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RON HAVIV: BLOOD AND HONEY IN PHOTOGRAPHS AND WORDS*

This exhibition is both stirring and edifying at the same time. It should be seen by ALL people on the planet Earth. To learn something, in order for the things which happened on the territory of former Yugoslavia not to happen again. But, they are repeating themselves, all the time, in different parts of the world. It seems that people are a hopeless case, and that they DO NOT WANT TO LEARN LESSONS! They either do not want to or cannot do it?! THE TRAGEDY OF THE HUMAN SPECIES (Is it the smartest on our Planet at all?)

Sandra (a message in the Book of Impressions at the exhibition)

Several times, and in several ways, it has been stressed that the war conflict on the territory of the former Yugoslavia was initiated through the language of hatred - at football matches and in the media (Bugarski, 1995; 2000; 2001). Looking at the messages at the exhibition of war photographer, Ron Haviv, »Blood and Honey« (Novi Sad 10th – 20th September 2002), it may be said that after the wars, the hatred was transferred from battle fields to the messages written by the hand of those who left them next to the photographs, as a confirmation that there is no end to hatred – that weeds with their deep roots are in us.

For some authors, *the language of hatred* covers the names for verbal expression of hatred, chauvinism, xenophobia, racism, and other adverse collective feelings (Bugarski, 2002). For other authors, the language of hatred is just another form of *politically incorrect language* in the sense that the latter is a wider notion, and it means the language which is in accordance with the requirements of general human rights (Savić, 2003). The basic requirement is not to hurt another person verbally or in writing. Therefore, the language of hatred is not something fancy, but a bad intention which finds its way into words, phrases, sentences, and it is activated when conditions for this are satisfied. War is an opportunity for such a language to escalate in various forms. The emotion of hatred is so strong that it may destroy people, things, but most of all thoughts, sometimes of a thinker himself, or a hater – it is also self-destructive.

If we are interested in the analyses of the messages left next to the photographs at the exhibition, then, we first ask ourselves: what is photography? Is it objective reality, or reality seen through the eyes of an author, or is it just a part of reality out of which a whole is comprehended? Or, is it not reality at all? Up to now, there have been so many debates on what photography is, so that, for this occasion, it is difficult to set aside a definition which is fully appropriate for the need of this analysis. The photograph, author himself, Ron Haviv, considers that war photography may not be the actor of changes by itself, for example, to stop a war. According to him, the photography has an important role in educating masses and politicians. Therefore, the author, being a photojournalist, sees his role as informing the public – “the photo journalist may have an important role –

the possibility to record evidence”. For him, the photography is evidence and irrefutable testimony that there was war, that there was hatred and violence, that there were sufferings and pain everywhere. Thus, the intention of the author was that the photographs present the testimony of the breakdown of people’s lives due to war destruction, as a universal message for everyone. The intention of the exhibition organisers was to stimulate public discussion on war occurrences. The intention of the analysis of the messages left at this exhibition is to find evidence of the existence of the degree of (collective and personal) responsibility for what had happened in wars on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, in order for this to be a seed of guarantee in reconciliation building.

We see a sequence of various intentions directed at humane objectives, and we wonder to what extent all three of them may be taken into account: the intention of the photographer to record evidence, the intention of the exhibition organisers to, on the basis of evidence, initiate public discussion, and our intention is to connect the evidence and good intention of the organisers with the messages left at the exhibition as a proof of the possibility of the level of responsibility of those who visited the exhibition for the events that had happened. We are not generalising data, but we are making them concrete in relation with time, region, present visitors. We are interested in the level of responsibility of a male individual, or a female individual, as a reaction to exhibited unsubscribed photographs. We are analysing:

- I. the verbal and non-verbal messages on white paper next to the photographs;
- II. on the big poster with the size of 10 meters;
- III. in the Book of Impressions (all the messages are stated here in the way they are written at the exhibition).

