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Conceptual Photo Books: Photo-Imago as a Trace of the Geist

Abstract: In the essay, we will deal with the models of the photo book of artists in conceptual art 1966–80. A short sketch of the international history of photo books in conceptual art will be presented, ranging from the examples of American, British, Croatian, and Serbian authors, etc. We will point out to the two levels of discussion: (1) the essential morphological properties of the book, artistic books and photo book in conceptual art – the transformation of static photographic image into a series of sequences and a series of sequences into mental representation; and (2) typology of characteristic models of photo books in conceptual art (book-project, artist's book as a first-person speech, tautological articulation of a series of photographs, analytical reflection between image and text, documentary book etc.). We will also discuss photo books in conceptual art in relation to models: phototautology, photodocuments, photoperformance, photoselfreflectivity, photoarchive, photo-remediation, photosemiology, photoshifter, photoconceptual text, phototravellers, photo-construction-of-the-every-day-life, phototranscultural narration, photoexistence, photopolitization and photo-simulation.

Keywords: book; artist's book; book as art; photo book; artistic photo book; conceptual photography.

Book

A book as human product – an object – has different appearances and functional characterizations which could be traced in the range of hand-written, painted and made object through the set of arranged and bounded printed pages or audio records of the reading voice in specific native language to digital formats (.doc, .pdf, .epub, .djvu). In other words, a book functions as an “object” for reading, looking, touching, holding, for performing indirect communication between reader/spectator and absent author. A book functions as an object watched/read by a person, and at the same time a book is a mass distributed object. If a book is a distributed object, then *it* is a token of one type:

In other words, *Ulysses* and *Der Rosenkavalier* are types, my copy of *Ulysses* and tonight's performance of *Rosenkavalier* are tokens of those types.¹

In more general sense, a book is an 'agent' with specific articulation of medium (material) and media (tools) directed toward potential for delivering the 'effective package' with meaning/information, but also with the material visual effects ranging from semantic to visual effects. A book is fundamentally presented ontologically, by its appearance and functionally as complexity – let's remind to the introductory definition by Deleuze and Guattari:

In a book, as in all things, there are lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also, lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification. Comparative rates of flow on these lines produce phenomena of relative slowness and viscosity, or, on the contrary, of acceleration and rupture. All this, lines and measurable speeds, constitutes an *assemblage*. A book is an assemblage of this kind, and as such is unattributable.²

A book is an *assemblage*, which means it is a complex and heterogeneous creation, most often made by authorial, then also by designed and printed compilation of linguistic (inscription of linguistic text) and graphic (visual: drawn, photographic, typographic) materials. By appearance and presence, a book witnesses about the specific assemblage space that is not only the seen space but also the space reconstructed by the gaze/reading, i.e., the space archived by a gaze, language, knowledge, witnessing or performing fictional effects. A book is, therefore, similar to the package whose content should be unpacked and shown in the event by which that package fulfills its goal of epistemologically useful and used object.

Artist's Book / Book as Art

An *artist's book* or *book as art* is an art product. According to Johanna Drucker, artist's books appeared within the different art and literary movements during the 20th century.³

Primarily, the artist's book is an object which looks and functions as a book, made by an artist with the intention to be archived, exhibited and distributed within the artworld. An artist's book is not a book about artist or about his/her art works, it is a book which functions the same way the visual artwork functions. A book is a

¹ Richard Wollheim, "35," in *Art and its Objects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, New York, 1990), 75.

² Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, "Introduction: Rhizome," in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 3–4.

³ Johanna Drucker, "The Artist's Book as Idea and Form," in *The Century of Artists' Books* (New York: Granary Books, 2004), 1.

medium: it is material, and it is material tool of shaping, telling and an embodiment of artis' concept, the ones who entirely or provisionally abandoned the devices of making traditional artworks (paintings, graphics, sculptures, photographs, movies, poems, prose, music, theatrical events). Artist's books are recognizable communicative products, created within avant-garde, neo-avant-garde and contemporary art practices. Therefore, artist's book could be defined as an "experimental form of presentation"⁴. The first artists' books as specific products emerged during the art movements of Futurism, Cubo-Futurism, dada, Constructivism, Suprematism, Zenitism and Surrealism at the beginning of 20th century. As a term, "artist's book" was theoretically defined in relation to media books in movements such as Neo-Dada, Fluxus, Concrete and Visual poetry, processual art, arte povera and Conceptual art at the end of 1960s. In the context of Eastern European conceptual art, the term 'samizdat' is used in order to point to the fact that the artist is publisher of his/her own work and not the gallery, museum or any publishing house. Samizdat as a term also bears a political message about the status of alternative art practice within the real-socialist culture and official publishing. Therefore:

Artists' books take every possible form, participate in every possible convention of book making, every possible "ism" of mainstream art and literature, every possible mode of production, every shape, every degree of ephemerality or archival durability. There are no specific criteria for defining what an artist's book is, but there are many criteria for defining what it is not, or what it part takes of, or what it distinguishes itself from.⁵

From the beginning of 20th century till the end of 1970s artist's books were usually handmade or realized by photocopy machine or by cheap printing techniques (offset) in small editions. In postmodern and contemporary art the artist's book usually became a luxury, spectacular and highly circularly product, which connects subtle, witty, conceptual, political, or spiritual artistic ideas with modes of expression in mass media popular culture. The distinctions between the artist's book, art monography and catalogue of specific art projects were blurred. It is not just the consequence of technical and economic changes in the art world, but also in the establishing poetical attitude that the artwork is in constant media transformation from an object though reproduction and information, to the model of mass spectacle.

In order to show the difference between a 'poor' conceptual book and a contemporary 'spectacular' high circulated book an instructive example of this could be found pointing to the difference between the handmade collage book by Mladen Stilinović titled as *Knjige*⁶ and the high circulated, printed assemblage Damien Hirst book

⁴ Ute Eskildsen, "Photographs in books," in *The Open Book: A History of the Photographic Book from 1878 to the Present*, ed. by Andrew Roth (Göteborg: Hasselblad Center, 2004), 15.

⁵ Drucker, "The Artist's Book as Idea and Form," 14.

⁶ Mladen Stilinović, *Knjige* (Beograd: SKC, 1976).

*I Want to Spend the Rest of My Life Everywhere, with Everyone, One to One, Always, Forever, Now.*⁷ Both books are carefully designed and posited as an opposition of a model of poor designed and richly designed high-tech products. Both books were realized by connecting the text (artist statements), information about different artist's art works, photos of the art works or clippings from art works. Stilinović's book is a manually realized collage of original material taken from his works. Hirst's book is a printed, construed assemblage of hybrid reproduced or redesigned materials taken from his art works. Both artists intervened on the book pages: Stilinović tore pages and pasted them with Schoch tape, while Hirst intervened on the design by machine cutting/perforating book pages. Stilinović's text was typewritten,⁸ xeroxed and hand-written; Hirst's text is computer typed, in different fonts and sizes, and printed. One artist performed a tactical action of anti-art within the conditions of poor real socialism, the other projects and produces the action of hyperart within the conditions of neoliberal capitalism's material and technological abundance.

Photographic Book

The photographic book belongs to the genre of the artist's book as well as to the genre of book based on reproduction or presentation of the photography. At the same time, we could distinguish photobooks and artistic photographic books. The photobook is, usually, a collection of photographer-artist photographic works, while a photographic book of an artist is, usually, a collection of photographic works by the artist who is not a photographer, but the user of photographic media.

