

Arhivi: uznemirujuće prakse izdvajanja

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Archives: The Disturbing Practices of Singling Out

Arhiv je mjesto uspostave reda, imaginarna lokacija koju suvremena umjetnička praksa ne doživljava kao repozitorij, nego je pretvara u medij. I dok će tradicionalno poimanje arhiva pretpostavljati adresu, preciznije zgradu unutar koje se razvijaju odnosi temeljeni (i) na moći i pravu na interpretaciju,¹ institucionalni prijelaz od privatnog prema javnom, kojim Derrida imenuje jednu od karakteristika povijesnog arhiva, u našem vremenu biva dopunjen mogućnošću nove vrste prisvajanja, kako mjesta tako i samog ustroja funkcioniranja arhiva kao fikcionalne “ustanove”. U povijesnom slijedu arhivi su nerazdvojni od ustanove, podložni klasifikaciji pohranjenog materijala u odnosu na privilegij. Njega Derrida dovodi u vezu s topologijom u smislu odabranog mjesta (pri čemu ne treba zanemariti *zamišljenu* sliku pretrpanog mjesta, iako se u arhivima, ako je o topologiji riječ, važnost pridaje kvaliteti materijala, a ne količini).

Teorijska razmatranja arhiva u umjetničkim praksama aktualna su posljednjih desetak godina, iako ćemo začetke bavljenja tom temom pronaći još u 60-ima. Ne samo Derrida i Foucault, nego i mnogi drugi znanstvenici i teoretičari s humanističkih i društvenih područja zaslužni su da je tema arhiva i nadalje u interesu mnogih interdisciplinarnih rasprava. Pa iako će mnogima i danas

Archive is purportedly a place where order has been established, an imaginary location that the contemporary art practice no longer experiences as a repository, but rather as a medium. And whereas the traditional idea of the archive presupposed an actual address, a specific building in which relations would evolve based (among other things) on the power and right to interpret,¹ in our times the institutional passage from private to public, which Derrida has identified as one of the main features of the historical archive, has been complemented with the possibility of a new type of appropriation, which affects both the place and the very structure in which the archive operates as a fictional “institution”. Throughout history, archives have been understood as inseparable from the idea of “institution”, and subject to the classification of the preserved material according to the principle of privilege. Derrida has thereby associated them with topology in the sense of a selected location (whereby one should not ignore the imaginary idea of a cramped place, although archives have, speaking of topology, always given preference to the quality of the material rather than its quantity).

Theoretical research on the archive within the artistic field has been especially topical in the past ten years, although its beginnings could be traced back to the

prva asocijacija biti vezana uz historijska znanja i važnost mjesta unutar kojega se ona skupljaju, čuvaju i po potrebi obnavljaju, suvremeni umjetnici temi pristupaju istražujući druga značenja i znanja, ona koja su u mogućnosti sami proizvesti. U tim novostvorenim “konstrukcijama” ne teži se cjelovitosti, nego izdvajanju kao jednoj od potencijalnih metoda stvaranja novih poredaka. Izrecivo će pokušati nadomjestiti “procijep” nastao nedostatnošću vidljivog na tragu Foucaultove strategije, pri čemu će i izrecivo i vidljivo izbjeći uobičajene procese klasifikacije kao jedne od karakteristika arhiva. Individualno uspostavljeni arhivi u najvećoj su mjeri, iako ne potpuno, izbjegli zamke političke moći čiji je interes u kontekstu “tradicionalnih” arhiva bio usmjeren i na sjećanja. Potencijalni sukob odvijat će se na drugom planu, možda onome politike slikâ ili njihove proizvodnje, na primjer. Ili će se njime pokušati uspostaviti odmak od “nasilja” arhiva kao takvog, ako se složimo s opisom njegove pozicije i konzervativnog karaktera.²

Izmaknuti se zakonima kuće? Godine 1999. Walid Raad pokrenuo je projekt *Atlas grupa* radi istraživanja i dokumentiranja suvremene povijesti Libanona. Arhiv posjeduje dokumente koji lociraju, čuvaju i prezentiraju određene događaje,