I. Verbal and Non-verbal Messages Left on White Paper Next to the Photographs

Art photographs hang, in line, on the walls in order from 1 to 64, fragmentary, just like a remembrance, set in a hall in the town centre (at SPENS) in Novi Sad (10th-20th September 2002), without the subscription of the contents given by the author. Being silent, on white walls, beside them is clean paper with pencils hanging on rope, they should lure the first impressions of visitors, after seeing an individual photograph. The exhibition visitors write their experience and interpretation of the seen photograph, on the paper, unaware of the meanings given by the author. The writing of one’s own knowledge and experience on war is – just like a photographic one, fragmentary and emotional evidence by itself. Experience that was felt and a part of testimony are encountered, stimulated by a picture, which initiates a flood of experience, sublime, logical, memorised, and emotional. For example, we are asked by an expert in war events: *Have you heard of the Muslim camps in Sarajevo (Tarčin, the silos, “Viktor Bubanj” Barracks...)?*

(ph18)

Messages are hand-written in the Serbian language, in Cyrillic and the Latin alphabet, in block letters and in script. Several messages are in a foreign language, for example in Italian (next to the photograph of Arkan with a little tiger:

Grande onore alla tigre Arkan! (Great honour to tiger Arkan: ph34), in English: swear words (*fuck you*), speaking to Arkan on the photograph: *You are a GAD!*, or written in Serbian *kul* (cool = dobro (good)); one of the messages in Spanish. There are the messages on the language of community: two in Hungarian (next to Arkan's photograph: ph34). An exhibition visitor feels less responsibility for what is said, especially for swear words in a foreign language, not in the mother tongue – foreign language is the medium behind which hatred, anger, the negation of the other may be hidden.

What is a message here? Everything left by the exhibition visitors in material form on white paper next to the photographs: verbally (words, sentences, texts), and non-verbally (drawings, signs, different lines, the crossing out of statements, etc.). The messages left in this way may be best connected to graffiti – the messages left on a wall (Šokica, 1985), or those carried by students on posters during the demonstrations in the past decade (Gruden, 2003): anonymous, unsubscribed, of different length (from one syllable or character, such as a question mark, up to another text). A potential, but not actual author may be read taking into account several elements embedded in a message and its immanent part:

- the selection of alphabet, dialect (ekavian, ikavian, ijekavian);
- graphically formed letters (block and/or script);
- misspelling and other grammatical mistakes (capital letter writing, above all, followed by palatalisation);
- on the basis of verb form regarding a person's gender;
- from the message content, age may be seen (stating some messages from films, cartoons, or featured films, followed by songs, etc., which is a cultural characteristic of the young in Serbia and Vojvodina);
- on the basis of knowledge about war events (the data on massacres in particular parts of war areas: *Cursed be you slaughtered by the Serbs in Ravni Kotari*).

Within the corpus, we have also included printed messages by an individual (or a group) taped next to each photograph, as an attitude in relation to the exhibition, with the aim of underlining the output of the organiser and the exhibition, and to impose his attitude of what the photographs present.

During its 10 days duration, the exhibition was visited by around 5,000 visitors, some visited it only once, some several times, and some every day. In total, 1200 messages were left next to the photographs, 100 on the big poster and 87 in the Book of Impressions. For one photo there were just a few messages (for two of them there is not any message), and two effected numerous messages, over 44: the photographs of leaders, both of them deceased: Tito (ph2) and Arkan (ph34). On average, 20 messages were left per photograph during the 10 days of the exhibition.

A. Who Do the Messages Refer to?

The level of responsibility is seen in the purpose of reading the sender's message by somebody. It is not always simple to determine who an actual message is aimed at on the basis of the message content and form:

1. the author of a photograph;
2. the exhibition organisers;
3. a previously signed sender;
4. a person on a photograph;
5. everyone.

1. To the Author of Photographs:

*Why didn't you go to Israel to photograph the Jews' crimes against the Palestinians
You are colorblind, all you see are the dollars you get for forgeries and staged
photographs*

How many Arkans have you had (Arkan with a little tiger: ph34)

Fuck the author of this shit, and the guy who allowed him to exhibit it (ph60)

*What an idiotic exhibition. It would be better if this Haviv took photos of how his people
are molesting the Palestinians... No fighting, no war without Yasser Arafat (ph62)*

In a way, a photographer who makes photographs of our reality is not "our" but "their" in the messages left at the exhibition. Therefore, many messages of hatred are related to his origin (Jew), i.e. citizenship (USA). Accumulated collective racism was poured out on an individual, thus messages dedicated to the photographer are mostly the language of hatred, only because he made testimonies about our events, and in doing this confronted the exhibition visitors with what they knew, but for what they wanted to remain a secret – non-remembrance, i.e. what they did not know and do not want to find out, for they do not see how such knowledge may be used.

