

**U STAKLU
NEPROZIRNOG MEDIJA:
EDITA SCHUBERT**

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LEONIDA
KOVAC

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**IN THE GLASS OF
AN UNTRANSPARENT MEDIUM:
EDITA SCHUBERT**

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SAŽETAK: Tekst se bavi čitanjem radova Edite Schubert (1947.–2011.) nastalih tijekom 1990-tih, kontekstualizirajući ih ne samo promjenom diskurzivne paradigme u smislu otklona od modernističke estetike, već prije svega tranzicijskim razdobljem u Hrvatskoj gdje nastaju, odnosno razdobljem globalizacije nakon pada Berlinskog zida. Postupak transgresije pojedinog medija kojim je obilježen ukupni opus slikarice Edite Schubert, tijekom devedesetih godina dvadesetog stoljeća postaje svojevrsno pregovaranje s procesima medijalizacije svojstvenim postmodernom, ili postindustrijskom društvu. Tekst razmatra radove nastale u zadnjem desetljeću umjetničina života, posebice one autoreprezentacijskog karaktera u relaciji s pojmom biopolitičke proizvodnje u razdoblju neoliberalne ekonomije.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: znanje, postmodernost stanje, slika, medij, fotografska slika, kôd, tranzicija, transgresija, tehnologija, regulacija slike, identitet

2001. godine koncipirala sam i realizirala izložbu *Ispričati priču* koja je umjetničku produkciju nastalu u Hrvatskoj tijekom zadnjeg desetljeća 20. stoljeća nastojala kontekstualizirati otklonom od modernističke paradigme utemeljene na tezama o teleološkom razvoju umjetnosti i njezinoj autonomiji. Razmišljajući tada o iskoraku iz modernističkog formalizma, koji se devedesetih i u Hrvatskoj konačno počeo događati unutar tzv. *mainstreama*, oslanjala sam se na Jamesonove i Lyotardove detekcije i

dijagnoze postmodernog stanja. 1984. godine Jameson objavljuje dalekosežno utjecajni tekst *Postmodernizam ili kulturna logika kasnog kapitalizma*, u kojemu konstatira kako se u razdoblju ekspanzije multinacionalnog kapitala zbililo da je estetička proizvodnja postala integrirana u robnu proizvodnju općenito: žestoka ekonomijska hitnja proizvodnja sve neobičnijih dobara (od odjeće do aviona), po sve većim stopama obrtaja, pridaje estetičkoj inovaciji i eksperimentiranju sve bitniju strukturalnu funkciju i poziciju. Takve ekonomijske nužnosti onda nalaze priznanje u svim raspoloživim vrstama institucionalne podrške novijoj umjetnosti, od fundacija i subvencija do muzeja i drugih formi pokroviteljstva. Konstatirajući to, Jameson podsjeća čitaoca kako je ta globalna, a ipak američka postmoderna kultura unutarnji i nadgradbeni izraz cijelog novog vala američke vojne i ekonomijske dominacije širom svijeta: u tom smislu, kao i kroz klasnu povijest, poledinu kulture tvore krv, tortura, smrt i strava.¹ Nekoliko godina prije, 1979. Jean-Francois Lyotard u knjizi *Postmodernost stanje* zapisuje da je „znanje posljednjih desetljeća postalo glavna proizvodna snaga, što je već znatno izmijenilo sastav aktivnog stanovništva u najrazvijenijim zemljama i što predstavlja najuže grlo za zemlje u razvoju. U postindustrijskom i postmodernom dobu znanost će zadržati i bez sumnje još povećati svoj značaj u bateriji proizvodnih kapaciteta država-nacija. Ta je situacija čak jedan od razloga

In 2001 I had designed and organized an exhibition *To Tell a Story* which contextualized the art production in Croatia during the last decade of the 20th century by emphasizing its detachment from the Modernist paradigm, based on the hypotheses about the teleological evolution of art and about its autonomy. At that time I was reflecting upon that step out of Modernist formalism, which in Croatia finally occurred in the 1990s within the so-called mainstream, by relying on Jameson's and Lyotard's discoveries and diagnoses of the postmodern condition. In 1984, Jameson had published his widely influential essay on "Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," in which he analysed what happened in the era of expansion of multinational capital: "[A]esthetic production was integrated into commodity production generally: the frantic economic urgency of producing fresh waves of ever more novel-seeming goods (from clothing to airplanes), at ever greater rates of turnover, assigns an increasingly essential structural function and position to aesthetic innovation and experimentation. Such economic necessities then find recognition in the institutional support of all kinds available for the newer art, from foundations and grants to museums and other forms of patronage." Having established that, Jameson reminded his readers that this global, and yet predominantly American postmodern culture was an inner and superstructural expression of the entire wave of American military and economic domination

