.

Elena Cooke



Veronika Geiger – Verito Violin

Born 1982 in Mödling, Austria. Since 2002 studying Textile Art at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and since 2003 Education of the Arts. From 2006-2007 Veronika studied abroad in Santiago de Chile and consecutively travelled through Chile, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador, initializing a recycling project “la separación de la basura” in four schools in Ecuador. Her art work focuses on the relationship of art and garbage and includes “Tetrapack Tipi” and “art, advertising or garbage?” She says: „In any Austrian cellar - garbage becomes art and art becomes garbage...”

Claudia Harich

A notorious globetrotter, precarious jobber, re-student of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and recent teacher of creative subjects at the HLA Herbststrasse for art and fashion, Claudia mostly lives in Vienna since 1980. Active participation in various cultural contexts and socio-political affairs, especially concerning border issues, capitalism critique and open space conflicts; contributions to various gatherings and political events.

Before studying at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna she took a Diploma in Furniture and Interior Design at College Mödling in 2000, ensuing three years of working in that branch followed by one yearlong stay in Spain. After five years of studying, including one semester abroad in Chile, she passed her MFA in Art and Crafting Education in 2010. Her thesis on autonomous spaces of self-determined cultural and social production won the first Award of the Academy; it was followed by two articles dealing with similar subjects. Since 2009 she studies Fashion and Styles. Recently she participated in Viennese group exhibitions and staged several art performances.

Eva Greisberger

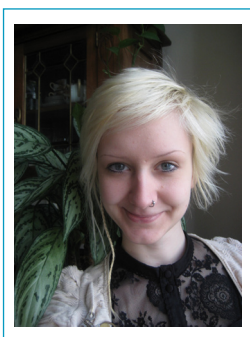
In August 2007 Eva moved to Vienna to study “German Language and Literature Studies”. Soon it turned out that she needed to do a more practice oriented study and so, in September 2008, she began to study “Fashion and Styles” as well as “Art and Communication” at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

In May 2010 Johanna Messner and Eva founded the label ILANOI which is a creative concept space. The label's intention is to establish a connection between art and design.

Furthermore Eva did two courses at the Summer Academy of Fine Arts at Salzburg. Due to a scholarship she had the opportunity to visit sculpture classes of Judy Fox and Wang Fu in the years 2007 and 2008.

Aino Korvensyrjä

Studied Philosophy and Contemporary History in Helsinki and Madrid, currently studying art, new media and critical theory in Cologne and Vienna. Interested in regimes of (re)production and distribution of images, narratives and knowledges.



Verena Krems

In 2008 Verena graduated from school and right afterwards started studying Fashion and Styles and Design and Context at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. Later she added Art and Communication to her studies. Her art work varies from textile works to drawing and painting, from photography to designing jewellery and other handcrafts, exploring medieval handcrafting techniques.



Katharina Luksch

Katharina Luksch was born in Vienna, Austria, where she has been living ever since. Besides working various underpaid part-time jobs she has tried her hands at Anthropology, Modern Greek Studies, Philosophy, and Latin before entering the Institute for Art and Education at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna.

Luiza Margan

Margan was born in Rijeka, Croatia. After obtaining her degree from the Academy of Fine Arts in Ljubljana in 2006, she now lives and works in Vienna. Her art works also connect to her other home towns: Rijeka (Croatia), Ljubljana (Slovenia), and Sofia (Bulgaria). In her work she employs a variety of media and is interested in approaches investigating the relation between art and everyday life, history and knowledge, language and body in re/presentation.



Martin Martinsen

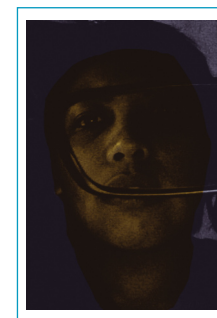
Martin studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, where he sews re-makes of gowns that have been worn by Greta Garbo, and then wears them.



Johanna Messner

After graduating from the Graphic Design School Brixen, Italy, Johanna studied History of Art at the University of Innsbruck, Austria in 2005. After that she worked as an integration teacher in a vocational school for one year, before she started to study “Arts and Communication” and “Fashion and Styles” at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Passionate about sewing and engaged with various textile print and staining techniques, her current textile art works experiment with new cuts in balance between art and fashion.



Stephanie Misa

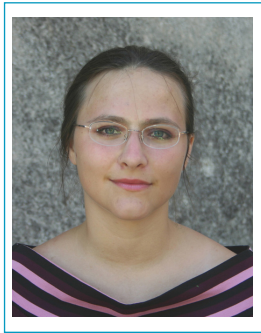
Stephanie Misa, born in 1979 in Cebu City, Philippines, studies Performative Arts and Sculpture under Prof. Monica Bonvicini at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. She also holds a BA in Philosophy from the Ateneo de Manila University, and an MA in Interactive Telecommunications from New York University. Her work often deals with issues of identity construction and otherness whether as art-in-public space, installation or performance. She has exhibited at the Salzburger Kunstverein, Das Weisse Haus, BKS Garage in Copenhagen, Homebase V in Berlin and Mossutställningar in Stockholm among others. She lives and works in Vienna, Austria.

Aki Namba

Born 1982 in Japan, lives and works in Vienna, Austria. The discovery of a phenomenon always means the discovery of the world and simultaneously its disposition and construction: Aki Namba investigates ways to reinterpret reality positively. To achieve this she attempts to transform concrete phenomena and situations, which she is able to perceive in the world surrounding her, into art practices with combining a wide range of media like video or daily stuff by picking up the relationships between aspects of daily life which lie behind these phenomena and situations. Her motto is “minimal effort, maximum effect”.

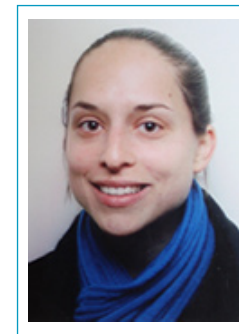
www.akinamba.com

www.amalgamzine.com



Diana Nenning

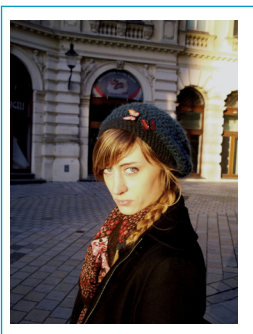
Born in Vienna in 1982 Diana now studies Education in the Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, Education in IT and IT Management at the Vienna University of Technology, Artistic Education under Renée Green and Graphic Arts and Printmaking Techniques under Gunter Damisch, Michael Hedwig, Otto Zitko and Nobuhiko Numazaki and Franz Strobl. She participated in exhibitions in Austria and abroad



Katharina Petru

Currently studies Education in the Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Her art work, respectively research, focuses on questions on history and how it affects present circumstances. Her concern are vacancies and spaces in-between, details and gaps which tell something about society and conscript relations.



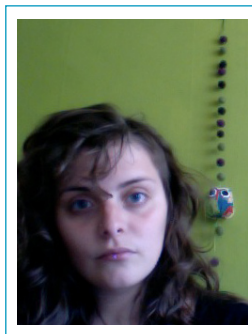
Julia, Alexandra, Soteris Riederer

Achieved the title master tailor in May 2008. Since Oktober 2009 studies Education in the Arts with main focus on fashion and styles and art and communication at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna.

In April 2009 she created her fashion-art label jiloinx, which will soon be renamed in mampell, her grandmother's maiden name.

Julia also works as a costume designer for music videos and film productions (e.g. in the historical costume film "Dr Hope" with Heike Makatsch starring).

She works with textiles in a sculptural way and I does experimental video and contemporary dance. In her work she mainly focuses on body and motion and the behaviour between body and space and has been exhibited in Vienna and Munich.



Marianne Sorge

Born in Vienna in 1986, Marianne grew up in Southern Germany. Since 2002 she works and lives in Vienna. After graduating from school with a major in Graphics and Communication Design she now studies Education in the Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.

Influenced by her interest in educational studies, postcolonial studies, gender studies and semiotics, her recent projects explore questions like: How is the migrant/exotic/oriental other perceived, negotiated and designed in Central Europe? How does the political and social discourse on dress confine our choice of how much we show of our bodies? How does mainstream pornography affect our society's concept of gender and sexuality?

Siax Soquel

Since 2001 works at an Art-Center in Payerbach called Kunststaette Kuenburg as a teacher, artist and curator. Since 2001 teaches at the Children Painting Seminar „Komm wir malen!“ („Come let's paint!“) Since 2007 Teaching Assistant of Prof. Phillip Rubinov Jacobson at the Summer Academies „old masters new visions“.

Since October 2009 she studies Education in the Arts with main focus on Fashion and Styles and Art and Communication at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna.

Siax uses different materials and artistic expressions such as painting, photography, installation, video and performance. Beside Exhibitions at the Kuenburg and the Artoff Gallery in Reichenau, she performed in Lodz (Poland), Hyère (France) and Berlin.

Julischka Stengele

Julischka Stengele (*1982) is a German visual artist who primarily expresses herself through photography and performance art.

She first studied Visual Communication/Photography at HTW Berlin, from where she graduated in 2010.

Parallel, she took up self-educational studies in performance art – supplemented by seminars and mentoring of well established artists. Since October 2010 she studies at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Since 2007, Stengele participated in various group shows in Germany and Canada and presented her performances internationally, including Mexico, Poland and the US. She also participates in the work of other artists as a model since 2003 and organises exhibitions and art projects.

Mario Strk

Mario Strk, born 1979 at Bad Aussee, is a contemporary artist who lives and works at present in Vienna, Austria.

Since 2007 he studies at the Academy of Fine Art Vienna at the Department Object Sculpture led by Pawel Althamer. Warning: Let there be air.

Klemens Waldhuber

Born in 1989 Klemens grew up in a town in the vicinity of Graz, Styria. He attended grammar school and did his alternative service in a workshop for special people. In this facility it was possible to work with clay. And although he never had had much to do with sculpting Klemens started to experiment and soon afterwards did his first sculptures in plaster. A few months later he was admitted to the class of Pawel Althamer at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. At present he lives and works in Vienna.



Khadija Carroll La

El delantal blanco Die weiße Schürze The white apron



...O vertilge diese ruchlos
Böse Brut, die Götterfresser -
Vitzliputzli, Putzlivitzli,
Laß uns siegen, Vitzliputzli!¹

Heinrich Heine
cut the god he made in Mexico's image
named, cut up, and cannibalized the name:
Vitz|li|put|zli = Put|li|vitz|zli²

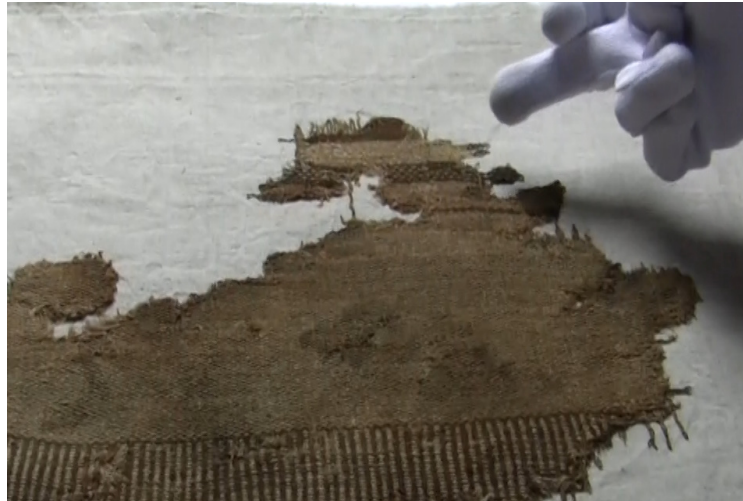
Vitzliputzli arrived sometime around 1851 to haunt
Europe as revenge for Mexico, for sending Cortez, and
as a prediction also of the madness that would catch a
Queen, and bleed a King.³

¹ Heinrich Heine, *Vitzliputzli*, 1851. An epic poem about Cortez's colonization and violence in Mexico by means of demystification and deconstruction.

² Rubén Gallo, *Freud's Mexico: Into the Wilds of Psychoanalysis*, MIT Press, 2010.

³ 13 years after the poet Heine's curse on European colonialism the Habsburg emperor of Mexico, Maximilian and his wife Charlotte, arrive in 1864. His execution is ordered by Juarez in 1867, bloodshed resonant in Heine's curse and the material remains of graves excavated and sent back to Vienna during his brief reign.

A fragment of an archeology
 von a body, an archeology.⁴
 Torn in fact, from a corpse in a cave.
 Dark stains on textiles
 speak of objects from graves.⁵



⁴ Because of the humidity it is very rare to have archeological textiles from Mexico, most are anthropological collections. This one in Vienna's ethnographic museum is a very rare piece therefore, the only two textile fragments to have survived from the Novara expedition / Maximilian von Mexico's time in the field.

⁵ Gerhard Buessel, the curator of Mexican materials at the Völkerkunde Museum, Wien. From a personal interview in the museum in November 2010.

Read. Journals of penetration into the dark.⁶
(Graves opened in the name of research
of those things usually given to the dead.)⁷

Was this wise Maximilian?⁸

It seems inauspicious to take the clothes from the dead
at the same time steal the offerings given to them
sent back to stay in the museum with Montezuma's
crown.⁹

what did they wear and
were they always already far from
the bright missionary gift of days of the dead,
all sugar and colour coated?¹⁰



⁶ There are countless diaries of colonial explorers that do archaeological digs in graves during their expeditions. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is the novel however that portrays the psychology of colonial urges to penetrate the darkness.

⁷ In North America museums are now forced by law to assess repatriation claims under The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). A United States federal law passed in 1990 requiring that Native Americans' cultural items be returned to their respective peoples if and when they have been excavated, NAGPRA allows archaeological teams a short time for analysis before the remains must be returned.

⁸ It is of course not his doing directly, but merely a spooky resonance with Maximilian's death after his unwise decisions surrounding the Mexican colony. Most humorous of accounts is perhaps Richard O'Connor's *The cactus throne: the tragedy of Maximilian and Carlotta*, Allen and Unwin, 1971.

⁹ The very same museum is of course also the proud owner of the contentious feather crown attributed to the last indigenous ruler of Mexico before Cortez, Montezuma.

¹⁰ Claudio Lomnitz, *Death and the Idea of Mexico*, New York, Zone Books, 2005. See also Piñata story in this volume for another missionary use of sugar to seduce the heathens.

On white tissue and with white gloves,
the fragment is not treated like any other
dirty rag 'pulled from the compost'
the curator in the white apron instructs.¹¹
It has provenance: Novara provenance.¹²

White apron,
perhaps it was mothers?
whitest cotton with hand embroidered detailing.
For a museum curator,
there is the tradition of wearing a lab-coat
like the scientists next door in the university.
Here in the Vienna Völkerkunde Museum¹³
Not splitting atoms,¹⁴ but splitting items
from cultures living on without them.

A few years after this corpse is robbed of this cloth
To Juarez
June 19, 1867, just before his execution.
Maximilian writes "that my blood may be the last that
is shed".
In a speech to the people he reiterates himself as a
sacrificial victim,
he adds, "may it regenerate this unhappy country".¹⁵
Maximilian offers himself to the cannibals and their gods.¹⁶

El emperador se ve como víctima sacrificial



¹¹ Barbara Matuella, textiles conservator of the Völkerkunde Museum, Wien.

¹² For more on the Novara expedition read Elke Gaugele in this same volume.

¹³ The catalogue of Völkerkunde Museum for objects from Veracruz:
Objects from Veracruz that are in Vienna:

Tierfigur Köpfchen Köpfchen Köpfchen Köpfchen
Spinnwirtel Spinnwirtel Spinnwirtel Spinnwirtel
Spinnwirtel Köpfchen Scherben Scherben Scherben
Scherben Smiling head Smiling head Tonkopf Querflöte
Trommel Kernspaltflöte Fächer Pan de muertos Pan de
muertos Hemd Hose Hut Bluse Bluse Fächer Tasche Hose
Hemd Hose Hemd Kleid Schürze Haube Schlauchrock
Bluse Schürze Gürtel Tuch Quechquemel Halskette
Ohrgehänge Bänder Topf

¹⁴ There is no association to science with the white apron.