The photobook has a long history, almost equivalent to the history of media photography. Photobooks in the commercial field of popular culture were defined generically as sequential narrating by pictures, i.e., as photo novellas and photo comics (or *Fumetti*), or photo films. Photobook could be the presentations of collections of photographs by one photographer (Walker Evans *American Photographs*⁹ or Diane Arbus *Diane Arbus*¹⁰), presentations of one photographic project (August Sander, *Antlitz der Zeit: 60 Fotos deutscher Menschen*¹¹ or Lewis W. Hine, *Men at Work: Photographic Studies of Modern Men and Machines*¹²). They could also be the books with photographic illustrations (William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*¹³) or photo illustrated literary works (photo illustrations by Alexander Rodchenko in Vladimir

⁷ Damien Hirst, *I Want to Spend the Rest of My Life Everywhere, with Everyone, One to One, Always, Forever, Now* (London: Booth-Clibborn Editions, Other Criteria, 2005).

⁸ Written with critic Branka Stipančić.

⁹ Walker Evans, *American Photographs* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1938).

¹⁰ Diane Arbus, *Diane Arbus* (Millerton NY: Aperture Inc, 1972).

¹¹ August Sander, *Antlitz der Zeit: 60 Fotos deutscher Menschen* (München: Transmare Verlag, Kurt Wolff Verlag, 1929).

¹² Lewis W. Hine, *Men at Work: Photographic Studies of Modern Men and Machines* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932).

¹³ William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature* (London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans), 1844–6.

Mayakovsky's book of poetry *ИПО ЕТО: Еу и Мне*¹⁴ or photocollages of Aleksandar Vučo in Dušan Matic's book of poetry *Podvizi družine 'pet petlića'*¹⁵). One of the most influential books which was at the same time an art photographic typographic work and theory of typographic photo design is László Moholy-Nagy's Bauhaus book *Malerei Photographie Film*.¹⁶

Photobooks in Conceptual Art

Numerous avant-garde, neo-avant-garde, conceptual and contemporary artists worked with photobooks making a quite autonomous genre of the 'artist's photobook': Anton Giulio Bragaglia *Fotodinamismo futurista* (1913), Vítězslav Nezval, Milča Mayerová, *ABECEDA* (1926), Hans Bellmer *La Poupée* (1936), Gordon Matta-Clark *Walls Paper* (1973), Christian Boltanski *Inventaire des objets ayant appartenu à une femme de Bois-Colombes* (1974), Richard Long *The North Woods* (1977), Peter Fischli, David Weiss *Airports* (1990), etc. Special cases are conceptual artist's photobooks. Conceptually motivated photobooks are in the function of the *idea* as an intervening impact of artistic research, work, and production. This corresponds to the idealistic claim made by Sol LeWitt:

The Idea becomes a machine that makes the art.¹⁷

These and other examples from avant-garde through conceptual to contemporary art point to an important consequence of artists' photobooks, the "influence of non-photographers"¹⁸ on the division of artistic and photographic work, and on the production, distribution, and reception of photography in contemporary art and culture. The author of an art photobook is not necessarily a photographer-cameraman, but an artist who commissions, directs, poses, appropriates, or projects photographic shooting and photographic production.

Conceptual photography¹⁹ is an artistic tactical-media practice of approaching photographic production beyond the interests and goals of *mainstream* artistic and even commercial photography. The goal is not an autonomous photographic product of normatized, standardized or exceptional aesthetic – shown sensory, i.e., visual – realizations, but instrumental-reflective and pragmatic effect in relation to theoretical, cultural, social, and artistic discourses, and diapositives. Conceptual photography is primarily defined as the practice of using a photographic medium or appropriating

¹⁴ Владимир Маяковский, Александр Родченко, *ИПО ЕТО: Еу и Мне* (Москва: Государственное Издательство, 1923).

¹⁵ Aleksandar Vučo, Dušan Matic, *Podvizi družine 'pet petlića'* (Beograd: Nadrealistička izdanja, 1933).

¹⁶ László Moholy-Nagy, *Malerei Photographie Film*, Bauhausbücher 8 (München: Albert Langen Verlag, 1925).

¹⁷ Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," *Artforum* 5 (June 1967): 80.

¹⁸ Eskildsen, "Photographs in books," 22.

¹⁹ *Light Years: Conceptual Art and the Photograph 1964–1977*, ed. by Matthew S. Witkovsky (New Haven: The Art Institute of Chicago, Yale University Press, 2011).

pre-existing impacts of a photographic medium in order to express a general or specific ideas about art, culture, society or anything else. Conceptual artists often invited professional photographers to solve their requests, they used tourist cameras, instant cameras, Polaroids and other commercial or amateur devices for capturing technical images. The book with photographs was at the same time a photo archive, an experimental exhibition space or a new media type of work of art. Here we have in question a critique of photographic immanence – from a point of view not guided by autonomous photographic goals - but by opening the photographic medium (*expandable medium*) to other disciplines or practices and the requirements of communicating the concept, discourse or index of mental representations.²⁰ This achieved a “greater degree of complexity”²¹:

The development of postconceptual art²² certainly appears to be connected, historically, to transformations in the ontology of the photographic image. And these transformations are not merely ‘technological’, but fundamentally social as well. In the sphere of cultural economy, for example, the image-space of the photographic has expanded to global dimensions as a constituent part of what we might call *photo-capitalism*.²³

Conceptual photobooks are extremely diverse art products that range in media, appearance or concept from a manually created unique or low-circulation book through a mechanically reproduced book to digital reproduction of photographs and photobooks, and online-distributed products. In a tactical and pragmatic sense, we can talk about different conceptual photobooks – let’s look at a following telling diagram:

| Tactically-Pragmatical Models | Titles of the Books and Year of Publication | Artists |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| photo tautology | <i>Every Building on Sunset Strip</i> (1966) | Edward Ruscha |
| photo documentary procedure | <i>Anonyme Skulpturen: Eine Typologie technischer Bauten</i> (1970) | Bernd and Hilla Becher |
| photo performance | <i>Primeri analitičke skulpture</i> (1978) | Neša Paripović |
| photo <i>shifter</i> | <i>Tragedija jedne Venere</i> (1976) | Sanja Iveković |
| photo self-reflection | <i>Grupa 143 1975–1977 / 1978–1979</i> (1979) | Grupa 143 |
| photo travelling | <i>Skyline Ridge</i> (1975) | Hamish Fulton |
| photo conceptual text | <i>Notebook on Water 1965–1966</i> (1970) | Joseph Kosuth |

²⁰ Compete to Rosalind E. Krauss, “Notes on Index,” Part 1 and 2, in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge MA, London: The MIT Press, 1985), 197, 211.

²¹ Edgar Reitz, Alexander Kluge, Wilfried Reinke, “Word and Film,” trans. by Miriam Hansen, *October* 46 (1987), 87.

²² In Osborn’s text “postconceptual art” denotes the historical continuity from conceptual to contemporary art.

²³ Peter Osborne, “Photographic ontology, infinite exchange,” in *Anywhere or Not at All: Philosophy of Contemporary Art* (London, New York: Verso, 2013), 118.