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1960s. Not only Derrida and Foucault, but also a number of other scholars and theoreticians from the field of humanities and social sciences have contributed to the topic of the archive, which remains in the focus of many interdisciplinary debates. Today, many will associate something of importance first and foremost with historical knowledge and the places where it has been collected, preserved, and if needed, restored; however, the contemporary artists have been approaching the issue from a different angle, by exploring other meanings and insights, those that they can produce by themselves. In these newly coined “constructs”, one does not aim at completeness; instead, it is the singling out that serves as a potential method for creating new orders of things. The utterable will seek to make up for the “gap” created by the lack of the visible, following Foucault’s strategy, whereby both the utterable and the visible will avoid the usual processes of classification, which used to be one of the archive’s main features. Individually established archives have, for the most even if not completely, managed to avoid the trap of subjecting themselves to political power, which used the “traditional” archives in order to create memory. The potential conflict will probably surface on a different level, perhaps that of the politics of images

pružajući zainteresiranima na uvid niz arhivalija – zvučnih, vizualnih, literarnih i drugih radova, organiziranih u naizgled vrlo službenu formu. Stvarnog ili imaginarnog arhiva? Jer, Raad izmišlja narative i navodi na „ispravno“ čitanje događaja s čijim se značenjem lako manipulira i politizira. Nastao je, uz ostalo, zbog temeljne skepse prema okvirima unutar kojih je struktura povezivanja pročitano i viđeno sadržaja prečesto nalikovala jedna drugoj. U arhivskim sustavima morao se poštovati zatečeni red, pa ne čudi potreba za iznalaženjem drugačijeg modela arhiviranja, koji možda počiva u već spomenutom procijepu, gdje je moguće zadovoljiti pojedinačne zahtjeve. U njima se, doduše, ne moramo nužno snalaziti kao u onim tradicionalnim sustavima.

*We gaze at what is not there, and we are where we cannot see.*³

S druge strane, logično je da pojedincima tradicionalni sustavi ne odgovaraju; ponajviše zbog promjene načina života i u krajnjoj liniji interesa koji više nisu istoznačni uobičajenoj arhivskoj *čežnji* zahvaljujući kojoj je mnogo toga izmaklo zaboravu. Svjedočimo ontološkoj promjeni arhiva kao repozitorija dokumenata u arhiv kao dinamično i plodno produkcijsko oruđe, te, konačno, kako piše Simone Osthoff, pretvorbi arhiva u umjetnički rad. Propitujući institucijske granice

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and their production. Or it may be used to create distance with regard to the “violence” of the archive as such, if we agree with this description of its position and its conservative nature.²

Evading the laws of the house? In 1999, Walid Raad launched the Atlas Group project in order to research and document the contemporary history of Lebanon. The archive contains documents that locate, preserve, and present certain events, offering a series of archival materials to everyone who may be interested in them, including sounds, visual, literary and other works, organized in a seemingly official form. Was this archive real or imaginary? Raad, namely, invented his narratives, guiding us to a “correct” reading of the events, which means that their meaning was easily manipulated and politicized. The project was, among other things, a result of the author’s fundamental scepticism towards the framework in which the structure of linking the read and seen content is too often similar. In archival systems, one must observe the given order, which is why a different model of archiving may be needed, perhaps residing in the abovementioned gap where different requirements can be met. There, of course, one needn’t proceed in the same way as in the traditional systems.

i stabilnost ustanove arhiva, njegovu funkciju, način korištenja i značenje, umjetnici su u prilici istražiti ne samo njegovu konstitutivnu politiku, nego i odnos prema subjektu te složene i višeznačne procese indeksacije.