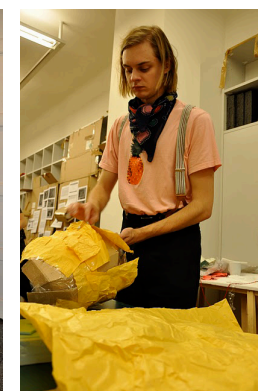
¹⁵ W. Harris Chynoweth, *The fall of Maximilian, with an historical introduction, the events immediately preceding his acceptance of the crown, and a particular description of the causes which led to his execution; together with a correct report of the able defence made by his advocates before the court-martial, and their persevering efforts on his behalf at the seat of the republican government*, London, 1872.

¹⁶ Cummins, T. B. F., *To Serve Man: Pre-Columbian art, Western discourses of idolatry and cannibalism, Res: West by nonwest*, 42, 2002. For more on cannibalism see entries in this volume by Ruby Sircar, Sabeth Buchmann, Aino Korvensyrjä, and Klemens Waldhuber.

Khadija Carroll La

Piñatas Made in Vienna

At 5am on a November morning a group of Museums Quarter cleaners found in our wake the 'piñata as archive' of an Austrian subjectivity.¹ This time our constructions of Mexico were embodied in the popular piñata, which is already an object of early colonial politics. Imported from China to the West by Marco Polo. As a hollow fiber sculpture filled with sweets and beaten to gush, the Piñata had been used to coax Native Americans in South and North America into Christianity. The seven-pointed star piñata, still common today, is a relic of these early missionaries representation of the seven deadly sins, which they said only "blind" faith could destroy. In my workshop we each made a Piñata and sewed blindfolds. Afterwards we went to execute these together in public, as an experiment in the construction and cathartic deconstruction of an icon.



¹ Irene Lucas, guest artist, piñata workshop, Academy of Fine Arts, Critical Crafting Café, November 2010.



"I made Frieda Kahlo into Mickey Mouse in 3D."

"I made the Schillerplatz, symbolic of the fine art school,
as an architectural-piñata-model - to be destroyed"

"I want to be the piñata, hit me"

I can see the headline form as they speak:

“Students forced to perpetrate violence in the Vienna Zocalo!”

“I don’t want to hurt the animal piñata” says one student in belated protest (after hitting the piñata).

“Hitting is mean in my culture” says another

“I made a Punschkrappen piñata – symbolizing all the worst parts of Austria – and then took it home.”

“A pineapple with a contents of my post precious objects: a pipe, new Orleans necklaces, and of course a mini-live pineapple with which to deal the blow”

- the tragedy being that the children were quicker to the loot than the bringer of tropics to the North could be.





Blindfold off

The horror

Precious contents all gone!

I found I enjoyed the thrill
 Blindfolded and dangerous
 Because sweets - swiping
 The giggle and roar of the crowd
 my my my ah
 Where is that piñata
 Before I can get the blindfold
 off, the children are at my feet
 gathering the sweets.



Lisbeth Freiß

Claims on Mexico: Regency after Viennese Fashion.

As a modernist European discourse fashion is a central agent to govern nation, culture and space. Thus my ongoing research, at the Department for Education in the Arts, focuses on “Viennese Fashions. Regimes of Materialization”. The research project analyses fashion in regard to the Vienna Fashion (*Wiener Mode*) and its countercultures as social and political regulatory. Hypothetically assuming that fashion activated social and spatial borders and “policies of appearance”, during the nation-state renewal in 19th century Europe. At the beginning of the 19th century Vienna nominates itself as “fashion metropolis”, following internal and external colonial intentions. While ethnic and national costume and fashion is occupied by the imperial elites as internal colonial and national regulatory for the Habsburg Monarchy, Maximilian v. Habsburg’s assignment to the imperial Mexican crown in 1864



sideswipes fashion as colonial regulator. The discourse which is created by *Viennese Fashion* as a mass media fashion magazine follows the “Othering” (Homi K. Bhabha) strategy and also mentions Mexican fashion.

This talk will discuss the aspiration of Maximilian’s rule in Mexico to strengthen the regime of *Viennese Fashions* over “fashion in Mexico”; analysing references on Mexico in Viennese fashion magazines from 1844 and 1867, as well as Albert Kretschmer’s and Carl Rohrbach’s history of costumes *The peoples’ costumes* (1864). In regard of spatial policies to “locate culture” (Homi K. Bhabha) fashion and physiognomy are strongly related. Fashion which is a modern phenomenon conceives itself through the interchange with culture and education and is regarded as indicator for culturalisation, progress and the constitution of nations.

In 1798 *Charis* magazine writes:

Less developed people could be recognised through their “mind and taste culture”; their dress would be static, they would insist stubbornly on old ways and could not “name what we call fashion”. (Charis 1806, p. 10., see: Journal des Dames et des Modes (Frankfurt) 9. September 1798, p. 2).

The cover page of the *Wiener-Modejournal* of 1805 (WMZ1805) furthers the assumption, quoting the German poet Friedrich Schiller who calls fashion “culture’s source”. Appealing to all Viennese women, to all “kind female dwellers of the educated world (...) who are not so far advanced in the art of enhancing their beauty and to please” the article *Revoluzion der Toilette (Revolution of female Toilette)* draws the border line for Viennese fashion; calling for an “original” *Viennese fashion*. The author compares the “bold savage” and “their lively phantasy adoring on their skin arabesques, historical and landscape painting” (WMZ1805. Nr.4. 15.2.1805) and asks for an “original “ Viennese fashion from the “educated world”. Fashion magazines translated this request and produced “imagined communities” which finally, according to Benedict Anderson¹ create nations. According to the dynamics of fashion, articles in fashion magazines which are propagated as mass media, contribute to the creation of social geographies which develop through the imagination of communities and commons such as language, print media and mass products (see: Anderson. 1991:37). To produce fashionable/Western clothes system fashion replaces “landscape painting on the skin of [...] bold savages” (WMZ1805. Nr. 4. 15.2.1805) with modern social geographies. Fashion acts as aesthetic regime

¹ See. Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. London: 1991 (1983).

which governs and hierarchically categorises citizens according to class and race. The “cultivated elite”, “noble” and “ignoble savages” are governed through their appearance by the regime of fashion.

In 1844 the fashion magazine *Die Wiener Elegante* (DWE. Nr.1, 1.1.1844, 3. year p. 3) subjects Mexico in the article “Fashion in Mexico” to the Viennese fashion laws: *The Alameda* as well as all the other Mexican promenades are “governed by the ruling laws of fashion” (DWE. Nr.1, 1.1.1844. 3. year), according to DWE, just like the *Wiener Prater* – the promenade’s counterpart in the Habsburg Monarchy’s metropolis. The magazine denounces reluctantly the influence of the French fashion on Spanish costumes and favours “the dress of the Spanish-Mexican cavalrymen [...] which mirrors the costume and luxury of the middle ages” as Mexican national costume (DWE. Nr.1, 1.1.1844. 3. year, p.3). With this national costume, designed after the dress of the Spanish conquistadores, the *Wiener Elegante* depreciates contemporary fashion trends which it describes as “strange mixture between French elegance and old Spanish customs” (DWE, Nr.6. 15.3.1844).

The article constructs through dress, physiognomy,

character and customs a national Mexican character which is build on indiscipline, indolence, negligence and phlegm.

The recently introduced bodice in the Viennese style are regarded as useless by the author “as the Mexican women keep their beauty and physical regularity until old age, even though all, even the younger ones, show a tendency for obesity.” When appearing in public the Mexican gentlewomen would only mind the correct fit of their stockings and shoes. “At home they [the Mexican gentlewomen] are always only in negligee and without stockings or combed hair. During visits they sit on small, low tabourets, and smoke cigars. As they don't want to sully their fingers they smoke them with small silver pincers which they carry round their necks” (DWE. Nr.1, 1.1.1844. 3. year:3).

The cigar becomes a synonym for the “Mexican addicted to gambling” (ibid.); lighting a cigar “in cold blood” when “having lost his last reales as if he had won thousands” (ibid.).

Constructing and depreciating a “national characteristic” which fashion designs for all “Mexican gentlemen and gentlewomen” representing all Mexican citizens, depicts them as “ignoble savages” (ibid.).

In 1844 the DWE specifies the national Mexican character

in an article on social gatherings – the *tertulia*. (DWE. No. 6., 15. 3. 1844, p. 23) Here the author allows the alien – himself – to study the Mexican character and puts a strong point on the already mentioned characteristics such as indiscipline, indolence, negligence and phlegm which are expressed through the French fashion. The author praises the “auspicious moment which allows us to depict the Mexican gentlewomen in one of their beloved tertulias which allows the foreigner (sic!) to study the Mexican character. The shown image depicts the gentlewomen sitting in front of the wall on low tabourets, as might be found in Parisian salons, and in the latest French style, smoking leisurely the richly gold plated cigars. [...]” (ibid.).

Even though in society, the article states, the Mexican gentlewomen sit without movement lost in thought and without interest in conversation. Only “the old negress [...] is used frequently” (DWE. No. 6., 15. 3. 1844, p. 23).

20 years later, the year Maximilian v. Habsburg is proclaimed Mexican emperor, the Viennese fashion reports, such as Albert Kretschmer's und Carl Rohrbach's Costume History “The peoples' costumes” (1864), allow the Habsburg objects to become “noble savages”. Around 1550 the costume images of Codex Tudela were drawn. Aztec

ball games at the Spanish court in Sevilla were depicted in Christoph Weiditz' costume book. In 1529 Weiditz had been to Spain and in 1531/32 to The Netherlands (<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kost%C3%BCmbuch>. 2.5.2011:15:00 p.m.): Christoph Weiditz' Book of Costumes from his Travels to Spain (1529) and to The Netherlands (1532/32).

The Mexican national costume which the influential Parisian fashion designed after the conquistadores, has merely the standing of a costume. The Parisian and Viennese Original-Women-Fashion magazine *Iris* advises in the "Original Parisian Fashion Picture" to wear the "costume of the Spanish gypsy" as fancy dress for the Viennese ball season (*Iris*. No. 3., XVI. Jg. 15.1.1864:19).

In a contribution on the neighbouring Haitian region the gentlewomen magazine *Iris* (No. 20,13. May 1864) openly criticises the "inappropriateness" of French customs openly. Referring to a French article the contribution "From Haiti" describes a gruesome murder of a seven-year old girl in the capital Port-Au-Prince. The author describes the "prosecution of the fiends" as "quite odd", comparing the outrageous, cannibalistic atrocity opposed by the peculiarity of the prosecution which takes place in the "most modern French fashion".

At the same time the neighbouring "ignoble savage" is convicted by his lack of culture and ignorance - "None of the convicts could state their age." (From *Haiti*. In: *Iris*. Literary Supplement. No. 20., XVI. year 13. 5. 1864).

On 9. June 1864, just one month later, a contribution about the "The Emperor's Residence in Mexico" is published in the Parisian and Viennese Original-Women-Fashion magazine *Iris* (*Iris*. Literary Supplement. No. 24., XVI. year, 9. June 1864. pp.191-92), following an article on Pope Pius IX and his Homeliness. Due to its selection and ordering of subjects the magazine shows a clear expulsive methodology – the principles of a sovereign's life should be in accordance with the Popes.

Maximilian's seizure of Mexico City on 13. June 1864 marked the begin of his regency. The Parisian and Viennese Original-Women-Fashion magazine *Iris* created his "new empire" according to the idea of a "wonderland which he would reign poetically and wildly. The people's hearts are governed by burning and untamed passions... the noble deity reason [is] disfigured by hypocritical superstition and phlegm" (*Iris*. Literary Supplement. No. 24., XVI. year, 9. June 1864. pp.191-92).

The author heralds for the objects which he describes full

of "burning passions in their hearts [...] and distorted by hypocritical superstition[...]" with the emperor's reign a "magnificent field to cultivate goodness" (*Iris*. Literary Supplement. No. 24., XVI. year., 9. June 1864. p.191). The future reign is the "beginning of a joyous era for the ransacked country" (ibid.). The promise allows the upward revaluation of the "ignoble savage" who is signified by ignorance and phlegm to the "noble savage". Beginning at the empire's capital – according to the "Southern character" - the article "The Emperor's Residence in Mexico" the regency's beauty is envisioned in folio and fashion: From numerous balconies the "black eyes of the beautiful creoles" can be seen "which negligently linger in their rocking chairs [...]." Together with the other city dwellers "from Spaniard and Creole to Indian and Negro [in] all possible shades of human skin colours" they impatiently await, according to the author, their new ruler (*Iris*. Literary Supplement. No. 24., XVI. year., 9. June 1864. p.192).

Kretschmer's and Rohrbach's 1864 history of costumes "The Peoples' Costumes" affirm the status of the "noble savage". The introductory contemplation states that "what makes a people's appearance" is "its heritage,

its residence and its history” (Kretschmer, Rohrbach. Einleitende kulturhistorische Betrachtungen. In: Kretschmer Albert, Carl Rohrbach. *Die Trachten der Völker*. Leipzig 1864. pp. 1-5:1). Based on this the appearance, according to the authors, is a “symbolic relation of society and governance” (ibid.:4). The search for a “ur-costume” by costume history and the expected “discovery” of an “original Mexican” as well as the subjection of the overall nation is based on a Zapotec and Aztec dress repertoire. The union created by costume history, as per Albert Kretschmer and Carl Rohrbach, tries to “free” the Spanish and French influenced “ignoble savages” and to turn them into “noble savages”. This is based on the imagined national Mexican union, under the regency of the “new” emperor, of the different people and their vestimentaire characters which were found by the Spanish in the 16th century.

The search for a “Mexican” ur-costume marks the attempt to create a national union, through the drawing of a series of costume historical images by Kretschmer and Rohrbach, to show a linear “Mexican” cultural history: “Mirroring the interrelation of various centuries[...]” (Kretschmer, Albert. Rohrbach, Carl. *Die Trachten der Völker*. Einleitende kulturhistorische Betrachtungen. p.2.).

The “Costume History Writes” revive a “dead costume” according to “original sculptures” which could be found in Berlin museums; on the other hand the constructed Mexican ur-costume follows the contemporary found “costume” of North American First Nation people. By following certain rules of dress of all classes Rohrbach and Kretschmer certified this sparse and thus “poor” dress the status of costume. Thus Rohrbach and Kretschmer see that “16th century Mexicans” “represent the Western continent most sufficiently and complete” (Rohrbach, Carl. *Die Mexikaner im 16. Jahrhundert*. In: Kretschmer, Albert. Rohrbach, Carl. *Die Trachten der Völker*. Leipzig 1864. pp. 266-269:266).

„What the European people wore, beginning with the Greeks and Romans, to the armoured headgear of German and French knights – as ore replica or actual helmet feathers – can be also found with people from the New World, without having knowledge of each other” (Rohrbach, Carl. *Die Mexikaner im 16. Jahrhundert*. In: Kretschmer, Albert. Rohrbach, Carl. *Die Trachten der Völker*. Leipzig 1864. pp. 266-269:266f).

Producing the costume with natural products, artistic expertise, as well as the choice of colours bear witness of a “fine sensibility”, as well as, according to the

costume historians, a “cultural achievement” of the “noble savage” (see: Rohrbach, Carl. *Die Mexikaner im 16. Jahrhundert*. In: Kretschmer, Albert. Rohrbach, Carl. *Die Trachten der Völker*. Leipzig 1864. pp. 266-269:266). The *Fazada* or *Sherape* – a long duvet which has a neckhole in the middle – as worn in 1864 quotes an earlier dress of former priests and kings and depicts the right of the noble. This ur-costume which is taken from “the noble Mexican savage” is seen as the “new national costume for all Mexicans”. The “liberation” from the national Spanish costume declares Cortez’ reign and its objects in Mexico for obsolete and paves the way to legitimate Maximilian’s rule as emperor of Mexico, according to the regime of fashion.

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Afterwords. Postkoloniale Praxen an den Schnittstellen von Kunst, Mode und Kultur

Seit Anfang der 1980er Jahre begann mit dem Einzug der Mode in die Museen und „einer Mode nach der Mode“¹ das Auflösen der Grenzen zwischen den beiden Disziplinen Kunst und Mode, das sich zum Gegenstand vieler künstlerischen und kuratorischen Praktiken² entwickelte. Dies stellt auch für uns den Ausgangspunkt der Ausstellung VIENNA ZOCALO und deren künstlerischen und kuratorischen Strategien dar, mittels derer sich die Studierenden kritisch mit dem Projektthema „textile Kunst als postkoloniale Strategie“ auseinandersetzen.