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| photo semiology | <i>Physical and Semiological Information</i> (1976) | Bálint Szombathy, Gábor Tóth |
| photo existence | <i>My Year</i> (1977) | Željko Jerman |
| photo ideology of everyday life | <i>Frizeri</i> (1975) | Mladen Stilinović |
| transcultural photo narration | <i>Some Cities</i> (1996) | Victor Burgin |
| photo remediation | <i>Kaddish</i> (1998) | Christian Boltanski |
| photo politization | <i>Fish Story</i> (1995) | Allan Sekula |
| photo simulation | <i>Untitled Film Stills</i> (1990) | Cindy Sherman |
| photo archive | <i>Atlas</i> (1997) | Gerhard Richter |

A book as a photo tautology or a collection of “tautological images” designs a realization in which an unquestionable semantic identity is placed between the photographic image and the concept of shooting. A photograph or series of photographs are what their title says and nothing else – there is no metaphorical or any other functional and rhetorical superstructure. Edward Ruscha in his books *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1963), *Various Small Fires and Milk* (1965) or *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (1966) performs photo-conceptual operation of literal denotation: the title of the book points only to what serially ordered photographs in the book literally show. It does not matter what is shown, but that the chosen topic is consistently visually mediated without taking into account the specifics of the place, time and situation of the shooting. It is about nullifying the expressive or subjectivizing effect.

The photo-documentary procedure records a certain specific ‘external’ place, object, time interval and natural or artificial situation. By looking and photographing, the object is transposed from the existing landscape into a conceptual network of identifications and classifications – into a potential archaeology of knowledge about the recorded objects or buildings. The photographs function as a statement on industrial and construction buildings or archaeological sites full of traces of industrial modern buildings. These are photographic procedures as metaphors of architectural forensics. German photographic couple Bernd and Hilla Becher in quite different projects (exhibitions, photobooks) performed the act of photographic appropriation of ‘anonymous’ disappearing modern buildings and their constructive and functional classification into series of documents. The term ‘anonymous sculpture’ signifies that architectural objects that lose their function in the visual or photographic mediating sense act as images of ‘sculptures’ – i.e., 3D objects.

Photo performance signifies a specific genre of performance art, conceived on the purpose and tactical action by which a live event is performed, not for the audience, but for photographic, film or video recording. A physical or behavioral event has become a ‘live art’ for the technological device of recording, recording, and performing. Numerous artists have worked in this domain of performance art from Marcel Duchamp’s posing for a recording by Man Ray (*Rose Sélavy*, 1920) through a

performance in Bruce Nauman's studio (*Walking in an Exaggerated Manner Around the Perimeter of a Square*, 1968) to a remediation of performance sculptural relationship between figure-model and body of artist-actor by Neša Paripović (*Examples of Analytical Sculpture*, 1978).

A *shifter*²⁴ designates visual 'triggers' – signs or codes – of performing of meaning of a photography or a series of photographs. In her books *Dvostruki život / Dokumenti za autobiografiju 1959–1975* [*Double Life / Autobiography Documents 1959–1975* (1976)] and *Tragedy of a Venus* [*Tragedija jedne Venere* (1976)] conceptual artist Sanja Iveković set up a series of private and media photographs that were the *visual triggers* of gender identification (autobiography) or over-identification (a Venus: Marilyn Monroe). By constructing a visual autobiography or reconstructing homologies, that is, non-homologies of her private life and the public life of film star Marilyn Monroe, she pointed to the social practice of establishing meaning in consumer-media societies in which the relative relationship between private and public is indicated. i.e., between the life at the margins and life at the center of media image production. Photographic image is an opaque center of power because it participates by its visual photographic atmosphere, in establishing the ideological order of reality in which the identification and interpellation of everyone who will become a *subject* is performed, enabling her/him to express herself/himself as a gendered *self*.

Photo auto reflection is an oriented way of representing or reflecting the conditions and circumstances that lead to the realization of a specific photograph, series of photographs or photobook. In this case, auto reflection signifies activating the epistemological potentials of photographic recording or the potential of the recorded, most often, processed event. Auto reflection shows the process of creating a photographic work of art and the way in which it works in specific contexts. Tzvetan Todorov, for example, described the concept of self-reflection in the following words: "The art of the twentieth century has revealed this everyday feature of art: a work is telling the story about the way it is created, what one canvas presents, is how it is made; how the text is written."²⁵ The status of a photographic work of art canonized as a first-degree sensory phenomenon is redefined by showing the processing of recording events into a second-degree – meta – conceptual basis of epistemological reflection or discourse analysis. The photobook realized by *Group 143 1975–1977 / 1978–1979* (1979) is a collection of individual and collective projects of Group's members.²⁶ They performed a series of procedural works – sequentially recorded, which were set as a basis for the reconstruction of the behavioral or object event that was recorded, the process of recording and 'inducing' the concept, i.e., mental representations of the photo event recorded.

Photobooks by the English artist Hamish Fulton are, most often, presentations of one or more related walking projects in a certain geographical area. The book

²⁴ *Shifter* is a term introduced by Roman Jakobson to signify "linguistic sign which is 'filled with signification' only because it is 'empty'". Compared to Rosalind Krauss, "Notes on the Index" – Part 1, 197.

²⁵ Cited in Katarin Mile, "Konceptualna umetnost kao semiotika umetnosti," *Polja* 156 (1972): 11.

²⁶ The members of *Grupe 143* worked on the book are: Jovan Čekić, Neša Paripović, Maja Savić, Paja Stanković, Biljana Tomić, Mirko Dilberović, and Vlada Nikolić.

documents a specific walking trip or a conceptual reconstruction of the conditions and reasons for traveling, that is, the atmosphere of being in a natural environment, with photographs, diagrams, and text. Photographs are precise indexes of his moving through the natural space; we can talk about the artist's walking in nature as a work of art. The book is proof of the walk action performed. For example, the book *Skyline Ridge* (1975) presents four related walks undertaken in southern England between 1971 and 1974. Richard Long, close to Fulton, documents his travels in different geographical areas. Unlike Fulton, who documents his view of the scene within the landscape, Long documents the minimal interventions performed – lines, squares, circles – with materials found in the natural landscape (*The North Woods*, 1977). Both artists have access to photography developed in the tradition of British travel photography from the time of the discovery and conquest of distant lands.

Analytical conceptual art is literally post-media art. This means that any medium / media is used and performed in terms of discursive presentation of an idea or project. The medium is used with the communication function, and not with the function of reviewing the media possibilities, properties, limits and conditions of use. A photobook is a communication instrument of a discursive character. Joseph Kosuth developed the idea of presenting, for example, an enlarged negative – a photo shoot – a dictionary definition of abstract and concrete terms under the general title *Titled (Art as Idea as Idea)*.²⁷ The hierarchical structure is important: (1) the level of *readymade* is defined by taking over the non-artistic vocabulary definition and placing it in the context of art, which belongs to Duchamp's tradition, (2) the level of tautology is achieved by looking at / reading the photographed definition of the word *idea* we also have the idea of the word *idea*, (3) the level of a discursive pattern for imagining, constructing a mental representation of abstract and concrete words 'meaning', 'idea', 'water', 'glass', etc., (4) a second-degree level of redefining artistic practice. The title *Titled (Art as Idea as Idea)* shows that art is a consequence of the definition of art. A book *Notebook on water 1965–1966*²⁸ is a collection of abstract photo-shoots of dictionary definitions of water and of modalities of water (liquid, snow, ice). It is a primary model of meta-presentation of data and concepts derived from water modalities.

