

jerica  
ziherl

## strah i bijeg od realnosti dekadentnih zapadnjaka

## fearing and fleeing the reality of decadent westernizers

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<sup>1</sup> JERKO DENEGRİ, EXAT-51 i Nove tendencije: umjetnost konstruktivnog pristupa, Zagreb, 2000., 551.

<sup>2</sup> Doduše, i to se mora primiti s rezervom. Na primjer, još nije istražena uloga Josipa Seissela u Motikinu stvaralaštvu, a zna se da ih je vezivalo dugogodišnje prijateljstvo. Za vrijeme nastupa EXAT-a njezini sudionici nisu se pozivali na Seissela, ali mogu se prepoznati znaci srodnog i bliskog senzibiliteta.

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<sup>1</sup> JERKO DENEGRİ, Exat-51 i Nove tendencije: umjetnost konstruktivnog pristupa [Exat-51 and the New Tendencies: constructive approach to art], Zagreb, 2000, 551.

<sup>2</sup> Admittedly, this must be taken with reserve: for example, the role of Josip Seissel in Motika's art has not been researched yet, though it is well known that they were friends for a long time. During the period of its activity, the Exat group never referred to Seissel, but one can observe links and similarities between their sensibilities.

1. A. Motika, Akt / Nude, 1951.

▼ Jedna od opsesija zapadne civilizacije je obilježavanje raznih obljetnica. Naravno, toga nije pošteđena ni povjesničarskoumjetnička disciplina. I ona voli precizne datosti brojčanog sustava i (neprecizne) datosti određenih godina. Poziv za uvažavanje povijesne svijesti i povijesnog mišljenja dobro dođe u svakoj prilici, pa i u ovoj našoj, jer znati da se nešto dogodilo, znati kako se i zašto to dogodilo, podjednako je nužno i u uvjetima modernog i u uvjetima postmodernog duhovnog stanja. Minula umjetnička zbivanja i načini njihove historizacije (ili dehistorizacije) u bilo kojoj sredini (tako i našoj) ističu vrlo naglašenu svijest o uvjetovanosti umjetnosti vlastitim vremenom i vlastitom epohom, ali i "svijest o tome da umjetnost nije refleks vremena i epohe, nego da je podstrekač i nosilac promjena u vremenu i epohi".<sup>1</sup> Stoga bi obilježavanje nekog jubileja bila obrana shvaćanja da se nijedan fenomen u umjetnosti i kulturi ne bi trebao prepuštiti olakom gubitku iz kulturnog pamćenja vlastite sredine. Tim više što danas sama ta sredina umjetnost pamti kao važnu crtu u vlastitoj kulturnoj samosvijesti.

Povod ovom uvodu jesu dvije obljetnice, koje na prvi pogled i nemaju dodirnih točaka, ali koje su, kako ćemo razraditi u daljnjem tekstu, ipak međusobno povezane. U godini 2002. povijesnoumjetnička struka dostojno je obilježila sto godina od rođenja i dvadeset godina od smrti umjetnika Antuna Motike, a u 2003. godini (ne) obilježava se pedeset godina od prvog nastupa EXAT-a u zagrebačkom Društvu arhitekata Hrvatske (odnosno izložba *Kristl, Picelj, Rašica, Srnec*, 18. II. - 4. III. 1953.). Što povezuje Antuna Motiku i EXAT? Zajednička imenica umjetničke prakse zasigurno ne, čak ni neko osobno bliže poznanstvo.<sup>2</sup> Povezuje ih izravno sudjelovanje, doduše s različitim pozicijama, u jednom od procesa u kojem su se, kako je zapisao Radovan Ivančević, izborile i obranile slobode istraživanja i individualnog stvaranja u likovnim umjetnostima. Tim se procesom stara stranica hrvatske povijesti umjetnosti zatvorila, a nova započinjala ispisivati svoje retke. A ona je započela izložbom koja je bila povod jednoj od "ključnih teorijskih i ideoloških rasprava u hrvatskoj likovnoj kritici", s posljedicama stvaranja preduvjeta za drukčiju, suvremeniju, a osobito slobodniju umjetničku atmosferu.

Počnimo s činjenicama: izložba *Arhajski nadrealizam* Antuna Motike, tekst Rado-

● One of the obsessions of Western civilization is honouring various anniversaries. Art history is by no means an exception. It also likes the precision of numbers and the (imprecise) certainty of particular years. There is always need for a call to appreciate historical awareness and historical thinking, and the same goes for our situation, since it is good to know that something happened, and how and why it happened, and it is equally important in circumstances of modern and post-modern states of mind. Past artistic events and the ways they are historicized (or dehistoricized) in any environment (and Croatia is no exception) indicate a very manifest awareness of the way in which art is conditioned by its time and epoch, but also the "awareness that art is not a reflection of its time and epoch, but sustains and encourages changes in that particular time and epoch."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, celebrating a jubilee might stand for the attitude that no phenomenon in art or culture should suffer an easy disappearance from the cultural memory of its own environment. In so far as this very environment remembers such art as an important aspect of its cultural self-consciousness.

The starting points for this introduction are two anniversaries. Though at first sight they are not connected in any way, this text will show that there is a link between them. In 2002, art historians adequately marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of death of artist Antun Motika, whereas in 2003, there was a (non)celebration of 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first public appearance of the EXAT group in the Association of Croatian Architects in Zagreb (with an exhibition entitled *Kristl, Picelj, Rašica, Srnec*, 18 February - 4 March, 1953). What links Antun Motika and EXAT? It is certainly not the common denominator of artistic practice, and even less personal acquaintance;<sup>2</sup> it is their direct participation, even though from different positions, in a process of, to use the words of Radovan Ivančević, gaining and defending freedom of research and individual creation in visual arts. This process closed the old page of Croatian art history and began to inscribe a new one. It began with an exhibition that served as a basis for one of the "crucial theoretical and ideological debates in Croatian art criticism," the result of which was the creation of conditions for a different, more modern and particularly more liberal artistic climate.



slava Putara "Izložba crteža Antuna Motike" u Narodnom listu, tekstovi Grge Gamulina "Zarobljeni oblici" (I i II) objavljeni u Vjesniku i tekst Vjenceslava Richtera "Zarobljene teorije" u Krugovima. Razdoblje u kojem se sve to dogodilo omeđeno je prvim i zadnjim danom siječnja 1952. godine.

Dakle, vraćamo se u pedesete godine prošlog stoljeća, a mjesto događanja je Zagreb. Namjerno ističemo geografsku odrednicu, jer kako je istakao Radovan Ivančević pišući o "fenomenu Zagreba" pedesetih, sve pojave i strujanja u domeni umjetnosti tih se godina odvijaju prvenstveno u Zagrebu, kako u zatvorenim, tako i u javnim

Let us begin with facts, namely the exhibition *Archaic Surrealism* of Antun Motika; the text of Radoslav Putar on the "Exhibition of Drawings by Antun Motika," published in *Narodni list*; the texts of Grga Gamulin on "Captured Shapes" (I and II), published in *Vjesnik*, and the text of Vjenceslav Richter on "Captured Theories", which appeared in *Krugovi*. We are speaking here of the period from the first to the last day of January 1952.