throughout the world: "in this sense, as throughout class history, the underside of culture is blood, torture, death, and horror."¹ Several years earlier, in 1979, Jean-Francois Lyotard wrote in his book on *Postmodern Condition* that "knowledge has become the principal force of production over the last few decades; this has already had a noticeable effect on the composition of the work force of the most highly developed countries and constitutes the major bottleneck for the developing countries. In the postindustrial and postmodern age, science will maintain and no doubt strengthen its pre-eminence in the arsenal of productive capacities of the nation-states. Indeed, this situation is one of the reasons leading to the conclusion that the gap between developed and developing countries will grow ever wider in the future. (...) Knowledge in the form of an informational commodity indispensable to productive power is already, and will continue to be, a major – perhaps *the* major – stake in the worldwide competition for power. It is conceivable that the nation-states will one day fight for control of information, just as they battled in the past for control over territory, and afterwards for control of access to and exploitation of raw materials and cheap labor. A new field is opened for industrial and commercial strategies on the one hand, and political and military strategies on the other."² In Croatia, the 1990s were indeed marked by "blood, torture, death, and horror," and the catastrophic consequences of

koji navodi na pomisao da će se razmak prema državama u razvoju neprekidno povećavati. U svom obliku informatičke robe neophodne proizvodnoj moći, znanje već jest i bit će veliki, možda i najznačajniji činilac u svjetskom nadmetanju za vlast. Kao što su se države-nacije borile za osvajanje teritorija, a potom za ovladavanje raspolaganjem i korištenjem sirovina i jeftine radne snage, može se zamisliti da će se u budućnosti boriti za ovladavanje informacijama. Tako se otvara novo područje za industrijske i trgovačke strategije i za vojne i političke.⁴² Devedesete su u Hrvatskoj doista bile obilježene „krvlju, tortutom, smrću i stravom“, a katastrofalne posljedice inicijalnih procesa domaće postmodernizacije mogu se danas, početkom drugog desetljeća novog milenija, potpuno jasno sagledati. Početkom devedesetih, nakon ekonomskim kolapsom uvjetovanog pada Sovjetskog Imperija, koji je omogućio doslovni i simbolički čin rušenja Berlinskog zida (a taj je događaj uklonio i posljednju prepreku globalnom kapitalizmu), u Hrvatskoj u optjecaj ulazi floskula „povratak u Europu“. Termin Europa funkcionirao je kao metafora označujući kompleksnost relacija sadržanih u binarnoj opoziciji ekonomski razvijeni Zapad – Balkan. „Povratak u Europu“, ili točnije fikcija puta u „blagodati“ kapitalizma i demokracije nije bila obilježena nastojanjima za ovladavanjem informacijama (o kojima govori Lyotard) i stjecanjem novih spoznaja s inherentnim im kreativnim potencijalom, već

doslovce ratom države-nacije za obranu vlastitog teritorija. Ratom inducirana žestoka nacionalistička i konzervativno-klerikalna retorika postala je paravan invaziji divljeg kapitalizma sa svojstvenim mu pustošenjem javnih dobara u nerijetko kriminalnoj privatizaciji te prodajom banaka i telekomunikacijske infrastrukture multinacionalnim korporacijama. Razdoblje tranzicije iz totalitarnog komunističkog sustava u (totalitarni) sustav globalnog neoliberalnog kapitalizma, odnosno prijelaz iz modernog u postmoderno društvo, u Hrvatskoj je doista obilježeno nestankom industrijske proizvodnje. Međutim, deindustrijalizacija nije bila popraćena ekspanzijom tzv. kreativnih industrija koje su istodobno u najmoćnijim zapadnim zemljama postajale nositeljima ekonomskog razvoja. Naprotiv, devedesetih se godina nepogrešivo manifestirao performativ izjave jednog visokog državnog dužnosnika koji je ustvrdio da „kilo mozga vrijedi dvije marke“. Čak i u takvom sociokulturnom kontekstu umjetnička produkcija koja nastaje u Hrvatskoj tijekom devedesetih (ako se razmatra u kontekstu Jamesonovih termina estetičke inovacije i eksperimentiranja) ne pokazuje izrazitijih formalnih razlika u odnosu na produkciju koja postoji na ekonomski razvijenom Zapadu. Međutim, strukturalno i funkcionalno njezina je pozicija bitno drugačija, jer takozvana estetička proizvodnja u Hrvatskoj nije nikada bila, pa ni devedesetih (a nije ni danas),

EDITA SCHUBERT,
BEZ NAZIVA, 1991.

