

## peripheral structure from karas to exat

“While looking at the graphic exhibition of ‘Šestorica’ (Group of Six, 1926), I reflected upon the mysterious motions of beauty - how the indefinite, infantile, decadent beauty of Western urbanism can appear so chillingly suggestive in a peripheral pseudo-civilization such as ours, which is neither Balkans, nor Central Europe.”

M. Krleža, *Essays*, III (1963), p. 204

The first thought that comes to our mind, having decided in the title which period of art history we shall concentrate on and how large it should be, is focused on the fact that, first of all, one should formulate the right question. Or perhaps it is possible just to throw in a word and it will direct one's attention by creating a sort of associative atmosphere?

*Constitute*, for example. The word seems appropriate, both semantically and lexically, for expressing what we intend to speak about, or rather ask in the manner of today: what is it that our recent art is *constituted* of, what is the cause of its development precisely in *this* direction, the cause of its being as such? This question is by no means asked out of idleness; even if the desire of knowing were not sufficient as motivation — of knowing the historical truth, of cultural awareness — and in fact it is, the question should be asked because of a number of “technical” problems in art history. What is meant here is equally the interpretation of persons and phenomena, the conflict of artistic individualities and forces that determine them, and the particular system of values in which the values of our art could persist and be justified as unique and universal.

But what is it that we call “our” art? What is Croatian art, for example? (What is Serbian art?) Tizian in Dubrovnik, Carpaccio in Zadar, travelling masters that happened to visit our country and left their works of art here; and art that somehow got here regardless of its authors, does it belong to our art

as well? The 19<sup>th</sup> century first defined the character of being, it was the character of people/individual, which then occurred both as a constituting basis and as a determinant of style. Thus, it was all depending on the expressiveness and expressedness of national particularity, which was in the case of Croatian art - in the given historical circumstances, marked by the expansion of what was foreign and the suppression of what was national - regularly articulated in terms of differentiation of what is “ours” by defining it against something else, as resistance and negation. In the course of several decades, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the nationality of art was experiencing characteristic transformations as an idea: in the beginning, the existence of a “national” artist was sufficient; his only legitimisation was the ethnical link to the people/individual (thus, Laurana, Medulić, Klović, and Bukovac were “ours” before they came to Zagreb); certainly, in the next moment, his art was likewise iconographically nationalized on the outside — by means of summarized episodes from national history or by landscape and folklore motifs of the land on which the people lived; the last stage consisted in the creation of “national art”, an artistic style which was believed to express most closely the supposed character of people/individual. — However, the whole problem appears to us more complex and partly contrary to that simplified scheme: moreover, looking backward, we are inclined to view the interpreta-

## periferna struktura od karasa do exata

“Promatrajući grafičku izložbu ‘Šestorice’ (1926) razmišljao sam o tajanstvenom gibanju ljepote, kako neodređena, infantilna, dekadentna ljepota zapadnjačkog urbanizma djeluje sablasno sugestivno u perifernoj ni balkanskoj, ni centralnoevropskoj pseudocivilizaciji, kao što je, na primjer, naša civilizacija”.

M. Krleža, Eseji, III, 1963, str. 204.

Prva misao koja nam se nameće, nakon što smo se već u naslovu odlučili na koji i na kolik ćemo period historije umjetnosti usredsrediti pogled, upravljena je na to da je, prije svega, potrebno postaviti pravo pitanje. Ili, moguće, samo spomenuti riječ koja bi bila u stanju usmjeriti pažnju, stvoriti određenu asocijativnu atmosferu?

*Tvornost*, na primjer. Ta se riječ čini sa semantičkog i sa leksičkog stanovišta prikladnom da izrazi ono o čemu namjeravamo govoriti, pitati se na način dana današnjeg: šta je to što *tvori* našu noviju umjetnost, što uvjetuje *takav* njen razvoj i, u cjelini, njeno biće? Daleko od toga da se ovo pitanje postavlja iz besposlice; sve i kad čisto spoznajne pobude — spoznanje historijske istine, svijest kulturna — ne bi bile dovoljne, a one to doista jesu, valjalo bi ga postaviti zbog mnoštva “tehničkih” problema historije umjetnosti. Pod tim se misli podjednako na tumačenje lica i pojava, na sukobljavanje umjetničkih individualnosti i sila koje ih determiniraju i na određen vrijednosni sustav u kojem bi vrijednosti naše umjetnosti mogle da opstanu i da se opravdaju kao jedinstvene i univerzalne.

Međutim, šta je to naša umjetnost? Šta je to hrvatska umjetnost, na primjer? (Šta je to srpska umjetnost?) Tizian u Dubrovniku, Carpaccio u Zadru, umjetnici namjernici koji dolaze u našu zemlju i ostavljaju u njoj djela ili ona sama dospijevaju bez obzira na svoje autore, spadaju li i oni u našu umjetnost? XIX je stoljeće najprije definiralo karakter bića, bio je to karakter naroda-individuuma,

koji se onda javljao i kao tvorna osnova i kao determinanta stila. Sve je dakle stajalo u ovisnosti o izražajnosti i izraženosti nacionalne posebnosti koja se u slučaju hrvatske umjetnosti, u datim historijskim okolnostima koje obilježava ekspanzivnost onoga što je tuđe i potisnutost onoga što je nacionalno, redovno ukazuje kao razlikovanje svoga, određivanje prema nečem, otpor i negacija. U toku nekoliko desetljeća, u drugoj polovini prošlog vijeka i na početku našeg, ideja narodnosti umjetnosti doživljavala je karakteristične promjene: u početku je bilo dovoljno postojanje “narodnog” umjetnika; on se legitimirao samo etničkom vezom s narodom-individuumom (te su tako Laurana, Medulić, Klović, ili Bukovac prije dolaska u Zagreb — “naši”); u slijedećem se trenutku, izvana, istina, ikonografski, ponaroduje i njegova umjetnost — preko sižea iz nacionalne historije, preko pejzažnih i folklornih motiva zemlje na kojoj narod živi; posljednji stupanj čini stvaranje “narodne umjetnosti”, umjetničkog stila za koji se drži da najprisnije izražava pretpostavljeni karakter naroda-individuuma. — Nama se, međutim, cio problem pričinjava složenijim i djelomično obrnutim od te uproščene sheme: skloni smo, dapače, gledajući unazad da u tumačenju nacionalnog (etničkog) elementa kao jezgra tvorne sposobnosti i kao uzroka osobitosti stila, vidimo naknadnu i povijesno određenu konstrukciju. Ukoliko je dotična umjetnost vezana uz naciju, onda je to u izvjesnom smislu posrednim putem, zbog historijskih preobrazbi i peripetija, i na

tion of the national (ethnic) element, as the core of constituting ability and the cause of the specificity of style, as a subsequent and historically conditioned construct. If the art in question is linked to a nation, then it is linked in a sort of indirect way, through historical transformations and vicissitudes, and externally, which emphasizes the historical rather than racial or national/individual determinism. The question that we have asked in principle with respect to Tizian's presence (i.e. in what measure certain culture historically assimilates works of art in its possession) becomes serious and concrete when it comes to the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the case of C. Reggio, a painter active in Dubrovnik, the cases of Stroy and Simonetti (who even corresponded with Strossmayer in Italian), those various artists of foreign origins, or Croats of foreign upbringing - all that points to the extreme incompleteness of the genetic appropriation of certain cultural and artistic phenomena on the basis of a subsequently formed ethnic model; and that is especially true about the periods of the first concentration of the cultural medium, which was precisely our 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Keeping in mind the insufficiency of the hypothesis about the ethnically based and therefore permanent character of Croatian art, and having subtracted all affected relationships, and if we decide to use a more detached grammatical form — then the question: What is the art of the Croats? will lead us to the same historical retrospective, to the same, unchanged scene of people, actions, and events that condense the time and space of our past; whether they will be transformed into meaningful historical sentences, into a whole, a recognisable entity, *depends on the ability of our gaze to recognise unity in the scattered and manifold particles of the panopticon, to recognise that dialectic call of the cause and the answer of the consequence, of thesis and antithesis, the one and the many*. Unity in multiplicity, that is the link, the connection, the correlation between details.