We are going back to the 1950s, and the scene is Zagreb. It is on purpose that we draw attention to geographical coordinates, for as Radovan Ivančević pointed out while writing on the "phenomenon of Zagreb" in the 50s, all happenings and currents in the domain of art took place primarily in Zagreb, be it in private, be it in public spaces; from exhibitions to criticism, manifestoes, polemics, debates, and protests, down to the active participation of citizens.

In order to understand the spiritual climate of Zagreb in the 50s, we must be acquainted with historical facts. It was a period that followed Tito's breach with Stalin and the secession of Yugoslav Communist Party from the Informbiro. The dissociation of Yugoslavia from the block of countries practicing "people's democracy", with the Soviet Union in the lead, resulted in the gradual opening of Yugoslav foreign policy towards the West, as well as the gradual overcoming of socialist realism as the official doctrine in art and culture. Until 1948, Yugoslav political model had closely followed that of the Soviet Union, while the model of "socialist realism" had been the given ideological norm in art and culture. Anything that was outside this norm and its ideology was subjected to organised activity of dangerous denial on the part of its supporters, since "hardly anyone could dare to act against its spokesmen, the 'theoreticians', who shaped their attitudes and opinions as orders, genuine dictates that tolerated no contradiction."<sup>3</sup> In the early 50s, the domination of the ideology of socialist realism was still felt, but the chain was beginning to fall apart. If we put aside a series of internal artistic events that occurred at exhibitions and perhaps even remained unnoticed by the broader public, the presentation of Antun Motika in January of 1952 has meanwhile acquired the significance of a historical moment in the process of "revival" of Croatian (at that time



prostorima; od izložbi do kritika, manifesta, polemika, diskusija i protesta do aktivnog sudioništva građana.

Za razumijevanje duhovne klime Zagreba pedesetih godina moramo poznavati i povijesne činjenice. Pedesete su razdoblje koje su slijedile nakon raskida Tita sa Staljinom i nakon izdvajanja jugoslavenske KP iz okrilja Informbiroa. Raskid Jugoslavije s blokom zemalja "narodne demokracije", predvođenih Sovjetskim Savezom, označava postupno otvaranje, kako jugoslavenske vanjske politike prema Zapadu, tako i postupno prevladavanje službene doktrine socijalističkog realizma u umjetnosti i kulturi. Do 1948. jugoslavenski je politički model tijesno slijedio sovjetski politički model, a time i model "socijalističkog realizma", koji je bio zadana ideološka norma u umjetnosti i kulturi. Sve ono što nije bilo po mjeri toj umjetnosti i njezinoj ideologiji kod njezinih zagovornika bilo je podložno organiziranoj akciji opasnog poricanja, jer "jedva se tko mogao usuditi da se djelom suprotstavi glasnogovornicima, 'teoretičarima' koji su svoje stavove i mišljenja oblikovali kao direktive, prave diktature kojima nije bilo pogovora".<sup>3</sup> Rane pedesete još su uvijek godine razdoblja dominacije ideologije socializma, no karike se lanca postupno počinju raskidati. Ukoliko ostavimo po strani niz internih umjetničkih zbivanja koja su se očitovale na tadašnjim izložbama, ili su možda i ostala izvan uvida javnosti, nastup Antuna Motike u siječnju 1952. danas ima ulogu povijesnog datuma u procesu "obnove" hrvatske (tada u sklopu jugoslavenske) umjetnosti. U novom salonu ULUH-a, u zagrebačkoj Praškoj ulici 4, Antun je Motika izložio četrdeset i četiri crteža (izrađena ugljenom na papiru), koja su svedena pod zajednički naziv *Arhajski nadrealizam*. Crteži su predstavljali, u većini primjera, skice za vaze u keramici, a nastajali su u razdoblju od 1941. do 1951. godine. Na temelju izjave samog autora izložba "predstavlja rezultat jednog traženja da se preko arhaičnih, primitivnih oblika, obogaćenih oblicima živih organskih formi dade jedna nova umjetnička cjelina". No, slikarev skroman nastup izazvao je nimalo skromne reakcije. Naprotiv, njegova se izložba uskoro našla u središtu tadašnjih likovnokritičkih ukrštavanja, koja su se kretala od šturih novinskih osvrtâ do različitih, pa čak i suprotnih, interpretacija i ocjena.<sup>4</sup> Ponajprije je, kako je zapisao Radoslav Putar trideset dvije godine kasnije, sve izne-

under the wing of Yugoslav) art. In the new salon of the ULUH in Praška 4 in Zagreb, Antun Motika exhibited forty-four drawings made with coal on paper, collected under the common title of *Archaic Surrealism*. The drawings were mostly sketches for ceramic vases and stemmed from the period between 1941 and 1951. According to the author himself, the exhibition was "the result of an attempt to use archaic, primitive shapes, enriched by those of living, organic forms, in order to create a new artistic entity." However, the artist's self-effacing attitude caused reactions that were far from modest: on the contrary, his exhibition was soon in the centre of an art-historical debate, beginning with brief reviews in newspapers down to various, even contradicting interpretations and evaluations.<sup>4</sup> But, as Radoslav Putar was to write thirty-two years later, the greatest surprise was Antun Motika himself. First of all, he "moved things" by his individualistic appearance; moreover, he exhibited exclusively drawings in which one missed that characteristic "vibrancy, restless verve, and play of forms revealing an incessant encounter of chromatic accents, though surfaces are not covered by bright light," which were replaced by "clear, compact forms, revealed with complete freedom - in fantasy."<sup>5</sup> At that time, both the public and the art critics read those "new forms" as the "darkest omen", as an abstraction that had "recently gained its captives in our surrounding."<sup>6</sup> Even while the exhibition was still on, Radoslav Putar published a text in which he very briefly exposed the "painter's metamorphosis," establishing links between Motika's work before and after.<sup>7</sup> Thus, he said that the artist's earlier works "made manifest the life of movements of natural forms, in a way even their dematerialization," but now, after ten years of research, "his creation begins to disclose an intensive poetization of forms that he observes; he is compressing these forms in such condensed visions that they come close to bordering on a single sign." Therefore, according to Putar, Motika was not an abstract artist, since he had "by no means abandoned natural forms. On the contrary, each new creation of his was based on a visual experience. He watched, observed, enveloped with his gaze a succulent bulb of a plant, the curving movements of branches, swollen shapes of old vases, contours and forms of human body. But those things did

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<sup>3</sup> RADOSLAV PUTAR, Antun Motika u pisanoj riječi, u: *Istra*, 4 - 5 (1984.), 22.

<sup>4</sup> Kao npr. "Motika je pokušao dati jednu novu kreaciju žene, koja bi bila umjetnički živa" (ANONIM, Ante Motika: Izložba crteža, u: *Vjesnik*, 13. 1. 1952.) ili "brojni posjetioci na izložbi pokazali su veoma mnogo interesa" (ANONIM, Crteži Ante Motika, u: *Vjesnik*, 4. 1. 1952.) do nesretnog Manea koji "novinar ko novinar, čuje i vidi svašta, a opet, kobajagi, ne zna ništa" te panično piše: "Bože, što smo gledali! Gledali i stajali, pa opet - stajali i gledali! Četrdeset i četiri crteža ugljenom: vijuge, trbusi, bezglava trupla, grudi i oči posvuda, posvuda... Err...Osjećao sam se kao da sam uletio glavom u kocku ogromnog rebusa koji bijaše pun strahota nakaza i furija." (MANE, Izložba? Ne-izložba!, u: *Vjesnik*, 13. 1. 1952.)