Photo semiology is the procedure by which visual phenomena in exteriors and interiors, in nature or urban environments, are researched, recorded, shouted, classified, and interpreted. Each individual photograph or series of photographs is treated as a visual arrangement of media and representative signs / codes in everyday communication. In some cases, a photograph is identified as a visual text. For example, Bálint Szombathy wrote that for him creativity is not related to production, the creation of new material objects, but he tried to set up models of new linguistic systems, or more precisely, his intention is to detect existing but insufficiently known linguistic forms. In this sense, the photobooks of Bálint Szombathy and Gábor Tóth's, *Physical and Semiotical Information* (1975), and Bálint Szombathy, Katalin

²⁷ Joseph Kosuth, *Titled (Art as Idea as Idea)* (1967), in *Art Conceptuel I* (Bordeaux: CAPC Musée d'art Contemporain de Bordeaux, 1988), 98.

²⁸ Joseph Kosuth, *Notebook on Water 1965–66* (New York: Multiples, Inc., New York, in association with Colcraft, Inc., 1970).

Ladik, Franci Zagoričnik and Gábor Tóth's *Poetical Objects of the Urbanical Environment* (1976) were created. Signs of everyday life are understood as objects that should be shown as specific poetic potentials by locating and photographic indexing. It was a post-Duchampian approach to the search for the ordinary, trivial, or every day, which is shown by the artist's decision and selection as important and as having the power of a work of art in the context of structuring meaning within culture.

Certain artists have worked with the politics of the time. They identified visible traces of time (Bernd and Hilla Becher), focused on the moment of execution of the action in time (On Kawara) or recorded temporal self-identifications (Željko Jerman). The life of an object or human creature was filmed at a presumed time rhythm or time interval – for example, Jerman was consistently filmed every day for a year (a book *My Year*, 1977). It was important to establish a correspondence between the everyday – the existential index – between the isolated form of the artist's life and the photographic image. On each page, a photo was taken on a specific date (from January 1, 1977, to December 31, 1977) and a short-handwritten note. The linearity of the daily recording corresponded to the linearity of the book's browsing. Placing 365 photographs in an exhibition means making the diachronic shooting process synchronously present. Putting 365 photos on the pages of a book means making viewing photos taken for 365 days visible again in the time series of leafing, turning pages, of the book. In addition to the formal level, the idea of portrait or figurative or intersubjective recording of the artist's behavior in everyday life is important. The recording process is the performance of a daily minimum, but essential, effect of the working process. This project sets the relationship between the form of photographic-textual recording and the form of life itself ready for self-recording as an artistic activity.

Photo ideologies of everyday life are based on demonstrative indexations of the visibility of ideology specific to a certain social order. The ideology becomes visible through photographs. Almost trivial – ordinary scenes or segments of visible reality are presented in the structural order of the book. The goal is not to document the anecdotes of everyday life, but the models of ideological construction of everyday culture, culture as realized everyday life. In his hand-made book *Hairdressers (Frizeri)*, 1975), Mladen Stilinović filmed segments of advertisements or segments of hairdressing salons in Zagreb. He thus presented the visibility of the primary / poor aesthetics of the commercial sector in socialist Croatia and Yugoslavia. Similarly, with his book *May 1, 1975 (1. maj 1975)*, 1975), he documented street scenes or segments of advertisements and slogans related to the celebration of the national holiday 'Labor Day'. He indexed the visual signs / codes that construct and perform socialist everyday life and direct the view to the event of social self-identification. The 'gray' poor and rhetorically neutral atmosphere of socialist everyday life in post-revolutionary society has been reconstructed.

Transcultural photo-narration is performed by establishing a relationship between narrative or descriptive text and documentary photographs taken in different urban locations. It is a matter of reconstruction and the construction of the potentiality

of urban space policy derived from it. An example is Victor Burgin's book *Some Cities* (1996). At the beginning of the book Burgin writes "But my aim is less to record traces I have left in some cities than it is to recall some traces some cities have left in me. Cities new to us are full of promise. Unlike promise we make to each other; the promise of the city can never be broken. But like the promise we hold for each other, neither can it be fulfilled."²⁹ The artist selects individual shots pointing to encounters with different cities (Warsaw, Sydney, Halifax, London, Paris, New York, Tokyo, etc.). To his shots, he adds shots of another photographer (Bill Brandt) or shots with a woman in the hallway from Alfred Hitchcock's movie *Vertigo*. The narrative of passing through the city acquired the character of a visual-textual conundrum. The relationship between photographs and shorter or longer authentic or quoted texts is important, which suggests the ambivalence of the atmosphere of meeting the city, being in a foreign city and remembering the city. The book has at the same time the character of a memory discourse of a film-essay and a photo album with photos from different travels.

Photo remediation is the process of appropriation and then, visual, or semantic manipulation of existing photographs, or any other images taken from film, painting, graphics and set in a completely new artistic order. A remediation-based photobook is a collection of appropriated "images" introduced into a new connection that indexes the field of evidences, damaged narratives, memories, dreams, rebuses and desires in relation to a censored sexual, political or violent past. The photobook looks like documentary evidence, although it is in fact a reconstructed or completely (re)constructed *vision* of past events. In individual photographs, photo installations and numerous photobooks, Christian Boltanski performed illusions of reconstructions of traumatic data, their narrative interpretations, allegorical potentialities in relation to family and social histories: from family or local secrets to the Nazi Holocaust. One indicative example is a book *Kaddish*: "The Kaddish is the Hebrew prayer for the souls of the dead and the implication of this is clear. But here this intensely Jewish artist extends the prayer not only to the victims of murderers themselves. Thus, mixed in with the images of Jewish, French and Swiss dead are snapshots of Spanish killers and German soldiers, all part of this compendium of departed humanity. The book seems to ask a profound question: do the deeds of the living matter when they are dead? Will those who sinned eventually atone for them?"³⁰ With this book set as a "memory package", Boltanski suggests an allegory about the character of Nazi evil.

American photographer Allan Sekula developed cases of "radical post-documentary photography"³¹, more precisely, he conducted research and testing of the relationship between the visual potential of photography and its discursive coding and decoding in specific cultural and political conditions between the canons of modernist and contemporary photography. He transformed the potentials of historical,

²⁹ Victor Burgin, *Some Cities* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996), 7.

³⁰ Martin Parr, Gerry Badger, "Appropriating Photography: The Artist's Photobook," in *The Photobook: A History II* (London: Phaidon, 2008, 173).

³¹ Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "Remembering Allan Sekula (1951–2013)," *October* 148 (2014): 133–34.

modernist, photographic *critical realism* into new *political agencies* provoking the conditions of subjectivization of photographers in relation to technocratic and proto-totalitarian regimes of modern and mainstream media work. Sekula was photographically opposed to totalizing corporate control, and the destruction of experience and ambient positioning in a specific geographical and thus political space. He researched with photographic means – for example, photo books (*Fish Stories*), exhibition pieces or photo projections – generic pathways of simulating reality in the place of reflecting reality in relation to swimmers, to symbolic figures of the digital age such as Bill Gates, to ships, to work on deck, but also to museums – for example, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao by Frank Gehry.³² The discursive potential of photographic work marked the possibility of introducing a semiotic and textual approach – reflection, critique – in relation to contexts and institutions of art in a general sense and photographic communication in a specific sense. The importance of the political nature of the photographic shot was emphasized from the point of view of the cameraman, but also from the point of view of the photographed person, i.e., from the point of view of the viewer of photographs in the gallery, i.e., the reader / viewer of the photo book.