2. To the Exhibition Organisers:

Organizers, fuck your mother, father and your small children!

Whose exhibition is this?

(ph24)

*What kind of exhibition is this, no place, no date. When did all of this happen. All of this
is a lie, without proof. Next time you must try better, take photos of Kosovo Albanian,
Croatian, Muslim and NATO pact crimes!!! (The survivors after the Serbian attack of
Srebrenica: ph37)*

Mostly, the language of hatred and intolerance is directed at the organisers who enabled the photographer, as a witness of events, to make his testimony available in public and to them. The role of the organisers as mediator in the comprehension of truth is undesirable, which is the basic conclusion of these messages.

3. To the Previous Sender of Message on White Paper (in the form of various dialogues):

You are is a GAD! (The message to Arkan on the photograph: ph34)

Learn grammar, moron! (arrow in the upward direction of grammatical mistake in English)

Who can confirm that Serbs wear these types of uniforms?

(Question raised to everyone)

I can!!! (The answer of an unknown to unknown).

The intention for dialogue is the most important result of the analysis of messages directed at the previous sender, sometimes with the aim to insult and disavow the sender of the previous message, sometimes to co-operate with him.

4. To the Person in the Photograph:

You live!!!! (Arkan is in the photograph: ph34)

Arkan, burn in hell! (ph34)

5. To Everyone / No One Special:

Arkan is alive, he's not dead as long as the Serbian idea and Serbia live on

Those who did this: - they are not even Serbs; they are not even Bosnians; they are not even Croats; they are not even people – they are war criminals... (ph24)

Fuck you all (ph31)

Is this an air attack on FRY in '99, on Afghanistan, Vietnam...* (ph36)

As to the frequency of this type of message direction, most frequently, the message is aimed at everyone reading it, rather than to the previous sender, building a dialogue, and messages are aimed at the author (photographer) and the exhibition organisers to a much lower extent. This detail in the analysis is important for the consideration of possibilities for discussion: an exhibition visitor felt that he was invited to discussion with the person closest to him, the one who preceded him, who was the first to him/her, and then with everyone. This intention is worth using in creating the model for reconciliation and calming conflict.

B. Does the Content of Messages Indicate the Level of Responsibility for the Events on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia?

The message content contains political, geographical, or time elements of the context. For example, the exhibition was opened by Nenad Čanak, the president of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. A great number of the messages of hatred are dedicated to this authority, who has different political and ideological attitudes in relation to Arkan or Tito, another two heroes, who are not alive anymore, and around whom a myth is created.

The messages to Čanak are directed at regarding the photographs with another two leaders:

Čanak Ustaša

Čanak -faggot. (ph34: Serbian leader of Tigers, Željko Ražnatović Arkan with a little tiger).

In our intention to determine the level of responsibility, in the analysis of message content, we applied a scale of continuum (A-B) with 10 levels: from complete denial of responsibility and the expression of hatred to the other (A) up to the acceptance of collective and personal responsibility (B) for what happened during the wars on the territory of Yugoslavia, which is documented through the photographs:

1. Explicit hatred
2. Implicit hatred
3. The underestimation of the other
4. The denial of responsibility by introducing the language of the other
5. The denial of photograph as truth
6. Accepting that something is a crime, but it is required that others pay for their crimes
7. Religious beliefs/affiliation as the guarantee of reconciliation
8. The acceptance of collective responsibility
9. The acceptance of personal responsibility and the disassociation from the crimes of others
10. Silence, the absence of messages.

1. **Explicit hatred** and intolerance expressed by the language of hatred to others, but also to own members of different political affiliation. These messages are the most numerous, and they are categorised into several subtypes.

- The use of swear words through which (according to mythical belief) an opponent on the other side is destroyed (Svenka Savić and Veronika Mitro, 1996):

May Bush fuck you up the ass;

Fuck you, idiots (ph16)

Fuck Djindjić – Hitler (ph28)

Fuck you all (ph31)

Swedish pussies (ph33: A Bosnian woman at refugee camp...)