What is more in *our art*, that is there through art; therefore, what is *ours*, I mean, not only art, but also our art, represents certain correlation, which is contained in it. It is different from all that is outside and different, it is always its own, always something else: the other structure. The historical *specificum* that we have before our eyes is neither innate ("our innate basis" — Lj. Babić), nor mandatory for those phenomena

that have not participated in its making and therefore do not form part of the structure. It is simply historically existent, subjected to gradual change and even to negation.<sup>1</sup> By coming into existence and vanishing from it, by unravelling the logic of its correlation, that specific quality defines the "ours" and "us" in our own consciousness, just like Doric art, as Focillon has once remarked, was able to transform sunny desert into ancient Greece! The organicity of correlation is its ruling principle; in other words, all that becomes our art by adding its quantity and its value — regardless, we repeat, of whether it is positive or negative — should be expressed and asserted in this permanently created structure in some sort of truthfulness of relation.

Contemporary art criticism has established that there is an autonomous world of art, a "third reality" of the extra-temporal "imaginary museum", in which reality is joined by aesthetically valuable works of art beyond the boundaries of their sources, in some deep solidarity of quality. However, in that imagined empire, there are unparalleled injustices: there is place only for the purest, supreme works of art, for that caste of super-value in which no more hierarchies are permitted, whereas all that is below, in those ample grounds that all art must struggle through, from utterly modest sketches to great and sublime artefacts, remains in the darkness of worthlessness and in the ambivalence of so many conditionals. Keeping in mind this permanently present danger of devaluation and confusion, which influences the evaluation of our young artistic development, we are asking: By which way of reasoning can we establish and legitimately accept them, reach the truth of their meaning? To resort to a comparison with different and already acknowledged values - that we can always do and that is, in fact, rather a problem of certain political culture than of the basic aesthetic evaluation. And that will force us to take a different path: instead of an aprioristically problematic questioning of "universal value" (which is little more than mechanical application of the criterion of different structure, the criterion of the working of central processes), we should start from the authenticity of phenomenon, from its logical embeddedness in the cultural space in which it was created and acknowledged as value according to some, at least temporarily relative criterion.

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The cave art of the prehistoric man was created in the close relationship with his low-level social organization, which was, however, necessarily complete; the art of Herzegovinian and Bosnian necropolises, for example, was created at a different and differently complete stage of social organisation. For modern art, it is characteristic that its creation in no way preceded any significant concentration of social and therefore cultural medium. In the Western cultural orbit, from the renaissance and especially from the romanticism onwards, art has been most closely linked to the development of new social forms, of those forms of civilization that symbolize well, though incomplete, the new achievements of technology; which one might call the process of *urbanization* in the broad sense of the word. The social precondition of this process of urbanization is a man in a tensed relationship with reality, which is in the process of creation and opens up new perspectives regarding his own human condition: from Goya and Delacroix to Cézanne, Gauguin, and Kandinsky, all great modern artists represented the incarnation of an awareness of the ongoing transformation: if their eye was sharper and the eye of their mind more piercing, the awareness was deeper and more complete, while their art was greater. — Starting from that point, we may observe that the real beginnings of our modern art in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as well as its further development in the century to come, were primarily linked to those weak shifts from the lethargy of the feudal/frontier order in the middle of the century (and the cultural correlate of that order practically equalled zero) and to the ever larger amount of events that followed, gradually creating political, technological, and intellectual preconditions for a new order.

It is crucial to trace the restarting point: no matter how important the Illyrian Movement was for the revival of language or the awakening of national consciousness in the political sense, in the field of visual arts it meant rather little. Therefore, we cannot speak of any continuity of development (with respect to the modest and scattered legacy of previous centuries), of any stylistic or historical premise that would condition the paths of new development. Even less can we speak of the connection that was supposedly established between art and folklore: there was a gap of different civiliza-

izvanjski način, koji naglašava historijski, a ne rasni i narodno-individualni determinizam. Pitanje koje smo iz načelnih razloga postavili u vezi s Tizianovim prisustvom (tj. do koje mjere izvjesna kultura historijski asimilirala djela u svom posjedu?), u XIX st. postaje ozbiljno i konkretno: slučaj C. Reggia, slikara koji djeluje u Dubrovniku, slučaj Stroya i Simonettija (koji se, između ostalog, sa Strossmayerom dopisuje na talijanskom), slučaj umjetnika stranog porijekla ili domaćeg porijekla a stranog odgoja ukazuje na krajnju nepotpunost genetskog posvajanja određenih kulturnih i umjetničkih pojava na bazi kasnije formiranog etničkog obrasca; to naročito važi za razdoblja početne koncentracije kulturnog medija, kakvo je, upravo, naše XIX stoljeće.

Imajući u vidu nedostatnost teze o etnički zasnovanom, trajnom, znači, karakteru naše umjetnosti, kad oduzmemo sve afektivne relacije i nek se u tu svrhu poslužimo lokativom — pitanje: šta je to umjetnost u Hrvata? stavlja nas ponovo pred istu historijsku retrospektivu, pred onaj nepromijenjeni prizor ljudi, djela i događanja koji zgušnjavaju vrijeme i prostor naše prošlosti; da li će se oni preobraziti u suvise rečenice povijesti, u cjelinu, u prepoznatljivo biće, *zavisu od toga koliko će naš pogled među razbijenim i raznorodnim česticama panoramika prepoznati jedinstvo, ono dijalektičko prizivanje uzroka i odazivanje posljedice, teze i protuteze, jednog i mnogog*. Jedinstvo množine, to je veza, odnos, odnošenje među pojedinostima.

Ono što u *našoj umjetnosti* ima više, ima preko umjetnosti, ono što je *naše*, dakle, ne samo umjetnost već i naša umjetnost, predstavlja određeno, u njoj sadržano, odnošenje. Ono je od svega što je izvan njega različito, ono je uvijek vlastito, uvijek drugo: druga struktura. Historijski specifikum koji imamo pred očima nije ni urođen ("naša urođena osnovica" — Lj. Babić) niti je obavezan za pojave koje nisu i same sudjelovale u njegovu nastajanju, koje ne čine dio strukture. On je jednostavno historijski egzistentan, podložan postupnoj promjeni i dapače, negaciji.<sup>1</sup> Stvarajući se i nastajući, raspoređujući logiku svoga odnošenja, taj specifikum definira ono naše i nas u vlastitoj svijesti, isto tako kao što je dorska umjetnost, kako je primijetio Focillon, pretvarala sunčanu pustinju u klasičnu Grčku! Organičnost odnošenja vlada kao njegovo načelo; drugim riječima, sve što postaje naša umjetnost, dodajući joj svoju količinu i

svoju vrijednost — bez obzira, ponavljamo, s kojim predznakom — treba da se iskaže, da se potvrdi u toj stalno nastajućoj strukturi u nekoj vrsti istinitosti odnosa.