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EDITA SCHUBERT,
UNTITLED, 1991

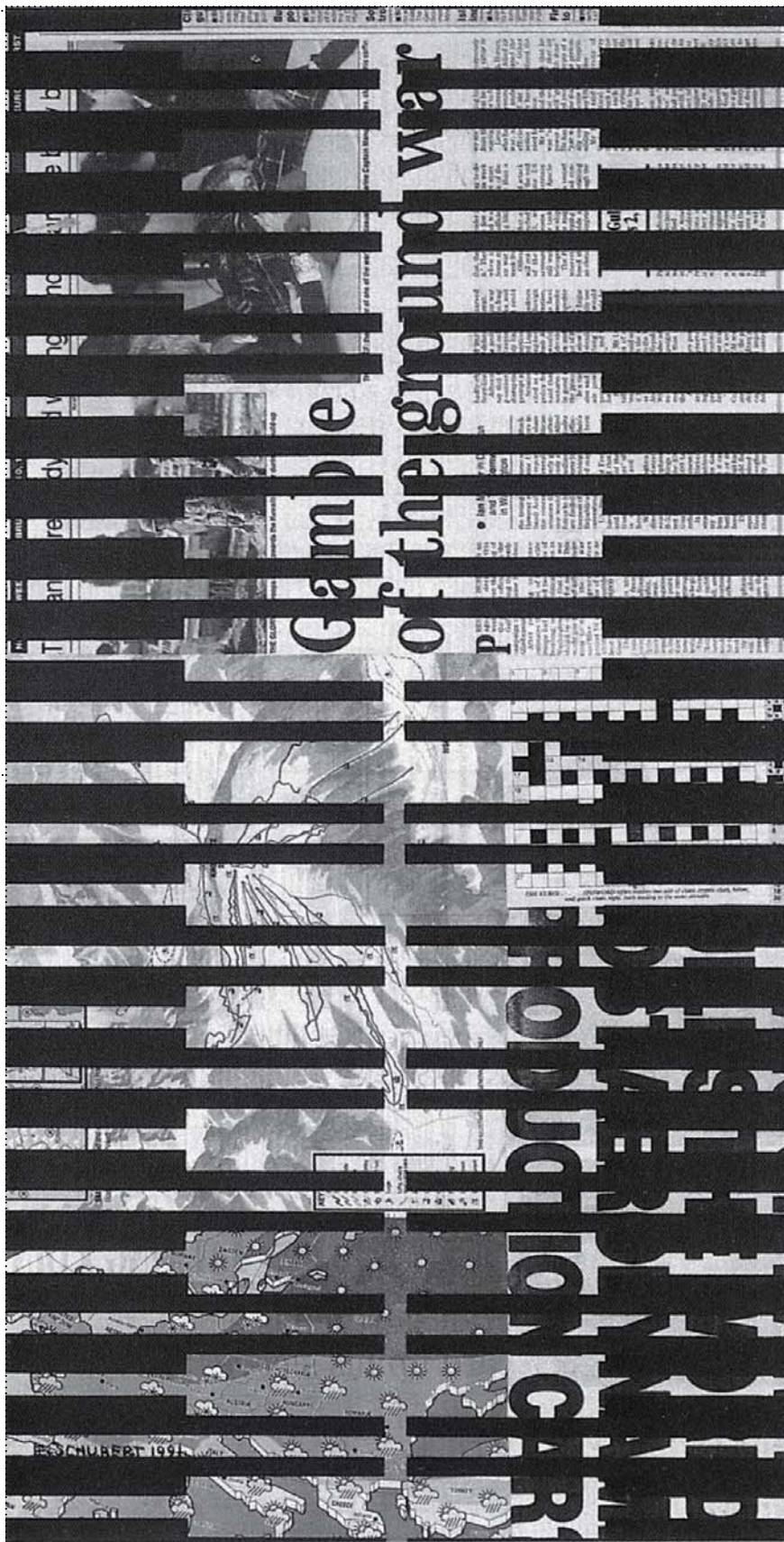
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the early processes of its postmodernization appear clearly manifest from today's perspective of the early 2010s. In the early 1990s, after the fall of the Soviet empire brought about by the economic collapse, which made possible the actual and symbolic act of tearing down the Berlin Wall (as the last obstacle to global capitalism), Croatia embraced the cliché of its "return to Europe." The term "Europe" functioned as a metaphor, denoting a complexity of relations comprised in the binary opposition between the developed West and the Balkans. The "return to Europe," or rather the fiction of a path towards the "welfare" of capitalism and democracy, was not characterized by efforts to dominate information (an issue addressed by Lyotard) and to obtain new insights with the help of its inherent creative potential, but quite literally by the struggle of a nation-state defending its own territory. Fierce, war-induced rhetoric of nationalism and conservative clericalism became a screen that concealed the invasion of rampant capitalism, with its typical devastation of public goods in often-illegal privatization and its sale of banks and telecommunication networks to multinational corporations. The age of transition from the totalitarian communist regime to the (likewise totalitarian) system of global neoliberal capitalism, or the transition from modern into postmodern society, was in Croatia accompanied by virtual disappearance of industrial production. However, this de-industrialization did not go hand in hand with