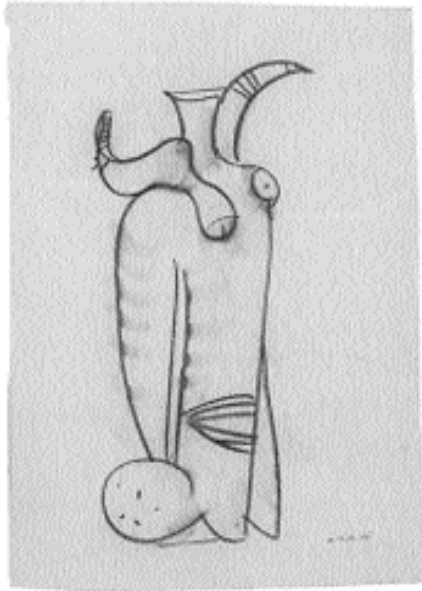
<sup>3</sup> RADOSLAV PUTAR, Antun Motika u pisanoj riječi [Antun Motika in texts], *Istra* 4-5 (1984), 22.

<sup>4</sup> For example: "Motika tried to offer a new creation of woman that would be alive in terms of art" (ANONYMOUS, Ante Motika: Izložba crteža [Antun Motika: exhibition of Drawings], in: *Vjesnik*, 13 January 1952); or: "numerous visitors of the exhibition showed great interest" (ANONYMOUS, Crteži Ante Motike [Drawings of Antun Motika], in: *Vjesnik*, 4 January 1952); all the way to poor Mane who, "being a reporter, hears and sees all kinds of things and still pretends not to know a thing," writes in panic: "Good Lord, what have we seen! We just stood there and stared and then - stood and stared again! Forty-four coal drawings: curves, headless bodies, breasts and eyes all over the place, every where... Er-r... I felt like I had fallen headlong into a cube containing some huge puzzle full of horrors and furies." (MANE, Izložba? Ne-izložba! [An exhibition? A Non-Exhibition!], in: *Vjesnik*, 13 January 1952).

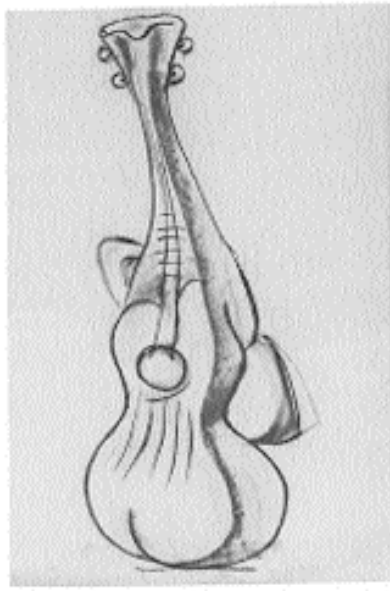
<sup>5</sup> RADOSLAV PUTAR (n. 3), 23.

<sup>6</sup> RADOSLAV PUTAR (n. 3), 23.

2. A. Motika, Akt / Nude, 1952.



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nadio sam - Antun Motika. Prvenstveno stoga što je "pomaknuo stvari" individualnim nastupom, zatim, izložio je isključivo crteže u kojima ne nalazimo one prepoznatljive "vibrantnosti, nemirnog nerva i igre oblika u kojoj se neprestano susreću obojani akcenti, a površine ne prekriva blještavo svjetlo", već to su sada "jasni kompaktni oblici, koji su posve slobodno otkriveni - u mašti".<sup>5</sup> A tadašnja je publika i likovna kritika te "nove oblike" pročitala kao "najcrnji znak", kao apstrakciju koja je "upravo nedavno bila našla svoje zatočenike u ovoj sredini".<sup>6</sup> Još za trajanja izložbe Radoslav Putar je objavio tekst u kojem vrlo sažeto iznosi "slikarevu metamorfozu" kroz koju uspostavlja linkove između prijašnjih i sadašnjih Motikinih radova.<sup>7</sup> Putar tako piše da se i u najranijim Motikinim radovima "jasno nazire život kretanja prirodnih oblika, a u neku ruku i njihova dematerijalizacija" da bi sada, nakon deset godina istraživanja, "počela u njegovu stvaranju intenzivna poetizacija oblika koje on gleda; počelo je sažimanje tih oblika u tako kondenzirane vizije da se približavaju granici jedinstvenog znaka". Stoga Motika nije apstraktan, jer on "nipošto nije napustio prirodne oblike. Naprotiv, svako se njegovo novo ostvarenje zasniva na vizualnom doživljaju. On gleda, motri, obavija pogledom sočnu lukovicu biljke, zavojite kretnje granja, nabrekle oblike starih vaza, obrise i forme ljudskog tijela. Ali sve se to ne koči u njegovu doživljaju, ne zaustavlja se u svom bitku i ne bilježi on samo jedan trenutak nji-

not turn stiff in his experience, they did not come to a standstill in their essence and he did not capture only a single moment in their formation: rather, they kept living and growing, overcoming the usual flow of time, they pervaded each other and expressed what was characteristic and essential in them, striving to show the dynamics of movements and to encounter in themselves their ancestors from ancient times."

But Putar did not stop at defending the morphological novelty and the logic of growth of forms: he was also critical towards some of Motika's work, since "not all drawings should be considered of high quality. In some cases, the transposition of archaic forms into new motifs turned into forced borrowing, while the rhythm of shapes and lines is not always discernible and borders between figurative and non-figurative motifs are often blurred and obfuscated." Moreover, Putar rejected the very title of the exhibition, though at the same time he offered an explanation for it: "It is easy to see that the basic idea of the exhibition, the 'archaic surrealism,' is problematic in its perspective. Surrealism has been suffering a crisis for a long time (...)", but then he went on saying that surrealism was only one of those "isms" that "have been multiplying since the beginning of our century, as well as in the past, and have done their part in the dialectic negation of the past heritage, especially in deconstructing the dated classicism with all its derivatives; thus, Motika's surrealism can be understood as a phase in the development towards free forms of visual expression. There is no doubt that, in the complex texture of the multiple ways in which art moved in the past fifty years, there is a line that has found its solution in the 'non-figurative' visual art. And that comprises such great possibilities of expression, and can adapt so fittingly to the needs of modern man as a social being and an individual, that it will certainly result in artistic values marked by profound humanism."<sup>8</sup>

Writing the final lines of his apology for the creative "freedom" of Antun Motika, Putar was aware that his text would provoke reactions. "It is to be expected," he said, "that our 'impressionists' will accuse Motika of being a 'decadent Westernizer.' But such reproaches will not be difficult to deal with, since the label 'Westernizer' has lost its serious negative connotations long ago, while the notion of decadency should

hova oblička, nego žive one i dalje, rastu, savladavaju obični tok vremena, prožimaju se međusobno, iskazuju ono što je u njima karakteristično i bitno, a teže i za tim da pokažu dinamiku kretanja i traže u sebi svoje pretke iz pradavnih vremena."