Kill her, you faggot (ph33)

Čanak, Hungarian son of a bitch (ph33)

Showing off in Somalia (ph62: The Bosnians are waiting for USA forces to arrive)

Do you want a blow job (ph33)

- Different forms of curses:

God, let it be the same here, and even worse! (ph33)

Let God arrange the same for you in your home! Fascist

Death to Kikes, Ustašas, Muslims, Commies, Democrats, Serbia for Serbs

- Insulting phrases:

There could hardly be a bigger idiot than you! Asshole!

- The names from the inventory of the language of hatred in war:

Down with the fascists!!! Hurrah! (directed at the exhibition organisers)

Swastika (the symbol of fascism directed at anyone).

- The expression of hatred by ordinary messages:

The more of them they kill, the less work for us (ph15)

Attack the scum!!! (ph 24)

Serbia for Serbs, take an axe to the Šiptars (Tigers and their victims during the attack on Bijeljina: (ph24)

Serbian heroes... (ph24)

Kill Balija!!! (ph25)

Death to the Jews (ph31)

Slobo – fucker! Piss off (ph36)

They should be killed (The survived after Serbian attack on Srebrenica: ph37)

2. Implicit hatred by glorifying one's own nation, heroes, religion, alphabet, by putting only national symbols (four "S"), or by stating common language slogans:

A true Serb in every way!!! (Arkan is in the picture)

Glory to the Hero!!!

Write in Cyrillic, bastards (ph62)

He who shaves his beard is not a Serb!

For the holy cross and golden freedom

Only unity saves the Serbs

Serbia Serbia

The borders of Serbia all the way to Tokyo!!!

If it were for Ravna Gora, Serbia would lie on three seas!

Cross yourself with three fingers, my right hand, I learned Vuk Karadzic's Cyrillic
(ph20)

Pride of the Serbian nation! (next to the photograph of Arkan)

The pen or the camera. Jews and Serbs are two nations who have had their Dachau and Jasenovac, nations commonly despised because they are the chosen ones. For being chosen calls up the deepest hatred. Enriko Josif, academic (ph23)

The last message is printed on the leaflet taped next to the majority of the photographs. In this case, it is not the message of one person, but the summary of opinions of one group, which, in this way, in an organised manner, imposes its opinion on the exhibition visitors (since the letters of the message are in capitals, in Cyrillic, legible, and everyone may read it from a distance).

3. The underestimation of the other (above all the Jews, Romas, Muslims, Americans):

UN – soldiers – dogs of war (ph16)

We're not Gypsies! (ph36)

Forward, Gypsies and Blacks – hoorah (ph45)

Death to Jews

The last, racist message is next to many photographs, and it is the most frequent of all forms of the language of hatred, and it is related to the origin of the photographer. It seems that racism has always been among us.

4. The denial of responsibility by the use of the language of the other (by turning to a joke, gag, some familiar motto, or its paraphrase, familiar slogan, or a part from media, cartoon, or domestic feature film). For example, the names (opera “A Barber Of Seville”, film):

Serial barber (ph4: A Serb is having a haircut during the first days of war in Croatia)

Puss in 'Helmets' (ph15) (The name of a domestic feature film)

Mirko, watch out for Slavko! (ph15) (Slogan from the children's comic "Mirko and Slavko")

Nice villages burn nicely! (ph43) (The name of a domestic film on war events in the 90s).

Then, the messages from some songs (country, folk, author)

Fall snow, let the Ustašas run away!!! (ph61: American peace forces arrive in Bosnia)

Burn it, brother, folk musicians rule!!! (ph43)

Only Sex Saves a Serb (ph44: Serbian couple is kissing after the fall of Vukovar)

(Allusion to 4 “s” on the coat of arms of the Serbian government:

Only unity saves the Serbs (Samo Sloga Srbina Spasava))

The messages at the exhibition may be related to the messages on student slogans during the protest in 2000. Through a joke, a message is decontextualised and contextualised in a new way:

We are only observing you!!! (a message of “Resistance” on a poster)

Laurel and Hardy! (ph19: Prisoners at the camp of Trnopolje)

5. The refusal of a photograph as truth:

Half of the truth is hidden here!