Cindy Sherman's work is *American* in its direct-visual confrontation with the systems of urban and media production, exchange and uncontrolled consumption of goods, values, meaning and visuality in the current mass media and consumer culture. Her photo works reconstruct the material system of production, *exchange* and *consumption of fictionality* by promising entropic consumption in the visual scene. She explores and presents the visual entropies of a photographically captured scene, pointing to the relative relationships of meaning, corporeality, and matter. In her early photographic works realized using the model of a film frame (photo book *Untitled Film Stills*, 1990), a scene is shown of a female figure in a landscape or urban exterior, a *frame* is an indexing of desire that the artist *advocates* in the field of the Other. The condition for the existence of photographs in the *Film Stills* series is the simulacrum nature of what they contain, the condition that they are copies *without* originals.³³ The photos look like stills from famous movies, although those stills can't be found. Simulacrum relies on apparatuses and concepts of film remediation into film still of photography and in the presentation of isolated photo stills printed in a photo book.

A photo archive is a collection of photographs collected and classified according to some implicit or explicit criterion. A photo book as an archive is a specific function of a book as an example of the appropriation, classification, and presentation of photographs. An instructive example of a photo archive is the conceptual project of the painter Gerhard Richter *Atlas* (1997). It is an archive of various photographs taken from the print media (daily newspapers, magazines, illustrated books, flyers, etc.) or private photo albums. The procedure used in making it is, most often, appropriation: photos were appropriated from mass media communication, taken photo material was classified and

³² Allan Sekula, "Between the Net and the Deep Blue Sea (Rethinking the Traffic in Photographs)," *October* 102 (2002): 3–34.

³³ Rosalind E. Krauss, "Cindy Sherman: Untitled," in *Bachelors* (Cambridge Mass., The MIT Press, 1999), 102.

connected with drafts of future images or installations. Richter used appropriated photographs of various origins as the starting motifs of his paintings. His paintings were not in the literal sense of “painterly photorealism”, but the photographic pattern was a means of depersonalization and non-expressive approach of the artist. A process of remediation between photography and painting has been established. The open and changeable collection of appropriated photos was subject to constant change: “As a total art work, *The Atlas* is an ‘organism’ which develops further and changed.”³⁴

Conclusion

Photo books are documents, collections, or archives of research by conceptual artists performed by intertextual and inter-image connection of photography and text into a conceptually motivated diagram. The photo book as a conceptually motivated diagram points to the functions of transmediality (media nomadism), remediation (transfer of the effects one medium in another medium) and performing the auto reflective subject of artistic practice in the epistemological regime (content of photographic knowledge) and cognitive theorizing regime (material configuration of photographic knowledge). Using the old-fashioned dictionary of philosophy, it can be said that photo books of conceptual art demonstrate the appearance and relationship of image (photography) and spirit (concept, mental representation, and even discourse). Therefore, it could be said that these photographs are beginning to act in the way of the phenomenology of the spirit.

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³⁴ Helmut Friedel, “Gerhard Richter *Atlas*. Photographs, Collages and Sketches 1962–2006,” in Gerhard Richter, *Atlas* (New York: DAP, 2006), 17.

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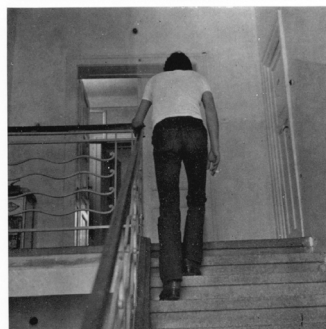
Original scholarly paper

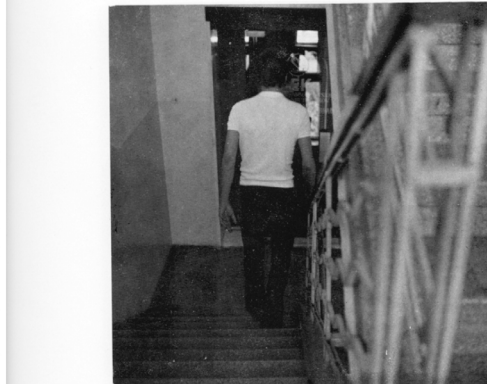
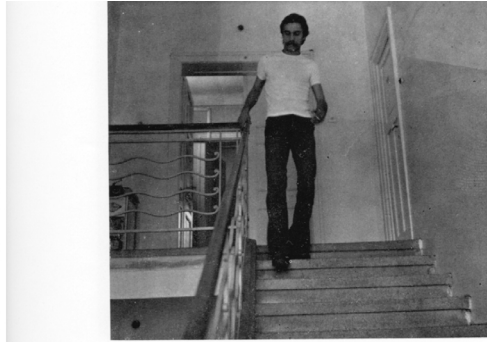
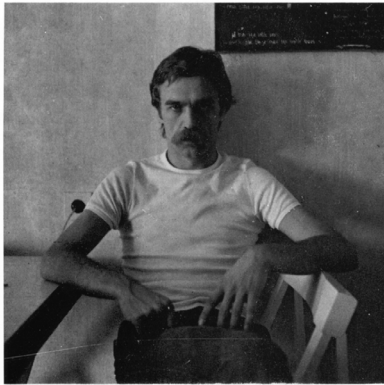
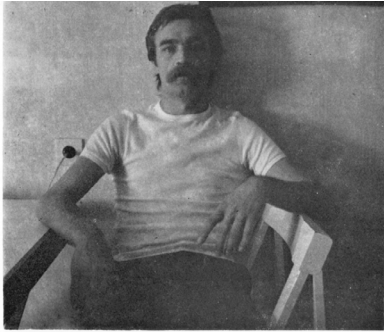
grupa 143

grupa 143
I deo
1975/1977

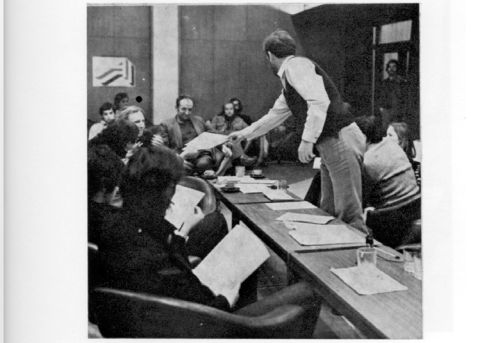
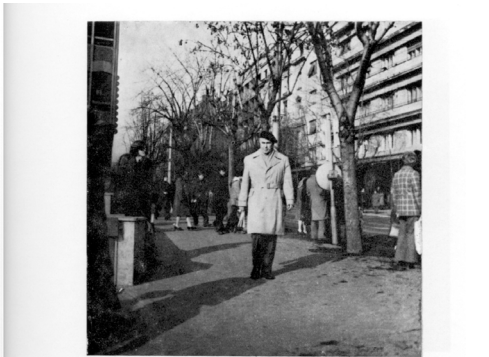
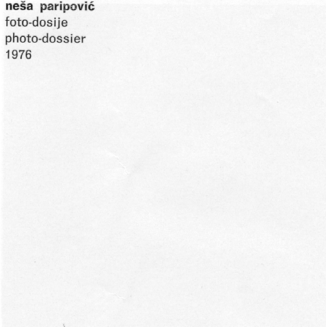
jovan čekić
neša paripović
maja savić
paja stanković
miško šuvaković
biljana tomić
grupa 143