Suvremena kritika umjetnosti ustanovila je postojanje autonomnog svijeta umjetnosti, "treće realnosti" vanvremenskog "imaginarnog muzeja" u kojoj se realnosti ujedinjuju estetski vrijedna djela, preko granica svojih istjecišta, nekom dubokom solidarnošću kvaliteta. Međutim, u tom zamišljenom carstvu vladaju nečuvene nepravde: mjesta ima samo za ona najčišća, za vrhunska djela, za onu kastu nadvrijednosti u kojoj više nisu dozvoljene nikakve hijerarhije, a sve što je ispod, ona prostrana područja kroz koja se umjetnost probija, od najskromnijeg nagovještaja do većih i uzvišenih ostvarenja, ostaje u mraku bezvrijednosti i u nedoumici mnogobrojnih kondicionala. Imajući u vidu ovu stalno prisutnu opasnost obezvređenja i konfuzije koja djeluje na sagledavanje vrijednosti našeg mladog umjetničkog razvoja, pitamo se, kojim ih putem zaključivanja možemo ustanoviti i legitimno prihvatiti, dovi-nuti se do istine njihova značenja? Prihvatiti usporedbu s drugačijim i već obznanjenim vrednotama, to nam uvijek ostaje da učinimo, i to je, u biti, prije problem određene politike kulture negoli problem osnovnog estetskog vrednovanja. A ono će nam nametnuti suprotan put: mjesto unaprijed problematičnog ispitivanja "univerzalne vrijednosti" (što i nije drugo do mehanička primjena kriterija druge strukture, kriterija djela centralnih razvoja), valja nam poći od autentičnosti pojave, od njene logične ukotvljenosti u kulturnom prostoru u kojem nastaje i u kojem je usvojena kao vrijednost po određenom, bar privremeno relativnom kriteriju.

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Spiljska umjetnost prehistorijskog čovjeka nastala je u prisnom odnosu s društvenom organizacijom niskog stupnja, no zato neophodne cjelovitosti; umjetnost hercegovačkih i bosanskih nekropola, na primjer, nastaje na drugačijem i drugačije cjelovitom stupnju društvene organizacije. Za modernu je pak umjetnost karakteristično da njeno postojanje ni u kom slučaju ne prethodi znatnijoj koncentraciji društvenog, a zatim i kulturnog medija. Umjetnost je u zapadnoj kulturnoj orbiti, od renesanse dalje, od romantizma posebno, najuže vezane s razvojem novih društvenih oblika, onih oblika civilizacije koje dobro, iako nepotpuno, simboliziraju nova iznašaća teh-

nike; to bismo u širokom smislu riječi mogli nazvati procesom *urbanizacije*. Društvenu pretpostavku procesa urbanizacije predstavlja čovjek koji je u napetom odnosu s tom stvarnošću što nastaje i što mu otvara nove perspektive u njegovu vlastitu ljudsku situaciju: od Goye i Delacroixa do Cézannea, Gauguina i Kandinskog, svi veliki moderni umjetnici predstavljaju inkarnaciju svijesti o preobražaju koji je u toku: što je njihovo oko oštrije, oko njihova duha pronicavije, ta je svijest dublja i potpunija, a njihova umjetnost veća. — Polazeći od toga, možemo primijetiti da su stvarni počeci naše moderne umjetnosti u XIX stoljeću, i njen dalji razvoj u stoljeću u kojem živimo, vezani najprije uz slaba pomicanja iz letargije feudalno-graničarskog poretka sredine stoljeća (a kulturni je korelat spomenutog poretka gotovo ništavan), zatim uz onaj rastući zbir događaja koji su uslijedili stvarajući postupno političke, tehničke i intelektualne uvjete novog.

Važno je zacrtati točku ponovnog počinjanja: koliko god je ilirski pokret značajan za obnovu jezika i književnosti ili za buđenje nacionalne samosvijesti u političkom smislu, toliko je malo značio na likovnom planu. Prema tome ne može biti govora ni o kakvu razvojnom kontinuitetu (sa skromnom i razbijenom baštinom ranijih vjekova), ni o jednoj stilsko-povijesnoj premisi koja bi uvjetovala putove novog razvoja. Pogotovo ne može biti govora o vezi umjetnosti koja je trebalo da se rodi s folklorom: između njih je zjapio jaz različitih civilizacija. Ništa se ne mijenja činjenicom što su se one dodirivale na istom mjestu i u istom času.

Ako držimo na umu taj suštinski paralelizam općeg društvenog razvoja i razvoja moderne umjetnosti, bit će nam umnogome jasnija posebna situacija u kojoj se zatekla novija hrvatska umjetnost. Nastajući kao rezultat kulturnog dozrijevanja određenog društva, ta je umjetnost, nužno, kao njegov proizvod morala biti u organskom odnosu s njime, ona ga je izražavala, nosila je u sebi njegove odlike i njegova ograničenja. Kao proizvod urbaniziranog čovjeka i urbaniziranog društva ona i nije mogla, po tom nezaobilaznom unutarnjem određenju, preticati urbanizaciju samu! Međutim, ta ista umjetnost (ili jednostavnije — isti umjetnik) dolazi u stalan dodir s jednom drugom naprednijom i modernijom umjetnošću, koje je civilizacijski supstrat isto tako neusporedivo napredniji i moderniji i trpi neodoljiv pritisak gotova stila. U stvari, nije riječ o bilo

tions between them. Regardless of the fact that they coincided in place and time.

If one keeps in mind that essential parallelism between general social development and the development of modern art, the special situation in which recent Croatian art has found itself will become considerably clearer. Created as a result of the cultural maturing of society, that art was necessarily its product and organically related to it, functioning as its expression and carrying both its qualities and its limitations within. As a product of urbanized man and urbanized society, it could never — given its inevitable internal determination — overtake urbanization as such! Nevertheless, that particular art (or simply — that particular artist) was constantly coming into contact with another, more advanced and more modern type of art, with a civilization substrate that was incomparably more advanced and more modern, and likewise suffering from an insufferable pressure of ready style. In fact, we do not mean just any art, since artists find it easy to resist distant and foreign styles; the art in question came from the same circle of civilization, but it was on a more advanced stage of development; artists can recognize it easily, since they vaguely anticipate such forms and they are bound to affect their searching nerve with an unendurable directness; they start to adopt or even copy, instead of conquering and creating. The fascinating effect of the stylistically more advanced art is enhanced by its publicity, the power of fame that normally expands from the centres to the periphery.

That is the diagram of determining forces in our peripheral setting. Using Sedlmayr's terminology, we may call it the "primary phenomenon" of our art-historical development in this period. Its sense is to explain, on the basis of its simple premise — that we have just presented — as many phenomena as possible that are encountered almost regularly at all problem levels of our art: in the formation of artistic personalities, and later also groups and generations, with their duality, incoherency, and constriction; and at the level of work — in the hybrid character of the artistic style and in the so-called stylistic retardation; and eventually at the level of critical reasoning, in the imprecision of methods, as well as the rivalry and fusion of diverse and inorganic criteria.

The peripheral phenomenon is unique and dialectic. It is neither good nor bad, but neutral with respect to value: it is a struc-

tural phenomenon. It is regularly rendered by an antithesis of terms: peripheral-central, regional-universal, national-general. Or perhaps by that asymptotic "time" (which regularly denotes some sort of particular conceptual and stylistic certainty of European processes) that has stood for a hundred years in opposition to "our milieu", a term defining the social, economic, and political reality of the moment. None of the hypotheses of its definition is either internal or external, either more or less significant. Even in those cases, when there was no direct or real contact with the outside style, its definition stands — on the level of the criterion that identifies and determines its value. Whatever appears enters by its mere appearance into a polemical relationship on both sides. To say it even more precisely — it incarnates the relationship, since there are false commitments: both false betrayals and false allegiances.