Obwohl Mode nicht frivol und unbedeutend³ ist, wie es Michael Boodro in seinem Aufsatz über Mode und Kunst formulierte, haftet ihr im Vergleich zur Bildenden Kunst bis heute das Vorurteil an, die Kleidermode könne vor allem wegen ihrer Alltäglichkeit und ihrer

Verfügbarkeit für die Allgemeinheit keine Kunst sein. Denn sie sei nur Beiwerk des Körpers und verlange höchstens handwerkliches Geschick im Sinne einer Schneiderkunst, das seine Inspiration aus der erhabenen und außergewöhnlichen Kunst zieht.⁴ Dabei hat schon Friedrich Schiller betont, wie man ihn im „Wiener Moden Journal“ von 1805 zitiert, dass Mode als essentiell wichtig zu erachten ist: „Liebe zum Schein, Putz und Spiel ist die Quelle der Kultur.“

Mode ist eine „sozial verhandelte Form von Kleidung“⁵, deren Träger Mensch nicht nur ihr Medium, sondern gleichzeitig Empfänger für Ausdruck und Wirkung ist.⁶ Die Kuratoren Richard Martin (1947-1999) und Harold Koda, die seit 1980 gemeinsam an Ausstellungen für das Costume Institute am Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York gearbeitet haben, behaupten, dass Kleiderstücke komplexe ästhetische Gebilde sein können, die viel über Geschmack, Technologien und soziale Gepflogenheiten ihrer Zeit zu erzählen haben.⁷ Mode ist also ein flexibles Gebilde, das sich in den verschiedenen Feldern gesellschaftlichen Lebens immer wieder neu erfindet, ohne die eigene Geschichte verleugnen zu müssen. Sie baut förmlich auf vorangegangenes und bestehendes auf. Sie interpretiert, kopiert oder verfremdet. Reste kolonialer Beziehungen spiegeln sich – beispielsweise

¹ Dieser Begriff wurde von Barbara Vinken geprägt und beschreibt eine Avantgarde unter ModedesignerInnen, die auf einen konzeptuell-analytischen Anspruch in ihren Arbeiten Wert legen und ihn künstlerisch zum Ausdruck bringen. Vgl. Vinken, Barbara: Mode nach der Mode. Geist und Kleid am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts. Frankfurt 1993

² z.B. die Ausstellung über Alexander McQueens Savage Beauty im The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (siehe <http://blog.metmuseum.org/alexandermcqueen/>) oder die Ausstellung Future Beauty 30 Jahre Japanische Kunst im Haus der Kunst, München (siehe: http://www.hausderkunst.de/aktuell/aktuell/future_beauty_30_jahre_japanische_mode.php). Beides 2011.

³ Vgl. Boodro, Michael: Art and Fashion. In: (Hg.) Welters, Linda; Lillethun, Abby: The Fashion Reader. Oxford, New York 2007, S. 256

⁴ Vgl. Zelenko, Lori Simmons: Is Fashion Art? In: American Artist. June 1981, S. 88. Zitiert nach: Bok Kim, Sung: Is Fashion Art? In: Fashion Theory. Volume 2, Issue 1, 1998, S. 53

⁵ Loschek, Ingrid: Wann ist Mode? Strukturen, Strategien und Innovationen. Berlin 2007, S. 189.

⁶ Vgl. Hollander, Ann: Seeing Through Clothes. Berkelex, Los Angeles 1993, S. XV.

⁷ Smith, Roberta: Review/Art. How Underwear Became Outerwear. Quelle: <http://nytimes.com/1993/05/14/arts/review-art-how-underwear-became-outerwear.html>, Stand, 10.05.2011.

in den mexikanischen Volkstrachten⁸ – in Schnitten, Materialien oder auch Accessoires wider.

Doch was heißt das nun für Lehrende und Studierende, die sich, wie im Falle von VIENNA ZOCALO mit postkolonialen Themen auseinandersetzen? Welche Möglichkeiten bietet zeitgenössische Mode in solch einer Auseinandersetzung, angefangen bei einer künstlerischen Arbeit bis hin zur deren Präsentation bzw. der kuratorischen Praxis?

Ein exemplarisches Beispiel für eine konzeptuelle Praxis, die sich sowohl durch kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung (field trips, Literaturrecherche, etc.) als auch durch ihre avancierte künstlerische Arbeit auszeichnet, ist die Kollektion „Afterwords“ von Hussein Chalayan. „Afterwords“ entstammt Chalayans Herbst/Winter-Kollektion 2000-2001, die 2001 auf der Istanbul Biennial präsentiert wurde. Chalayan setzt sich mit verschiedenen Dimensionen wie Zeit und Raum, mit menschlichen Ausnahmezuständen und persönlichen Erinnerungen, die eine politische Aussage beinhalten, auseinander. Er bezieht sich in seiner Kollektion und in ihrer Präsentation auf das Schicksal türkischer Zyprioten, die 1974 durch die ethnische Säuberung der Insel – die auch seine eigene Familie betraf – ihr ganzes



⁸ Frida Kahlo war eine der bekanntesten TrägerInnen mexikanischer Volkstracht. Sie trug vor allem die Tracht aus Tehuana in Oaxaca, Mexico.

Hab und Gut verloren. Allein mit der Kleidung am Körper gelang ihnen überstürzt die Flucht. Dieser Arbeit gingen Gespräche mit seiner eigenen Familie sowie anderen Zeitzeugen voraus, aus denen sich das Konzept für seine Kollektion und ihre Präsentation entwickelte. Als Präsentationsform wählte er keinen Laufsteg, sondern entwarf ein Bühnenbild, um das tragische Schauspiel als Performance darzustellen:

Auf der als Wohnzimmer gestalteten Bühne waren Kleidungsstücke als Sesselüberzüge, Koffer als Stühle und ein Rock als Tisch getarnt. Erst die Models enthüllten die Gegenstände als die neue Kollektion, indem sie die Objekte als Kleidungsstücke verwendeten. Die Transformation von Möbeln zu Kleidern ist eine Referenz an den plötzlichen Aufbruch und den Wunsch der Flüchtlinge, ihren Besitz zu behalten und mit sich führen zu können.⁹ In Hussein Chalayans „Afterwords“ werden nicht nur die Flexibilität von Raum und die Grenzen von Zeit überdacht, sondern auch die Möglichkeiten von Ästhetik und politischer Aussagekraft. „Afterwords“ ist ein Beispiel für eine Position in der Mode, die auf die Politik der Kolonisierung, Ethnisierung, Verfolgung und Krieg Bezug nimmt. Indem sie deren Mechanismen aufzeigt wird sie exemplarisch für eine neue postkoloniale Praxis, die neue Räume eröffnet an den Schnittstellen von Kunst und Mode.



⁹ Chalayan, Hussein: Beschreibung der Herbst/ Winter 2000-2001 Kollektion „Afterwords“. Quelle: http://www.husseinchalayan.com/#/art_projects.afterwords.overview/, Stand: 10.05.2011.

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From Kakanien to Mexico and Back

Ruby Sircar

In his novel “Man without Qualities” (1930-42) Robert Musil describes the Austrian-Hungarian Empire playfully as Kakanien. Adopting, on the one hand, the “k.k.” (kaiserlich und königlich/imperial and royal) which indicates the empire’s double role and also mirrors the lack of political and sentimental unity of the state; on the other hand it also echoes the onomatopoeic sound of the German child’s phrase for faeces: Kaka – which is actually derived from the Greek kako, a prefix denoting bad/ill. Further the word is also used in Kakophonie (cacophony) - the demonstration of unpleasant phonaesthetics, which Musil, just as others

of his contemporaries, used to describe the cultural situation in the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy with.

Kakanien is the closest description which cynic Mr. Musil wilfully cast to describe the situation of the empire’s objects – a variety of languages which decided one’s cultural/hierarchic position within the state’s structure; where German-speaking cultures ranged on the upper half and so-called Balkan cultures/languages on the lower. In early 19th century when most of the European empires where proud owners of colonies and dominions Austria-Hungary was still an annex fledgling. Without a functioning navy and an army, which was towered by the Prussian and Tsarist rivals the empire was put hard to task to gain more power and space. The choice was soon made: the foundation of a colonial power within one’s patio. Nothing easier then occupying the border lands of the then already ailing Ottoman Empire. The Austrian-Hungarian Empire decided to skilfully annex Bosnia. It was not even necessary to cross the seven seas, merely the Karst poljas had to be taken which was done by means of the new rail technology. And, apart from technology also the arts, especially literature, were used to create a colonisation friendly climate within the object lines: The Balkan had to be romantically described as

the European Heart of Darkness, the imperial occupiers as heroic crusaders who would free European soil from heathen Muslims. German gothic travel literature had an early height.

Austria-Hungary constructed its own first oriental myth right at its own door step. Gulping down cultures. This cannibalistic act though was not completed – they ate but forgot to digest. Kakanien uncompleted. Austria-Hungary moved on and by the mid-19th century was able to begin dreaming about an oversea colony. The question, which arose was only – what is left on the global map and which European power was weak enough to lose foot overseas. In the end they decided on Mexico. An emperor was sent and soon lost. “La paloma” too.

In 2001, roughly 140 years after the death of the last Mexican emperor the University of Vienna decided to revisit Kakanien: the online project (www.kakanien.ac.at, 11.04.2011) viewed Austrian-Hungarian colonialism and post-imperial situation, but only as it concerned the Balkans, as well as other post-communist Central and Eastern European countries – where was/is (as this is an ongoing platform and blog project) a Latin American, say Mexican, perspective? Kakanien was influenced

and stretched beyond its most successful colonial enterprise in the Balkans. But, this seems a forgotten issue in today's postcolonial Austrian discourse. The Mexican legacy is quite nullified while the discussion regarding migrational routes and social differences in today's Austrian society regarding the Central and South-Eastern European region rule the agenda. Losing one head of the two-headed imperial throne, even if the second was just a bleak sprout which lasted for less than three years, seems not yet digested and somehow only allows a limited reflection on one's own (colonial) history.

A possible solution to this dilemma of indigestible memories would be to apply the discourse of the former colonised objects, one which is used in the Latin and South American discourse and allows a deeper understanding of one's own current and historical situation without losing the dual perspective of coloniser and colonised: apply anthropophage practices, cultural cannibalism, as suggested by Oswald de Andrade in his "Manifesto Antropófago" (1928). Unlike the ongoing Western discourse regarding annexing through hybridisation, Andrade suggests a cultural Kakanien. Not to merge and mix, but to actually adopt and become the coloniser, to

digest and actually dump colonialism seems by far more effective than to adjust to its left-behinds.

Apparently, if we look at everyday culture which is the main shaping vehicle of one's self-defined identity the (former) subalterns (as according to Ranajit Guha: *Hegemony without Dominance*. New York: Harvard UP, 1998.) have dealt with their part in (a revisited) Kakanien far more effectively than the (once) colonisers. While the street styles and fashions of so-called second generation youth of South-Eastern European origin have become part of Austria's popular culture on a very direct route, the Latin American colonial history took a longer way of digestion and subtly lurked in through the door of globalisation opened unto the Austrian popular media channels. The question is which signs that we thus find – and are most surely colonial left-behinds – in international Latin American/Mexican/Chicano _a culture can be pinpointed to the Austrian colonial intermezzo? Which colonial signs have become part of Mexican self-understanding? Which were turned into positive identity phrases?

Amongst those obvious signs such as *lucha libre* masks being adopted by wrestling and spiderman, piñatas

there is one cultural signifier which may be seen as digested colonial phrase: the song "La paloma" and its accompanying cultural signs, such as: the sea faring images and designs entered in folk and ethnic song contests and television shows and radio programmes, as well as all those singers who are associated in German-speaking countries with the song (ranging from Ol' Hans Albers, Roy Black, Carl Dall, Udo Jürgens, Freddy Quinn to Fischer-Chöre and James Last and the German proto-exotic folk singer, Cuban-born Roberto Blanco, and least and last Julio Iglesias, representing the German media created Hispanic). Even though the song was banned, after the last Mexican emperor was shot from being played at any Austrian naval vehicle – it survived in popular media culture as the ultimate wanderlust song. Beautifully exotic and longing.

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Sabeth Buchmann: From Antropofagia to Tropicalism.
In: Entre Pindorama. Edited by Elke aus dem Moore and
Giorgio Ronna, Verlag für moderne Kunst Nürnberg,
2005, pp. 70-77.

Sabeth Buchmann

From Antropofagia to Tropicalism

When the Tropicália environment installation by artist Hélio Oiticica was created in conjunction with the Nova objetividade brasileira exhibition at the Museu de Arte Moderna (Museum of Modern Art) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil had already been under military dictatorship for three years. This is an important point to mention

when one considers that – according to Luis Camnitzer, an artist, author, and curator living in New York – Latin American conceptualism cannot be understood without taking into account the political repression that had begun at the time in neighboring countries¹. In this context, English art critic Guy Brett writes that the artistic practice of Brazilian artists such as Oiticica and Lygia Clark was concerned with enabling the individual [to regain] trust in his own intuition and his most passionately-pursued ambitions². Oiticica's Creleisure concept can also be understood against this backdrop of neologism which shows that the conceptual designs for his works, which were created in the second half of the 1960s, were no longer oriented on the model of industrial production, in contrast to concrete art, to which he had still felt obliged during the late 50s and early 60s. Instead, Oiticica propagated a combination of creativity and leisure that was his answer to the living conditions within an authoritarian working society that was – for a large portion of the population – characterized by poverty and hunger.

Hélio Oiticica's body of work is extremely diverse. It ranges from drawings, paintings, objects and installations, to his Quasi Cinemas³, which he began creating at the end of the 1960s, and which expressed

¹ See: [Sabeth Buchmann], Dada-Situationismus-Fluxus-Tupamaro-Konzeptualismus! – Luis Camnitzer interviewed by Sabeth Buchmann, in: Texte zur Kunst, Vol. 12, No. 50, June 2003, pp. 114-129, here: p. 116.

² Guy Brett, Situationen, die man erleben soll, in: Sabine Breitwieser (ED.), Vivências / Lebenserfahrung / life experience, (exhibition catalogue Generali Foundation), Vienna 2000, pp. 35-60, here: p. 37.

³ The Quasi Cinemas are slide projection series with sound.

his affinity for the films of Andy Warhol and Jack Smith and, consequently, for homosexual underground cinema. In 1978, Oiticica returned to Rio de Janeiro, where he died two years later at the age of 43. Before he went to New York on a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1979, Oiticica had been one of the protagonists of the Tropicalism movement which, in incorporating music, art, literature, and theater, took a stand against the cultural, U.S.-dominated mainstream on the one hand, and against elitist and/or conservative-patriarchal forms of national art (traditions) on the other. In close collaboration with his fellow artists Lygia Clark and Lígia Pape, Oiticica developed the concept of a new objectivity that was devoted to the mutual understanding of artistic practice and the art of living. However, only fragments of the natural connection to the legacy of the historical avantgarde are apparent in his conceptual works. They are characterized by an increasing distance to the vocabulary of geometrical abstraction which influenced certain tendencies of Constructivism and Neoconcretism. As the Belgian art historian and curator Dirk Snauwaert writes, geometric abstraction was of all the avantgarde movements (...) the one (...) which can most substantially claim to have successfully propagated its aesthetic worldwide⁴. Snauwaert relates the

problematic of universalism and colonialism discernible therein to the interaction of new technological modes of production and the transformation of the language of forms. This developed, he claims, parallel to the beginning of modernization in the second Industrial Revolution, with phenomena such as mass production, mechanization, and urbanization.⁵

It's true that such factors played just as important a role in Oiticica's artistic change of direction as did his increasing interest in the modes of depiction and aesthetics of everyday life. As a result of his relating their objectivity to conceptual sign and object languages, the style eclecticism propagated by the anthropophagic manifesto became the subject of a specific, popular-cultural interpretation within the context of Tropicalism. There was a corresponding artistic concept of (everyday) practice which would today be labelled as micropolitics. That's because the criticism of geometrical abstraction also points to, as Snauwaert emphasizes, the pressure from minority movements, [which] beginning in the late 60s, turned away from the program of a uniform, dominant, formal language and focused on language as the motor and substance of cultural identity⁶. The factors Snauwaert mentions were also considered by American art historian Benjamin Buchloh to be decisive with

⁴ Dirk Snauwaert, Universalismus, Globalismus – eine Bibliografie, in: Kunst und Text, (exhibition catalogue Heimo Zobernig, Bonner Kunstverein / Galerie für zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig / Kunstverein München), Leipzig 1998, pp. 37-42, here: p. 37.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

regard to both Oiticica's position and that of fellow artist Lygia Clark, who was so important to him, as belonging to that group of artists who questioned the possibilities of continuing the universal project of abstraction (...) during the 60s⁷.