No, nije Putar išao samo u obranu morfoloških novosti i logike rasta oblika; on je isto tako i kritičan prema nekim od radova, jer "ne treba sve prihvatiti kao kvalitetne radove. Prenošnje arhajskih oblika u nove motive u nekim se slučajevima prometnulo u usiljeno posuđivanje; ritam oblika i linija nije uvijek ograničen, a razgraničenje između figurativnih i nefigurativnih motiva često je nejasno i zamućeno." Nadalje, Putar osporava i sam naziv izložbe, ali ujedno donosi i njezino objašnjenje: "Nije teško utvrditi ni to da idejna osnova izložbe 'arhajski nadrealizam' ima problematičnu perspektivu. Nadrealizam je uopće već odavno u teškoj krizi (...)", ali nastavlja kako je nadrealizam samo jedan od -izama "koji su se izredali od početka našeg stoljeća i prošlih, učinivši svoje u dijalektičnom negiranju baštine prošlosti, a napose u razgrađivanju zastarjelog klasicizma sa svim njegovim derivacijama, pa se može Motikin nadrealizam prihvatiti kao prelazna faza razvoja prema slobodnim oblicima likovnog izraza. Nesumnjivo je, naime, da u komplikiranom spletu više putova kojima se umjetnost kretala posljednjih pedesetak godina, postoji i linija koja svoje rješenje nalazi u 'nefigurativnoj' likovnoj umjetnosti. A ova sadrži tako velike mogućnosti izražavanja i tako se prisno prilagođava potrebama modernog čovjeka kao društvenog i individualnog bića, da će zacijelo ostvariti umjetničke vrijednosti dubokog humanizma."<sup>5</sup>

Ispisujući završne retke obrane stvaralačke "slobode" Antuna Motike, Putar je bio svjestan da će njegov tekst izazvati reakcije. "Može se očekivati", piše Putar, "da će Motika primiti od strane naših 'impresionista' prigovor da je 'dekadentni zapadnjak'. Ali te prigovore neće biti teško odbiti činjenicom da je riječ 'zapadnjaštvo' odavna izgubila ozbiljniji sadržaj u negativnom smislu, a i pojam dekadentnosti treba primijeniti oštro razlučujući ono što u cjelokupnoj umjetnosti zaista propada, od onog što je moderna znanost utvrdila kao logičan razvoj i napredak. Izmjena mišljenja s tim u vezi bit će samo znak težnje za istinitošću i širine shvaćanja i umjetničkog stvaralaštva." Putarova povijesna obrana



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be applied in strict discernment of what has really been decaying in art as a whole from what modern scholarship has recognised as logical development and progress. An exchange of opinions in this respect will only serve as an expression of tendency towards truth, as well as broaden the horizon of understanding and of artistic creation." Putar's legendary defence of the art of his times was at the same time a defence of humanist aspects of modern art, since he opposed not only the school of "social-realist" theoreticians, predominant at the time, but also the common perception of modernists.

And indeed, the call for an "exchange of opinions" was answered by Grga Gamulin, at that time the unquestionable bard of Croatian art criticism and an artistic arbiter, as well as the principal ideologist of "realism" and its circles in visual arts. Thus, Grga Gamulin published a long text in two parts under the title "Captured Shapes," in which he did not enter into a polemic with Putar, notwithstanding the fact that the latter's arrow of "Westernizing" was meant precisely for him, but attempted to employ a language that was rather modern even for himself in order to expose, as he said, a "relative truth." In that text, one could find neither phrases from the repertoire of ideological rhetoric, such as might have been expected regarding Gamulin's position, nor references to social realism; on the contrary, he even acknowledged the possibility of a "constructive debate" and the "free



<sup>5</sup> RADOSLAV PUTAR (bilj. 3), 23.

<sup>6</sup> RADOSLAV PUTAR (bilj. 3), 23.

<sup>7</sup> RADOSLAV PUTAR, Izložba crteža Antuna Motike, Salon ULUH-a, od 2. do 15. o. mj., u: *Narodni list*, 2943 (1952), 5.

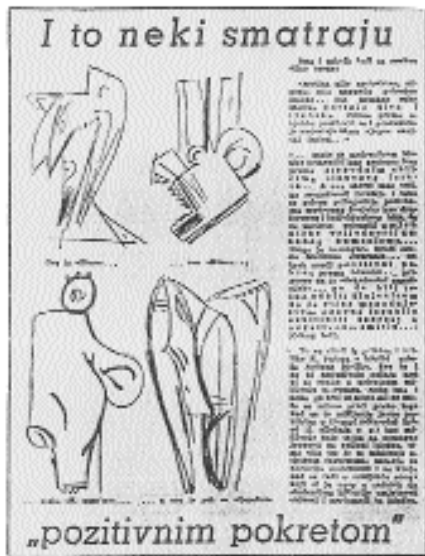
<sup>8</sup> RADOSLAV PUTAR (bilj. 7), 5.



<sup>7</sup> RADOSLAV PUTAR, Izložba crteža Antuna Motike, Salon ULUH-a, od 2. do 15. o. mj. [Exhibition of Drawings by A.M., Salon of ULUH, 2-15 January], in: *Narodni list*, 2943 (1952), 5.

<sup>8</sup> RADOSLAV PUTAR (n. 7), 5.

3-6. A. Motika, Crteži za keramiku / drawings for ceramics, 1950. - 1952.



Vijestnik 17/1/1952

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umjetnosti njegova vlastitoga vremena ujedno predstavlja i obranu humanističkih aspekata suvremene umjetnosti, suprotstavljajući se tadašnjoj vodećoj školi "socrealističkih" teoretičara, ali i uvriježenom poimanju modernista.

I doista, na poziv za "izmjenu mišljenja" odazvao se Grgo Gamulin, tada neprikosnoveni bard hrvatske likovne kritike i arbitar domaće umjetnosti, ali isto tako i glavni ideolog "realizma" i njegovih foruma u likovnim umjetnostima. Tako Grgo Gamulin objavljuje opširan tekst, koji je izašao u dva dijela, pod nazivom "Zarobljeni oblici", u kojem ne polemizira s Putarom, bez obzira što je bilo očito da je upravo njemu bila uperena strijelica u vezi "zapadnjaštva", već se trudi jednim i za Gamulina suvremenijim jezikom, obrazložiti, kako je sam zapisao, jednu "relativnu istinu". Nema u tekstu, kako se moglo očekivati obzirom na Gamulinov status, rečenica iz repertoara ideološke retorike, niti pozivanja na socrealizam; dapače, i on se izjašnjava za mogućnost "konstruktivne diskusije" i "slobodnog ispoljavanja svih umjetničkih težnji".<sup>9</sup> Povod Gamulinova javljanja bila je sama izložba *Arhajski nadrealizam*, za koju on naglašava da je "pozitivno" što se pojavila, ali odmah dodaje "što ne znači da je pozitivna i izložba sama." Zapravo, mogli bismo reći da je i Grgo Gamulina iznenadio sam Antun Motika! On jednostavno nije znao, ili nije želio, prepoznati izvorno značenje "drukčijeg" Motike. Tako za Gamulina Motika nije više slikar "izgrađena gledanja i stila", već se sada radi o "običnoj pozi", jer Motika nije dorastao zadatku što ga sebi predstavlja. On je samo dodirnuo jedan programski pravac "koji je na Zapadu davno minuo", a koji je, eto, u našu sredinu dolutao i izazvao pažnju. Lutajući između "modernističkih evolucija" i ne uočavajući specifična svojstva Motikina rada, Gamulin se obrušio na termin "arhajski nadrealizam" i time Motiku automatski smjestio u vrijeme nastanka tog pravca. No, to mu je bio samo povod da se pored nadrealizma, kao "konsekvence stare u europskom slikarstvu otprilike četrdeset godina", okomi i na apstrakciju, čiji programi su, gle čuda, "ograničeni dogmatskim i uskim obujmom izoliranih ličnosti"! U biti, Gamulin se ustremkuje na umjetničke koncepte koji s Motikinim djelima nisu bili u izravnoj vezi. Njegov napad bio je uperen prema, nedavno prije Motike proklamiranim "novim sintezama" u hrvatskoj umjetnosti koje bi trebalo,