We shall give a few summary illustrations. — The case of Karas, which stands at the very beginning, is largely symbolic in this respect; it may be related to a corresponding pseudo-literary motif of certain "Croatian fatalism", which represents this Croatian hypertension of Karas in its literal symbolism. Faced with the real reasons — and these can easily be located within the boundaries of conflict between two antinomic worlds, which can neither unite nor live without each other — this belated pathos is arbitrary and needless. Having returned to his native land in 1848, Karas wandered between Karlovac and Travnik, Zagreb and -akovo, sad and restless as if moonstruck. Someone might say that his "Girl with a Lute" was a small pledge to his dream about the "golden age" of art, a dream that he had brought with him from the South; however, when we look at it together with its own unreturned debts to the fourth decade, among the paintings of artists like Stroy, Zasche, or Mücke, it stands there as the first glorious defeat with which young art had to pay for its awakening. And what about Karas's environment? The cool Gaj, the inconvenienced Strossmayer! People whose need of art stopped at the wish to be recognized and confirmed on their portraits. A wasteland at the end of the world, for which Babić found a happy term: a semi-state. Karas painted the best portraits before Bukovac in Croatia, although one could say, paradoxically, that he was no portraitist in the same sense as some others in his time. While others

around him, as well as long after him, were citizens that painted, Karas embodied *the artist*, a new sociological quality, a refined conscience of the society, the very Croatian society that was only just sensing its perspective of development. In this respect, Karas was certainly more exceptional and more modern than one may establish by a narrow analysis of his work.

Račić's much later destiny is a direct inversion of Karas's "case". The preconditions were identical — again that insuppressible existential dilemma, sights of Horvati in his memory and that intransigent fervour of a neophyte ("Manet would not paint that way"), which seemed tragic and irreparably ridiculous in the Paris of 1908.

As for the stylistic breaks, in Croatian painters and sculptors they reveal the presence of conflict, one stage after another; "Hrvatski Salon" (Croatian Salon, 1898) and our "Secession" were the first to express openly a desire for modernity (which was, in fact, that fascinating intrusion of style imposed from the outside), consciously and on a collective basis. It was the first time that our artists wanted to "run with the times", seeking for the ways to update their art in terms of style according to the current models and trying to combine their own painting phrases with the new ones by using a weakly learned grammar of style (the choice of characteristic motifs, imitation of the colouristic atmosphere, painting techniques), which did not result in particular masterpieces, with the partial exception of Čikoš. Soon growing weary of their affected enthusiasm and lacking the strength — or perhaps the motivation — to persist in the negation of their own upbringing, the first wave of Croatian Secessionists ended in a provincial routine. Lunaček, their advocate from those "rebellious" days, in which one referred to the mysticism of the soul and the beneficial and sacral role of art, soberly concluded after the hangover had passed: "Our environment is best served with healthy realism".

Some interesting stylistic shifts can be observed in the work of M. Tartaglia. During the 1920s, which he had spent in Italy, in contact with the local vanguard circle, Tartaglia developed an expressive colourism, marked by considerable liberalism with respect to the traditional conceptions of portraiture and to the organism of painting as such; his link with the style that he was currently adhering to was probably not only

kojoj umjetnosti, jer se dalekim i stranim stilovima umjetnik obično lako odupire; u pitanju je umjetnost istog civilizacijskog kruga, ali na većem razvojnem stupnju; umjetnik je lako prepoznaje jer u njemu nejasno traje iščekivanje takvih oblika, oni pogađaju neizdrživom neposrednošću njegov tražiteljski živac, on počinje usvajati, ili čak prepisivati, mjesto da osvaja i stvara. Fascinantno djelovanje stilski napreduje umjetnosti pospješuje i njena objavljenost, snaga fame koja se normalno širi od centara prema periferiji.

To je dijagram sila određenja u našem periferijskom ambijentu. Govoreći Sedlmayrovom terminologijom, to je "primarni fenomen" našeg povijesno-umjetničkog razvoja u ovom periodu. Smisao mu je u tome da na osnovi njegove jednostavne pretpostavke — koju smo upravo iznijeli — objasnimo što je moguće veći broj pojava koje se susreću gotovo u pravilu na svim razinama problema naše umjetnosti: u formiranju umjetničkih ličnosti — kasnije, grupa i generacija — u njihovoj dvojnosti, nedorečenosti i zagrcnutosti, na razini djela — u hibridnom karakteru umjetničkog stila i u tzv. stilskoj retardaciji, napokon na razini kritičkog rasuđivanja — s obzirom na nepreciznost metoda na nadmetanje i miješanje raznoznačnih i neorganskih kriterija.

Periferijski je fenomen jedinstven i dijalektičan. On nije ni dobar ni loš, on je vrijednosti ravnodušan: on je strukturalni fenomen. Prevodi ga redovno pojmovna antiteza: periferijsko-centralno, regionalno-univerzalno, nacionalno-opće. Ili možda ono asimptomatsko "vrijeme" (a koje redovito znači određenu idejnu i stilsku izvjesnost evropskih razvoja) što stotinu godina stoji u kontrapunktu s "našom sredinom", s pojmom kojim se označuje društvena, ekonomska i politička realnost trenutka. Ni jedna od teza njegova određenja nije ni unutarnja, ni vanjska, ni manje ni više značajna. "ak i u onim slučajevima kad nije postojao direktan i stvaran kontakt s vanjskim stilom njegovo određenje postoji — na razini kriterija prepoznavanja i utvrđivanja vrijednosti. Sve što se pojavi samom svojom pojavom ulazi u polemički odnos s obje strane. Možda je još točnije reći — inkarnira odnos, jer postoje lažna opredjeljenja — lažna izdajstva, kao i lažna pripadanja.

Da navedemo i nekoliko sumarnih ilustracija. — Karasov primjer, na samom početku, u znatnoj je mjeri simboličan; postoji s tim u vezi pseudo-literarni motiv

nekog "hrvatskog fatalizma" koji ovu karasovsku hrvatsku pretrgnutost predstavlja za simboličnost u doslovnom smislu riječi. Suočena s pravim razlozima — a njih ćemo lako smjestiti u granice sukobljavanja dvaju antinomičnih svijetova koji niti mogu da se sjedine niti mogu jedan bez drugoga — ta je zakašnjela patetika proizvoljna i nepotrebna. Po povratku u domovinu godine 1848. Karas luta između Karlovca i Travnika, Zagreba i Đakova mjesečarski tužno i nesmireno. Mogao bi tko primijetiti da je "Djevojka s lutnjom" premali zalag njegova sna o "zlatnom dobu" umjetnosti, sna koji je donio s juga; pa ipak, kad je gledamo s njenim vlastitim neispunjenim dugovima četvrtoj deceniji, među slikama Stroyâ, Zscheâ, Mückeâ, ona stoji kao prvi svijetao poraz kojim je mlada umjetnost imala platiti svoje osvješćenje. Karasova sredina? Hladni Gaj, inkomodirani Strossmayer! Ljudi čija se umjetnička potreba zaustavlja na želji da se prepoznaju i potvrde na svom portretnom liku. Pustoš kraja svijeta za koju je Babić našao sretnu riječ: polustanje. Karas je naslikao najbolje portrete prije Bukovca u Hrvatskoj, premda bi se moglo reći, paradoksalno, da on i nije portretist u onom smislu riječi kako su to bili drugi u njegovu vremenu. Dok su drugi oko njega i dugo nakon njega građani koji slikaju, Karas predstavlja *umjetnika*, nov sociološki kvalitet, oduhovljenu savjest društva, i baš onog hrvatskog društva koje tek nazire svoju razvojnu perspektivu. Po tome je Karas svakako izuzetniji i moderniji nego što to možemo ustanoviti uskom formalnom analizom njegova djela.