In this context, the so-called *dessarrolismo* must also be mentioned. The name refers to a state-funded project, part of a compensatory capitalistic development that was started in the 1950s and 60s in several Latin American countries. The enthusiasm for development prevalent at the time was founded on the hope that southern nations, which were worse off economically than Europe and North America, could soon overcome their position as societal and cultural late-comers. That means that greater importance was attached to the expansion of so-called progressive industrial culture, and this was supported by the concretists more than it was questioned. In response to the rationalistic character of industrial language of form, Oiticica, Clark Pape, etc. proposed alternatives such as intuition, creativity and subjectivity. In the following section on *Tropicália*, I would like to explain why these artists were so interested in founding a new objectivity.

Tropicália is an environment of sand, gravel, tropical plants, a cage containing two parrots, as well as two

hut-like buildings reminiscent of structures found in the Brazilian *favela* so-called *Penetráveis*, which can be translated as penetrables. Atop the strewn gravel, there is a stone with a poem painted upon it. Inside the larger of the two huts, each consisting of wooden frames covered with fabric, there is a television that is switched on at the end of a dark, labyrinthine passageway, representing the only source of light. During my visit, the television could be heard even from outside. In the smaller of the two huts, the sentence *A pureza é um mitú* (Purity is a myth) has been written on the upper corner of a monochrome surface. Not only the labyrinthine spatial structure, but also the colorfully printed fabrics make a division between inside and out, or rather between back and front, appear superfluous. In other words: *Tropicália* takes the form of an ensemble of acoustic, tactile, visual, and semantic elements that reveals itself only through the physical involvement of its visitors. They are encouraged to literally penetrate the spaces. The (self-)perception of the body in its movement through space and time also played a central role in minimal art in the United States: its credo was presence and place. Oiticica, however, had already been pursuing objectives typical of minimalist series of art works – expressing time as space, or rather, space as time –

⁷ Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, *Structure, Sign and Reference in the Work of David Lamelas*, in: *David Lamelas – A New Refutation of Time*, (exhibition catalogue), Munich / Rotterdam 1997, pp. 121ff. Buchloh believes that the failure of abstract art as a universal language can be seen in artworks following World War II: that they insisted on the continuity of a culture of national identity presumably guaranteed within pictorial and sculptural conventions. The art historian refers to the French *ionformel* but he qualifies: Evidently these conventions had already become problematic, if not outright illegible or invisible, for national or regional culture at precisely that moment when the disintegrating ideology of the nation state could no longer present itself as the matrix of cultural identity. At that moment, in the early part of the twentieth century, some of the major figures of the historical avant-gardes had aligned themselves with strong articulations of internationalist utopian thought (e.g., Piet Mondrian and De Stijl, El Lissitzky and constructivism, Jean Arp, Tristan Tzara and dadaism), *ibid.*, p. 122.

earlier, specifically since the early 1960s. For example, in his text *About the Hunting Dogs Project* from 1961, Oiticica explicitly refers to the anti-linear time and spatial structure of the labyrinth – an antithetical model, as it were, to the concepts of constructivism, which were based on succession and progression⁸. Here, too, one could recognize an anthropophagic impulse – indeed, in this way, the designs for Oiticica's works refer to cyclical concepts of time, which recall those of the Mayas, Incas, and Aztecs driven out by colonialism.

As American Robert Smithson writes, the affinity shown by the artists of the 1960s for labyrinthine, cyclical, crystalline forms also represented a revival of the Ultra-Modern of the 1930s. To support his argument, the artist mentions the rejection of the organic concept of time prevalent in the European Modern Age and inherent in the traditional conventions of painting, sculpture, and architecture⁹.

Precisely this moment can be identified in *Tropicália*. The folded-in spatial structure of the larger *Penetravels* stands in contrast to the smaller hut composed of four canvases which seems to inhabit the border area between painting, sculpture, and architecture. In one of his texts, Oiticica writes that he would prefer to speak of *Painting in Space* rather than sculpture despite the artificiality

of the term¹⁰. What he means by this can be recognized in the light of his installation *Grand Nucleus*, which refers to Piet Mondrian. Here, the static quality that was characteristic of Mondrian's spatial organization, undergoes a wide-reaching dynamization. But in contrast to the traditional way of presenting a painting, which implies a primarily optical and/or visual mode of perception, Oiticica's construction generates a direct physical relationship between the space and the viewer, in the sense of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*¹¹. Thus, the alternation between the two- and three-dimensionality of the stretched fabric surfaces generates a mode of perception that can be realized through physical movement. At the same time, other forms of time experience are discernible in *Tropicália*. Like many artists of his time, Oiticica was inspired by Marshall McLuhan's and Quentin Fiori's writings on the transformation of traditional concepts of reality through the new mass media. In this light, the inclusion of the television set can be interpreted as an allegory for the *Compression of Time*. Important in this context are Oiticica's designs for so-called supra-sensorial fields of perception¹², which he distinguishes from the deterministic stimulus-response model of Op Art and purely mechanical forms of interactivity – Alexander

⁸ Hélio Oiticica, *About the Hunting Dogs Project* (August 28, 1961), in: Hélio Oiticica, (exhibition catalogue, Witte de With Rotterdam / Galerie nationale Jeu de Paume Paris / Fundació Antoni Tàpies Barcelona et al.), 1992, pp. 57f., here: p. 57.

⁹ See: Robert Smithson; *Ultramoderne*, in: Eva Schmidt / Kai Vöckler (Eds), *Gesammelte Schriften* (Collected Texts), Cologne 2000, pp. 92-95, here: p. 93.

¹⁰ Hélio Oiticica, *Colour, Time and Structure*, in: Hélio Oiticica, (cat. 1992), pp. 34-37, here: p. 37.

¹¹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phänomenologie der Wahrnehmung*, Berlin 1966.

¹² Hélio Oiticica, *Eden*, in: Hélio Oiticica, (cat. 1992), p. 12.

Calder's mobiles, for example – in a text accompanying his exhibition *Eden*, shown at the Whitechapel Gallery in London in 1969.

Oiticica's spatial designs focus rather on the viewer's innate ability for unpredictable acts of perception. The potential of such an act of perception was recognizable in the crossing of two different perception modalities, evoked by the juxtaposition in space of the larger, colorfully printed and the smaller, monochrome hut. The former construction corresponds with showing images as an expression of the modernistic artistic imperative of a pure perception free of references and associations. At the same time, the television placed inside the larger huts acts as an interface between different ways of experiencing space and time (favelas, mass media, aesthetic abstraction), which are interwoven. Luis Camnitzer characterizes Oiticica's model of perception as follows: Whatever happens, it only takes place 'with' the viewer, not 'for' the viewer.

It is precisely this element of participation that allows the cultural-critical dimension of Oiticica's artistic project to come to the fore, as apparently, this expansion of perception did not come about for its own sake. Taking a specific lifestyle as its subject – this is discernible in the reference to the building methods of favela huts – is a

suitable way of standing up for values other than those of the art market. In contrast to works of minimalist and pop art, the favela-esque huts are consciously deprived of the status of trademarks. In this way, *Tropicália* formulates the possibility of reversing the avantgarde promise of transferring art into how one lives and placing it into a socio-geographical relationship with those experiences of time and space exclusive of modern artistic consciousness.

In this sense, one may conclude with the question: Does Oiticica's *Tropicália* offer points of departure for a further development of Oswald de Andrade's concept of *Antropofagia*, especially with regard to its underlying model of time and space? And if so, to what degree?

In this context, I am reminded of the criticism of popular concepts of identity and difference expressed by the American cultural theoretician Lawrence Grossberg. In his opinion, despite wide-reaching attempts, cultural and post-colonial studies have not really proven themselves capable of overcoming dualistic-hierarchical identity and difference relations. He believes this is fundamentally due to the priority given to the category of time as compared to space in the modern philosophy of history¹³. Grossberg points to a phenomenon that is apparent not least of all in language. We speak of

¹³ Lawrence Grossberg, *Cultural Studies in/and New Worlds*, in: *What's going on? – Cultural Studies und Popularkultur*, Vienna 2000, pp. 194-230, here: pp. 198ff.

simultaneity, or things happening at the same time, but we lack a term for in the same space. Here, time refers first of all to a simple subdivision into past, present and future as proof of a reliable order. The prevailing concept of history is also subjugated to this notion¹⁴, for it fosters the stories that grasp the European Modern Age as a genuine and exclusive phenomenon while other cultural manifestations are perceived as the expression of a lagging and/or delayed development¹⁵.

For that reason, Grossberg suggests viewing history as spatially placed time¹⁶. This would mean understanding history not in the sense of a (telelogical) continuity or a dialectic unfolding of contradictions, but in the sense of a simultaneity of singular events and disparate forms of becoming. From this, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari - with reference to the philosopher Henri Bergson¹⁷ - have developed the theoretical possibility of describing an Otherness which is neither derived from oneself nor constituted by the / versus other or own versus foreign relationship. Rather, they suggest a concept of otherness which makes the difference of the difference conceivable.

In my view, Tropicália appropriates the anthropagic idea in this sense, according to which that which is supposedly Brazilian (i.e. the tropicalistic world of

objects) first requires a physical incorporation in order to thus be able to go against the grain of the conventional differentiation between the one's own and the Other. The environment achieves this, in my opinion, by making us aware of different modes of perception of time and space.

Oiticica works with the aesthetic difference between European and American-influenced geometrical abstraction and the location-specific iconographies that distinguish the plants, patterns of fabric, parrots, etc. he uses. In this sense, the term tropicalism refocuses the attention of Europe's Modern Age on Latin American nations – a Modern Age that must fail to recognize the particularism of its universal project in order to be able to consume cultural differences as exotic products. Oiticica's assertion of a counter-myth as seen in the term tropicalism is correspondingly ambiguous. With regard to de Andrade's concept of Antropofagia, the becoming incommensurate through consumption, which is based on physical pleasure, seems to be that which comprises one of the basic ideas of Oiticica's designs: (...) it is undoubtedly more correct to 'consume consumption' (...) ¹⁸. The fact that precisely such an act of perception, which goes beyond common patterns of consumption, signals an ability based on an experience other than that

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 200

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 199.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 207; for English publication see: Critical Studies in Mass Communication, (Vol. 10), Durham / London 1993, p. 1-22.

¹⁷ Oiticica had read Bergson's work.

¹⁸ Hélio Oiticica, *Brazil Diarrhea*, in: Hélio Oiticica, (cat. 1992), pp. 17-20, here: p. 18.

of dualistic-hierarchical identity and difference-related concepts of space and time – that is what for me makes Tropicália one of the most aesthetically and intellectually pleasing examples of historical conceptualism.

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Hg. mit Helmut Draxler, Clemens Krümmel und Susanne Leeb von PoLYpeN einer Reihe zu Kunstkritik und politischer Theorie. Zuletzt erschienene Veröffentlichungen: Hg. mit Helmut Draxler und Stephan Geene: Film Avantgarde Biopolitik, Wien: Akademie der bildenden Künste und schlebrügge. editor, 2009; Denken gegen das Denken. Produktion, Technologie, Subjektivität bei Sol LeWitt, Yvonne Rainer und Hélio Oiticica, Berlin: b_books, 2007; Hg. mit Alexander Alberro: Art After Conceptual Art (Generali Foundation Collection Series), Cambridge/ Massachusetts: The MIT Press und Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2006.

Jens Kastner

Praktiken der Diskrepanz

Die KünstlerInnenkollektive Los Grupos im Mexiko der 1970er Jahre und ihre Angriffe auf die symbolische Ordnung

In den 1970er Jahren gründeten sich verschiedene Kollektive von KünstlerInnen, die ihre ästhetische Praxis in unterschiedlichen Formen in einen politischen Kontext stellten. Sie prägten die künstlerische Produktion dieses Jahrzehnts in Mexiko (vgl. Espinosa 2004, Debroise

2005, Gallo 2007, Bustamante 2008). Diese Gruppen zählen einerseits zu den wichtigsten AkteurInnen des Konzeptualismus in Lateinamerika¹, andererseits stehen sie mit ihrem politischen Engagement aber auch in einer künstlerischen Tradition, die vom „Surrealismus im Dienste der Revolution“ über die Situationistische Internationale bis hin zu verschiedenen anderen Gruppierungen versucht hat, die Praxis der angeblich sozialrevolutionären, kommunistischen und sozialistischen Parteien zu kritisieren und erneut zu revolutionieren.

Die künstlerischen Kollektive (Grupo Suma, Proceso Pentágono, Grupo Mira, Taller de Arte e Ideología u. a.) entstanden in einer gesellschaftlichen Situation, die durch die gewaltsame Niederschlagung der Studierendenbewegung von 1968 geprägt war. Zu Beginn der 1970er Jahre proklamierte der offizielle Diskurs der Staatspartei PRI eine „Demokratische Öffnung“. Ein großer Teil der bedeutendsten Intellektuellen Mexikos – u.a. Fernando Benítez, Octavio Paz und Carlos Fuentes – verscrieb sich diesem von Präsident Luis Echevarría (1970-1976) eingeleiteten Prozess (vgl. Zapata Galindo 2006). Zeitgleich wurde ein „schmutziger Krieg“ gegen die Reste der sozialen Bewegung eröffnet,

¹ Sie selbst kategorisierten ihre Kunst zunächst nicht als konzeptuelle, sondern als „arte no-objetual“, nicht objekthafte Kunst. Der Begriff No-Objetualismo wurde vom peruanischen Kunsthistoriker und -kritiker Juan Acha eingeführt (vgl. Acha 1981). Maris Bustamante prägte später den Begriff „Formas PIAS“ – als Abkürzung aus performance, instalación und ambientación –, um die Kunstformen der frühen 1970er Jahre zusammenzufassen. Das Wort „pía“, Spanisch: fromm – ist zudem eine ironische Spitze gegen diejenigen, denen diese neuen Kunstformen allzu „unfromm“ erschienen. (Vgl. Bustamante 2008: 134)

deren Akteurinnen und Akteure in großer Zahl Guerilla-Gruppen in südlichen Landesteilen oder Stadtguerillas gründeten (vgl. Becker 2008). Zwischen den regierungstreuen SchriftstellerInnen und den militanten Sozialbewegten nehmen die Mitglieder der künstlerischen Kollektive eine Sonderstellung ein. Sie stellten ihre künstlerische Produktion weder in den Dienst der Staatspartei, noch gaben sie ihre Produktion zu Gunsten des sozialen Engagements auf. Vielmehr entwickelten sie aus dem Kunstfeld heraus ästhetische Praktiken, die in den politischen Raum hineinragten und – so die These dieses Textes – diesen damit erweiterten.

Innerhalb der Kunstgeschichte Mexikos ist dabei insbesondere die Abgrenzung vom Muralismus zu betonen, der wie keine andere Bewegung seit den 1920er Jahren das Verhältnis von Kunst und Politik dominiert hat: Die Spannungsfelder zwischen öffentlichem Bildungsauftrag und Kunstmarktabhängigkeit sowie zwischen nationalstaatlicher Modernisierung und sozialrevolutionärem Anspruch stellen dabei die wesentlichen Eckpunkte dar, in denen sich die Gruppen der 1970er Jahre zu bewegen hatten – und in denen sie neue, kollektive Praxisformen entwickelten. Obwohl erstens auf den nationalstaatlichen Rahmen Mexikos

bezogen, agierten sie zweitens im Kontext von Praktiken, die im Zuge der „68er Jahre“ in vielen Teilen der Welt das künstlerische Feld geprägt hatten: Die Infragestellung der Materialien, die Neudefinition der Beziehung zwischen Werk und BetrachterIn und die Kritik der Institutionen (vgl. Syring 1990, von Bismarck/ Fraser/ Sheikh 2006, Papenbrock 2007, Kastner 2008a). Dennoch sind sie – sowohl hinsichtlich des Alters ihrer Mitglieder als auch bezüglich ihrer Praktiken – als spezifisches Post-68er Phänomen zu betrachten (vgl. Vázquez Mantecón 2007). Sie sind damit drittens beispielhaft für die besondere Entwicklung konzeptueller Kunst in Lateinamerika (vgl. Ramírez 2000, Longoni 2006, Camnitzer 2007).