Staged photo (ph23)

A doctored photograph. (Tigers and their victims during the attack on Bijeljina: ph24)

Why don't you show the whole truth? Because you couldn't speculate then. (ph16)

Selective truth is dangerous political speculation (Printed leaflet taped next to many other photographs, ph23)

A good doctored photograph??? (ph18)

Your photo is no good, “brother” (Yugoslav forces attack Croatian town of Osijek: ph20)

Please also make an exhibition of burned-out Serbian houses and victims, for God's sake! (ph60)

Such messages do not deny that there was evil, sufferings, and reprisal in war, but that such a testimony is not adequate regarding the wishes of those who do not want to see the truth. This is the level when the existence of committed acts is recognised, but the material evidence is not recognised, a photograph in this case.

6. Accepting that this is crime, but it is required that others also present their crimes:

The crimes of all sides in the war should have been shown, so that these tragedies are not repeated. In this way, another crime has been committed. (A man with bloody hands prepares a family of Kosovo Albanians for funeral: ph 22)

Show the Serbian graveyard in BRATUNAC (ph25)

Where is a Serbian graveyard with a Serbian mother... You yourselves demonize the Serbian people, the others don't do that. (ph25)

But where are the Serbs burned in the lime kiln in Kosovo? (ph21)

Where are the photographs of Serbs slaughtered in the Knin Krajina / Where are the photographs of Serbs slaughtered in Western Slavonija

And where is the Serbian church in Pakrac (Catholic cross in Vukovar: ph27)

Why didn't you go to Israel to photograph the Jews' crimes against the Palestinians

Where are the pictures of American dropping bombs from 15,000 m. If they had come on foot, we would have chased them off with our dicks!

But this was first done by the Croats, then by the Muslims to the Serbs, and there are some in disguise here who would do it to the Serbs as soon as they got the chance (ph24)

The examples in this group indicate that the exhibition visitors agree that committed acts are non-humane acts, and these acts are not denied, but the knowledge of crimes committed to Serbian people is stated, deriving from the belief that this was not presented in the photographs. Discussion is accepted, but to discuss the crimes of both one and the others in an equal manner – above all of the OTHERS. We may see even two pieces of data for the future reconciliation model: “there was evil, we want to discuss it, but your testimony is wrong, we want to talk about evil, but we want to see the extent of your guilt”. Here, there is no more negation of the other, there is no underestimation and insulting of the other, but there is a thin thread of desire to talk to the other, but under certain conditions.

7. The acceptance of collective guilt (and responsibility):

Why can't some people stand the truth?!

We're all guilty for not saying anything!

There are individual evildoers in every nation.

There should be no wars, the consequences are clear from the start. (ph24)

A crime is a crime regardless of who commits it! (ph24)

This is a step towards the demystification of Serbs as a “heavenly people” (ph24)

Our shame!! (Arkan with a little tiger: ph23)
We're all Arkan! (ph34)
If you like this, then keep making war (next to the peace sign) (ph18)
The cross is common to all!!! (Catholic cross in Vukovar: ph27)
First let's find the church and the faith within ourselves, then it will be easier (ph28)
War takes two! (ph35)

Such messages indicate the harmony in relation to those who committed crimes – ours are equally as guilty as the others are, the level of guilt is already in being silent and in not talking about responsibility. The messages of such a kind give hope that in numerous communities, where there are great differences in comprehending the responsibility, this actual group, a minority one, is a starting point in the opening of the dialogue about responsibility.

8. The acceptance of personal responsibility and putting a distance from the crimes of the others:

For this group, an example of dialogues where the first person accepts the responsibility as a part of a whole is a nice one:

We're all Arkan! (ph34)
Another person enters into dialogue with him as an individual who wants to distance himself:

*I'm not
I'm less ashamed and less afraid when I see the truth about myself in front of the mirror of the whole world!
The truth hurts!* (The remainders of the poster of former Yugoslav president: ph60)

The replies of testimonies regarding personal experience are also included here:

Why did they burn my parents' village in Dalmatinska Zagora, 124 of 125 houses, but my brother still lives happily with his Croatian wife, but in Las Vegas. Why did everyone have to leave? Why wars!!!* (ph20)
I was just sitting in the Čaršija drinking my coffee, when Serbo-Chetnik soldiers came and beat us for no reason!! (ph 46)
Aren't you ashamed. I am (ph60)