the expansion of the so-called creative industries, which were becoming the basis of economic development in the most powerful countries of the West. Quite on the contrary: the 1990s witnessed the perfect manifestation of a statement once made by a high functionary of the state, who said that "a kilogram of brain was worth two deutschmark." Even in such a socio-cultural context, Croatian art production in the 1990s (if viewed in the context of Jameson's aesthetic innovation and experimentation) did not reveal any extraordinary formal differences with regard to that which existed in the economically more developed Western countries. And yet, in terms of structure and function its position was essentially different, since the so-called aesthetic production was never (neither in the 1990s nor today) integrated in commodity production generally, while aesthetic innovation and experimentation were not a result of the "frantic economic urgency of producing fresh waves of ever more novel-seeming goods." Instead, what could be seen in Croatia in the 1990s was the emerging process of cultural spectacularization, which correspondingly catered for the tastes of the nouveau riche. That spectacularization would not have been possible without the so-called "tycoonization", which infected even the owners of the most widely read dailies and weeklies. This newly created constellation of capital and the mass media

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integrirana u robnu proizvodnju općenito, a estetičke inovacije i eksperimentiranje nisu ovdje bile posljedica „žestoke ekonomijske hitne proizvodnje sve neobičajnijih dobara“. Umjesto toga, devedesetih je godina u Hrvatskoj započeo proces estradizacije kulture s primjerenim podilaženjem ukusu malogradanskog sloja novih bogataša. Takva estradizacija ne bi bila moguća bez takozvane tajkunizacije, koja nije zaobišla ni vlasničku strukturu najtiražnijih dnevnih i tjednih novina. U novonastaloj sprezi masovnih medija i kapitala iz domaćih su tiskovina sustavno istrebljivane tzv. kulturne rubrike, čime je praktički dokinuta mogućnost kompetentnih javnih kritičkih refleksija ne samo o učincima različitih umjetničkih praksi, već prije svega o modalitetima medijske konstrukcije stvarnosti. Riječima W.J.T. Mitchella, mediji nisu samo materijali, nego i materijalne prakse koje uključuju tehnologije, vještine, tradicije i običaje. Medij je puno više od materijala, puno više od zbroja slike (*image*) i podloge (*support*), osim ako se „podlogom“ ne podrazumijeva to da ona podupire sustav, cijeli niz praksi koje omogućuju da se slike utjelove u svijetu kao slike. Mitchell pritom slike poima oblicima života (*life-forms*), a medije habitatima ili ekosistemima u kojima slike postaju živima.³ U kontekstu opservacije da je danas imperijalizam zamijenila globalizacija, on podsjeća da globalizacija nema cara ni glavni grad, ni strukturu, osim beskonačnog labirinta

korporativnog spajanja, vladine birokracije i uvijek proliferirajućih nevladinih organizacija. Posrijedi je rizom mreža i medijskih krajolika (*mediascapes*) gdje brbljanje nikad ne prestaje, telefonski stupovi ne prestaju rasti, a nitko nije odgovoran. Nasmijani licemjer zauzima najmoćniji ured na svijetu, genijalni avatar spoja korporativnih interesa, poput oružja, biomoći, energetike i prodorne ideologije neoliberalizma koja instalira „demokraciju“ i „slobodu“ kao alibije za sve više deregulirani kapitalizam i američki vojni avanturizam. U tom Novom Svjetskom Poretku sloboda znači slobodu robe (a ne ljudskih tijela) da slobodno cirkulira preko granica, a demokracija znači beskonačnu proliferaciju potrošačkog izbora praćenu sve užim rasponom političkih izbora.⁴ Kritičke, eksplicite politički angažirane umjetničke prakse u čijem se referencijalnom polju nalaze upravo učinci globalizacije, odnosno biopolitike koja svakim danom sve više rezultira prekarnošću života, na hrvatskoj su se sceni profilirale krajem 1990-ih i u prvom desetljeću 21. stoljeća, uglavnom u tzv. medijskoj umjetnosti i djelovanjem tada mladih umjetnica i umjetnika. Međutim, u radovima Edite Schubert (1947.–2001.) nastalima tijekom zadnjeg desetljeća 20. stoljeća, koje je ujedno bilo i zadnje desetljeće njezina života, prepoznajem jasno artikulirano, premda potpuno lišeno aktivističkog prizvuka, problematiziranje kompleksnog odnosa pojma medija i biopolitičke proizvodnje.