Der theoretische Zugriff auf die erwähnte Erweiterung des Raumes des Politischen kann im Rahmen dieses Textes nur grob umrissen werden. Der beschriebene Zusammenhang ist eher als Skizze zu betrachten, die vor allem auf zwei Forschungsdesiderate verweist: Zum einen bedürfte es der systematischen Beschreibung der Genese eines künstlerischen Feldes in der Peripherie des globalen Kunstgeschehens und zum anderen drängt sich eine theoretische Verknüpfung von Feldanalyse und Hegemonietheorie anhand des Gegenstandes auf.

Muralismus, Kunst und Nationalstaat – Ein historischer Hintergrund

Die Mexikanische Revolution (1910-1920) hatte eine Vielzahl gesellschaftlicher Auswirkungen, von denen jene auf das kulturelle Feld zu den viel diskutierten gehört. Die enge Verknüpfung von moderner Kunst und dem nationalstaatlichen Projekt der gesellschaftlichen Modernisierung, in deren Zuge das indigene Erbe erstmals sozial anerkannt und zugleich künstlerisch bildwürdig wurde, wird von den meisten ChronistInnen erwähnt, wenn nicht gar besonders hervorgehoben (vgl. Tobler 1984, Krauze 1997, Tobler 2007). In den Worten Pierre Bourdieus ließe sich der wesentliche Effekte so beschreiben: Die „ungebildeten Betrachter“ (Bourdieu 1974: 162) treffen auf die „Eingeborenen der oberen Bildungssphäre“ (Bourdieu 1974: 163), d.h. unterschiedliche, bis dato weitgehend isoliert voneinander lebende Milieus treffen in der Kunstproduktion und -rezeption aufeinander. Denn mit Beginn der postrevolutionären Phase in Mexiko ab 1920 beginnt hinsichtlich der Kunst etwas Außergewöhnliches: Die ungebildeten Schichten werden als BetrachterInnen adressiert, und zwar durch staatlich in Auftrag gegebene und in jeder Hinsicht groß angelegte Wandgemälde an öffentlichen Orten. An diesen

Orten – dem Nationalpalast, staatlichen Ministerien, Gebäude von Erziehungs- und Bildungseinrichtungen, u.a. – werden die BetrachterInnen mit einer neuen Malweise konfrontiert. Die so genannten ungebildeten BetrachterInnen, die in der Regel dazu neigen, in der Kunst die „realistische Darstellung“ zu fordern, weil es ihnen an spezifischen Wahrnehmungskategorien mangelt, mit deren Hilfe sie die künstlerische Arbeit anders begreifen könnten als die Gegenstände ihres Alltags, treffen auf eine Riege von KünstlerInnen, die sich verschiedenen Formen der „realistischen Darstellung“ verschrieben haben. Dabei geschieht zweierlei: Zum einen wird das Primat der Form über die Funktion des künstlerischen Ausdrucks, dass die Autonomie des Kunstwerks ausmacht, zur Debatte gestellt, denn die Kunst wird eindeutig verschiedenen gesellschaftlichen Funktionen zugeordnet – um nicht zu sagen untergeordnet. Denn als Unterordnung verstanden weder KünstlerInnen noch die Kritik die Arbeit jener historischen Phase. In der Selbstbeschreibung von Künstlern wie Diego Rivera war es kein Widerspruch, im Auftrag des Nationalstaates zu malen und zugleich (gemeinsam mit Leo Trotzki und André Breton) das Manifest für eine unabhängige revolutionäre Kunst (1938) zu verfassen. Von Seiten des Staates wurde mit den

KünstlerInnen nicht wesentlich anders verfahren als mit GewerkschafterInnen oder LandarbeiterInnen: Hier wie dort lagen Kooptation und Repression stets sehr nah beieinander, gelang die eine nicht, wurde die andere angewandt.² Zum anderen kommt es innerhalb einer gesellschaftlichen Neuordnung von Kräfteverhältnissen zu einer Situation, in der die KünstlerInnen für eine kurze historische Phase ihren – von Bourdieu (1974: 163) so genannten – „Klassenethnozentrismus“ praktisch in Frage stellen. Die an der europäischen Kunstgeschichte und den zeitgenössischen europäischen Avantgarden geschulten Maler schaffen ein neues Methoden- und Formrepertoire, das sich um „Verständlichkeit“ bemüht. Die eigene, zugleich bürgerliche und avantgardistische Wahrnehmungsweise wird in diesem Moment nicht – anders als in der „klassenethnozentristischen“ Regel – für das Normale und Selbstverständliche gehalten.

Diese Bindung, die die wichtigsten Akteure (und nur wenige Akteurinnen) des künstlerischen Feldes an den postrevolutionären Nationalstaat und sein bildungspolitisches Projekt haben, ist zwar nie ungebrochen und stets ambivalent. Es hat aber weit reichende Folgen für die Entwicklung der bildenden Kunst in Mexiko: Indem die künstlerischen

² Der berühmte kommunistische Maler David Alfaro Siqueiros fertigte während der 1950er Jahre im Auftrag des Staates verschiedene großformatige Wandmalereien an und wurde zugleich wegen seiner Agitation für den Eisenbahnerstreiks 1958/1959 zu neun Jahren Zuchthaus verurteilt. Er wurde 1964 nach vier Jahren Gefängnis begnadigt.

Entwicklungen so eng an das neue, postrevolutionäre Nationalstaatsprojekt geknüpft waren, wurde erstens eine weitgehende Autonomie des gesamten Feldes verhindert bzw. lange Zeit verzögert und zweitens wurden dadurch die Möglichkeiten für politische Kunst bzw. künstlerische Politik für Jahrzehnte an dieses Projekt gebunden (während sie sich in anderen Ländern gerade durch Kritik am und/ oder Distanz zum Nationalstaat auszeichnete). Diese Bindung löste sich erst in den 1970er Jahren im Gefolge der niedergeschlagenen 68er-Bewegung.

Repression und Laboratorien der Kämpfe

Die studentische Protestbewegung in Mexiko hatte ihren erstmals deutlich vernehmbaren Ausgangspunkt am 26. Juli 1968. Sie begann mit dem Aufeinandertreffen zweier Demonstrationen im historischen Zentrum der Hauptstadt, als einige Tausend Linke bei einer Solidaritätsdemo für das revolutionäre Kuba auf einige Tausend Studierende des Polytechnischen Instituts trafen, die für die Autonomie der Universität und gegen staatlich gelenkte Attacken gegen Studierende auf die Straße gegangen waren. Nachdem am 18. September die Universität bereits vom Militär geräumt worden

war, erfuhr die Bewegung den grausamsten Einschnitt am 2. Oktober: Zehn Tage vor Beginn der Olympischen Spiele in Mexiko-Stadt umzingelte das Militär auf dem „Platz der drei Kulturen“ in Tlatelolco eine studentische Demonstration und schoss eine Stunde lang auf die Protestierenden. Etwa 400 von ihnen wurden getötet und ungezählte verletzt (vgl. Taibo II 1997, Poniatovska 2004). Bis Anfang Dezember existierte der 123 Tage währende Streik an der Universität, der nicht nur eine ganze Generation mexikanischer Studierender prägte. Die 68er Bewegung in Mexiko, obwohl – und weil – so brutal unterdrückt, hat das ganze Land nachhaltig verändert. Es folgte eine Ära der Diskrepanz, so der Titel einer Ausstellung über die Kunst der Post 68er-Jahre, die im Sommer 2007 in der mexikanischen Hauptstadt zu sehen war. Eine Zeit, in der das politische System zwar nicht zusammenbrach, aber in der die politischen, intellektuellen, sozialbewegten und auch künstlerischen Positionen sich grundsätzlich neu ausrichteten. Hatte das Massaker von Tlatelolco bereits das postrevolutionäre Selbstbild der PRI in der gesellschaftlichen Wahrnehmung stark beschädigt, führte der Überfall der paramilitärischen Gruppe Los Halcones auf eine studentische Demonstration am 10. Juni 1971, bei dem mehrere Studierende erschossen

wurden – die Zahl der Toten schwankt zwischen 14 und über Hundert – zur dauerhaften Legitimationskrise der Staatspartei hinsichtlich ihres revolutionären Erbes. Jener Ausstellungstitel geht zurück auf einen Ausspruch des damaligen Rektors der UNAM, Javier Barros Sierra, der selbst Teil des gemäßigten Flügels der Bewegung war: Sie attackieren die Universität, sagte er damals, weil wir nicht einverstanden sind. Die Diskrepanz aber sei das Beste, mit dem die Universität einer Gesellschaft dienen könne. (Vgl. Debroise 2007) Den Studierenden diene die Universität als Ort der Auseinandersetzung, als ein Laboratorium von Kämpfen und neuen Erfahrungen. Seit dem Sommer 1968 waren verschiedene Institute in den Streik getreten und kämpften, ähnlich wie in anderen Ländern der Welt zur gleichen Zeit auch, ausgehend von der Universität für eine Demokratisierung der gesamten Gesellschaft.

Die Radikalisierung künstlerischer Fragestellungen

Demokratische, antiautoritäre und antihierarchische Formen wurden aber nicht nur in der politischen Arena, sondern auch in gesellschaftlichen Teilbereichen, also bestimmten gesellschaftlichen Feldern, gefordert

und in Mikropolitiken ansatzweise umgesetzt. Auch kunstimmanente Fragestellungen wurden in verschiedenen Ländern der Welt in den 1960er Jahren neu aufgeworfen und grundsätzlich verschoben, und zwar vor allem auf drei Ebenen: Erstens hinsichtlich der verwendeten Materialien, zweitens in Bezug auf das Verhältnis von Werk / künstlerischer Arbeit und BetrachterIn und drittens im Hinblick auf die Institutionen – zunächst die des künstlerischen Feldes, später gesellschaftliche Institutionen überhaupt (vgl. O’Doherty 1996, Kastner 2008a). Von diesen Entwicklungen ist auch die Kunst in Mexiko nicht ausgenommen.

Nachdem sich bereits in den späten 1960er Jahren verschiedene, konzeptuell arbeitende KünstlerInnen in Lateinamerika politisiert hatten (vgl. Ramírez 2000, Longoni 2007), nahmen auch in Mexiko verschiedene künstlerische Praktiken direkt Bezug auf die Bewegung von 1968: MalerInnen unterstützten die Bewegung mit ephemeren Wandgemälden und kollektive künstlerische Arbeitsformen entwickelten sich im Zusammenhang mit den umfassenden Demokratisierungsforderungen. Diese Phase zeichnet sich, wie Grenfell und Hardy (2007: 178) an Bourdieu anschließend erläutern, in Form der

Infragestellung dessen, was Kunst (noch) sein kann und soll, durch eine fundamentale Glaubenskrisen innerhalb der zeitgenössischen Kunst aus. Auf diese Krise wird in Mexiko zum Teil mit einer Erneuerung dessen reagiert, was Bourdieu (1987: 64ff.) die „populäre Ästhetik“ nennt, also künstlerischen Praktiken, die einen Zusammenhang zwischen „Kunst“ und „Leben“ behaupten. Muss einerseits entgegen kunsthistorischen Gepflogenheiten auf den Zusammenhang dieser Entwicklung mit den gleichzeitigen sozialen Bewegungen abgezielt werden, darf andererseits aber auch ihr Verhältnis zur mexikanischen Moderne nicht außer Acht gelassen werden. So sind Formfragen im Anschluss an Diego Rivera oder Rufino Tamayo keineswegs vollständig der Funktion des künstlerischen Ausdrucks untergeordnet.

Künstlerisches Eingreifen

Ausgehend von der Erfahrung bzw. der Analyse eines „langen und globalen 68“ (vgl. Kastner/ Mayer 2008), also eines transnationalen Protestzyklus, der sich erstens weder auf den Pariser Mai oder Mitteleuropa und die USA, zweitens nicht auf das studentische Milieu als Träger der Bewegungen und drittens nicht auf das Jahr 1968 beschränkt, ist das Verhältnis von

künstlerischer Produktion und sozialen Bewegungen als widersprüchlich und ambivalent zu betrachten.

Sind rein werk- bzw. kunsthistorische Beschreibungen (vgl. z. B. Buchloh 1990) kaum dazu angetan, den Wandel innerhalb des künstlerischen Feldes in den 1960er Jahren angemessen zu fassen, so ist der Zusammenhang von Kunstproduktion und Praktiken sozialer Bewegungen doch auch nicht selbstverständlich. Ohne diesen umfassend zu theoretisieren, wird im Folgenden zunächst nur von der Bourdieu’schen Feststellung ausgegangen, dass die Definition von Kunst, da nicht aus sich selbst zu gewinnen, immer auch „Gegenstand der Klassenauseinandersetzung ist“ (Bourdieu 1987: 91). Dieser Befund kann sowohl in Richtung Kunst, also dahin gehend gelesen werden, was als Erweiterung ihrer Mittel Akzeptanz findet und was nicht (und warum nicht), als auch in Richtung sozialer und politischer Kämpfe. Wenn die Definition von Kunst Gegenstand von antagonistischen gesellschaftlichen Auseinandersetzungen ist, lässt sich auch die Frage stellen und erörtern, wie künstlerische Praktiken – die ja kein passiver, überhistorischer Gegenstand sind – selbst in diese Auseinandersetzungen eingreifen. Die im Mexiko der 1970er Jahre gegründeten KünstlerInnenkollektive haben solche künstlerischen Eingriffe in gesellschaftliche Auseinandersetzungen

praktiziert. Auf welche Weise sie dabei die Grenzen des künstlerischen Feldes überschritten und ob oder inwieweit diese Überschreitungen zu Verschiebungen innerhalb der politischen Hegemonie geführt haben, kann im Rahmen dieses Textes bestenfalls angedeutet werden.

Los Grupos: Urbaner Raum, Guerilla-Form und die Angriffe auf die symbolische Ordnung

Das kulturelle Feld im Mexiko der frühen 1970er Jahre war keineswegs komplett in die Strukturen und Diskurse der Staatspartei involviert. Trotz der gezielten Einbindung des kulturellen in das politische Feld – und der damit einhergehenden mangelnden Autonomie des kulturellen Feldes – entstanden verschiedene Formen kultureller und politischer Dissidenz. Zum einen gründeten einige Intellektuelle in Reaktion auf die harte Innenpolitik Guerilla-Gruppen im ländlichen Süden des Landes. Zum anderen kam es speziell unter jungen KünstlerInnen zur Gründung einer Reihe von Kollektiven, die die Kunstgeschichte mittlerweile als Los Grupos, die Gruppen, kategorisiert hat.