jovan čekić
skica za autoportret
sketch for a selfportrait
1976



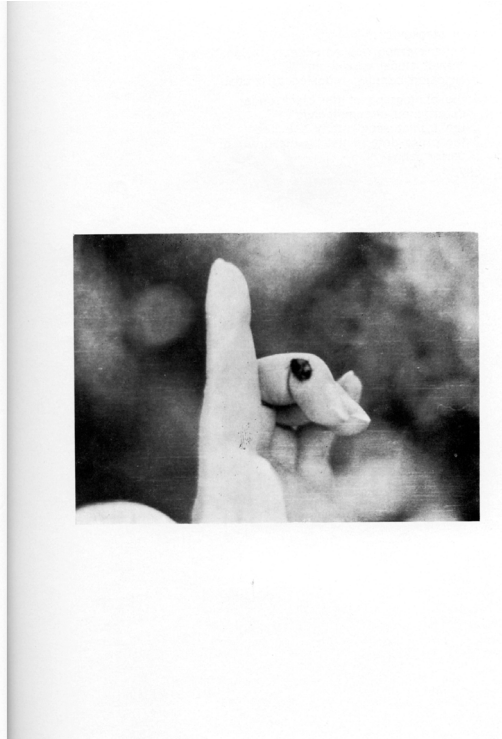


neša paripović
foto-dosije
photo-dossier
1976



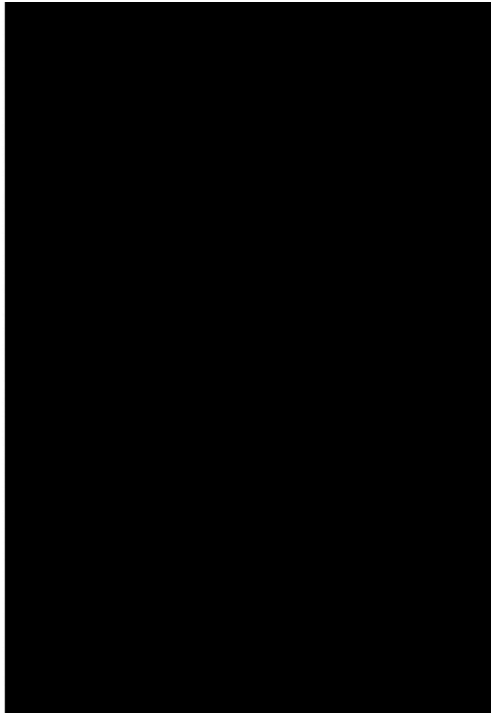


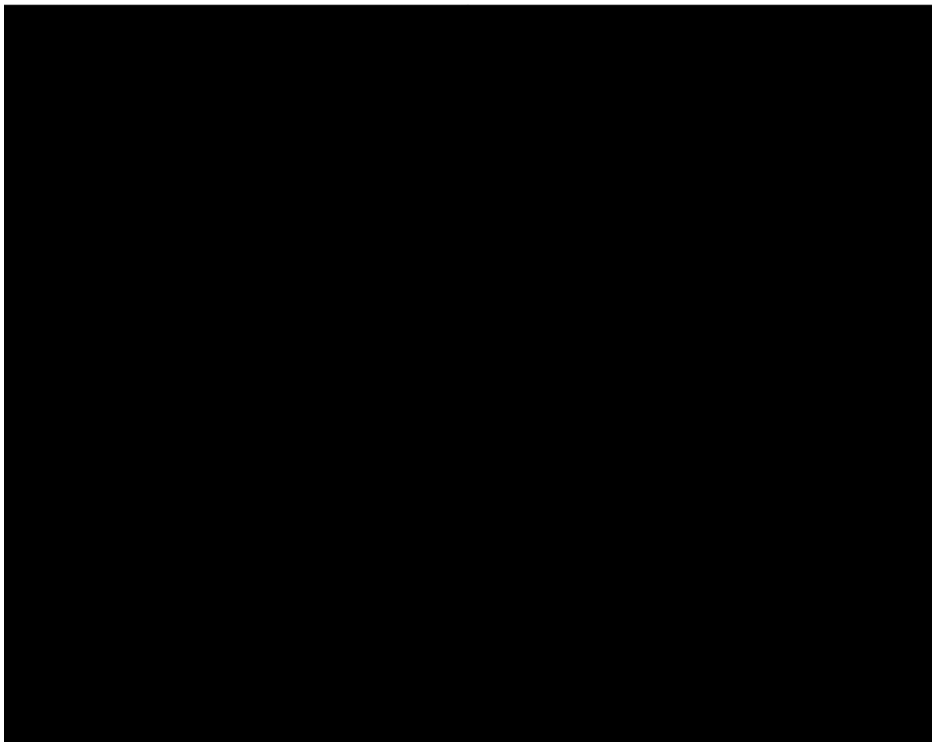
maja savić
mišljenje prožeto osećanjima
/sve se oseća kao misao
mišljenju razgovori oduzimaju
važnost ozbiljnost istinu
zapisana misao takode gubi važnost
ali ponekad stiče novu
pondering permeated by feelings
/everything is felt as a thought
talking deprives pondering of
importance gravity truth
the written down thought loses
importance also though it acquires
a new one sometimes
1976



paja stanković

- 1 snimak crnog pod određenim okolnostima
 - 2 format slučajno odabran
 - 3 redosled određen redosledom izrade
 - 1 the photograph of the black under determined circumstances
 - 2 the format accidentally selected
 - 3 the order determined by the order of performance
- 1977





miško šuvaković

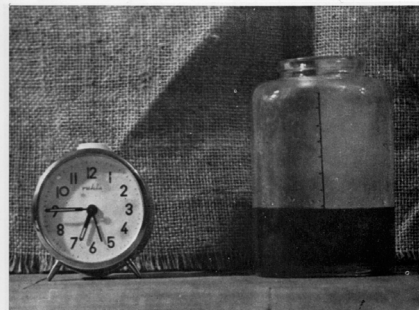
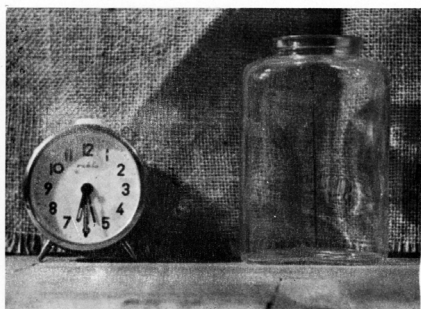
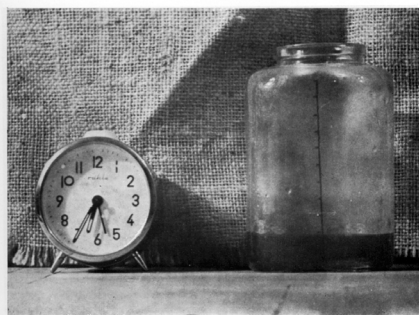
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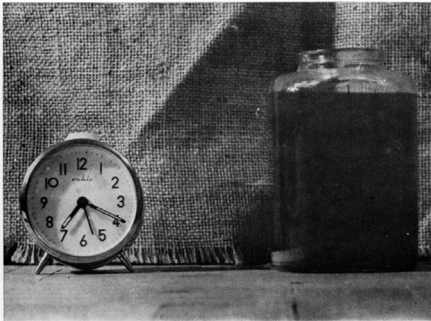
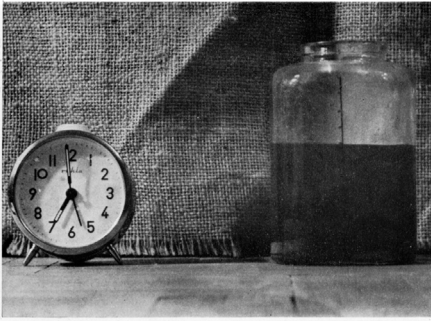
prostorna progresija: 0 1 3 6 10