9. Religious beliefs as the guarantee of reconciliation:

Christian religious beliefs are included in a message as a possibility of conflict resolution and the satisfaction of justice by somebody else, but not regarding our activity:

for _____ against _____
Arkan is a saint *Murderer*

*There is a God
Rest in peace
Glory to him/them* (to Arkan)

*Arkan, burn in hell
Now he is where he belongs.
God willing, you will die
once again.*

*Peace to his soul. May he rest in peace.
God forbid! (Arkan)
God, don't let this happen again (ph18)
Not one single terrorist is a true believer*

We arranged examples to show the mentioning of God as a force which will lead to justice, even without the engagement of an individual. This is the attempt to reach the reconciliation through somebody else's engagement. Besides, everyone emphasises his own truth with the Almighty.

10. **The last possibility is not stated** – silence. The question is raised of why only every fifth visitor left a message next to a photograph? Why aren't there more messages of those who think differently in relation to the nationalists? Those who consider themselves tolerant? Why did they remain silent?

C. How may we understand the stated data of our analysis?

The results indicate that out of the total number of messages written next to 64 photographs (verbal and non-verbal), the most numerous are those containing explicit hatred to the others (30%), more exactly, the refusal of any responsibility. Who are the others in the messages? In majority of cases, those are all those who are not the Serbs, above all the nations from conflicted sides (the Croats, Muslims, Albanians), followed by the Americans who were present either in the form of the UN peacekeeping army or as a remainder of the NATO bombardment in Serbia. The others are of another religion, Catholics and Muslims. But they are also those who live in Serbia, or who feel like the people of Vojvodina do, so, those who are related in regional terms, and not national. Love/hate is expressed towards leaders. There are three persons about whom there are the most messages: Tito, Arkan, Čanak. The senders of messages see their greatness through a leader, who is an untouchable hero, who is Arkan himself for Arkan's followers. This is followed by the messages with implicit hatred (25%). Those are the messages glorifying one's own (Serbian) nation, religion, alphabet, persons, events, history, due to the belief that the Serbian nation is a victim, which, according to them, is missing at this exhibition. A guilty party is sought (organisers, photographer, somebody else) and the unwillingness for co-operation.

This is followed by the messages where, by introducing the language of another, a distance is made from responsibility and guilt, in various way, by turning to a joke, the association which is hardly related to a photograph, by using an already created expression from some other genre or speech: country song, film, comic, slogans, advertisements. There are 15% of such messages.

There are only 8% of messages, where the willingness for collective responsibility is noted, in which the voice of conscience includes the whole community. Such messages may be a guarantee for the claim that there is a mass, but still of a non-critical potential, to initiate and change the situation.

There are only a few messages of personal responsibility (2%), within which we also included those messages testifying personal confessions – “I am a part of the reality, which is shown in the photographs, thus I testify – I am a photograph”:

They got killed when they attacked my house and my land (ph25: A Woman at the graveyard Lion in Sarajevo).

All other types are classed as the remaining 10% of messages. (Note that after these data on the frequency of particular messages, we did not include numerous non-verbal signs such as crossing out, drawing various signs such as the swastika, or writing four “s”).

A precious piece of data is that 10% of messages were achieved through dialogue, where the latter visitor continues the message of a former one. There are the series of ways to achieve a connection in the dialogue, which shows that the exhibition organisers fulfilled their intention, for the dialogue and willingness for discussion is led at several levels, which is testified next to the photographs, on a big poster on wall and the Book of Impressions. Individual persons wrote in it as they liked. Those who wanted to were able to leaf through a book, to read what others had written, and in this sense, these messages are public and available for dialogue.

Then, there are particular persons who, while watching the exhibition, gave statements about their impressions about the exhibition for radio or TV (which, unfortunately, was not kept in documentation). Journalists regularly reported on the exhibition in daily newspapers (there is a collection of press articles in the organisers’ documentation). Secondly, the organisers, on the occasion of the exhibition, organised different discussions inviting people to discuss various topics (discussions: “Vietnamese Syndrome in Serbia” and “War is a Free Choice?”, documentaries screenings: “The Road of Brotherhood and Unity”, “The Museum is Open during National Holidays”, “War is Over”, and “The Victim of Geography”).