expression of all artistic endeavours."<sup>9</sup> The impetus for Gamulin's statement was the very exhibition *Archaic Surrealism*, about which he declared that the fact of its appearance was "positive", though he immediately added that "it does not mean that the exhibition itself is positive." As a matter of fact, we might say that Grgo Gamulin was surprised by Antun Motika himself! Gamulin simply could not, or would not, recognise the real meaning of this "different" Motika. Thus, he no longer considered Motika a painter of "well-formed vision and style," but accused him of "merely posing," since the artist was, in Gamulin's opinion, not equal to the task he set for himself. He was only able to touch the programmatic current "which in the West is long gone" and which only incidentally arrived to Croatia and caused some commotion. Wandering among "modernist evolutions" and missing the specific features of Motika's work, Gamulin bit himself into the term "archaic surrealism" and automatically classified Motika together with the period in which that movement was born. However, that was only a starting point, from which he attacked not only surrealism as a "consequence that is in European painting about forty years old," but also abstraction, whose programmes he condemned as no less than "limited to a dogmatic and narrow scope of isolated individuals"! In fact, Gamulin came down with rage upon artistic concepts that were not directly related to Motika's work. His attack was directed against the so-called "new syntheses" in Croatian art, which appeared not long before and which should have been, according to Gamulin, likewise cleansed from the traces of "belated and tired resonances" - Western resonances, of course. Therefore, surrealism and abstraction were not understood merely as free forms of (modern) art, but signified "narrowing, limitation, and finally the enslavement of possibilities of expression, isolated individuals stuck in snail shells."<sup>10</sup> It seems though that the identity of those "free forms of (modern) art" was not quite clear to Gamulin himself. This explains the great dose of disdain and censure that he showed towards Motika's exhibition in particular and abstract art in general.

Contrary to Putar, who started from an analysis of visual values in Motika's drawings, Gamulin emphasized their emotional content, which he deemed as "predomi-

po Gamulinu, također očistiti od natruha "zakašnjelih i umornih odjeka", dakako, Zapada. Stoga nadrealizam, odnosno apstrakcija, nisu jedino slobodni oblici (suvremene) umjetnosti, već oni znače "sužavanje, ograničavanje i u posljednjoj liniji, zarobljavanje izražajnih mogućnosti, u puževim kućicama osamljene ličnosti".<sup>10</sup> A koji su to "slobodni oblici (suvremene) umjetnosti", nije bilo jasno ni samom Gamulinu. Stoga je i prisutna tolika doza podcjenjivanja i osuda Motikine izložbe, a u daljnjem kontekstu i apstraktnosti umjetnosti.

Za razliku od Putara, koji polazi od analize likovnih vrijednosti Motikinih crteža, Gamulin u njima ističe emotivni sadržaj koji je "pretežno pervertirano erotski" i samim time neprimjeren "novom" socijalističkom društvu. Za Gamulina je to "obična poza", trenutak "afektacije s nekonformizmom". Ocjena Motikinih crteža je porazna, jer oni se očituju "kao unakaženo ispoljavanje jednog erotskog kompleksa", a istu ocjenu upućuje i onima "koji slične dispozicije u sebi osjećaju".<sup>11</sup> Ispisujući završne retke prvog dijela teksta, Gamulin zapravo sumira bit svojih namjera: "Ne bi imalo smisla iznositi i objašnjavati na ovom mjestu sve te pravce moderne umjetnosti, te frenetične i fantastične umjetničke negacije vanjske predmetnosti, u kojoj se unutar građanskog društva očitovao strah od realnosti, pa možemo samo površno (možda kao osnovu jedne šire diskusije) označiti ono što nas ovim povodom najviše zanima: kako provesti negaciju te negacije? Kojim putem postići njenu ocjenu u njeno teorijsko objašnjenje?" Iako ostavlja pitanja otvorenim, Gamulinu je sasvim jasno da odgovore treba tražiti izvan dojučerašnjih okvira "sorealizma". On se zadovoljava nekim "integralnim realizmom", kod kojeg je potrebno "čistiti teren" od svih, po Gamulinu, neprihvatljivih umjetničkih shvaćanja. A na prvom mjestu se nalazi, više od Motikinog individualnoga nastupa, programski i kolektivno najavljena apstrakcija grupe EXAT.

Nakon Gamulinovih "Zarobljenih oblika" u siječanjskom broju časopisa "Krugovi", koji je okupljao mlade i napredne pisce i umjetnike, objavljen je tekst "Zarobljene teorije" Vjenceslava Richtera.<sup>12</sup>

Richterovim podužim polemičkim (ali i didaktičkim i pedagoškim) odgovorom težište rasprave odmaklo se još dalje od neposrednog povoda Motikina "Arhajskog nadrealizma". Richter, tada mlad arhitekt koji je izravno sudjelovao u izgradnji "novog

nantly erotic in a perverted way" and by this very fact inappropriate for the "new" socialist society. In Gamulin's opinion, it was "merely a pose," a moment of "flirting with non-conformism." His evaluation of Motika's drawings was devastating, since they were characterised as a "mutilated expression of an erotic complex," a judgment directed to all those "who nourish similar disposition in themselves."<sup>11</sup> In the last lines of the first part of his text, Gamulin effectively summarised his aim: "It is not worthwhile mentioning and explaining here all these currents of modern art, these frenetic and fantastic artistic negations of external objectivity, since they are an expression of fear from the reality of bourgeois society; we can only marginally (perhaps as a basis for a larger discussion) point to the issue that interests us most: how can we achieve the negation of that negation? How can we transform its evaluation into its theoretical explanation?" Though leaving these questions unanswered, Gamulin made it perfectly clear that the answer should be sought beyond the surpassed context of "social realism." He limited himself to a sort of "integral realism," which presupposed "clearing the field" of all unacceptable (in his opinion) artistic stances. And that went for the programmatic and collective statement of abstraction of the EXAT group, rather than for Motika's individual performance.

Gamulin's "Captured Shapes" were followed by the "Captured Theories" of Vjenceslav Richter, published in the January issue of *Krugovi*, a journal featuring young and progressive literary and visual artists.<sup>12</sup>

Richter's lengthy polemical (as well as didactic and pedagogical) response shifted the focus of the debate even further away from Motika's *Archaic Surrealism* as its immediate cause. Richter was at that time a young architect who had been directly participating in the construction of the "new society" and he raised his voice in defence of Antun Motika, but even more in defence of abstraction, which was at that time an ideologically hypersensitive issue. As a subscriber of the EXAT Manifesto and a supporter of the idea of "synthesis of arts", Richter had both ideological and personal interests in defending Motika's "surrealism" and abstraction in general. Considering the circumstances, he was rather daring and confident in defending his principles, which

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<sup>9</sup> GRGO GAMULIN, Zarobljeni oblici I. Uz izložbu crteža Antuna Motike u Salonu ULUH-a, u: *Vjesnik NFH*, 2092 (1952.), 5.

