

# DO NOT CORRECT ME

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## 1

### *The language of banning*

The potentiality of spoken and written word is traditionally challenged by imposition of various languages of political correctness. Their function is to mask any disciplining attempts underway, while supporting them. They are renewed again and again, their semantics are updated depending on what specifically is being silenced at a certain point, according to the propaganda manner, aims and targets. Being performed through an artificial suppressed way of speaking, the language of political correctness pragmatically aims to channel the way we think about reality by limiting the space of speech, as noticed by Zorica Tomić.<sup>1</sup>

The corporate-state order regularly invents rules of public verbalization which have nothing to do with the democracy promoted on its surface. While verbal delict within western propaganda and scholastic scope is associated with socialistic states and overseas exotics, even though it is quite alive occurrence in the empire, too, it's very obvious that it has central role in maintaining corporatism. Once punished by exiling to penitentiaries such as Goli otok island, a disobedient is today usually excluded by limiting reach of his appearance on so-called social networks, labeling him as the conspiracy theoretician, reducing him approach to employment or underpaying his intellectual work.

The language of banning becomes regulated and strengthened by legalistic and financial instruments in a way that supports spreading of silence where a debate should be expected, and vice versa. This results in anesthesia of the social essence, which is essential for further development of the necro-capital rule.

## 2

### *What is correct*

During the recent worldwide prohibition exercise, founded on sanitary phantasmagories, there was an edition of the theatre festival BITEF in Belgrade. It included open-air events with auditorium positioned in a metal construction with multiple cage-like separations. Each separation could sit only a few persons. That construction could be built from anti-protestor fences which are usually used by police forces, or, at least, looked very much like assembled from those fences. At the prohibition context, installing such construction was a *correct* way of managing

those who agreed to contribute their presence to such spatial restriction. It was in-line with the correctness promoted by the self-proclaimed governors of safety. It underlined that correctness by being built in a public space of the city, which is, yet, city of everybody. You could feel grotesqueness of this auditorium easily, and the specific spatial contrast made it even more obvious – it was right next to the open air market Pijaca Skadarlija, a lively place to walk among fruits, vegetables and neighbors. The incorrectness of free moving around was juxtaposed with the correctness of caging an audience.

What was the message to the public sent by “the festival of new theatre tendencies” which openly installed itself in the segregation regime? What is the core quality of the *field* of cultural production that realizes such pattern of damaging of social tissue in the kernel of Belgrade social life?

### 3

#### *What is political*

Saying that there is a demand to be politically correct, we are aware that that demand is imposed by certain alienated force, meaning that we are not participating in setting it up but rather allowing it. The question of correctness could therefore be viewed from perspective of lack of co-deciding. That lack is symptomatic for what is called democracy and what could be seen as a machined governing system, where impact of *everybody* is drastically minimized, while the power of few gets progressively concentrated. Only the creativity which is not incorporated in the art *field* and is, therefore, incorrect, escapes this totalitarian framing.

Consequently, we can notice that the term “political” has nothing to do in the narrowness of correctness, another name of censorship. Politicalness is, in fact, nested right in the creativity *out of the field*. It is crucial not to misuse the word that affirms togetherness, the common place and festivity by getting used to putting it in the poor vocabulary of the *field*.

### 4

#### *Otherness does not exist*

Instead of imposing particular legalisms in order to make the so-called “other” visible, which is a typical operation that aids to preserve the core of inequality, so instead of dealing with laws, there is another perspective: With the notion of *everybody* in mind, particularities of legality lose their virtual domination, as we can approach any stage – the stage understood as a space of experimental speaking – in qualitatively different context. Politicalness, in its primal sense, means festivity – which is the primary context of theatre. It is performed consensually, with whatsoever otherness unconditionally included, as a matter of sense of live collectivity.

The narrative about including otherness makes sense only as a bad make-up of imperial exclusiveness. Supporting that narrative means supporting the exclusiveness.

5

*The beyond*

How to reject or bypass the obedience logic? How to actually carry out the violation of a prohibition, as an invasion into the established hegemony, as a self-organized practice of breakthroughs? Rather than answering such questions, a practice of a liberating character for everybody who enters it could be a continuously maintained situation of living *beyond* of what is supposed to be, and already is, a permanent world war, literary installed in our very βίος – both the collective and individual one – through variety of legalistic, biopolitical, pharmaceutical and neuro-programming techniques (always, in a way, allowed by ourselves). The permanent war is the core of the allegedly green sustainability advocated much by the empire's agents. The art field, its subjects, totally relates to this agenda adopting it as a perverted form of creativity, the exclusive one – in terms of actively practicing the excluding of non-aligned subjects, those who are consciously interested in the beyond.

In the core of the artwashed war, there is always a body related creativity-of-the-outside even in the field's inside. Rather than a clash of the two conditions, this contrast could be perceived as a fluidity of changing of one's own perspective (attitude, viewpoint, thinking, sensing) about the world as possible and actual paradise.<sup>ii</sup>

6

*Theatre of the absurd*

Aestheticization is the key technique that ensures smooth functioning of the so-called democracy – the theatre of the absurd. Practically everything becomes aestheticized, and hence we sometimes see astonishing contrasts between the logic of sale-ability (of anything and everything) and real human needs that usually have nothing to do with the all-pervasive torrent of advertising. The materialism logic largely relies on (wanna-be) alluring packaging – as pointed out by Wolfgang I. Haug in his book “Critique of commodity aesthetics,” as well as Robert Kurtz in his book “The world as will and design: postmodernism, lifestyle left and the aestheticization of the crisis”.