Račićeva sudbina, mnogo kasnije, pruža nam upravo inverziju Karasova "slučaja". Datosti su iste — opet nezatomiva egzistencijalna dilema, horvaćanske vedute u sjećanju i onaj intranzigentni neofitski žar ("Manet tako ne bi slikao") koji se u Parizu godine 1908. pokazuje tragično i nepopravljivo smiješan.

Što se tiče stilskih lomova, oni u djelima naših slikara i kipara označuju prisustvo sukoba, etapu po etapu; s "Hrvatskim salonom" (1898), s našom "secesijom" po prvi put je deklarirano istaknuta težnja za modernošću (što je u stvari onaj fascinantni prodor stila koji se izvana nametao) na svjestan način i na kolektivnom planu. Po prvi put naši umjetnici žele biti "u vremenu", oni traže putove da svoju umjetnost stilski ažuriraju s momentalnim uzorima, pokušavajući da slabo naučenom stilskom gramatikom

(izbor karakterističnih motiva, podražavanje kolorističkog štimunga, tehnika slikanja) iskombiniraju svoje i nove slikarske fraze, što je sve zajedno, s djelomičnim izuzetkom Čikoša, dalo slabog ploda. Umorivši se brzo od glumljena zanosa, a nemajući snage — nemajući zapravo povoda — da u negaciji vlastita odgoja istraju, prvi val hrvatskih secesionista odreda završava u provincijskom rutinerstvu. Lunaček, njihov advokat iz tih "buntovničkih" dana, kad se pozivalo na mističnost duše i na blagopojnu i pričesničku ulogu umjetnosti, nakon tog prolaznog mamurluka trezvenjački zaključuje: "Našoj sredini najbolje odgovara zdrav realizam."

Zanimljive stilске deklinacije zapažamo u djelima M. Tartaglie. U toku druge decenije, boraveći u Italiji i u dodiru s tamošnjim avangardnim krugovima, Tartaglia je na svojim slikama razvio ekspresivni kolorizam kojeg su slobode s obzirom na tradicionalne koncepcije portreta i slikarskog organizma općenito već znatne; njegova veza sa stilom kojem u tom času pripada vjerojatno je ne samo prisna već i organska. Međutim, kad se vraća, kao da ponovo prekoračuje neku nevidljivu crtu granice i kao da neke neispunjene obaveze iskrsavaju usred njegova razvoja; mjesto u smjeru daljih plastičkih konzekvencija, on neočekivano stupa na put tonskog intimizma, na kojem ga dočekuje, ohrabrujuće ukorijenjeno, mirno slikarstvo Emanuela Vidovića.

Vjerujem da ne bismo pogriješili ako ovaj primjer i uopćimo (njega će isto tako dobro dopuniti primjeri u slikarstvu Šumanovića, Konjovića,<sup>2</sup> i na svoj način mnogi drugi): nijedan hrvatski umjetnik nije uspio do početka prošlog decenija da jedan od stilova moderne umjetnosti na Zapadu kreativno presadi u naš kulturni medij, a to znači da ga nastavi, da ga razvija dalje od onog stadija na kome mu se dotični umjetnik približio, u smislu implicirane razvojne tendencije. Dešava se doista suprotno — uvedeni se stilski kapital rastače, degradira, miješa, što ne mora značiti da se i umjetnikov izraz (i u krajnjoj liniji vrijednost njegove umjetnosti) degradira.<sup>3</sup> S gledišta "vanjskog" stila to je uvijek kompromis i apsolutna degradacija. No kompromis biva neminovan po sili unutarnje smjernice ambijenta koja slučajnim susretom u obliku vanjskog poticaja ostvaruje vlastiti korak naprijed. Kraljevićev sezanimizam iskustvo je u našem ambijentu svježije i perspektivnije od do tog časa postojećih. Tu leži smisao paradoksa.

close, but also organic. However, in the moment of his return, it was as if he stepped again over some invisible boundary and as if some unfulfilled obligations had risen in the midst of his development; instead of continuing in the direction of further plasticist consequences, he unexpectedly took the path of tonal intimism, where he was greeted by the encouragingly anchored and serene painting of Emanuel Vidović.

I believe that we would not be misleading if we generalized this case (it would be well complemented by paintings of Šumanović, Konjović,<sup>2</sup> and many others in their own ways): no Croatian artist has managed, until the beginning of the last decade, to transplant any style of modern Western art into our cultural medium in a creative way, which means to continue and develop it further from the stage on which he had encountered the artist in question, in an implied tendency of development. What was happening was precisely the opposite — the imported stylistic capital was dissipated, degraded, and amalgamated, which did not necessarily mean that the artist's style (and eventually the value of his art) was degraded.<sup>3</sup> From the point of view of the "external" style, it always meant compromise and absolute degradation. However, compromise is inevitable by the force of the interior environmental trend, which accomplishes its own step forward with the help of an external impulse. Kraljević's Cézannism was an experience that was more refreshing and more promising in the Croatian context than those existing at the time. That is the meaning of the paradox. Despite the basic impossibility of transferring the more advanced, exogenous style, a series of subsequent attempts to implant the shoots of another species has had a favourable impact on endogenous tendencies, encouraging their appearance and formation.

Having "gotten over Europe," our artists were usually reaching the stage of developing their own expression, in a hybridism that contained their youthful adventure — adopted and asserted or perhaps rejected and denied. And while those trends, enclosed in their own flow, tended towards complete artistic self-knowledge (such as that of Vidović and Tartaglia, the other, colouristic one in the 30s, and even the third one, that of Hegeđušić, which was explicitly tied to the soil, the land), the young generation tended to idolize foreign art or else their longings were intensified, smouldering sub-

dued until they would break out even more extravagantly, as was the case after 1950.

One should mention two more things: the meaning of the so-called "retardation", a term that usually denotes the persistence and validity of those stylistic forms that had already been surpassed in their original, central localities, which means that it is not identical with mere belatedness; if that were so, if that were just an accidental lack of coincidence or some sort of technical failure in communication, it could be solved at once by removing the obstruction. Each generation is inclined to believe that it is in its power to do that: this is what also happened to M. Krleža, who penetrated the contrariness of the peripheral phenomenon with an incomparable acuteness and concluded that it was already at the level of Becić (in the 1920s) that retardation had been cancelled. (A topic so dear to our contemporaries!) Retardation is a quality of peripheral structure; it can only be eliminated by a corresponding change of order, in other words, by that complex shift in the conditions of a cultural environment. Now one should ask the following question: What is the role of *the level of information*?

In our modern times, various means of human communication have achieved that we are being informed more quickly and more exhaustively. We get to know the thoughts of others, various things and shapes, and even the emotions of strangers and distant people in various ways. However, the transfer of certain style, its natural expansion, can not be identified with information, just as having certain style cannot be reduced to knowing it. It is known that the new ideas and stylistically similar forms of art were frequently maturing in various places at the same time, even without obvious mutual contacts. Supplied with underground and unforeseeable communicability, they could evoke only the effect of misunderstanding, or of pastiche and stylisation, on the level of external transmittance.

The "Savremenik" journal published the manifesto of futurism as early as 1910 in one of its feuilletons, while in 1913 the label of futurism was attached with an outright aboriginal innocence now to Matoš, now to Vanka! How many Croatian artists knew about the research and results of European vanguard after that, but still remained unaffected and frequently even adverse towards them. We may add an opposite example: in

the 1950s, when "modernization" prevailed and stylistic renewal was imposed as the theme of the day, information became a very desirable currency in that reawakened interest. (Someone has made a malicious observation about the important role that the colour reproductions from Skira played in the "liberation" of quite a few Croatian artists from traditional and "imposed" forms!)