EDITA SCHUBERT,
AMBIENT, 1996.

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EDITA SCHUBERT,
AMBIENCE, 1996

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resulted in a systematic eradication of the so-called “cultural columns” from the Croatian press, which practically destroyed the possibility of competent public criticism, concerning not only the effects of various art practices, but also, and primarily, the modalities of reality construction by the mass-media. Quoting W. J. T. Mitchell, a medium is not only the material, but also the totality of material practices, which include technologies, skills, traditions, and customs. It is thus far more than the material, more than simply “the image plus the support”, except if one understands the “support” as something that carries the entire system; it is “the entire range of practices that make it possible for images to be embodied in the world as pictures.” Thereby Mitchell perceives these images as life forms and the media as habitats or ecosystems in which the images become alive.³ As for the observation that today imperialism has been substituted by globalization, he has stated that “globalization has no emperor, no capital, and no structure except for the endless labyrinths of corporate mergers, government bureaucracies, and the ever-proliferating nongovernmental organizations. It is a rhizome of networks, webs, and mediascapes where the buck never stops, the telephone trees never stop growing, and no one is in charge. A smiling pretender occupies the most powerful office in the world, a genial avatar of interlocking corporate interests such as weapons, biopower, and energy, and of a pervasive ideology of neoliberalism

(...) that installs ‘democracy’ and ‘freedom’ as the alibis for increasingly unregulated capitalism and U.S. military adventurism. In this New World Order, freedom means the freedom of commodities (but not of human bodies) to circulate freely across borders, and democracy means an infinite proliferation of consumer choices accompanied by an increasingly narrow range of political choices.”⁴

On the Croatian scene, critical and explicitly politically engaged art practices referred precisely to the abovementioned effects of globalization and biopolitics, the consequence of which was the increasing precariousness of life that emerged in the late 1990s and the early 21st century, mainly in the so-called “media art” and the activity of young artists. Nevertheless, in the artworks of Edita Schubert (1947-2001) from the last decades of the 20th century, which was also the last decade of her life, I recognize a clearly articulated discussion, albeit entirely void of all activist overtones, of the complex relationship between the concept of the medium and biopolitical production.

In her series of paintings made in 1990 and 1991, which she exhibited at the Gallery of Extended Media at Starčević Square in Zagreb at the outbreak of Croatian Liberation War, Edita Schubert focused the formative power of her medium precisely on the relationship between image and support, whereby the latter was shown as that which “supported the system” as well as “the

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Serijom slika nastalih tijekom 1990. i 1991., koje u osvit rata izlaže u zagrebačkoj Galeriji Proširenih medija na Starčeviću trgu, Edita Schubert fokusira formativnu moć medija upravo u odnosu slike i podloge, pri čemu podloga biva pokazana kao ono što „podupire sustav“ i kao „cijeli niz praksi koje omogućuju da se slike utjelove u svijetu kao slike“. Slikarsko platno napeto na slijepi okvir slikarica uredno presvlači novinskim stranicama hrvatskog i inozemnog tiska. Te stranice obiluju bombastičnim naslovima i fotografijama koje prikazuju vojne jedinice, sinoptičke karte, avione, automobile, sportaše u akciji, ili umjetnička djela koja se smatraju svjetskom kulturnom baštinom. Na takvoj podlozi, uslojenoj slikarskim platnom i novinskim papirom, događa se čin slikanja; nastaje slika strukture koja interferira sa svim upodloženim joj riječima i slikama. Preko masmedijskih slika i vijesti Edita Schubert nadsljkava svoj stari repetitivni motiv generiran tijekom 1980-ih u njezinim takozvanim geometrijama. Taj „apstraktni“ motiv koji se manifestira kao spoj šireg i užeg, izrazito izduljenog pravokutnika, nastao je u postupku stilizacije motiva ljudskog profila. Na nenaslovljenim slikama, gdje izveden crnom bojom u pravilnom ritmu premrežuje platno odjeveno u novinski papir, doima se poput tipki klavijature. Rad Edite Schubert, od njezinih početaka ranih 1970-ih do odlaska s umjetničke scene, obilježen je neprestanim invencijama tehnologije slikanja.⁵ Tako 1992. godine započinje seriju slika u kojima na platno nanosi dva sloja različite boje. Donji mokri sloj