time progression: 6.30 6.35 6.45 7.00 2.20

space progression: 0 1 3 6 10

1975





biljana tomić
paralelne realnosti
parallel realities
1976



juče — danas — sutra
yesterday — today — tomorrow



prošlost — sadašnjost — budućnost
past — present — future

grupa 143
razgovor u prirodi
conversing in open-air
1976





II deo

1978/1979

mirko dilberović
vlada nikolić
neša paripović
maja savić
paja stanković
miško šuvaković
biljana tomić
grupa 143

mirko dilberović

objekti A i B su snimljeni iz tačke koja se nalazi na polovini rastojanja između njih
decembar 1978

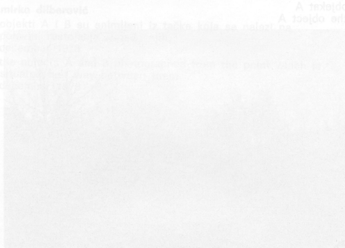
the objects A and B photographed from the point which is situated half way between them
december 1978

objekat A
the object A



objekat B
the object B

vlada nikolić
30 decembar 1978
december 30th 1978



neša paripović

kakva je poruka? da li izraz lica odaje poruku? šta znači šapat na plakatu? da li je poruka protivzakonita? nije li u pitanju lična paranoja? da li smeh znači smeh ili ga treba protumačiti? da li se nešto prikriva? šta bi bila skrivena poruka umetnosti? postoji li droga u seksu i obratno? na koju se drogu misli? postoji li umetnost u politici i obratno? na koju se politiku misli? zašto su četiri reči napisane na engleskom jeziku? zašto su četiri reči ispisane rukom? da li je plakat rad-poruka? da li je plakat doživljaj ili poziv na razmišljanje? da li se radi o šalji? da li je plakat poziv na akciju? da li je plakat glupost? da li su pojedine fotografije ilustracija četiri reči? u kakvom su međusobnom odnosu elementi ovog plakata? da li su osobe na fotografijama pozirale? zašto jedno lice na plakatu ima naočare za sunce? da li je šapat ilustracija zabranjenog ili neizgovorljivog? zašto su četiri reči u zagradi? da li je raspored fotografija nameran? da li su četiri reči u smišljenom redosledu? zašto je na svim fotografijama smeh? 1979

what is the message? is the message disclosed by the expression of the face? what is the meaning of whispering shown on the poster? is the message against the law? isn't it the matter of a personal paranoia? does the laughing means laughing or should it be interpreted? is there something concealed? what would be a hidden message of art? is there any drugs in sex and vice versa? what kind of drugs is thought of? is there any art in politics and conversely? what kind of politics is thought of? why four words written in english? why four words in handwriting? is the poster a work-message? is the poster an experience or a call to pondering? is it the matter of a joke? is the poster calling for an action? is the poster a dumbness? are particular photographs illustrating the four words? what is the mutual relationship of the poster's elements? have the persons modelled for the photographs? why one face on the poster has the sun-glasses on? is the whisper an illustration of the forbidden or unspeakable? why the four words are in brackets? is the arrangement of the photographs intentional? are the four words in a forethought order? why is there a laughter on all the photographs 1979



PORUKE - MESSAGES

(Sex, Politics, Drugs, Art)

maja savić



avgust 1976 zlatibor



maj 1977 beograd

www.maja-savic.com

page 44/45



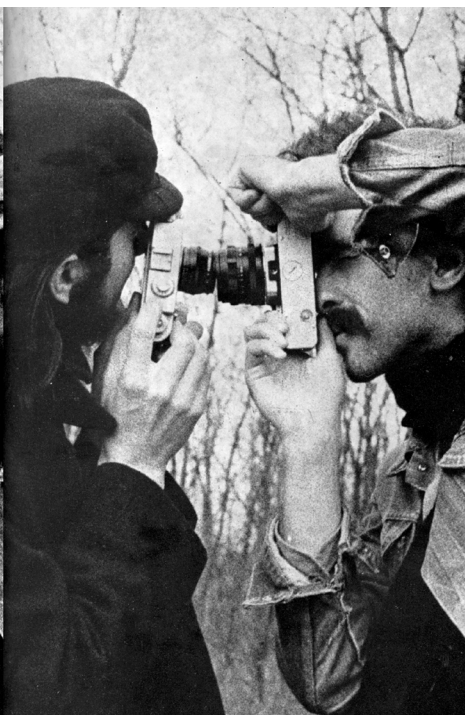
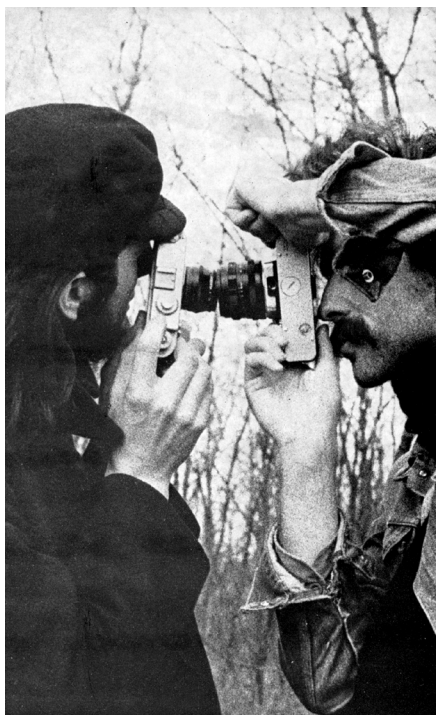
januar 1979 despotovac

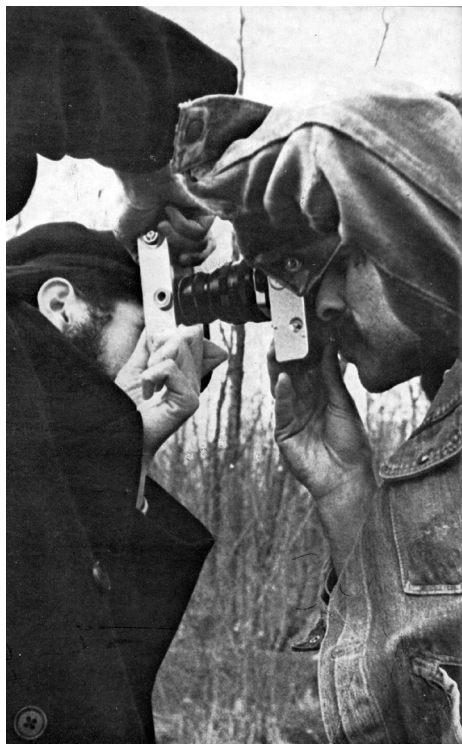
brugged 1101 lem

paja stanković

- 1 dokument procesa / snimanje crnog pod određenim okolnostima
- 2 format slučajno odabran
- 3 redosled hronološki