Since style and form of art cannot be appropriated on purpose, rationally,<sup>4</sup> or even preserved in a desired ratio, the mere wish of painters and sculptors to remain tied to what is "ours" in art, i.e. to be national, could not really guarantee that, just as the decision to get rid of the pseudo-national and live in the universal could not save them from being locally determined, perhaps even because of that very wish. Likewise, in certain circumstances — in the circumstances of universalistic conjuncture governed by notions/fetishes: experiment, novelty, vanguard, yet unseen, etc. — the rational orientation towards the chosen type of modernity, however careful and complete the information about it may be, however persistent the commitment, does not guarantee anything, especially not the quality of value, the creation of better and more original art.

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If we accept the presence and meaning of the peripheral phenomenon in Croatian modern art, if we get rid of the depressing second thought that this art should have developed at the same time as the Western one — and since it did not, it was sinful and less valuable — we shall also be able to think more coherently about a criterion of its evaluation. Let us begin with the simplest thing: in that period of our art, one cannot identify unquestionable and universally valuable pieces, which would belong to the category of supra-value that we have mentioned before. At first glance, Croatian works of art from that period are modest as to the quantity and range of their creative adventure. Therefore, when speaking of their value, we are speaking of their relative value. But is not every value, *ipso facto*, absolute as well? Absolute in its own way, which it contains and presupposes as such? Račić, Vidović, Meštrović, Kršinić — are they valuable at all? If we vaguely sense that they are, that their creative lives and their works of art reveal that exciting presence of art and the ethos of creation, then

Unatoč osnovnoj nemogućnosti prenošenja naprednijeg egzogenog stila niz uzastopnih pokušaja kalemljenja izdanaka drugog roda povoljno djeluje na endogene tendencije, podstiče njihovo izbijanje i oblikovanje.

Nakon što bi "odbolovali Evropu", tek tada naši umjetnici dolaze do stupnja ličnog izraza u čijoj je hibridnosti sadržana — usvojena i potvrđena, ili možda nepriznata i odreknuta njihova mladalačka avantura. I dok te linije, u zagradama vlastitih tokova, streme ka potpunom umjetničkom samospoznavanju (kakve su Vidovićeve i Tartagliina i ona druga, koloristička, tridesetih godina i čak ona treća, Hegedušićeve, što se deklarirano veže uz tlo, uz zemlju) u isto vrijeme mladi kreću na zagranično poklonstvo ili se njihove žedi produbljuju i tinjaju potmulo da bi zatim još nesuzdržanije prokuljale, kao što se dogodilo nakon 1950.

Još treba da spomenemo dvije stvari: smisao tzv. retardacije, pod čim se obično misli na trajanje i važenje stilskih oblika koji su već prevladani u svojim izvornim, centralnim prostorima, nije obično zakašnjanje; kad bi tome bilo tako, kad bi bila riječ o slučajnoj nepodudarnosti, o nekoj vrsti tehničkog nedostatka komunikacije, sve bi se moglo riješiti jednokratnim otklanjanjem manjka. Svaka je generacija sklona da povjeruje kako je u njenoj moći da to i ostvari: tako se dogodilo i M. Krleži koji je s neuporedivom oštrinom proniknuo protivnosti perifernog fenomena, da zaključiti da je već na razini Becića (20-ih godina) zaostajanje dokinuto. (Drage li teme naših suvremenika!) Retardacija je kvalitet periferne strukture; nju može eliminirati jedino odgovarajuća promjena ustrojstva, drugim riječima, ono kompleksno pomjeranje u uvjetima kulturnog ambijenta. Postavlja se pitanje koju ulogu u tome može odigrati *informiranost*?

U moderna vremena raznovrsna sredstva ljudskog saobraćanja čine da smo sve brže i sve iscrpnije informirani. Različitim putovima saznajemo o mislima drugih, o stvarima i oblicima, štaviše, o osjećanjima stranih i dalekih ljudi. Međutim, prenošenje određenog stila, njegova prirodna ekspanzija, ne može se poistovetiti s informacijom, kao što se i posjedovanje stila ne može svesti na njegovo poznavanje. Poznato je da su nove misli i stilski srodni oblici umjetnosti često sazrijevali na različitim mjestima i bez vidnijeg međusobnog doticanja. Obdareni podzemnom i nepredvidivom komunikativnošću, oni su na planu

vanjskog prenošenja u stanju da pobude jedino efekat nerazumijevanja ili pastiš i stilizaciju.

Časopis "Savremenik" već je 1910. prenio u feljtonu manifest futurizma, a još 1913, čas Matošu, čas Vanki, pridjeva se s upravo urođeničkom bezazlenošću futuristička etiketa! Nakon toga koliko je naših umjetnika bilo poznato s traženjima i rezultatima evropske avangarde, pa su opet ostajali neprijemljivi i nerijetko otvoreno protivni. Postoji i suprotan primjer: kad je pedesetih godina "osuvremenjavanje" zavladalo, kad se stilska obnova nametnula kao tema dana, informacija je vrlo tražena moneta probuđenog interesa. (Netko je zlobno primijetio koliko su bile važne u "oslobađanju" dobrog djela naših umjetnika od tradicionalnih i "nametnutih" oblika reprodukcije u boji iz izdanja Skire!)

Kako se stil i forma umjetnosti ne mogu htjeti, ne mogu racionalno usvojiti<sup>4</sup>, a isto tako održati u željenom odnosu, želja slikara i kipara da budu vezani uz ono naše u umjetnosti, tj. da budu nacionalni, nije u stanju da im to uistinu osigura, kao što ni drugima odluka da se tog kvazi-nacionalnog otreasu i žive u univerzalnom ne garantira da neće ostati, možda baš na osnovi svoga sujetnog htijenja, lokalno obilježeni. Jednako tako u određenim uvjetima — u uvjetima univerzalističke konjunktura u kojoj zakon kroje pojmovi-fetiš: eksperiment, novost, avangardnost, nevidenost, i sl. — racionalno usmjeravanje na odabrani tip modernosti, ma kako obaviještenost o njoj bila brižna i potpuna, a predanost usrdna, ništa ne osigurava, pogotovu ne osigurava vrijednosnu kvalifikaciju, stvaranje bolje i izvornije umjetnosti.

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Ako prihvatimo postojanje i značajnost perifernog fenomena u hrvatskoj modernoj umjetnosti, ako se oslobodimo mučne primisli da je ta umjetnost morala ići ukorak sa zapadnom — a kako nije, da je zbog toga griješna i manje vrijedna — moći ćemo povezanije razmišljati i o kriteriju njezinih vrijednosti. Podimo od najjednostavnijeg: u tom razdoblju naše umjetnosti ne vide se neosporna univerzalno vrijedna djela, djela one kategorije nadvrijednosti koja smo spomenuli ranije. Djela naše umjetnosti iz tog perioda skromnija su, na prvi pogled, po količini i po opsegu svoje stvaralačke avanture. Prema tomu, govoreći o njihovoj vrijednosti, govorimo o njihovoj relativnoj

vrijednosti. Ali nije li svaka vrijednost, ipso facto, i apsolutna? Apsolutna na svoj vlastiti način koji u sebi nosi i sobom pretpostavlja. Račić, Vidović, Meštrović, Kršinić — jesu li oni uopće vrijedni? Ako nejasno predosjećamo da jesu, da u svojim stvaralačkim životima i u svojim djelima odaju ono uzbuđujuće prisustvo umjetnosti i etos stvaranja, mora postojati određen način, određena mogućnost neosporne i nedvosmislene, estetske i historijske egzistencije tih vrijednosti.