preslikava gornjim, a potom boju automatiziranim pokretima briše grudicama papira. U procesu brisanja nastaje specifični oblik prozirnosti u kojemu se događa disolucija slike. Metodu brisanja upotrijebila je i 1995. godine u paradoksalno monumentalnom radu naslovljenom *Beskonačna traka*, ili *Rad na traci*, prvi put izloženom u Galeriji Proširenih medija u Domu hrvatskih likovnih umjetnika. Posrijedi je papirnata traka, nalik frizu, širine 50 cm, koja kontinuirano teče obodnim zidom izložbenog prostora, doslovce ga opsežući. *Beskonačna traka* u funkciji prostorne granice (pri čemu sam pojam granice postaje ono što inducira transgresiju) postavljena je godinu dana poslije i u eksterijeru, na dubrovačkim zidinama, na atici skalnade pred jezuitskom crkvom te u klastru franjevačkog samostana u Dubrovniku. Vertikale nastale brisanjem pri *Radu na traci*, doimale su se poput rešetki kaveza, aludirajući i na bar kod, čija će se gigantizirana verzija u funkciji prostorne granice pojaviti u instalaciji *Ambijent* postavljenoj 1996. u zagrebačkoj Galeriji Zvonimir.

Ambijent problematizira pitanje osobnog identiteta kontekstualizirajući ga činjenicom proizvedenosti unutar različitih klasifikacijskih sustava. Edita Schubert u središte izložbenog prostora na fotografske stativ postavlja šest naslikanih autoportreta. Umnogostručeni isti, ali ne i identični autoportret konotira pitanje reproducibilnosti, a fotografski stativ medij

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entire range of practices that make it possible for images to be embodied in the world as pictures.” The artist neatly dressed her canvas, extended on a blind frame, with newspaper pages from Croatian and international press. These pages abounded in bombastic headlines and photographs showing military units, synoptic maps, airplanes, cars, sportsmen in action, and artworks that were considered world cultural heritage. It was on that support, multi-layered owing to the canvas and the newspaper, that the act of painting had taken place; the image of structure emerged, interfering with all the words and images that constituted its support. Over these mass-media images and news, Edita Schubert had super-painted her old, repetitive motif generated in the 1980s in her so-called geometries. That “abstract” motif, manifested as a fusion of a wide rectangle and a narrower, extremely elongated one, resulted from the procedure of stylizing the human profile. On the untitled paintings, where it was executed in black paint and rasterized the canvas dressed in newspaper in regular rhythm, it seemed like a set of piano keys. Edita Schubert’s art, from her beginnings in the early 1970s until she left the art scene, was marked by incessant invention in painting technology.⁵ Thus, in 1992 she began a series of paintings in which she applied two layers of different colours onto the canvas, covering the lower wet layer with another and then wiping off the paint with automatized movements, using

small paper balls. The wiping process created a specific form of transparency, in which the image began to dissolve. The artist also used this wiping method in 1995, in the paradoxically monumental artwork called *The Endless Belt*, or *Working on the Assembly Line*, first exhibited at the Gallery of Extended Media in Croatian Artists’ Centre. It was a 50 cm wide, frieze-like paper belt running continuously along the outer wall of the exhibition venue, literally circumscribing it. In its role as a spatial borderline (whereby the very idea of borderline encouraged transgression), *The Endless Belt* was placed a year later in the open air, on the entablature of the staircase in front of the Jesuit Church and in the cloister of the Franciscan monastery in Dubrovnik. Vertical lines in *Working on the Assembly Line*, a result of the wiping movement, seem like cage bars and may even be associated with barcodes, the gigantic version of which appeared, also as a spatial borderline, in Edita Schubert’s installation called *Ambience*, set up in 1996 at Zvonimir Gallery in Zagreb. *Ambience* discussed the issue of personal identity, contextualizing it through the idea of being produced in various classification systems. In the centre of the exhibition venue, Edita Schubert placed six painted self-portraits onto a camera tripod. These multiplied self-portraits, almost the same yet not quite identical, raised the issue of reproducibility, while the camera tripod brought in the medium of photography, with the principle of endless

fotografije kojemu je načelo beskonačne reproducibilnosti imanentno. Medij fotografije, nadalje, upućuje na vlastitu biopolitičku misiju (među ostalim, klasifikacije i kategorizacije osoba) koju je u svojoj povijesti, od sredine 19. stoljeća do danas, obavio. Bar kod (preuzet s osnovnih prehrambenih artikala), pozicioniran, poput *Beskonačne trake*, u visini očiju promatrača duž svih zidova galerije, funkcionira poput ograde koja definira rub egzistencijalne granice.