Die 1976 an der Nationalen Schule für Plastische Kunst

(ENAP) gegründete Grupo Suma fand sich in Abgrenzung vom individualistischen Künstlerideal zum Kollektiv zusammen. Bis zu ihrer Auflösung 1982 gehörten der Gruppe 17 Männer und fünf Frauen, MalerInnen, ZeichnerInnen und GraphikerInnen, an. Gemeinsam agierten die KünstlerInnen häufig im Stadtraum, die sie mit ihren ephemeren Arbeiten somit als öffentlichen Raum proklamierten. Sie setzten sich dabei direkt dem Publikum aus, indem sie Bauzäune, Stadionfassaden und Wände an Straßenecken für ihre Kunst benutzten. Mit dieser aktivistischen Arbeit an öffentlichen Wänden grenzten sie sich auch implizit von ihren muralistischen VorgängerInnen ab, in deren Produkten nicht nur der kollektive Schaffensprozess ausgelöscht war,³ sondern die sich zudem immer wieder in die Politik des Staates hatten integrieren lassen bzw. deren Arbeit kooptiert worden war. Die mit Sprühschablonen affizierten Schattenmänner mit Aktentaschen (El Burócrata) konnten direkt als Kritik an der PRI-Bürokratie entziffert werden. Grupo Suma verzichtete in ihren politischen Statements nicht nur auf die Didaktik der Muralisten, sondern bediente sich auch subtilerer ästhetischer Mittel. Sie fügten der Stadt nicht nur Bildmaterial hinzu, sondern griffen auch gefundenes Material für ihre Arbeiten auf: Die wie die Bürokraten

³ Diego Rivera bildete in seinem Fresko The Making of a Fresco Showing the Building of a City, 1931, 6,95 x 9,15 m, San Francisco Art Institute, den Akt des kollektiven Schaffens zwar ab. Sich selbst dabei im Mittelpunkt des Geschehens verortend, vermochte er die auf Einzelpersönlichkeiten abzielenden Repräsentationsmechanismen des künstlerischen Feldes damit aber nicht grundsätzlich zu durchkreuzen.

ebenfalls als Schablonen gefertigten Gesichter von im Zuge des „Schmutzigen Krieges“ „Verschwundenen“ wurden auf Süßigkeitentüten oder Zeitungspapier gedruckt. Seit Picassos kubistischer Zeitungscollage Flasche, Tasse, Zeitung (1912) galt die Verwendung von Tageszeitungen in bzw. für Kunstwerke als das zugleich wörtliche wie auch transzendierende Hineinholen der äußeren Realität ins Werk. Bei Grupo Suma verweist es zudem darauf, wie wertvoll so etwas vermeintlich Banales wie Zeitungspapier sein kann, wenn der Staat, wie im Mexiko der 1970er Jahre, das Monopol über dessen Distribution innehat. (Vgl. Betancourt 2004)

Die drei Jahre zuvor 1973 gegründete Gruppe Proceso Pentágono fand sich angesichts der staatlichen Repression auf der Suche nach alternativen, nicht-staatlichen Ausstellungsräumen zusammen. Wie bei anderen Kollektiven auch, waren es hier nicht zuletzt die staatlich kontrollierten Museen und Galerien, die die KünstlerInnen gewissermaßen auf die Straße trieben. Trotz dieser Ablehnung staatlicher Ausstellungsinstitutionen nahmen Proceso Pentágono 1973 die Einladung an, im Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexiko-Stadt auszustellen – ein Ort, der nach Rubén Gallo wie kein zweiter den von Theodor W.

Adorno herausgestellten, mehr als nur phonetischen Gleichklang der Worte „Museum“ und „Mausoleum“ belegt. (Vgl. Gallo 2007: 170) Allerdings nutzte die Gruppe den Ort, um das Museum in Richtung Straße zu öffnen, indem der Großteil der „Ausstellung“ in Form von Performances im öffentlichen Raum stattfand. In der Aktion El secuestro (Die Entführung) mischten sich die vier Mitglieder der Gruppe unter die Menge vor dem Museum, als plötzlich drei von ihnen auf den vierten, einen scheinbar harmlosen Passanten, zugerannt kamen, ihm einen Sack über Gesicht und Oberkörper stülpten, ihn fesselten und von der Straße zerrten. Statt zu BetrachterInnen gepflegten Kunstgenusses wurden die MuseumsbesucherInnen ebenso wie die umstehenden PassantInnen zu ZeugInnen einer alltäglichen Szene aus dem „Schmutzigen Krieg“ ihrer Regierung. Bei ihrer Teilnahme an der Biennale von Paris 1977 zettelten die Mitglieder von Proceso Pentágono einen öffentlichen Streit um die Rolle des aus Uruguay stammenden Kurators Ángel Kalemberg und dessen Involvierung in die damals dort herrschende Militärdiktatur an, nahmen aber auch an dieser Ausstellung teil. (Neben Proceso Pentágono beteiligten sich außerdem die Kollektive Grupo Suma, Tetraedo und Taller de Arte e Ideología an der Paris Biennale 1977, vgl. Gallo 2007: 176, Vázquez

Mantecón 2007). Sie realisierten dort einen fünfeckigen Raum („Pentágono“), an dessen Außenwänden die Staatsausgaben verschiedener lateinamerikanischer Länder graphisch dargestellt waren, so dass die unterschiedlichen Summen für Erziehung, Militär und Auslandsschulden sichtbar wurden. Im Inneren war der durch mehrere Türen für das Publikum zugängliche Raum eingerichtet wie eines der typischen Folterzimmer der mexikanischen Polizei. Eine ähnliche Installation wurde zwei Jahre später unter dem Titel Proceso 1929 anlässlich der 50-Jahresfeier der 1929 gegründeten Staatspartei im Auditorio Nacional in Mexiko-Stadt errichtet. Hier baute die Gruppe allerdings eine ganze Polizeistation nach, die noch während der dreitägigen Feierlichkeiten von Regierungsbeamten zerstört wurde. (Vgl. Gallo 2006: 183)

Taller de Arte e Ideología (TAI) wurde 1974 an der Fakultät für Philosophie und Literaturwissenschaften an der UNAM von Alberto Híjar gegründet. Verschiedene KünstlerInnen nahmen an der eher wie ein Seminar organisierten Gruppe teil. Im Vordergrund der Arbeit stand vor allem die Auseinandersetzung mit marxistischer ästhetischer Theorie, insbesondere mit Louis Althusser, aber auch mit Michel Foucault. Teile

der Gruppe gingen 1979 nach Nicaragua, um die dortige Sandinistische Revolution zu unterstützen. Mitglieder von TAI gehörten auch zu den MitbegründerInnen der gewerkschaftsähnlichen Organisation Mexikanische Front der KulturarbeiterInnen-Gruppen (Frente Mexicano de Grupos Trabajadores de la Cultura).

Grupo Germinal, an der Escuela Nacional de Pintura, Escultura y Grabado „La Esmeralda“ in Mexiko-Stadt gegründet und bestehend aus sieben Mitgliedern (fünf Männer, zwei Frauen), stellte als Gruppe ihre ästhetische Arbeit am deutlichsten in den Dienst der sozialen Bewegungen. So leisteten sie Gemeindearbeit in der Stadt Escuinapa im Bundesstaat Sinaloa und organisierten 1979 eine Ausstellung zu den „luchas populares“ (populäre Kämpfe, gemeint sind die sozialen Kämpfe der unteren Bevölkerungsschichten).

Auch Grupo Mira gehört zum explizit politisch ausgerichteten Teil der Bewegung der Gruppen. Aus vier Mitgliedern bestehend, waren sie der studentischen Protestbewegung sowohl biografisch als auch inhaltlich eng verbunden. Sie betrieben verschiedene Formen grafischer Agitation, darunter das von ihnen entwickelte (und 1980 in der DDR preisgekrönte) Comunicado Gráfico

(1978), eine Art Grafisches Kommuniqué, indem mit neuen grafischen Formen verschiedene soziale Missstände kombiniert und in der klassisch aktivistischen Absicht, Bewusstsein zu schaffen, verdichtet wurden.

Demgegenüber verfolgte die Grupo Março eine dezidiert sprachanalytische Herangehensweise an ihre Kunstpraxis. Die Gruppe gründete sich 1979 und hatte sechs Mitglieder, zwei Frauen und vier Männer. Die meisten kollektiven Arbeiten fanden im städtischen Außenraum statt. In der Serie Poema Topográfico (Topografisches Gedicht) bezogen die KünstlerInnen Gegenstände wie Gullideckel oder Parkbänke in ihre oft nur mit Kreide affizierten Wortspiele mit ein und gaben den Materialien so neue Bedeutungen oder verschoben die bisherigen. In der Aktion Poema Urbano (Urbanes Gedicht) gaben sie PassantInnen Blätter mit verschiedenen Wörtern in die Hand, die damit auf dem Gehsteig selbst „Gedichte“ zusammensetzen konnten. Die Gruppe definierte ihre Arbeit über drei Bedingungen: „a) Das Wort als bedeutungsgebender Anreiz, b) Die kollektive Partizipation als Produktionsmechanismus, c) Die systematische Struktur als Bedingung für die Rückkoppelung (mit den BetrachterInnen) und die Selbstgenerierung der Kommunikation.“ (Vgl. Debroise

2007: 230) Ab 1979 gab die Gruppe auch eine Zeitung gleichen Namens heraus, in dem das Verhältnis von Wort und Bild ebenso verhandelt wurde wie kollektive künstlerische Praktiken oder Veranstaltungen alternativer Kultur.

No Grupo gilt bereits als Reaktion auf die anderen Kollektive: Der selbstironische Titel dieser 1977 gegründeten Gruppe spiegelt sich zum einen in der konkreten Produktionsweise wieder, die explizit individuelle Arbeiten vorsah, und zum anderen ist sie Ausdruck eines ironischen Bruchs mit der Ernsthaftigkeit der politisch arbeitenden KünstlerInnenkollektive. Dennoch unterstützte auch diese Gruppe nach einer Ausstellung in Medellín/ Kolumbien 1978 die Guerilla-Bewegung M-19 (Movimiento 19 de Abril). Beim dortigen Primer Coloquio Latinoamericano de Arte No Objetual wurde ihre Arbeit Montage de momentos plásticos (Montage plastischer Momente) (1978) gezeigt.

Kollektivität als Strategie

Die proklamierte und gelebte Kollektivität, offensichtlich die erste und größte Gemeinsamkeit aller KünstlerInnen-Gruppen, ist bereits als Effekt der Überlappung von

künstlerischem und politischem Feld aufzufassen. Besonders deutlich ist diese Überschneidung in der verhältnismäßig großen Beteiligung von Frauen an den KünstlerInnengruppen: Viele Protagonistinnen der mexikanischen feministischen Bewegungen waren Teil dieser Kollektive (vgl. McCaughan 2007, Bustamante 2008). Sowohl die Organisationsformen der sozialen Bewegungen als auch die Kritikformen innerhalb des Kunstfeldes selbst brachten kollektive Praktiken hervor. Diese stellen eine Strategie im Sinne von auf politische Zielvorstellungen ausgerichteten Handeln dar, sie sind aber auch eine Strategie als „eine Berechnung von Kräfteverhältnissen“ im Sinne Michel de Certeaus (1988: 23).

Wie in anderen gesellschaftlichen Feldern auch, finden Veränderungen im Feld der Kunst in Kämpfen statt, die u. a. um die legitime Sichtweise von Wahrnehmungs- und Bewertungskriterien geführt werden. Durch ihre Strategien innerhalb dieser Auseinandersetzungen haben die daran Beteiligten erheblichen Einfluss auf den Wandel innerhalb des Feldes (vgl. Bourdieu 2001: 329, Zahner 2006: 81). Die konkreten, eben kollektiven Strategien zielten allerdings nicht direkt auf diese Legitimität. Nur vermittelt und über ihre Werke

griffen sie in diese Kämpfe ein, zielten aber auch auf Wahrnehmungs- und Deutungsmuster außerhalb des künstlerischen Feldes: Auf gesellschaftliche Wahrnehmungs- und Begründungszusammenhänge.

Die Kollektivität war erstens eine Reaktion auf das, was auch Bourdieu (2001: 163) als die Einzigartigkeit und Originalität des „schöpferischen Projekts“ des einzelnen Künstlers/ der einzelnen Künstlerin zu dekonstruieren sucht. Wie in anderen Regionen der Welt auch (vgl. Stimson/ Sholette 2007), standen die kollektiven künstlerischen Ansätze der Post-68er-Jahre in Mexiko sowohl im Gegensatz zur Feier des schöpferischen Individuums als auch zur gesellschaftlichen Vereinzelung der beginnenden postfordistischen Ära. Zweitens richtete sich die Kollektivität als Strategie aber auch gegen das, was Bourdieu als einen der Hauptmechanismen der Kunst ausgemacht hat: Gegen ihre Funktion der Legitimierung von sozialen Klassenverhältnissen (vgl. Bourdieu 1974: 194) und gegen die der „Kennzeichnung klassenspezifischer Unterschiede“ (Bourdieu 1987: 125) – zumindest steuerten Los Grupos durch die Verlegung ihrer Aktionen in den öffentlichen Raum und durch ihr partielles Engagement in den Barrios der gängigen künstlerischen Reproduktion sozialer Klassen entgegen.

Ein konkreter Kontext der Strategie der Kollektivität ist der urbane Raum, in der viele der Gruppen ihre künstlerische Produktion nicht nur präsentierten, sondern auch fertigten bzw. unternahmen. Ein allgemeiner Kontext ist die Guerilla-Form, in der die künstlerischen Gruppen agierten.

Urbaner Raum und Guerilla-Form

Der urbane Raum ist heute als Gegenstand und Aktionsraum für zeitgenössische Kunstpraktiken selbstverständlich. Diese Selbstverständlichkeit wurde allerdings erst im Zuge der mehr oder weniger expliziten Kritik an den Kunstfeldinstitutionen Museum und Galerie geschaffen bzw. entwickelt. Vor dem Hintergrund einer rasanten Verstädterung mit Zuwachsraten von über fünf Prozent im Jahr – der Anteil der städtischen Bevölkerung stieg in Mexiko von ca. 25 Prozent 1930 auf 43 Prozent 1960 und 66 Prozent 1980 (vgl. Tober 2007: 329) – kam es auch in Mexiko im Zuge der 68er-Bewegung zu Aktionen von KünstlerInnen im Stadtraum: KünstlerInnen-Brigaden malten öffentliche Busse an, schufen ephemere Wandgemälde, machten Performances im öffentlichen Raum. An diesen künstlerischen Aufbruch, der zugleich ein Ausbruch aus

den im damaligen Mexiko fast ausschließlich staatlichen Institutionen des Kunstfeldes war, knüpften auch die KünstlerInnenkollektive der 1970er Jahre an.

Dieser Trend der künstlerischen Agitation und Praxis auf der Straße ist einerseits eine Fortsetzung der Verschmelzung von Kunst und politischem Aktivismus während der kurzen Phase der mexikanischen 68er-Bewegung. Sie ist aber auch eine Entwicklung, die sich durch die Zuspitzung zweier wesentlicher Fragen ergeben hat, die sich innerhalb des Kunstfeldes selbst gestellt haben. Erstens ist dies die Frage nach dem Verhältnis von Werk und BetrachterIn, die die KünstlerInnen hier mit einem (wörtlich genommenen) Entgegenkommen einerseits (raus aus den künstlerischen Institutionen hinein in die Lebenswelt potenzieller BetrachterInnen) und einer Aktivierung dieser BetrachterInnen andererseits beantworten. Zweitens ist es die Frage nach den künstlerischen Institutionen selbst, wie also mit der Lehre an der Akademie und der Ausstellung in Museen und Galerien verfahren werden soll. Aus der Unzufriedenheit mit dem staatlich kontrollierten Museums- und Galerisystem entstand auch die von Grupo Suma und Proceso Pentágono besonders betriebene Feier der Straße als Strategie einer unkontrollierten und

unabhängigen Kunstproduktion und -rezeption (vgl. Gallo 2007). Auf beide Fragen fanden die KünstlerInnen im Mexiko der 1970er Jahre Antworten, die nicht ohne die transnationalen Einflüsse zu verstehen sind, die die einige Jahre zuvor erfolgte Erweiterung künstlerischer Mittel im Happening ausübte und die von künstlerischen Bewegungen wie Fluxus und Trends bzw. Bewegungen wie vor allem der konzeptuellen Kunst ausgegangen sind (vgl. Gutiérrez Galindo 2005: 30f.).

Eine transnationale Kunstfeldanalyse einer bestimmten Epoche wäre eine Untersuchung für sich. In einer global funktionierenden Arena zeitgenössischer Kunst darf sich die Analyse künstlerischer Praktiken nicht auf den nationalstaatlichen Rahmen beschränken. Auch darf aus den in den letzten Dekaden verstärkt diskutierten, nordamerikanisch-westeuropäischen Dominanz im Feld der zeitgenössischen Kunst nicht geschlossen werden, die Gegenwartskunst der Peripherie habe sich jeweils in verschiedenen Stadien „nachholender Entwicklung“ formiert. Vielmehr ist den Spezifika der jeweiligen Arbeiten nachzugehen, ihren Auseinandersetzungen mit den hegemonialen Strömungen auch der eigenen Ansätze – also hinsichtlich der konzeptuellen Kunst jenen Strömungen in den USA und Großbritannien –, aber

auch ihrer bewussten Ignoranz gegenüber bestimmten Verknüpfungen. Der starke Bezug konzeptueller Arbeiten auf zeitgenössische politische Themen und Bewegungen, den etwa die „Schattenmänner“ oder der Nachbau des Folterzimmers darstellen, sind solche Spezifika, die nicht ohne den Kontext des „Zustands des Produktionsfeldes“ (Bourdieu 2001: 137) zu verstehen sind.