Historija umjetnosti poznaje velik broj slučajeva kad umjetnički značajni opusi nisu u vrijednosnom smislu postojali i nisu štaviše mogli da budu doživljavani sve dotle dok kritika (što se ne odnosi isključivo na znanstvenu sistematiziranu kritiku) nije učinila kongenijalni napor koji je omogućio njihov djelotvorni opstanak. Jednako tako, velike su umjetnosti velike ne samo stoga što ih čine umjetnici od značenja već i zato što ih prihvaća živa, raznovrsna i sredstvima zamišljanja bogata kritička svijest koja im pruža odgovarajuću rezonanciju, onaj neophodni vitalni prostor postojanja i važenja. S druge strane, koliko god se isticao autonoman i nadvremenski život umjetničkog oblika i, s njim u vezi, samostalna, spontana i neopterećena percepcija čovjeka koji ga promatra, doživljavanje djela podvrgnuto je u istoj mjeri koliko i rasuđivanje o njegovoj vrijednosti mitskim prekonceptijama, klišeiziranim mjernim idejama i podsvesno ukalupljenim načinima osjećanja, tako da od tog pretpostavljenog slobodnog susretanja i prepoznavanja, u kome bi trebalo da se ostvari nepomućena komunikacija kvaliteta, ostaje malo ili ništa.

Zbog svega je toga problem pred kojim stojimo u vezi s našom umjetnošću daleko kompleksniji od pojednostavnjenog, prekoncipiranog i klišeiziranog odmjeravanja njenih vrijednosti po metru gotovih kriterija: valja nam stvaralačkim kritičkim naporom stvoriti imanentan, organski i historijski podudaran prostor važenja i vrednovanja naše umjetnosti, relativan u odnosu na druge vrijednosne prostore i kriterije, apsolutan s obzirom na pojave koje ga stvaraju i artikuliraju. Može li to izvesti jedan kritičar, individualno, vlastitom mišlju i akcijom? To je teško pretpostaviti, ne zbog njegove teoretske nedostatnosti, već zbog postojeće razlike u snazi sugestivnosti između gole misli i mitizirane tradicije. Sugestivnosti kontinuiranih kriterija i dugih tradicija moguće je suprotstaviti se jedino novom i vlastitom



there must be a way, a certain possibility that these values should exist unquestionably and unambiguously, aesthetically and historically.

Art history knows a large number of cases in which artistically important opuses did not exist in terms of value and could not be perceived until the critics (by which I do not imply only scholarly and systematic criticism) did not undertake a congenial effort to enable their efficient survival. In the same way, great art is great not only because it is created by important artists, but also because it is accepted by a lively, diverse, and imaginative critical awareness, which gives them the necessary resonance, that indispensable vital space of existence and validity. On the other hand, regardless of how much we may extol the autonomous and supra-temporal life of an art form and the relevant independent, spontaneous, and unburdened perception of those who observe it, the experience of art is subjected to mythical preconceptions, to cliché-ridden standards and subconsciously moulded ways of sensation, just as much as the rational thinking of its value, which means that very little or nothing is left of the alleged free contact and recognition, during which an undisturbed communication of quality should take place.

Because of all that, the problem that we are facing with respect to our art is far more complex than the simplified, preconceived, and cliché-ridden measuring of its values according to the ready-made criteria: we should make a creative and critical effort in order to create an immanent, organic, and historically coincident space of validity and evaluation of our art, relative with respect to other value spaces and criteria, but absolute with respect to the phenomena that constitute and articulate it. Can it be done by a single critic, individually, by his or her own thought and action? It is difficult to believe, not because of that critic's theoretical insufficiency, but because of the existing difference in the power of suggestion between the bare thought and the mythicized tradition. The suggestiveness of continuous criteria and long traditions can be countered only by a new and original tradition, and that is a result of long processes of sedimentation and testing, of building one thought upon

another. Nevertheless, it is important and necessary that the critic, literary author, or philosopher have knowledge and experience of their subject in their minds that will build step by step, by the automatism of its truth, the basic lines of a future critical tradition.

In his famous essay ("Marginal Remarks on Paintings by Petar Dobrović"), from which we have quoted a sentence at the beginning of this text, M. Krleža said that "our modern cultural aristocracies are not creative, since they are not organic." In this case, as in all Krleža's cases, it is the organicity of a general definition, the semantic correlation with the cultural basis. We should presume — if the aforementioned "aristocratisms" are not organic and can therefore be neither creative nor valuable — that those things, which we consider valuable and creative in our art, are — organic. But there we would suggest an elaboration of the principle of organicity in the critical/operative sense: *as the basis of an aesthetic criterion that will not be mutually excluded with the comparative criterion, but will complement it, serving as its starting point and the source of critical argumentation*. Račić, for example. I was often wondering why some people consider his paintings (or at least some of them) among the best in the history of Croatian painting and in which way that might be right or wrong. Comparing his paintings with those from later stylistic periods, instead of reaching an answer in terms of better/worse, the only conclusion was that the compared paintings were different and that I had no arguments — except for an utterly subjective impression, which could for a moment make me favour one or the other — for reaching the final verdict. The solution is in choosing a different critical method: Račić may still seem to us an unsurpassed value as a painter (even though there are stylistically more advanced values) because he has thoroughly, consistently, and in a single breath fulfilled his own human, creative, and artistic potentials. In his art, he accomplished such intensity of organic union of his genetic premises — of concrete premises in terms of psychology, inherited culture, environment, and development of style — as artists from later period perhaps could not achieve. By adopting such an approach, we make it possible to compare

values by means of value *analogy*. We make it possible to compare not only different, but also hybrid, contrary, and externally incomparable forms. Two entirely different phenomena from two different layers of time or environment can become comparable and even identical in their analogous accomplishment of the creative chance they were given by their respective historical circumstances. Coming back to Račić, we shall notice that, within his coordinates — between the painting of the Bukovac circle and the situation in Paris at the end of the first decade, between the boundary of taste in the Austro-Hungarian provincial milieu and the modern European horizon, between his beginnings as an apprentice and the dramatic spheres of doubt, characteristic for a modern artist — he accomplished an ascending arch that was, in the intensity of its curve, comparable to the corresponding situation of a great artist from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Subjectivizing the critical space of our art is by no means identical to enclosing it parochially in its natural and historical boundaries, within which we would then enthrone our artists as "some sort of Manet", "some sort of Rousseau *Le Douanier*", etc. Writing on Meštrović, I have observed once that we shall never be able to prove his greatness to Europe if we compare him with Rodin on the basis of his Rodin-like features and with Maillol on the basis of his Maillol-like features. If Meštrović has anything that is valuable in terms of art, that is, anything original, he should be presented and compared only on the basis of that. And that will not be a reflection of some other genius, but on the contrary, something that was born beyond and apart from any possible influence. For it would be mistaken to understand the modern longing for an integration of cultures as saying yes to the assimilation of great entities and famous models with the excuse of universal criteria or under any other pretence. National art or art of a locality can aspire to a universal existence, i.e. universal integration, only after it has been defined in its own internal structure, enveloped in the awareness of its creation, existence, and future. ×

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tradicijom, a ona je rezultat dužih taloženja i provjeravanja, ona je mnogostruko nastavljanje misli na misao. Međutim, važno je i neophodno da u duhu kritičara, literata, filozofa — postoje znanja i saznanja o određenjima njihova predmeta koja će i automatizmom svoje istinitosti graditi, stepenicu po stepenicu, osnovne linije jedne naše još uvijek buduće kritičke tradicije.