1997. nastaje rad koji Edita Schubert naziva *Uklapanje*. Na drvenu podlogu, nalik kutiji s poklopcem, postavlja laboratorijske posudice za isparavanje na čijem se dnu smjestio njezin sumarno naslikan autoportret-lice, zaliven prozirnim poliesterom čija razina u staklenoj posudici simulira tekućinu. Tekućinu koja hlapi. 1998. godine izlaže rad naslovljen *Biografija* koji se sastoji od pet grupa staklenih epruveta, pri čemu svaku grupu fizički objedinjuje gipsani stalak. Prva grupa konotira razdoblje od 1947. (godine njezina rođenja) do 1960. Unutar stakla, u gustoj prozirnoj poliesteronoj masi, reproducirane su fotografske slike koje označuju njezino djetinjstvo: pročelje rodne kuće, oltar župne crkve u Virovitici gdje je odrasla, stranice molitvenika, fotografija Edite i njezinih dviju sestara, portret tete koja ju je odgajala. Sljedeća grupa epruveta koja se odnosi na razdoblje 1960.–1980. sadrži fotografske slike različitih mjesta koja je snimila na putovanjima. U prozirnosti

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reproducibility as its inherent feature. Moreover, the medium of photography indicated its own biopolitical mission (among other things, of classifying and categorizing people) that it had been performing since the mid-19th century. The barcode (taken over from the packages of staple food items), which was positioned, like *The Endless Belt*, along the gallery walls at the height of the observer's eyes, functioned like a fence defining the outermost existential border.

In 1997, Edita Schubert created an artwork called *Incorporation*. On a wooden support resembling a box with lid, the artist placed laboratory flasks for evaporation, on the bottom of which there was a sketchily drawn self-portrait of her face, slushed with transparent polyester that simulated the level of liquid. Evaporating liquid. In 1998, she exhibited an artwork called *Biography*, which consisted of five groups of test tubes, each group held together by a gypsum stand. The first group was dedicated to the period from 1947 (the year of her birth) until 1960. Inside the glass, set in dense, transparent polyester, there were reproductions of photographs related to her childhood: the façade of her parents' house, the altar in the parish church of Virovitica, where she had grown up, pages from a prayer book, a photograph of Edita and her two sisters, a portrait of the aunt that had raised her. The next group of test tubes referred to the period from 1960-1980 and contained photographs of

stakla treće grupe laboratorijskih posuda moguće je prepoznati reprodukcije njezinih radova nastalih tijekom 1980-ih godina. Četvrta, nedatirana grupa, koju autorica naziva *Anatomija*, sadrži reprodukcije crteža ljudske utrobe koji potječu iz anatomske priručnika s početka 20. stoljeća. Ovdje je potrebno spomenuti da se umjetnica po završetku školovanja na Akademiji likovnih umjetnosti zaposlila kao crtačica na Institutu za anatomiju Medicinskog fakulteta, gdje je radila do kraja života. Posljednja grupa epruveta svedena pod zajednički nazivnik 1997. godine sadrži reprodukciju fotografske slike – autoportreta kojim je sumarno prikazano vlastito lice, a koju Edita Schubert naziva *Lažni osmijeh*.

U ožujku 1999. na devastiranom zagrebačkom Cvjetnom trgu izložila je svoj stan. Izložba *Moj stan* najavljena je pozivnicom (odaslanom na adrese potencijalne publike) koja sadrži popis jedanaest punktova na kojima će nešto biti izloženo. S unutrašnje strane stakla svakoga od jedanaest izloga prodavaonica smještenih u prizemljima zgrada koje definiraju granice gradskog trga pričvršćen je po jedan mali stiroporni kvadar u kojemu su izdubljene dvije šupljine koje se površinski manifestiraju kao krugovi. Razmak između tih šupljina odgovara razmaku očiju potencijalnih promatrača i promatračica, i takav potiče na čin virenja kroz šupljinu. Pogledom izbliza postaje jasno da su u stiropornom bloku smještena dva dijavizora

various places that she had taken on her journeys. In the glassy transparency of the third group of test tubes, it was possible to discern reproductions of her works made during the 1980s. The fourth, undated group, which the artist called *Anatomy*, contained reproductions of anatomic drawings of the human body, taken over from early 20th-century handbooks. It should be noted here that having graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts, the artist became an illustrator at the Anatomy Institute of the Faculty of Medicine, where she worked all her life. The last group of test tubes, labelled 1997, contained the reproduction of a photographic self-portrait that showed the basic features of the artist's face, a photo that she called *The Fake Smile*. In March 1999, Edita Schubert exhibited her apartment at the devastated "Flower Square" in Zagreb. The exhibition was called *My Apartment* and was announced through an invite (sent to the potential visitors) containing the list of eleven points where something would be exhibited. There were eleven shop windows at the ground level, circumscribing the square, and on the inside of the glass there was a small Styrofoam block in each of the shop windows, with two small circular holes drilled in its surface. The distance between the holes fitted the distance between the eyes of potential observers, thus encouraging them to peep through. A look inside soon revealed that the Styrofoam blocks contained two slide viewers each,