Deskriptiv ein allgemeiner Kontext, stellt die Guerilla-Form auf normativer Ebene die Möglichkeit einer nicht essenzialisierenden Darstellung der kollektiven Kunstpraktiken der 1970er Jahre dar. Deskriptiv meint, dass im Zusammenhang mit den Protestbewegungen von 1968 eine Vielzahl von künstlerischen Gruppierungen theoretisch und praktisch an Auseinandersetzungen um die Guerilla-Form partizipierten: Das reicht vom Arte Povera-Manifest Arte Povera. Notes for a guerilla war, 1967 von Germano Celant verfasst, bis zur Performance Two, three, many... (Terrorism) (1972) von Allan Sekula, die im Titel auf die Fokus-Theorie Ernesto Che Guevaras anspielt. Die künstlerische Guerilla-Form ist somit auch als eine Alternative zur politisch-militärischen Guerilla zu verstehen. Normativ behauptet die Rede von der Guerilla-Form, die transnationalen Einflüsse

und Überlappungen darstellen zu können, ohne auf die in den politischen Theorien lancierten ontologischen Gemeinschaftskonzepte auf der einen und die in der Kunstgeschichte herausgestellten, rein werkimmanenten Parallelen auf der anderen Seite angewiesen zu sein (zur Guerilla-Form vgl. auch Kastner 2008b). Guerilla-Form bedeutet, den Fokus auf Organisationsprozesse zu legen: Diese sind nicht als (sich institutionalisierende) Organisationen im Sinne der Organisationssoziologie zu verstehen, sondern eher als kollektive Assoziierungen, die auf eine bestimmte gesellschaftliche Situation reagieren. Nicht das Ringen um gesellschaftliche Mehrheiten wie im Gramscianischen „Stellungskrieg“ steht dabei im Vordergrund, auch wenn es wie in diesem ebenfalls um Interventionen in die „Herzen und Köpfe“ der Menschen geht. Die unkontrollierbare Aktion, die plötzliche Involvierung des Publikums (wie bei der Urbanen Poesie) oder auch dessen unerwartete Konfrontation mit politischen Missständen (wie den Graffiti von Bürokraten und „Verschwundenen“), die unerlaubte Gegen-Information (wie mit den Grafischen Kommuniqés), die ästhetische Intervention aus dem Alltag in den Alltag, dies ist das methodische Wechselspiel zwischen Organisation der eigenen Gruppe und Desorganisation der vorgefundenen gesellschaftlichen

Situation. Der so verstandene „Guerillakrieg“ wäre gegenüber dem „Stellungskrieg“ also im Sinne des Organisationsreferates von Rudi Dutschke und Hans-Jürgen Krahls als Organisation „schlechthinniger Irregularität“ (Dutschke/Krahl 1992: 257) aufzufassen. Ob diese radikale aber lose strukturierte Militanz auch der Grund für die relative Kurzlebigkeit der meisten Gruppen war, wie Camnitzer (2007: 83) nahe legt, wäre gesondert zu diskutieren.

Ästhetische Praxis als Angriff auf die symbolische Ordnung

In der Guerilla-Form stoßen aber auch zwei auf den ersten Blick unvereinbare soziale Prinzipien aufeinander: Die Tradition der künstlerischen Avantgarden, spezialisiert in formalen Fähigkeiten und zugleich vertraut mit den Brüchen mit und in dieser Tradition (vgl. Bourdieu 2003: 143) auf der einen und die Tradition des Populären – eher im Sinne der *educación popular* oder des „Volkstümlichen“ (aber ohne dessen im Deutschen politisch rechte Konnotation) als im Sinne von angesagter Popkultur – auf der anderen Seite. Gemeinsam sind beiden Prinzipien die Versuche, „Kunst und Leben“ zu verbinden, also in den Worten Bourdieus, die Form der

Funktion unterzuordnen – „von ‚reiner‘ Ästhetik her gesehen der barbarische Akt schlechthin.“ (Bourdieu 1987: 86). Die Aktionen, Performances/ Happenings und Wandgemälde vieler Gruppen radikalisierten damit die politisch-künstlerischen Ansätze der Muralisten in mehrfacher Hinsicht: Sie erweiterten deren Anspruch auf allgemeine Zugänglichkeit der Kunst, bezogen also einerseits die BetrachterInnen in den Schaffensprozess mit ein, andererseits ließen sie ihnen anders als ihre Vorgänger aber auch die Wahl, sich mit der Kunst zu beschäftigen und drängten sie ihnen nicht als Wandbild gewordenen, ewigen Herausforderung suggerierendes Bildungsprogramm auf.

Kunst für alle zu machen und alle für das Kunstmachen zu interessieren, stellten dabei wechselseitige Ansprüche dar, die aber nicht der Kunst um der Kunst Willen gewidmet waren. Im Gegenteil: In der Phase starker politischer Repression und der in viele alltägliche Bereiche eindringenden Kontrolle des Staates wurde die Kunst als ermächtigend und potenziell befreiend verstanden. Was im Verständnis bürgerlicher KunstliebhaberInnen als barbarischer Akt erscheinen musste, war zugleich die Herausarbeitung dessen, was Terry Eagleton (1994: 204) den „implizite(n) Materialismus des Ästhetischen“

genannt hat: Nicht Verstand oder „Ideenhimmel“ (Bourdieu 2003: 134) zum Ausgangspunkt ästhetischer Erfahrung zu machen, sondern den individuellen Körper, verstanden als Produkt und Quelle der Geschichte zugleich. Das Symbolische und das Materielle sind in diesem Sinne ineinander verwoben: Gefühls-, Denk- und Wahrnehmungsschemata, die die Einteilung und somit auch die politische Aufteilung der Welt bestimmen, sind, wie Bourdieu mit dem Begriff des Habitus ausgeführt hat, an individuelle und kollektive körperliche Praxis gebunden. Aus der Weiterentwicklung ästhetischer Fragestellungen entwickelt, zielten die Aktionen von Los Grupos auf diese materiellen, verkörperlichten politischen Klassifizierungen und damit auch auf die politische und kulturelle Hegemonie.

Dass im Kunstfeld der mexikanischen 1970er Jahre nicht im Sinne nachholender Entwicklung das US-amerikanische Modell der 1960er Jahre, das zwar auch kollektive Arbeiten, vor allem aber nach wie vor individuelle Kunststars hervorbrachte (Zahner 2006: 143ff.), übernommen und gepflegt wurde, hat dabei verschiedene Ursachen: Zunächst sicherlich sozialstrukturelle, denn mit einer Mittelschicht, die 1970 etwa 18 Prozent der Gesamtbevölkerung

ausmachte (bei 80 Prozent „Unterschicht“) (vgl. Tobler 2007: 331), fehlte eindeutig das für die 1960er Jahre in den USA entscheidende, kaufkräftige Bürgertum als zahlungsfähiges Kunstpublikum. Zweitens gab es deshalb trotz wirtschaftlicher Stabilität („milagro mexicano“) auch nicht diese Form der Konsumkultur, die in der US-Kunst des vorangegangenen Jahrzehnts als Abgrenzungs- und Affirmationsmodell eine wichtige Rolle spielte. Und drittens ist vor allem der enge Zusammenhang der künstlerischen Produktion mit den sozialen Bewegungen eine wesentliche Erklärung für die politische Ausrichtung der Kunst im Mexiko der 1970er Jahre. Inhaltlich hebt Camnitzer (2007: 83) dabei das besondere pan-amerikanische Engagement von Los Grupos hervor. Während die künstlerischen Praktiken, die auf die Umgestaltung der gesellschaftlichen, symbolischen Ordnung zielten, also einerseits vor dem Hintergrund ihrer spezifisch mexikanischen Bedingungen zu diskutieren sind, dürfen auch die transnationalen Einflüsse und Effekte nicht unberücksichtigt bleiben. Zu den Einflüssen zählen die auch in anderen Ländern in den 1960er Jahren radikalisierten künstlerischen Fragestellungen. Und zu den Effekten zählt insbesondere die Verknüpfung der Entwicklung ästhetischer Formen mit Fragen

politischer Solidarität, bei Grupo Suma beispielsweise als Sprühschablone auf dem Alltagsgegenstand plus Protest gegen das Verschwindenlassen. Vor dem Hintergrund einer stark prägenden nationalstaatlichen (Kunst)Geschichte entwickelten sich hier kulturelle Praktiken, die als diesen Rahmen überschreitende, transnationalistische zu begreifen sind.

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Dolores L. Trailere

From hats to polos: Fashion trends and drug wars

A cowboy hat, snakeskin boots, thick gold neck chains, eighties Versace shiny prints and the handmade belts in “piteado”¹ style used to accessorized the signature look of drug traffickers in Mexico. Back in the early nineties, before the news of the Mexican drug wars became global, in the northern State of Sinaloa, people used to recognize the “buchones”, “narcos” or drug traffickers for their gaudy fashion taste.

Sinaloa has been for decades the epicentre of drug trade and it is the birth place of some of Mexico most powerful drug cartel leaders. The drug trade in Sinaloa goes back, according to some historical accounts, to the boom of the opium trade in the 1920's and 1930's. And, Sinaloans have learnt to live not only with the violence of drug cartels but also with their particular taste for fashion and music. The term “narcoculture” has been used there for decades to name the popular culture appropriation of symbols related to the drug world.



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¹ Piteado is a traditional form of embroidery art that involves cactus thread and leather, typically used to make belts, saddles, boots and other cowboy-themed products.

The narcocorridos are an example of this. The narcocorrido is an evolution of the traditional corrido song that dates back to the Mexican revolution, into a music style that narrates the epic tales of drug leaders. But the “narcostyle” has also influenced fashion. “La moda buchona” used to be the inspiration for impoverished youngsters aspiring to leave the margins of society to become rich and powerful, like the almighty “narcos” glorified in the music of the narcocorridos.

The “buchones” in Sinaloa, notorious for their love for exotic animal skins, used to be the model for the legendary cliché of drug traffickers. But today, things have changed. The violence of drug cartels has extended to almost all the country and the drug business has also evolved. In the past decades the drug trade belonged to country men. The old fashioned leaders came from rural backgrounds. Traffickers worked in hidden ranches, at the time when the Mexican mafia was a bunch of families focused on trafficking South American cocaine or growing marihuana. But today the Mexican cartels have gone global. Their criminal enterprise has expanded into sophisticated commercial operations around synthetic drugs.

The “narcos” of today are not just ranchers. The new “narcos”, the “narcojuniors”, as we have seen recently reported in the news, have university degrees, date celebrities and blend in with the aristocrats in fancy Mexico City neighbourhoods. The hats, the pick-up trucks and the boots have been left behind, and the “narco moderno” prefers Armani, Abercrombie & Fitch, Hugo Boss and Ralph Lauren.

Last year in August, Mexican authorities detained the suspected trafficker Edgar Valdez, alias “la Barbie”, who was allegedly a lieutenant for the brutal Beltrán-Leyva cartel. When the handcuffed “Barbie” was presented to the media, he was wearing a green Ralph Lauren Polo shirt. A few months later, the same shirt but in different colour was worn by “JJ” or “the model” during his arrest. He is another alleged criminal linked to “La Barbie” being charged with the attempted murder of a famous soccer player.

The media was quick to catch up on the “Polo fashion statement” of these two highly publicized apprehensions. Soon, the knockout Ralph Lauren Polo shirt became a hot sale in the markets of Mexico City. The website Mercado Libre, an e-Bay style shopping site, advertises

the infamous Polo with a photo of a smiley “Barbie” on his green shirt tightly held by a masked police officer.

Again, it would seem like the consumer goods of the “narcoculture” are infiltrating the Mexican street fashion. The so-called “War on Drugs” initiated when President Felipe Calderon took office in 2006, has yielded more than 30 000 deaths and counting. The government has defied criticisms with broad publicity campaigns highlighting the arrests of important drug bosses.

But with this publicity, Mexicans are learning more than just who is who in the drug business. Through the media, we often learn more about the lives and loves of the mythical figures of drug trade. We learn about the way they decorate their homes, the modelling careers of their girlfriends and who is their favourite designer. The public imagery is constantly fed with the symbols of the “narcoculture”.

This year, 700 media outlets along with renown journalists have signed a national “Agreement for the information coverage of violence”. The agreement pretends, amongst other objectives, to limit the propaganda effect in the

news coverage of violence. The purpose for the signatories is to avoid becoming the “involuntary spokespeople” for the criminals. Perhaps this is an indication that we won’t see again endless stories about “narcofashion” like we did with the “Barbie” fashion trend.

But the agreement cannot harness cultural expressions influenced by the extreme violence permeating the daily lives of Mexicans. “Narcoculture”, since the days of the stereotyped drug traffickers in their cowboy attire, embeds itself in subtle ways. In northern Mexico, political attempts to ban “narcoculture” such as censoring the “narcocorridos”, have done little to counter its legitimization. In Sinaloa, the look of the “narco” became a categorical symbol of status and power.

These days drug related violence is a reality spreading throughout the Mexican territory. Mexican drug cartels continue fighting the government to establish control in several states. The “War on Drugs” doesn’t have an end in sight, so it looks like the “narcofashion” is not “out” yet. The looks of drug traffickers will be “in” the public agenda, at least for another season.

Dolores L. Trailere was born in Mexico and has worked as a journalists in Mexico, Spain and the United States. She has written fictional stories about Jesus Malverde, the patron saint of drug dealers and the cult of the Santa Muerte, the Holy Death.

Source: <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0408/waibel/en>,
Stand: 21.04.11

Tom Waibel

Metaphysical Assertions On the Truths of Others

Translated by Aileen Derieg

Subalterns cannot speak and primitives have no culture. How are these assertions similar, even though they seem to be ripped from such different discourses? Whereas the latter forces an imperial gesture of colonial self-importance into words, the former expresses a postcolonial criticism of hegemonic self-(mis)conception in a – frequently misunderstood – formula. Nevertheless, they function like two sides of the same coin, the same barter currency, that greases the machinery of globalized

conditions of injustice. Subalterns cannot speak, says Gayatri Spivak, and adds later as an explanation, that “means that even when the subaltern makes an effort to the death to speak, she is not able to be heard.”¹ Thus it is less a question of whether subalterns speak, but rather of whether they are heard and – even more to the point – who hears them and how. But does the same not apply to the idiocy of the opening statement “primitives have no culture”? Here it is just as little a matter of speaking of “culture”, but rather of the perception/recognition of something that seems to have been invented solely to exclude the (subaltern) others from the hegemony of speaking and to characterize them as “primitives”.

In a sense, the problem of articulation and recognition raised here seems to be like a delayed aftershock from a dialectic buried by the contemporary neoliberal globalized world (dis)order. The current form of recognizing the Other corresponds more to a productivity of difference that has been made consumable. Roughly speaking, the crisis of global capitalism looks something like this from a social perspective: the incessant spread of capital makes use of the fragments of arbitrary “cultural” difference to make the monotony – and unbearableness – of exploitive hegemony consumable. A shimmering veil of multiculturalism woven from the

¹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Subaltern Talk. Interview with the Editors”, in: *The Spivak Reader*, ed. by Donna Landry and Gerald MacLean, London and New York 1996, p. 292.

greatest possible diversity of productive difference is intended to cover up the transformation of social conditions into commodities. In other words: in a process of assimilating difference itself, difference from the existing power relations is made exploitable. The simultaneous production and consumption of difference enables capitalism to constantly shift its own boundaries, and also explains why concepts such as the hybridity that Homi Bhabha² proposes cannot be unproblematically celebrated as being politically subversive.

In the present essay, I will attempt to uncover some of the mechanisms at work in this incorporation of difference, in order to then pursue the question of which possible consequences for the politics of difference and subjectivity might be tied to them. I will limit myself to the description of two specific cases of (subaltern) speaking in contemporary Central America, but the necessity of self-situation first requires a minor detour through the continent of occidental thinking.