U poznatom eseju ("Marginalije uz slike Petra Dobrovića"), iz kojeg smo citirali rečenicu na početku, M. Krleža kaže da "naši suvremeni kulturni aristokratizmi nisu kreativni, jer nisu organski". U ovom primjeru, kao i uvijek u Krleže, riječ je o organičnosti općeg određenja, o semantičkoj relaciji prema kulturnoj bazi. Moramo pretpostaviti — ako spomenuti "aristokratizmi" nisu organski, pa prema tome ne mogu biti ni kreativni ni vrijedni — da je ono što držimo za vrijedno i kreativno u našoj umjetnosti — organsko. No mi bismo predložili da se princip organičnosti produbi u kritički-operativnom smislu: *kao osnova jednog estetskog kriterija koji se neće isključivati s komparativnim kriterijem, nego će se s njime dopunjavati, služiti će mu kao polazište i vrelo kritičke argumentacije*. Račić, na primjer. Pitao sam se često, zašto se nekim ljudima čini da su Račićeve slike (bar nekoliko njih) među najboljim u historiji hrvatskog slikarstva i pitao sam se na koji način to može biti pravo ili krivo. Uspoređujući ih sa slikama iz kasnijih stilskih razdoblja, mjesto odgovora u smislu bolje-slabije, jedini zak-

ljučak bio je da su uspoređene slike različite i da nemam — izuzev sasvim subjektivnog dojma koji me momentano može prikloniti jednoj ili drugoj — argumenata za izricanje suda. Rješenje je u promjeni kritičkog metoda: Račić nam se još uvijek može činiti nenadmašenom slikarskom vrijednošću (iako postoje stilski naprednije vrijednosti) zato što je on potpuno, dosljedno i u jednom mahu ostvario vlastite ljudske, stvaralačke i usko slikarske pretpostavke. On je u svojoj umjetnosti ostvario takav intenzitet organskog sjedinjenja svojih genetskih premisa — konkretnih psiholoških, kulturno-hereditarnih, ambijentalnih i razvojno stilskih premisa — kakav intenzitet u slučajevima umjetnika iz kasnijeg vremena možda i nije dostignut. Uvažavajući ovakav pristup, omogućeno nam je uspoređivanje vrijednosti *analogijom* vrijednosti. Omogućuje nam se uspoređivanje ne samo različitih već i hibridnih, protivnih i izvana neusporedivih oblika. Dvije sasvim različite pojave, iz različitih vremenskih ili ambijentalnih slojeva, mogu biti usporedive i, dapače, identične analognim ostvarenjem stvaralačke šanse koju im pruža, svakoj na svojoj strani, složena povijesna uvjetovanost. Gledamo li još uvijek Račića, opažamo da on u svojim koordinatama — između slikarstva Bukovčeva kruga i pariške situacije pod kraj prve decenije, između granice ukusa austro-ugarske provincijske sredine i suvremenog evropskog estetskog horizonta, između šegrtskog početka i dramatskih sfera sumnje

modernog umjetnika — bilježi uzlazan luk koji je po intenzitetu svojeg otklona usporediv s odgovarajućim prikazom situacije bilo kojeg velikog umjetnika na početku stoljeća.

Subjektivizirati kritički prostor naše umjetnosti nikako ne znači zatvoriti je lokalistički u njene prirodne i historijske granice, unutar kojih bismo onda ustoličili naše umjetnike kao "neku vrstu Maneta", "neku vrstu Carinika Rousseaua" i sl. Pišući jednom o Meštroviću, spomenuo sam kako nikad nećemo Evropi dokazati njegovu veličinu uspoređujući ga na osnovu rodenovskih oznaka s Rodinom, na osnovu majolovskih oznaka sa Maillolom. Ako Meštrović ima bilo što što umjetnički vrijedi, što mu je, dakle, vlastito, jedino je to u stanju da ga predstavi i usporedi. No to neće biti refleks ovog ili onog genija, već naprotiv ono što se rodilo preko i mimo eventualnog utjecaja. Jer bilo bi pogrešno shvatiti suvremenu težnju ka integraciji kultura na taj način da se, pod izgovorom univerzalnosti kriterija ili pod nekim drugim izgovorom, prihvati asimilacija velikih cjelina i poznatih uzora. Određena nacionalna umjetnost ili umjetnost neke sredine može pretendirati na univerzalno postojanje, tj. na istinsku integraciju, tek kad je definirana u vlastitoj unutarnjoj strukturi, kad se zaogrme svjesnošću svojeg postanka, postojanja i svoje budućnosti. ×

Život umjetnosti, 1, 1966.

- <sup>1</sup> "Structuralist dialectics is not contrary to historical determinism: it evokes it and puts a new instrument into its hands." — Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Anthropologie structurale*, Paris 1959, p. 266.
- <sup>2</sup> Here are two nice sentences in the spirit of confession, which are so typical: "From the moment I reached Paris ... I felt that I was carrying within me a world that was different to that of the West and that my roots had remained on the Balkans, it was the pinnacle and also the end of my wandering: it became clear to me that I was the child of a young country that has not yet reached its self-fulfilment, and that my place was there..." — M. Konjović in an interview (NIN, 15 July 1957).
- <sup>3</sup> We are using the inevitable notion of style although we are well aware of its essential ambiguity; in the narrow sense of the word, style is an expression, a value created, an evident and qualitative result of the creative effort; the quantity of creative originality is proportional to the clarity of formal individuality. Thus, the value is in the form and form is meaningless without value. — However, in broader historical units, the notion of style appears abstracted, distilled from the necessarily individual and one-time value, it shows the appearances of communicativeness as a "form of observation", "the viewing character", etc.
- <sup>4</sup> In terms of theory, this statement is almost commonplace; therefore, it is all the more surprising that it should not be acknowledged in its implications. See, for example, A. Hauser, *The Philosophy of Art*, New York, 1959.

- 1 "Strukturalistička dijalektika ne protivrječi historijskom determinizmu; ona ga prizivlje i daje mu u ruke novi instrument". — Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Anthropologie structurale*, Paris 1959, p. 266.
- 2 Evo dvije lijepe rečenice ispovijesti, toliko karakteristične: "Onoga momenta kada sam u Parizu ... osetio da nosim u sebi različit svet od onoga na Zapadu i da je moje korenje na Balkanu, bio je to vrhunac i ujedno značio kraj mojeg lutanja: postalo mi je jasno da sam dete kulturno još neživljene mlade zemlje, da mi je mesto u njoj ..." — M. Konjoviću jednom intervjuu (NIN, 15. VII. 1957).
- 3 Upotrebljavamo neizbežni pojam stila iako smo svjesni njegove suštinske dvostrukosti; stil je u užem smislu izraz, vrijednost koja nastaje, vidni i kvalitativni rezultat stvaralačkog napora; količina stvaralačke originalnosti upravo je srazmjerna jasnoći formalne individualnosti. Dakle, vrijednost je u obliku, odnosno bez vrijednosti oblik je beznačajan. — Međutim, u širim historijskim cjelinama pojam stila pojavljuje se apstrahiran, izlučen iz uvijek nužno pojedinačne i jednokratne vrijednosti, on pokazuje privid komunikativnosti, kao "oblik gledanja", "vidni karakter" i sl.
- 4 U teoretskom smislu ova tvrdnja predstavlja gotovo opće mjesto, te je to više za čuđenje koliko se ona u svojim implikacijama ne uvažava. Vidi npr. A. Hauser, *Filozofija umjetnosti*, Zagreb, 1964, str. 150.