Koju vrstu upisivanja na *magični blok* očekujemo? Zapisi koji prate pojedine arhive opisuju predmete zbog kojih su oni “osnovani”; no davna Freudova bilješka o procesu sjećanja kao upisivanja (da ne kažemo popisivanja) danas tek djelomično odjekuje tonom njegovih riječi. Proces demokratizacije doveo je do disperzije arhiva u brojne “ustanove” zasnovane na kriterijima pristupačnosti i sudjelovanja, no čiji je ustroj zapravo u potpunosti ovisan o umjetničkoj interpretaciji. Spomenimo na primjer umjetnicu Peggy Buth, koja svoje kreativne kritičke konstrukcije u velikoj mjeri zasniva na arhivima. Njezina interpretacija pomaže nam izoštriti pogled i razmisliti o značenju reprezentacije povijesti unutar institucionalnih okvira, u kojima mnogi politički, ekonomski, rodni, vjerski i ostali odnosi dosad nisu bili predmetom pozornosti. Ili barem ne u tolikoj mjeri. Svoja je istraživanja usmjerila prema etnografskim muzejima čije sadržaje podvrgava kritičkom preispitivanju, ovisno o društvenim i političkim strukturama moći koje su utjecale na njihovo osnivanje. Dominantna zapadnjačka historiografija počiva na dvije strategije – muzeifikaciji i

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*We gaze at what is not there, and we are where we cannot see.*³

It is quite logical that some are unhappy with the traditional systems. It may result from the changes in one’s way of life and, after all, one’s interests, as they no longer correspond to the usual archival desire, owing to which so many things have escaped oblivion. We are witnessing an ontological change in the archive as a repository of documents and a dynamic, fruitful tool, which has eventually led, as Simone Osthoff writes, to a transformation of the archive into a work of art. By challenging the institutional borders of the archive and its stability as an institution, its function, usage, and meaning, artists have been able to explore not only its constitutional policy, but also its attitude towards the subject matter, as well as its complex and ambiguous processes of indexation.

What sort of inscription into the Mystic Writing Pad do we expect? Records linked to individual archives describe objects for which they have been “established”; however, Freud’s old note on the process of remembrance as inscription (or even listing) resounds today only partly with the tone of his words. The process of democratization has led to a dispersion of the

arhivu. Razvojem digitalne tehnologije koncept arhiva postao je dostupniji i “labaviji”, a u pojedinim je sredinama pomogao u demokratskim promjenama, pogotovo nakon raspada blokovske podjele i otvaranja mnogih dotad zatvorenih arhiva koji su djelovali u totalitarnim režimima. Niz atributa koji su arhivima dodjeljivani tijekom tog procesa (*društveni, sirovi, postkolonijalni, etnografski arhiv*, kao i *arhivska svijest, razlog* i dr.⁴) govori u prilog razvoju discipline i nestanku granica koje su je prije definirale.

Posljednjih desetljeća svjedočimo intenzivnom interesu za otkrivanje, dokumentiranje i organiziranje materijala, čijom je promjenom mjesta u idejnoj i/ili izvedbenoj strukturi te definiranjem važnosti elemenata koji postaju vidljivi ili “dostupni” moguće formirati nove, inovativne forme arhiva. U njima ne počiva samo povijesno znanje i sjećanje; arhivi su repozitoriji osobitih strategija uređenih sadržaja. Uspostavljeni su na temelju umjetničke slobode, kulturalnog sadržaja koji je netko odlučio izdvojiti i prezentirati, ponekad fragmentirajući sadržaj do te mjere da cjelina koja se izdvaja od zaborava postaje destabilizirajuća.

Kako umjetnici izdvajaju sadržaje, medije i teme? Postoje li sličnosti između arhiva

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archive into a number of “institutions” based on the criteria of accessibility and participation, whose structure, in fact, depends entirely on artistic interpretation. One may mention artist Peggy Buth, for example, who has largely based her creative and critical constructions on archives. Her interpretation helps us sharpen our gaze and reflect on the meaning of representing history within the institutional frameworks in which various political, economic, gender-related, religious, and other relations have not yet come into the focus of attention. Or at least not to a major extent. Her research is related to ethnographic museums, whose content has been subjected to critical investigation depending on the social and political power structures that influenced their establishment. The dominant Western historiography relies on two strategies – museification and archivation. With the evolution of digital technology, the concept of the archive has become more accessible and “looser”, and in some settings it has even contributed to democratic change, especially after the dissolution of the iron curtain, when many archives previously used by the totalitarian regimes were opened to the public. A series of attributes that were attached to these archives in the process (social, raw, post-colonial, ethnographic archive, as well as