First of all, it must be noted that the assimilation of difference described above is by no means to be regarded as a postmodern trick of neoliberalism. The mechanisms of the – not only discursive – incorporation of the Other instead draw from the underground reservoirs of occidental thinking itself. This is why it is so difficult

to elude the subterfuges of reason, as its traps are set in the midst of consciousness. When Hegel, for instance, argues the principles of what he calls “spirit/intellect” [Geist], it is like reading a colonial manual on world domination: “The principle of the European spirit [Geist] is therefore self-conscious reason, which is confident that nothing can present an insurmountable barrier to it, and which therefore touches everything to become present to itself in this way. The European spirit sets the world apart from itself, frees itself from this world, yet sublates this opposition again, reassumes its other, the manifold, into itself, into its simplicity.”³ The demand for integration put forth by multicultural politics presumably means little other than unreserved subjection to this compelling mechanics of hegemonic incorporation.

Yet even those who do not seek to declaim the hymn to the (own) spirit with Hegelian conviction will have difficulty granting others the possibility of thinking – and perceptible speaking – without shaking the pillars of occidental self-conception. Merleau-Ponty, for instance, cautions that emancipatory philanthropy is an insufficient condition:

“I reach an agreement with the Other, I am determined to live in a ‘co-world’, in which I grant as much space to the

² Cf. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London / New York: Routledge 1994.

³ G. W. F. Hegel, *Die Philosophie des Geistes*, in: *System der Philosophie, Dritter Teil (Sämtliche Werke, Bd. 10)*, Ed. F. Frommann, Stuttgart 1965, p. 77.

Other as to myself. Yet the proposal of a co-world remains my own, and it would be insincere to think I wanted the well-being of the Other like my own, since this adherence to the well-being of the Other still originates with me.”⁴

Which lines of flight are there out of the revolving, self-positing thinking that only holds gaps and silence for the Other? What is left of the constructions of western philosophy, if we shake the cornerstone of the Cartesian cogito ergo sum? One of the most extensive collateral damages from this kind of deconstruction undoubtedly applies to identitary politics. Let us therefore attempt in the following to bracket the ego as , the “subject- and ego-superstition” that Nietzsche denounces in Beyond Good and Evil as “the abstrusest metaphysical assertions”⁵ Let us not forget that intelligibility, i.e. the ability to think, speak, hear, etc., is not constituted from itself, but rather is always established only in relation to others. “It moves by changing what it makes out of its ‘others’ – the primitives, the past, the people, the madman, the child, the Third World.”⁶

Who Are the Dead?

“To understand the living, one must know who the dead are. And one must know how their hopes ended: whether they faded gently, or whether they

*were killed. More precisely than the features of the face, one must know the scars of renunciation.”*⁷

Who are the dead of the Guatemaltecan civil war, which was sparked by a US military intervention based in Honduras following an attempt to expropriate the United Fruit Company, and which was supported throughout the entire thirty-six years of its duration by funds from US-Aid and the Anglican Churches of North America? The numbers gathered by the “Project for the Recuperation of Historical Memory” speak a drastic language – 200,000 dead, one million displaced.⁸ Of the 20,000 missing persons, buried in mass graves following over 600 massacres on the populations of just as many villages, today only a tiny portion have been exhumed after the signing of the peace agreement over ten years ago.⁹ Yet the language of statistics is insufficient for tracing the “scars of renunciation”; discovering the traces of these scars in the desiring of the survivors is the only form in which the hopes that have been silenced can be made audible again. They point us to a discourse of testimony, in which it is less the truth about the others that is articulated, than a truth of the others. A meanwhile famous witness of the Guatemaltecan civil war recalls both the killing and the sight of the dead from the perspective of the indigenous rural population:

⁴ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phänomenologie der Wahrnehmung*, Berlin: Gruyter 1966, p. 408 (emphasis in the original).

⁵ Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*, in: *Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe*, Vol. 5, Ed. G. Colli & M. Montinari, Munich 1980, p. 9–243, here: p. 11 and 30. [<http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/nietzsche/1886/beyond-good-evil/preface.htm>; <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/nietzsche/1886/beyond-good-evil/choi.htm> (12)]

⁶ Michel de Certeau, *L’écriture de l’histoire*, Paris: Gallimard, 1975, p. 15.

⁷ Manes Sperber, *Wie eine Träne im Ozean*, Munich: dtv 2000, p. 698.

⁸ Cf. Oficina de Derechos Humanos, Guatemala: *Nunca Más. Informe del Proyecto de Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (REMHI)*, Guatemala 1998, 4 Vol. The project report identifies the state army as being responsible for over 90% of all the victims.

⁹ In his essay in the same edition of transversal, Santiago Cotzal provides moving insights into the social dynamics of tracing war victims in Guatemala.

“Anyway they [the soldiers of the Guatemalan army] lined up the tortured and poured petrol on them; and then the soldiers set fire to each one of them. Many of them begged for mercy. Some of them screamed, many of them leapt but uttered no sound – of course, that was because their breathing was cut off. But – and to me this was incredible – many of the people had weapons with them, the ones who’d been on their way to work had machetes, others had nothing in their hands, but when they saw the army setting fire to the victims, everyone wanted to strike back, to risk their lives doing it, despite all the soldier’s arms. ... Faced with its own cowardice, the army itself realized that the whole people were prepared to fight. You could see that even the children were enraged, but they didn’t know how to express their rage. ... [T]he officer quickly gave the order for the squad to withdraw.”¹⁰

The execution described took place in the market place of Chajul, a town in the highland of K’iche. Among the prisoners tortured and killed was a brother of the woman who recounted what she had seen – Rigoberta Menchú, and specifically this passage from her testimonial narrative I, Rigoberta Menchú became the primary target in a debate lasting for years about the authenticity and legitimation of the speaking of the Others. In the course of his ethnographic research, David Stoll found out that Menchú was not personally present during the incident and took this fact – confirmed by Menchú – as a pretext

for calling the veracity of the entire narrative into question.¹¹ What Stoll stages with the invocation of an (allegedly) inescapable authority of facts is an interesting lesson in hegemonic speaking: a white man protects indigenous men from the articulations of an indigenous woman.¹² Stoll, who feared that Menchú’s testimony could arouse sympathy for the liberation movement, wanted to save the indigenous rural population from resistance against state power. For him, guerilla war was per se nothing other than “an urban romance, a myth propounded by middle-class radicals who dream of finding true solidarity in the countryside”¹³.

In Stoll’s view, rebellious subalterns were consequently instrumentalized by non-subalterns – and anyone who contradicts this is referred back to subalternity. “The argument between Menchú and Stoll is not so much about what really happened as it is about who has the authority to narrate,” noted John Beverley aptly in one of his analyses of this conflict.¹⁴

In this constellation of subalternity, testimony and authorized speaking, in the strategically entered battle scene of identity, I would like to pose a somewhat different problem for discussion. Let us return to the beginning of the text to raise the question of the way in which Rigoberta Menchú’s difference to the existing

¹⁰ Rigoberta Menchú u. Elizabeth Burgos, I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala, London: Verso 1984, p. 179. I am quoting the English translation by Ann Wright, because its wording forms the basis of the following reflections. In the original Spanish version the book is entitled: *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia*, México: Siglo XXI, no year.

¹¹ Cf. David Stoll, *Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans*, Boulder: Westview Press 1999. Menchú responded that she knew of the incident through the presence of her mother and argued that her description had more of the character of a collective rather than individual testimony (Rigoberta Menchú in a press conference on 20 January 1999, cf.: Matilde Pérez, “La Nobel se defendió”, in: *La Jornada*, 21 January 1999; as evidence of Menchú’s statement, John Beverley cites an interview with Juan Jesús Arnáez: “Whoever attacks me, threatens the victims”, in: *El País*, 24 January 1999, cf. John Beverley, *Testimonio. On the Politics of Truth*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2004, p. 110, FN. 4).

¹² This compression distinguishes Stoll’s intervention as the variation of a “masculine-imperialist ideological formation” (Gayatri Spivak, “Can the Subaltern speak?”, in: Cary Nelson / Lawrence Grossberg [eds.], *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988, p. 296), for which Spivak coined the formula: “White men are saving brown women from brown men” (ibid.).

¹³ David Stoll, op.cit., p. 282.

¹⁴ John Beverley, “What Happens When the Subaltern Speaks”, in: ibid., *Testimonio*, op.cit., p. 81.

(Guatemaltecan) power relations was made exploitable in a process of assimilating difference itself. First the question must be clarified, of whether difference is involved at all, and if it is, whether its recognition has taken place. All indications of identitary logic suggest affirming both questions: Menchú is woman, indigenous, comes from a family of marginalized farm laborers whose members were almost all killed in the war; she speaks K'iche', did not learn Spanish, which must be regarded as the hegemonic language in Guatemala, until later, and she expresses herself in her quoted testimonio through the mediation of an Argentinian-French anthropologist. The recognition of these differences was already accomplished in 1992 with the award of the Nobel Peace Prize, and even the debate discussed above can be regarded as a kind of negative proof of recognition: at least her speaking was expected to generate difference to the repressive state apparatus.

Yet is it also possible to speak of these differences being made productive in an assimilation process? Obviously. The Nobel Prize-winner was granted political asylum in Mexico, and since then she has hardly missed an opportunity to denounce the Zapatist uprising in southern Mexico as a delayed, bleary-eyed and inappropriate rebellion against a progressively

humanitarian administration.¹⁵ After returning to Guatemala, she distanced herself from the organized social movements of the country, even from the Comité Unidad Campesina (CUC; Committee of the Farmers' Unity), which was co-founded by her father, with which she was closely tied at the time when her testimonio was written. Instead, she provided the right-wing conservative government under President Oscar Berger at the time with an appearance of openness towards the concerns of the indigenous majority population in her office as state "Goodwill Ambassador" in international politics.

This assimilated difference has only recently been refused recognition, specifically from an agent who has previously always only been assigned the role of silent (and manipulated) subalterns in the conflicts discussed here – namely the indigenous population of Guatemala. In fall 2007, Rigoberta Menchú was a candidate – as the only woman and the only indígena – for the office of state president, and on the first ballot she received less than 3% of the votes. In early November of the same year the voters elected Álvaro Colom, the candidate of the political successor organization to the united guerilla groups (URNG; Revolutionary National Unit of Guatemala). Did the population of the country deny their

¹⁵ As far as I know, Menchú never published these assessments in print, but repeatedly emphasized them in her speeches. This was the case, for instance, in her opening speech at the Congreso Mesoamericano de Antropología at the University of Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico, 2002. Derision of the rebellion movement as being "bleary-eyed" also occurs repeatedly in the rhetorics of the Mexican government, especially referring to the point in time when the EZLN appeared in public – at dawn on New Year's Day 1994.

probably most famous citizen recognition, specifically because she did not do – or only insufficiently did – what Stoll accused her of: namely supporting the demands of the social movements and guerilla groups?

The Magma of the Social

Indeed, as far as it is possible to determine within the limited framework of the present essay, the initially outlined concerns about the politics of identity are confirmed. It is not only that hegemonic jurisdiction, due to its lack of understanding for the truth of the Other, ends up floundering in the whirlpool of self-assurance that propels the authority of one's own speaking to a nomos of universality, finally to assert that the subject of the statement – following a Kantian formula – is “capable of a capacity”.

Non-hegemonic speaking also becomes entangled in defending its questioned identity, specifically through invoking a collectivity that gives the diversity another name, thus shifting heterogeneity and difference of what is one's own into a larger – and more complex – dimension.

However, this microscopic view of theoretical abstraction has lost sight of the historical-political constellation, in which the confrontation between claim and recognition

unfolds. In the language of contemporary political hegemony, the heirs of expansion, colonialism and jurisdiction, which was carried out historically both in the name of the identity of power and the power of identity, criticize the uprising of the subjected, the marginalized and the subalternized, who demand the right to their own equivalent and simultaneously different identity. Ironically, the criticism of identity becomes all the louder, the more the “damned of the earth” succeed in forging weapons in their battle for recognition from the politics of identity.

Let's look at this kind of precarious inversion of subject positions using a concrete example. The relevant incident took place in Chiapas on the Mexican border to Guatemala shortly after the attacks of 9/11, and it involved the question “Who are the dead?”. I was there at that time with a media project for communal communication, and I had prepared a videographic compilation of television reports about the widely discussed events for a planned travelling cinema tour. What was special about the image projections for the rebellious inhabitants of remote rainforest villages was the participation of a young man from New York, who had been an eye witness to the collapse of the World Trade Center. The New Yorker had come to the region

of rebellion for several months to do social work, and he was happy to have an opportunity to personally bear witness to a different America. He was welcomed in the villages and asked to give his report after the projection of the TV images. In fact, the eye witness was able to recount astonishing things that were not mentioned with a single word in the satellite information diffusion. He concentrated on telling of demonstrations that took place following the events, which took a completely different course, according to his information, from what was suggested by their representation in the media. He spread the news of thousands of people who, despite the hegemonic identitary politics that turned persons, names, fundamentalisms and rogue states into projection surfaces for hatred in the blink of an eye, demanded peace, rejected retaliation and called for reflection.

A teacher from the autonomous districts got up and politely interrupted the man giving his account. The teacher asked which reflection was meant and whether the young man perhaps didn't know that the USA had drawn the hostility of the whole world upon itself through its own deeds; and he began to count off an impressive list of military interventions, coups, repressions of rebellions and economic blockades that

had all been orchestrated by US American governments against sovereign states of the global south. What kind of peace was called for, he continued, was it not clear to him that a permanent state of war predominates all over the world and so it was hardly surprising when the buildings built with the profits from these wars should once fall upon the heads of the warmongers themselves. And so, the teacher continued with an identitary affirmation, the events were indeed unfortunate, because in the end it was “his” people who made up the majority of the dead, migrants from Mexico, Guatemala, Salvador, Nicaragua, etc. Many of those present had stood up during this impassioned speech, and the New Yorker had obviously become uncomfortable in his role as witness; he was unexpectedly made responsible for something, from which he had believed himself released, not least of all due to his decision to do social work in the marginalized crisis region. However, the address ended on a conciliatory note: he was told he need not be afraid, in the rebellious villages everyone was welcome who took the trouble to get there. He would be given food and a place to sleep here, even though, as the teacher pointed out, he himself would probably never be received like that in New York.

The “magma of the social” – to borrow a term coined by Cornelius Castoriadis from widespread silence¹⁶ – in which societies and their criticism are instituted through struggles for recognition and self-determination, is in danger of vanishing in current political discourses behind the stratifications and segmentations of “culture”. Translating social dissidence into cultural difference leads to an encroaching essentialization of differentness, creating space for political indifference and apparently easily assimilating and consuming non-essentialist counter-strategies. “The notion of culture transforms the hierarchies of global privilege into a horizontal array of mutually indifferent cultures. It replaces the notion of class – but not its rule,” according to Hito Steyerl’s precise assessment.¹⁷ Hegemonic strategy does not so much aim to exclude the Other – a social order that seems to know no outside even establishes difference artificially, if necessary. This reinforces social (biopolitical) control just as it alters and renews the selection of commodities. What is really at stake is making those (subalterns) silent, who call for equality and solidarity as a form of actively recognizing difference. Is there consequently nothing else we can do but to

¹⁶ Cf. Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*. Trans. Kathleen Blamey. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press and Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 1987.

¹⁷ Hito Steyerl, “Culture and Crime”, <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0101/steyerl/en>

stage “a strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest”¹⁸, if we want to impel the reconstruction of existing conditions? If the social meaning of existence is ensured by the societal context, individual existence gains its significance in deviation, in difference. But how can this difference be perceived outside of capitalizing and culturalizing assimilation? Instead of answering this, I would like to paraphrase Merleau-Ponty: Our concept of the human being remains superficial, as long as we do not sense the silence on this side of the noise of words and are capable of grasping the gesture that breaks this silence.¹⁹

¹⁸ Gayatri Spivak, In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics, New York: Methuen 1987, p. 205.

¹⁹ Cf. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, op.cit., p. 218 (quotation slightly altered, emphasis from the author). <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0408/waibel/en> Metaphysical Assertions

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