<sup>10</sup> GRGO GAMULIN (bilj. 9), 5.

<sup>11</sup> GRGO GAMULIN, Zarobljeni oblici II. Uz izložbu crteža Antuna Motike u Salonu ULUH-a, u: *Vjesnik NFH*, 2094 (1952.) 5.

<sup>12</sup> VJENCESLAV RICHTER, Zarobljene teorije, u: *Krugovi*, 1 (1952.), 84.-91.

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<sup>9</sup> GRGO GAMULIN, Zarobljeni oblici I. Uz izložbu crteža Antuna Motike u Salonu ULUH-a [Captured shapes I. Comments on the exhibition of drawings by Antun Motika in the Salon of ULUH], in: *Vjesnik NFH*, 2092 (1952), 5.

<sup>10</sup> GRGO GAMULIN (n. 9), 5.

<sup>11</sup> GRGO GAMULIN, Zarobljeni oblici II. Uz izložbu crteža Antuna Motike u Salonu ULUH-a [Captured shapes II. Comments on the exhibition of drawings by Antun Motika in the Salon of ULUH], in: *Vjesnik NFH*, 2094 (1952) 5.

<sup>12</sup> VJENCESLAV RICHTER, Zarobljene teorije [Captured theories], in: *Krugovi*, 1 (1952), 84-91.

7. Članak anonimnog autora: *I neki to smatraju pozitivnim pokretom / Article by anonymous author: Some even consider it a positive movement*, *Vjesnik*, Zagreb, 31. 12. 1951.

8. *Ilustracija iz članka: Izložba? Ne-izložba / illustration from article: Exhibition? Non-exhibition*, *Vjesnik*, Zagreb, 13. 1. 1952.



društva", ustaje u obranu Antuna Motike, ali još više od toga u obranu tada ideološki vrlo osjetljivog pitanja apstrakcije. Dakako da je Richter, kao potpisnik EXAT-ova manifesta i zagovornik ideje "sinteze umjetnosti", imao i načelnih i osobnih interesa braniti, kako Motikin "nadrealizam", tako i apstrakciju. Time je za ondašnje prilike hrabro i samouvjereno ustao u obranu svojih uvjerenja koja je nastojao provoditi i u praksi. Naime, kako smo već spomenuli, i samom Gamulinu je bilo jasno da je socrealizam u umjetnosti nadmašen, da rješenja treba tražiti izvan tih okvira, no u praksi on ne vidi gotovo rješenje, jer i "nove sinteze" posjeduju "u stvaralačkom smislu sumirana iskustva prošlosti". Zapravo, i individualna Motikina i kolektivna EXAT-ovska apstrakcija Gamulinu su samo argumenti na kojima temelji svoju kritiku te "još jednom uvodi u optičaj davno (u stvari, još od Krleže, kada on 1926. negira tadašnje mlade okupljene na Grafičkoj izložbi) eksploatiranu tezu o navodno fatalnom kašnjenju domaće umjetnosti sklone europskim avangardističkim eksperimentima i to od 'otprilike četrdeset godina', čime otvoreno zagovara lokalističku zatvorenost i izoliranost umjetničke scene vlastite sredine."<sup>13</sup> Gamulinovo neposredno negiranje Motikine izložbe, a zapravo posredno negiranje apstrakcije, u biti je bila i obrana samoga sebe, tj. "težnja za dokazivanjem prevlasti vlastite kritičke pozicije neprikosnovenog arbitra domaće umjetnosti".<sup>14</sup> No, nastupom raznolikijih koncepcijskih alternativa u toj umjetnosti i njezinoj likovnoj kritici početkom pedesetih godina, njegova uloga nije se više mogla održati, iako se on načelno zalagao za "slobodu", kako umjetnosti, tako i njezine kritike.

Trenutak "izmjene generacija" iskoristio je Vjenceslav Richter, koji je na Gamulinov tekst vrlo samouvjereno odgovorio polemičkim tonom u kojem elaborira obranu apstraktnu umjetnosti. Odnosno, s obzirom na to da je pripadao EXAT-u, obranu potrebe za sintezom umjetnosti, tj. sintezom "arhitekture, slikarstva i plastike". Richter spočitava Gamulinu da je njegova "polazna platforma" kritike Motikine izložbe, a u širem smislu i njegova razumijevanja suvremene umjetnosti, prvenstveno sociološke naravi te on zbog toga ne uočava, ili to jednostavno ne želi, biti samih umjetničkih problema trenutka. Prema Richteru nema razloga apstrakciji, a zapravo sintezi arhitekture i umjetnosti, pripisati "strah i bijeg od stvarnosti". Nema razloga stoga, jer

he also strove to put in practice. As we have noted, even Gamulin himself clearly saw that social realism in art belonged to the past and that answers should be sought beyond its boundaries, although in practice he could not envision an appropriate solution, since he was convinced that the "new syntheses" were "in terms of creativity only summarizing experiences from the past." As a matter of fact, both the individual abstraction of Motika and the collective one of EXAT served Gamulin as arguments for his criticism, so that he "once again brought into play the overexploited hypothesis (forwarded as early as 1926 by Krleža, when he disavowed the young artists present at the Graphic Exhibition) of an allegedly fatal belatedness of Croatian art as inclined towards European vanguard experiments, which amounted to 'approximately four decades,' because of which he openly preferred local enclosure and isolation of Croatian art scene."<sup>13</sup> Gamulin's direct denial of Motika's exhibition, through which he indirectly denied all abstraction, effectively meant defending his own person, i.e. "endeavouring to prove the dominant position of his own critical stance as an unquestionable arbiter in local art."<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, the appearance of various conceptual alternatives by the beginning of 1950s had rendered his role obsolete, even though in principle he was endorsing "freedom", both in art and in its criticism.