i zbirke, i možemo li muzej i arhiv smatrati sinonimima? U kojem su odnosu pojmovi arhiva, sjećanja i pamćenja? Jesu li mehanizmi i strategije arhiviranja u istočnoeuropskim zemljama usporedljiviji s Bliskim istokom ili zapadnjačkim zajednicama? Stvaraju li arhivi paralelne povijesti umjetnosti, neovisne o institucijama, ili im prijeti institucionalizacija i historizacija? Jesu li arhivi tek pomoćno sredstvo arheologije znanja ili kontingentne performativne prakse te na koji način u galerijskom/muzeološkom kontekstu rekonstruiraju i resemantiziraju izrečeno ili prešućeno? Može li prešućeno na kraju biti izgovoreno, i po kojoj cijeni? Velika količina dokumenata uvedenih u područje umjetnosti, koji su postali dijelom nove vizualne tipologije, povijesti i teoriji daju posebno mjesto. Ono se ne nalazi isključivo izvan ili unutar umjetničke realnosti; iako je zahvaljujući postupcima imanentnima teoriji i povijesti moguće sintetizirati neko određeno vrijeme, ono što se zapravo fiksira značenje je koje funkcionira poput primarnog izvora. A on je zapravo krajnje spekulativan.

¹ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever. A Freudian Impression*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 1995., 2.

² Derrida, isto, 7.

³ Katia Maciel citirana u: Simone Osthoff, *Performing the archive: The transformation of the archive in Contemporary art from repository of documents to art medium*, Atropos Press, New York

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archival consciousness, archival reason, etc.⁴) speaks on behalf of the discipline's evolution and the erasure of borders that had previously defined it.

In the past decades, we have witnessed an intense interest in discovering, documenting, and organizing materials, their change of place in conceptual and/or performative structures, and the definition of the importance of various elements that have become visible or "accessible", which has made it possible to create new, innovative forms of archives. These do not contain only historical knowledge and remembrance, but have also become the repositories of specific strategies related to the ordered content. They are based on artistic freedom, elements of culture that someone has decided to select and present, and sometimes such fragmented materials that the whole which has been selected as worthy of saving from oblivion has become destabilizing.

How do artists select these materials, media, and topics? Are there similarities between an archive and a collection, and can the museum and the archive be considered as synonymous? What is the relationship between the notions of archives, remembrance, and memory? Are the mechanisms and strategies of archivation in Eastern European countries more comparable to the Middle East

& Dresden, 2009, 11.

⁴ Marlene Manoff, "Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines", u: *Libraries and the Academy Portal*, Vo. 4, No. 1 (2004.), 9-25 (<http://muse.jhu.edu>; pristupljeno 1. 6. 2014.)

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or to the Western settings? Do archives create parallel art histories, independent from the institutions, or are they threatened with becoming institutionalized and historicized? Are the archives mere auxiliary instruments of the archaeology of knowledge or rather contingent performative practices, and how do they use the museum/gallery context to reconstruct and re-semanticize what has been uttered or hidden? And can the hidden eventually be uttered, and at what price? Large quantities of documents introduced into the field of art have become part of the new visual typology, granting a special place to history and theory. That place is not exclusively outside or within the artistic reality; even though procedures inherent to theory and history make it possible to synthesize a particular period of time, what actually becomes fixed is the meaning, which functions as a primary source. And as such, it is actually utterly speculative.

¹ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 2.

² Ibid., 7.

³ Katia Maciel as quoted in: Simone Osthoff, *Performing the Archive: The Transformation of the Archive in Contemporary Art from Repository of Documents to Art Medium* (New York and Dresden: Atropos Press, 2009), 11.

⁴ Marlene Manoff, "Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines," *Libraries and the Academy Portal* 4/1 (2004), 9-25, <http://muse.jhu.edu> (last accessed on June 1, 2014).