The theatre of the absurd is made possible thanks to a peculiar hybrid of repression and an apparent freedom of choice. Both of these components are garnished and embellished so that their true look often remain invisible at first glance.

Just as the semblance of freedom of choice reinforces the theatre of the absurd, in like manner each decision we make when choosing certain less-trodden paths, possibilities, and modes of existence may lead us to an exit, or even a number of exits, from this theatre. It is certainly possible to make choices with the awareness of the quality of the things we choose, while their aesthetic property itself is neutral; whereas the question of the effect of aestheticization always comes down to the question of authenticity of the correlation between the outer and the inner side of a given thing or person in that choosing act.

To leave the theatre of the absurd means to stop being in the audience. To stop being an actor who was assigned a role at an audition and who goes on playing that role forever, subject to screenplay and production. To allow one's own body to speak aloud just when it is supposedly not the right time to say something aloud, without conforming to any presupposed canonical norms.

Freedom implies that ruling necessarily comes down to self-control (self-mastery), therefore it cannot be framed in the rule-of-law theatre (in which rules replace justice). The demos that rules is an exclusionist construction that aestheticizes understanding of humanity by reducing it to the question of management — trivializing individuals to so-called human resources —, whereby it justifies parliamentarism as a mask — theatricalization — of alienated governance. Demos is made up of an audience that is in charge of nothing (except when it comes to their role to cast their votes in order to preserve the status quo), and only pays for their tickets (while they can) for the theatre of the absurd. Abandoning that conformation means redirecting our powers to empower ourselves, in a network with no exploitive mastery.

## 7

### *Inversion*

The inversion technique is implemented in an attempt to softly introduce and spread corporative mindset in different areas. It is a common operation in the field of cultural production, the field named so by Pierre Bourdieu. This operation makes an ontological confusion by publicly pushing products with hidden propagandistic quality as critical or activist.

For instance, in the theatre show entitled “2020,” based on Yuval Noah Harari's books and co-produced by the three biggest Ljubljana stage production houses, we face — at the first sight naive — playing with some dystopian proposals, now widely recognized as psychopathological. This theatre tends to make an intellectual game of phenomena such as robotization, infection, genderization, surveillance, corporatism, but it comes out that that game has not much to do with the idea of stage as a space dedicated to contemplation of the order we live in. While flirting with that idea it is rather *correctly* incorporated in the order, the field. Alike any inversion of critical thought to a spectacular game, it subliminally tells our imagination, hopefulness and creativity to leave the field. Such shows will keep on operating even in front of empty auditoriums.

A much more visible dramatical example of inversion of the very instinct of resistance, promoted via various corporate media channels, is the virtual activism performed by Greta from Sweden, also known as “How dare you”. Catching the dystopian trend, this famous dramaturgy proudly represents belligerent ecology of the colonialist North.

Such examples could be seen as a transfer of the field’s own guilt for being violently exclusive to any potential receiver.

8

*Theatre ends*

After recognizing the theatre institution as deeply integrated in the field, therefore in the quasi-public context, it is not expected that the phenomenon such as political correctness on stage is going to be reflected within that context, as it is alienated from the common. Such stage reflections happen only as exceptions, accidents, proving that integration of criticalness contributes to the actual dehumanization of society. The so-far dominant empire is imposing it increasingly during its own rapid decomposing. Its decomposition is currently impacting all arts in the militarized field, and, at the same time, provoking awareness that there could be more space for different kind of creativity.

9

*Who is the everybody*

The *everybody* is whoever feels the utterance of so-called political correctness as a limitation managed by the apparatus. The everybody is whoever aware about the power of public word and recognizes possibilities to speak in a community unbounded by institutional burden.

Certain inventive activity of the everybody is the premise to leave the theatre of the absurd the field; to affirm festivity as inherently live situating of socializing gestures within art and art within certain socialization context.

The audience is a construct of the devitalized stage. It is crucial to recognize that the audience does not exist.

- i <https://youtu.be/4OcjWMOgaNY?feature=shared>. („Novogovor političke korektnosti ograničava slobodu govora. Pol. kor. zapravo služi tome da ograničavajući prostor govora kanališe način na koji mislimo o stvarnosti.“)
- ii This paragraph taken from *War Artwashed* <http://www.performans.si/war-artwashed/>.

### *Resume*

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Saying that there is certain demand to be politically correct, we are aware about the fact that it comes from above, meaning that we are not participating in setting it up. The question of correctness could therefore be viewed from perspective of lack of co-deciding. That lack is symptomatic for what is called democracy and what could be seen as an alienated governing system, where impact of *everybody* is radically minimized, while power of the few gets more and more concentrated. Yet, creativity, when not incorporated in the art field, escapes any totalitarian framing.

That *everybody* is of a key importance within process of artistic creation and, certainly, when playing and interacting the stage arts. The key challenge is finding ways of performing the art which is capable to express itself and survive out of the imposed boundaries. This comes out to be possible only when certain collectivity perform it – also on the production level – out of canonic box.

As an artistic action/creation in its core means embodied freedom which aims to expand to a social space, it must actively relate to the position of whoever present in it. Instead of imposing particular rights in order to make “the other” visible, which is actually an operation that aids to preserve the core of inequality, and dealing with those rights, there is another perspective: With the notion of *everybody* in mind, particularities of legality lose domination, as we can approach any stage in qualitatively different context, the one freed from correctness and open for politicalness in its primal sense, where festivity especially in the theatre context – is performed consensually and every otherness unconditionally included, as a matter of sense of a collectivity that manages itself.

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