This moment of the "switch of generations" was used by Vjenceslav Richter, who responded to Gamulin's text with a good amount of self-confidence and in the tone of polemic. He elaborated a defence of abstract art which, with a view to the fact that he belonged to EXAT, amounted to the defence of the need for a synthesis of arts, i.e. a synthesis of "architecture, painting, and sculpture." Richter reproached Gamulin for the fact that his "starting platform" for the criticism of Motika's exhibition, and in broader terms for his understanding of modern art, was primarily sociological, for which reason he could not, or would not, see the essence of artistic issues at that moment. According to Richter, there was no reason to accuse the abstraction, or the synthesis of architecture and art, of "fearing and fleeing the reality." There was no reason for that because its functionalist nature made it a part of that reality, which would have certainly not been the case with a kind of art that would, with its illusionist

je upravo ona, svojom funkcionalističkom naravi, uključena u samu stvarnost, što zasigurno nije slučaj kod one umjetnosti koja iluzionističkim načinom pasivno sudjeluje i opisuje tu istu stvarnost. I ne samo to - apstraktna, odnosno "suvremena plastična umjetnost uopće", ukida i umjetnu razliku između "čiste" i "primijenjene" umjetnosti. Stoga je takva upravo ona vrsta umjetnosti koja odgovara stvarnosti novog društva i svijeta. Nadalje, Richter upozorava Gamulina i na političke posljedice tog navodnog "straha i bijega od stvarnosti". Jer, upravo je u ime takvog "straha i bijega" u staljinizmu i nacizmu, dvama inače različitim društveno-političkim sustavima, dolazilo do otvorene represije spram moderne umjetnosti. Stoga je i neprimjerno, piše Richter, u jednoj socijalističkoj zemlji iznositi "slične" sociološke argumentacije spram suvremene umjetnosti. Samo nekoliko godina unazad, izjednačavanje staljinizma s nacizmom, barem što se moderne umjetnosti tiče, nije bilo moguće. Ta činjenica, a uostalom i sama javna rasprava Richter-Gamulin i neposredno prije toga i Putarov tekst obrane Motikine umjetnosti, dovoljni su pokazatelji koji svjedoče o liberalnoj klimi povijesnog trenutka.

Na ideološkom planu, dosljedno njegovoj političkoj orijentaciji, Richter se za apstrakciju zalaže kao "dijalektičko, dinamičko, aktivističko i progresivno shvaćanje svijeta u duhu novih civilizacijskih i socijalnih procesa". A takvom shvaćanju sukladna je, po njegovu mišljenju, upravo suvremena umjetnost. U svom se tekstu zalaže za onu umjetnost kojoj je osnovni cilj promicanje ukupne umjetničke produkcije vlastite sredine. No, u tom promicanju nema uloga likovne kritike koja ne prihvaća, ili ne želi prihvatiti, suvremene umjetničke koncepte. Razlog tomu je, kako navodi Richter, što našu likovnu kritiku prati "temporalna i metodološka zaostalost". Stoga njegova težnja, bez obzira što najviše prostora posvećuje svojim interesima, jest - "ukupni kulturni interes sredine, a ne parcijalni interes grupe kojoj pripada".

Richterov odgovor Gamulinu pokrenuo je daljnju raspravu o naravi apstraktne umjetnosti te će se 1953. godine, povodom povijesne izložbe EXAT-a, javiti filozof i sociolog Rudi Supek<sup>15</sup> i povjesničar umjetnosti i kritičar Dimitrije Bašičević.<sup>16</sup> Time se problematika apstrakcije širi na ostale discipline, na različite ideološke pozicije i interese, ali pionirski dio posla već je bio odraden.

approach, participate in it and describe it in a passive way. And that was not all: abstract, that is, "modern sculpture in general" suspended the artificial difference between "pure" and "applied" arts and was therefore the very type of art that fitted the reality of the new society and the new world. Moreover, Richter warned Gamulin of the political consequences of such accusations of "fearing and fleeing the reality," since it was precisely on behalf of them that the Stalinist and Nazi regimes, otherwise entirely different, equalled each other in their repression of modern art. It is therefore inappropriate, said Richter, to forward "similar" sociological arguments against modern art in a socialist country. Only few years before, parallels between the Stalinist and Nazi regimes, at least concerning modern art, would have hardly been possible. This fact, as well as the very fact of a public debate such as the one between Richter and Gamulin, following immediately after Putar's defence of Motika's art, are sufficient indicators of the liberal climate in that historical moment.

At the level of ideology, Richter was consistent with his political orientation and thus endorsed abstraction as a "dialectic, dynamic, engaged, and progressive worldview, entirely in spirit with the new civilising and social processes." In his opinion, it was precisely modern art that fitted best to this role. In his text, he supported the kind of art the aim of which was primarily promoting the collective artistic production of its own environment. However, there was no place for an art criticism that could not, or would not, accept modern artistic concepts. The problem was, according to Richter, in the fact that local art criticism was marked by "temporal and methodological backwardness." Therefore, he declared that his primary concern, notwithstanding the fact that he dedicated most of his attention to his own interests, was the "overall cultural interest of his environment, rather than the particular interest of the group to which he belongs."

Richter's response to Gamulin provoked further debate on the nature of abstract art, so that in 1953, at the occasion of the legendary exhibition of EXAT, philosopher and sociologist Rudi Supek<sup>15</sup> and art historian and art critic Dimitrije Bašičević<sup>16</sup> raised their voices as well. In this way, the debate spread to other disciplines, to different ideological positions and

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- <sup>13</sup> JERKO DENEGRİ, Rasprava Grgo Gamulin - Vjenceslav Richter o apstraktnoj umjetnosti, u: *Novi Kamov*, 1 (2002.), 41.
- <sup>14</sup> JERKO DENEGRİ (bilj. 13), 42.
- <sup>15</sup> RUDI SUPEK, Konfuzija oko astratizma, u: *Pogledi*, 6 (1953.), 415.-421.
- <sup>16</sup> DIMITRIJE BAŠIČEVIĆ, Jezik apstraktne umjetnosti, u: *Krugovi*, 4 (1953.), 270.-274.
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- <sup>13</sup> JERKO DENEGRİ, Rasprava Grgo Gamulin - Vjenceslav Richter o apstraktnoj umjetnosti [Debate between Grgo Gamulin and Vjenceslav Richter on abstract art], in: *Novi Kamov* 1 (2002), 41.
- <sup>14</sup> JERKO DENEGRİ (n. 13), 42.
- <sup>15</sup> RUDI SUPEK, Konfuzija oko astratizma [Confusion around astratizm], in: *Pogledi* 6 (1953), 415-421.
- <sup>16</sup> DIMITRIJE BAŠIČEVIĆ, Jezik apstraktne umjetnosti [Language of abstract art], in: *Krugovi*, 4 (1953), 270-274.

Povod, razlog i sama bit rasprave Gamulin-Richter, gledana iz pedesetogodišnje distance, sastoji se u, kako je elaborirao Ješa Denegri u svom nedavno objavljenom tekstu, raspravi o "znatno temeljnijim i dalekosežnijim razlozima u kulturi i umjetnosti vlastite sredine", jer je to bila rasprava "između dva različita svjetonazora, koji su oba imali svoja uvjerenja i svoje argumente."<sup>17</sup> Gamulin u toj raspravi ne nastupa više u ime norme socijalističkog realizma, već istupa u ime "tradicionalističkih shvaćanja slikarstva" i "općeg ukusa vremena". I, naravno, u svoje ime. Stoga je Putar bio u pravu kada je navijestio "buru" koju će dići povodom Motikine izložbe od strane impresionista. S druge strane Richter govori o "srazu" umjetnosti "u ime obrane vlastitih radnih projekata i projekata skupine kojoj pripada, a ne u ime nametanja ideoloških koncepata što ih on i skupina posjeduju i slijede". A sve se to, kako zaključuje Denegri, odvijalo "u atmosferi dovoljne tolerancije" koja "osigurava zaštitu i dignitet učesnika u jednoj principijelnoj konfrontaciji s različitim predznacima ideoloških, kulturnih i umjetničkih opcija, ali bez prava bilo koje od njih na očekivanja, pogotovo na stvarnu podršku političke arbitraže".<sup>18</sup> To je bio znak, nastavlja Denegri, "da su u trenutku vođenja ove rasprave, ako ne u samoj politici, a ono ipak u kulturi i umjetnosti, bili izborni uvjeti stanovitog pluralizma", a mi ćemo dodati onu već ranije izrečenu Ivančevićevu misao da je to bio znak da su se u onom trenutku izborile i obranile slobode istraživanja i individualnog stvaranja u likovnim umjetnostima.