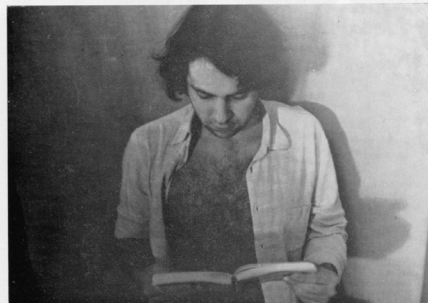
- 1 the document of the process / photographing the black under determined circumstances
 - 2 the format accidentally selected
 - 3 the order chronological
- 1979





miško šuvaković
 vremenska struktura
 I izolovana jedinica — vreme: 1975, mesto: x
 II izolovana jedinica — vreme: 1976, mesto: y
 III izolovana jedinica — vreme: 1979, mesto: z
 -aktivnost stavljanja prošlosti iza
 kao prošlog i stavljanja budućnosti
 ispred kao budućeg je sadašnji čin* (d. c.)
 niz: I... II... III — indukcija — IV...

the time structure:
 I the isolated unit — time: 1975, place: x
 II the isolated unit — time: 1976, place: y
 III the isolated unit — time: 1979, place: z
 -the action of putting the past behind
 as past and putting the future
 ahead as future is a present act* (d. c.)
 the series: I... II... III — the induction — IV...
 1979

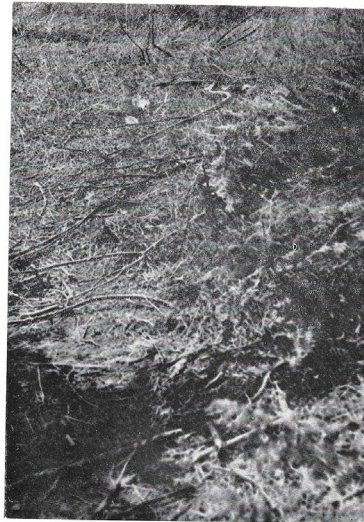


bijana tomić
 manastija 1962

| ДАНИ | НОВИ | СТАРИ | 1978 СЕПТЕМБАР | 30 дана |
|---|------|-------|---|-------------------|
| | | | ЗА ПРАВОСЛАВНЕ | ЗА РИМОРЪК |
| П | 1 | 19 | Св. муч. Андрей Страт.; свештмуч. Тимотеј | Елијин опат |
| С | 2 | 20 | Св. пророк Саваило; свештмуч. Филип | Максима мч. |
| Недеља 11. по Духовима. Гл. 2. Јев. пас. 11. На Лит. Ап. 141. Јев. Матеј. авт. 77. | | | | |
| Н | 3 | 21 | Св. ап. Тадеј; св. муч. Васа и њена деца | Нед. 22. обична |
| П | 4 | 22 | Св. муч. Агаџић | Роталди дј. |
| У | 5 | 23 | Св. муч. Луи; св. Иринеј (Одан. Успенија) | Локро Јустин; |
| С | 6 | 24 | Свештмуч. Савла | Петрови и др. мч. |
| Ч | 7 | 25 | Пренос мошт. ап. Вартоломеја; ап. Тит | Марко Крањак |
| П | 8 | 26 | Св. муч. Адријан и Наталија | МАЛА ГОСПА |
| С | 9 | 27 | Преп. Пимон Велики; Сврг. Кордоњски | Петар Клавер |
| Недеља 12. по Духовима. Гл. 3. Јев. пас. 1. На Лит. Ап. 158 и 334. Јев. Мт. 79 и Мт. 11. | | | | |
| Н | 10 | 28 | Преп. Мојсеј; Сабор Српских Светитеља | Нед. 23. обична |
| П | 11 | 29 | Усконвање главе св. Јована Крститеља | Прот и Хавиш |
| У | 12 | 30 | Св. Алекс. Нев. Царск. Навои и Миларије | Исе Маријино |
| С | 13 | 31 | Полтавске подвиге Препосте Богородице | Иван Кривош |
| Ч | 14 | 1 | СЕПТ. — Св. Симеон Столп.; Црква нова год. | УЗВ. СВ. КРИЖА |
| П | 15 | 2 | Св. муч. Мамонт; св. Јован Постник | Жалосна БДМ |
| С | 16 | 3 | Св. Антони; Св. Јовански Срвени | Корскај мач |
| Недеља 13. по Духовима. Гл. 4. Јев. пас. 2. На Лит. Ап. 166. Јев. Матеј. авт. 87. | | | | |
| Н | 17 | 4 | Свештмуч. Вавила; про. Мојсеј Боговољан; | Нед. 24. обична |
| П | 18 | 5 | Св. Захарја и Јелсавита | Јосип Курерт; |
| У | 19 | 6 | Црква св. муч. Макарија; муч. Елдокарје | Јаурић бач. |
| С | 20 | 7 | Св. муч. Солонт (Прептр. Рожа. Пресв. Бог.) | Кавкада и Сузана |
| Ч | 21 | 8 | Рожд. Пресв. Богородице — Мала Госпођина | Матеј ап. и св. |
| П | 22 | 9 | Св. прац. Јован и Ана; муч. Саверија | Тона и Влада |
| С | 23 | 10 | Св. муч. Мамадора, Митродора и Навофодора | Патериј мч. |
| Нед. 14. по Духовима — пред Воздвижењем. Гл. 5. Јев. пас. 3. На Лит. Ап. 215 и 170. Јев. Јн. 9 и Мт. 89. | | | | |
| Н | 24 | 11 | Преп. Теодора Алекс.; Сергеја и Германа | Нед. 25. обична |
| П | 25 | 12 | Св. муч. Антонио (Одан. Рожд. Пресв. Бог.) | Аурелија и др. |
| У | 26 | 13 | Св. муч. Кочмар (Прептр. Воздвижењем) | Кутана и Данија |
| С | 27 | 14 | Воздвижење часног Крста Крстовац | Вино Паулски |
| Ч | 28 | 15 | Велмуч. Никити; Св. Јосиф Нови | Врцислава мч. |
| П | 29 | 16 | Велмуч. Јефимија; преп. Дорот; и Каширија | МНУ и др. АРХ |
| С | 30 | 17 | Св. Софија, Вера, Наде и Љубав | Јероним свуч. |



grupa 143
razgovor o prirodi
discussing nature
1979



studentski kulturni centar
student cultural center
11000 beograd, maršala tita 48
direktor/director
dunja blažević
izdavač/publisher
galerija srećna nova umetnost
happy new art gallery
suizdavač/co-publisher
galerija studentskog centra
zagreb, savska 25
izdanje/publication
1/79
grupa 143
group 143
urednik kataloga/catalogue editor
dragica vukadinović
recenzent/reviewer
ješa denegri
fotografije/photographs
autori/authors
& nebojša čanković
prelom/lay-out
dragan stojanovski
prevod/translation
rajka nišavić
štampa/printed by
srboštampa
beograd, dobračina 6
tiraž/printed in
600
maj 1979
beograd