od kojih svaki sadrži po jedan dijapozitiv: fotografsku sliku unutrašnjosti stana Edite Schubert i fotografsku sliku pogleda kroz prozor toga stana. Temeljni konstitutivni element ovog rada jest postupak regulacije slike, pri čemu se regulacija provodi na nekoliko razina. Sintaksa kojom su spomenute razine povezane temelji se na sučeljavanju različitih kodova. U zadnjoj godini dvadesetog stoljeća Edita Schubert konstruirala simulakrum stereoskopa. Prisjetimo se, šezdesetih godina devetnaestog stoljeća pronalazak stereoskopske fotografije fascinirao je tadašnje građanstvo. Par fotografija promatran kroz dvije leće uređaja za gledanje – stereoskopa – rezultirao je stapanjem dviju slika u prividno trodimenzionalnu fotografiju. Učinak stereoskopa Edite Schubert, za razliku od onoga devetnaestostoljetnoga, očituje se u deiluzioniranju, a njezina, u digitalnoj eri, ručno izrađena naprava priziva u sjećanje Barthesovu konstataciju da razdoblje fotografije točno korespondira s eksplozijom privatnog u javno, ili radije u stvaranje nove društvene vrijednosti, a ta je javnost privatnoga: privatno se, kao takvo, konzumira javno.⁵ Svi radovi koje je Edita Schubert realizirala tijekom zadnjeg desetljeća 20. stoljeća inzistirali su na perceptibilnosti tehnologije vlastite izvedbe. A ta je tehnologija fokusirala upravo tehnologiju stvaranja tada kod nas novih, društvenih

vrijednosti koje smo tek danas sposobni shvatiti u kristalnoj jasnoći rečenice koju je Margaret Thatcher izgovorila 1987. godine: „There is no such thing as society“.

U Zagrebu, veljača 2012.

¹ Frederic Jameson, „Postmodernizam ili kulturna logika kasnog kapitalizma“, u: *Postmoderna: nova epoha ili zabluda*, Naprijed, Zagreb, 1988., 190–191.

² Jean -François Lyotard, *Postmoderno stanje*, Bratstvo-jedinstvo, Novi Sad, 1998., 12.

³ W.J.T. Mitchell, *What do Pictures Want?: The Lives and Loves of Images*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 2005., 198.

⁴ Mitchell (bilj.3), 150.

⁵ Vidjeti u: Leonida Kovač, Edita Schubert, Horetzky, Zagreb, 2001.

⁶ Roland Barthes, *Camera lucida*, Vintage Books, London, 1993., 98.

EDITA SCHUBERT,
UKLAPANJE, 1997.

LEONIDA

EDITA SCHUBERT,
INCORPORATION, 1997

KOVAČ

with slides inside them: a photographic image of the interior of Edita Schubert's apartment and a photographic image of the view through the window of that same apartment. The basic constructive element of this artwork was the procedure of regulating the image, whereby that regulation took place on several levels. The syntax of these levels was based on juxtaposing different codes. In the last year of the 20th century, Edita Schubert constructed a simulacrum of the stereoscope. As it is known, the invention of stereoscopic photography in the 1960s fascinated the world. Two photographs viewed through the two lenses of the viewing device – the stereoscope – resulted in the fusion of the two images into a seemingly three-dimensional photograph. However, contrary to the 19th-century stereoscope, the effect of Edita Schubert's one was disillusioning, while her device, handmade in the era of digital images, recalled Barthes' statement that “the age of Photography corresponds precisely to the explosion of the private into the public, or rather into the creation of a new social value, which is the publicity of the private: the private is consumed as such, publicly.”⁶

All artworks that Edita Schubert produced during the last decade of the 20th century insisted on the perceptible technology of their own performance. And that technology focused precisely on the creation of social values that were

new in this region at the time, and that we are now capable of perceiving perfectly clearly in Margaret Thatcher's sentence from 1987: “There is no such thing as society.”

Zagreb, February 2012

¹ Frederic Jameson, “Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,” *New Left Review* 146 (1984), 56-7.

² Jean-François Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 5.

³ W. J. T. Mitchell, *What do Pictures Want?: The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 198.

⁴ Mitchell (as in n.3), 150.

⁵ See Leonida Kovač, *Edita Schubert* (Zagreb: Horetzky, 2001).

⁶ Roland Barthes, *Camera lucida* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 98.

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