Zaključimo. "Arhajski nadrealizam" Antuna Motike početkom 1952. kronološki je prva javna manifestacija - izložba koja je drastično odudarala od dotad proklamirane estetike socrealizma. Ta izložba, uz Manifest EXAT-a i njihova interna djelovanja, kao i ono što je slijedilo nakon toga, kazuje da je riječ o središnjem pitanju određenja budućeg razvoja cjelokupne poslijeratne hrvatske umjetnosti i kao takva zauzima središnje mjesto u svakom razgovoru o tom razdoblju. Iako je ta izložba izazvala određena razmimoilaženja u kritičkim osvrtima, a time i u generalnim pogledima na pitanja moderne umjetnosti, ona je "u osnovi bila prihvaćena i podržana", ponajprije stoga što je svjedočila, kako kaže Denegri, "o kontinuitetima za koje se, uostalom, s pravom, smatralo da vode produbljivanju i osuvremenjavanju nekih u sredini već ukorijenjenih umjetničkih iskustava".

interests, but the pioneering work had already been done.

The cause, the reason, and the very essence of the Gamulin-Richter debate, viewed from the distance of five decades, is contained in the discussion about the "more fundamental and far-reaching reasons in culture and art of our environment," as Ješa Denegri has elaborated in a recently published text, since it was a controversy "between two different worldviews, each having its own convictions and arguments."<sup>17</sup> In that debate, Gamulin no longer argued on behalf of the norm of socialist realism, but rather in the name of the "traditional idea of painting" and the "general taste of the time." And, of course, in his own name. Therefore, Putar was right when he announced a "storm" that the impressionists would raise after Motika's exhibition. On the other hand, Richter wrote about the "conflict" of art "with the purpose of defending his own working projects and those of his group, rather than that of imposing ideological concepts owned and promoted by that group." And all that, concludes Denegri, took place "in an atmosphere of sufficient tolerance" that "guaranteed protection and dignity to the participants in a confrontation of principles marked by various ideological, cultural, and artistic options, though without granting any rights regarding expectations - or even less real support - of political arbitrage to any of them."<sup>18</sup> It was a sign, Denegri goes on, "that by the moment when the debate was going on, conditions of certain pluralism had been negotiated, if not in politics itself, at least in culture and art", to which we might add the aforementioned thought of Ivančević, namely that it was the moment in which freedom of research and individual creation was achieved in visual arts.

Let me conclude. The *Archaic Surrealism* of Antun Motika early in 1952 is chronologically the first public manifestation/exhibition that drastically differed from the predominant aesthetics of social realism. Besides the Manifesto of EXAT and their internal activity, it opened up the central issue of the way in which the entire development of post-war Croatian art was determined and as such deserves the most prominent place in any discussion on that period. Even though the exhibition provoked certain controversies in critical evaluation, as well as general enunciations of views related to modern art, it was "funda-

A Antun Motika? Njegova djela "arhajskog nadrealizma", kao i ostali mnogobrojni pothvati, u početku su bili shvaćeni jedino u probranom društvu njegovih poznanika i privrženika, a postat će, zahvaljujući kasnijim medijskim promocijama, široko shvaćene spoznaje koje su dovele u sumnju mnoštvo konvencionalnih pretpostavki o samoj prirodi umjetnosti u hrvatskoj sredini. Jedna od tih je bilo i konačno razdvajanje pojmova estetskog i umjetničkog. Težište značenja prenijelo se od normativnog suda o umjetničkom djelu na djelo kao umjetnikovu slobodnu odluku. Naravno, Motika tu nije bio sam. Od EXAT-a, pa do "Doživljaja Amerike" Ede Murtića dogodili su se različiti "povijesni datumi", ali iz tih raznovrsnih pobuda i procesa početkom pedesetih godina nastala je umjetnost koja više nije zagovarala kolektivne i općeprihvatljive vrline, nego je, naprotiv, težila tomu da umjetnik kao pojedinac, zahvaljujući vlastitoj moći inteligencije i kreativnosti, ishodi za sebe onaj i onolik prostor slobodnog djelovanja u kojemu će umjetnik, a ne bilo tko drugi, biti nositeljem razloga djelovanja i mjerilom kriterija vrijednosti. Za Motiku, tog nekad davno imenovanog "dekadentnog zapadnjaka", može se reći da je svojim djelom i svojim ponašanjem uspio afirmirati "pečat svoje vlastite samoće", da borbu u koju se upuštao, svjesno ili nesvjesno vodi "odsutnošću pokreta, sjedenjem". I dok su pokreti ekspanzivnih i socijalno usmjerenih avangardi težili preoblikovati svijet prema svojoj ideološkoj projekciji, a time su se neizbježno sukobljavali s političkim silama i u tim sukobima na kraju i stradali, Motika je usamljenski radio na vlastitu unutrašnjem preobražaju. Umjetnost nije zapostavio u ime bilo kojeg drugog ideala i time je na kraju dao dovoljno velik ulog pred licem povijesti. ▼

mentally accepted and supported," primarily because, according to Denegri, it gave evidence of "continuities which were rightfully considered as leading towards the deepening and modernisation of artistic experiences that had already struck roots in that environment."

And what about Antun Motika? His works of "archaic surrealism," as well as many other projects, were at first properly understood only within the circle of his acquaintances and fans, but eventually, as a result of later promotion in media, grew into widely accepted insights that led to the questioning of a number of conventional suppositions in Croatia about the very nature of art. One of such insights was the final separation of the ideas of aestheticism and art; likewise, the focus of attention shifted from the normative judgement about the work of art to the work itself as a free choice of its creator. Certainly, Motika was not alone in promoting this process: there was a number of other "historical dates," from EXAT to *Experiencing America* by Edo Murtić. In the early 1950s, these multiple interests and processes gave birth to a sort of art that no longer endorsed collective and generally acceptable virtues, but on the contrary, promoted the artist's freedom to conquer - as an individual, owing to his own intellectual and creative powers - such space of unrestrained activity as he needed in order to establish for himself, instead of having it done by somebody else, the reason for his activity and the criteria for its evaluation. As for Motika, that "decadent Westernizer," as he was labelled long ago, one could say that he managed to assert his "mark of isolation" with both his work and his behaviour and that he fought his battle, be it consciously or unconsciously, by "absence of movements, in sitting." And while expansive and socially oriented vanguards sought to transform the world according to their ideological projection, thereby clashing inevitably with political powers and perishing as a result, Motika worked in isolation on his internal transformation. He did not abandon art for any other ideal and this very fact is his large contribution in the face of history. ●

prijevod / translation: Marina Miladinov

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<sup>17</sup> JERKO DENEGRI (bilj. 13), 49.

<sup>18</sup> JERKO DENEGRI (bilj. 13), 48.

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<sup>17</sup> JERKO DENEGRI (n. 13), 49.

<sup>18</sup> JERKO DENEGRI (n. 13), 48.

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