

Post-Contemporary Manifesto

Pre-Archaeology of Post-Contemporaneity

In an attempt to contribute to any research project one needs to find an adequate methodology by which to define and theorize art and art history — in our case — from various and distanced world peripheries. At the same time one must attempt to define a relevant method to observe a particular period in art. To this end I am presenting the following manifesto:

- I. We all know that there are plenty of artworks, texts and projects that we might never notice, or which we would never use. There are many possible reasons for this — just to mention some of them:
 - A. the massive production of cultural industry all around the world,
 - B. the amount of art and literature that already exists — although we have internet access we could never absorb even a small part of it. We each are aware of great art works and art historical texts in the 'peripheries' which we represent, but these are not being exhibited or translated and would probably forever remain unrecognized,
 - C. repeating over-repeated facts (from the peripheries) in the world's dominant languages — this might be examples of mainstream art history or a kind of attempt at (self) colonizing. An example of this can be found when a student is researching an original peripheral topic at western university — but the research consists of just collecting and repeating already known and published knowledge,
 - D. over-elaborated studies — far too much detailed analysis of selected problems, a concentration on minutiae.

We may point out that in actual situations it is still quite typical to miss out on original interpretations while attempting to contextualize peripheral art in wider art historical and art theoretical concepts.

- II. Ironically we could say the above-mentioned points indicate a sign of art historical/theoretical overproduction. At this point we would like to offer a logical construction: overproduction of this kind must be seen as a positive accumulation of knowledge for the future (an intellectual reserve including its' exponential accumulation).
- III. Sui generis "intellectual storage" originates in this. It is the ultimate challenge to try to operate in these zones — it means one has to proceed with foresight to perform in an area which will produce an item of "intellectual consumption" only in the future.
- IV. Into these zones of the future, we can intentionally and in advance contribute some artistic or art historical concept for cultivation.
- V. Our preliminary analysis within such a project or concept can be identified as the pre-archaeology of post-contemporaneity.
- VI. Post-contemporary theory can create a new situation and structure; by considering contexts that might appear only later, after elaborating a project, and after it's critical review. To manage this process we are simultaneously using critical methods for discussing contemporary art and broader, more wide-ranging methods taken from Art History and Art Theory. It means that the initiatives and hypotheses raised by such a project are being both created and historically examined at the same time.
- VII. This might also be a good method for approaching „horizontal art history“ (defined by Piotr Piotrowski), because it has no geographical, political or other limits, and it allows for the production of a wide variety of free hypotheses. Furthermore a new narrative might be created when some hypothesis is transferred and newly developed in some other context.

Richard Gregor

Bratislava — Washington — Williamstown, 2016/2017