D. What does the Analysis of Messages Connected in the Dialogue Indicate?

In total, there are 10% of messages where it is noted that the exhibition visitors mutually communicate in the dialogue: one leaves a message next to a photograph at some time, the other, an unknown visitor, reads this message, and writes his/their opinion, attitude, emotions. The dialogue occurs when one person writes a message stimulated by a photograph, without the intention of inviting somebody to participate in a dialogue, and the other person (perhaps, watching a photograph) reads the last written message and responds to it, for he feels invited into the dialogue. It is not always clear in advance who will enter the dialogue on responsibility. Perhaps, some will be invited, and the others will be involved in it. An open possibility to be included in the dialogue is a prerequisite of successful dialogue.

The crossing out of the messages of the former visitor is, unfortunately, the mirror of bad emotions – the crossing out of the message of another is denial, disagreement, the annihilation of the opinion of another, uprooting, with the lack of wish for dialogue. In such messages, there is no possibility to establish or continue the dialogue. The examples of offering the alternative present a tiny ray of hope. For example:

Freedom for Slobodan!!!, the word *freedom* was crossed and the word *death* was written (ph60). Now, the attitudes of two persons are clear: freedom and death. What is different here in relation to the first example is that arguments take opposite directions, but there are dialogues where everyone offered his attitude. With reference to this, the following example is nice. The first visitor wrote *Long live Slobodan* (ph60). The second one came and crossed out *live* and wrote *is guilty*. Then, the third one came and wrote: *You can cross it out, but he's still guilty*. This latter visitor wants to say that crossing out and annihilation of an individual's opinion does not decrease guilt as such, for a language act is not identical with the act in reality. In this sense, an important piece of data is that speaking as act may not recover things until the act itself is changed. Until the guilt is transferred into the other thing, either forgiveness, or responsibility, or something else.

In the third example, opposite attitudes are expressed as legitimate, there is no intention to annihilate the person expressing an attitude:

*Both Orthodox and Catholics have the same commandment from God: thou shalt not kill. May they rest in peace!
They don't. If so, why didn't they observe that commandment. Then Jasenovac wouldn't exist, and Stepinac would not have participated in the slaughter as a man of God*

In the fourth case a discussion is held regarding the facts and more than two persons are involved in it (actually 4):

*A nation that doesn't have its own country and all that goes with it cannot be called a nation. If there is a mother to a people, the country is that mother.
And what happened to the Jews?
And what about VOJVODINA!
Death to the Jews (ph31: Serbian soldier goes next to the place where the Liberation Army of Kosovo killed an elderly Serb)*

Several visitors (perhaps at various times) express their own attitudes on something which is the responsibility of a nation, out of this only the first one refers to the thing presented in the photograph, and the others feel invited to enter the dialogue. Unfortunately, the last one enters to destroy already established co-operation in the dialogue. The example indicates that the dialogue dynamics is always in danger of being broken apart if a person who does not have the same or good intention enters it.

It seems that there is too much argument in the dialogue of hatred:

*Fuck Čanak
Then fuck Slobo and Karadžić (ph 38)*

*Let me say, Long Live (added: Serbian) Vojvodina
Long live Karadžić.*

This time, the disagreement refers to Serbian leaders, one is the leader of Vojvodina, the other is Serbian, or Serb. We see that hatred is not always directed at the exclusion of the OTHERS, according to religion, nationality... but also among their own people, by excluding those who are not like WE are in everything.

One of the possibilities in the dialogue is that with reference to the message of hatred (which actually has nothing to do with photograph):

Down with Čanak

The other person does not reply with hatred, but the collocutor is, by simple question, directed to the question to which everyone who wants to leave the conflict should be faced with:

Why? (ph33)

Why hatred, which demolishes and destroys, and not the one creating something new.

Where are the pictures of the 2,000,000 Serbian refugees from Croatia, from Serbian lands, Bosnia and Kosovo

What's with your spelling?

Excellent point (ph37: The survivors after the Serbian attack on Srebrenica)

In the last example, it seems as if these three visitors chat at a conference on Internet: they are involved in the dialogue to say something in favour of the dialogue, the last one to “cheer”, and to say something about the message exchanged regarding photograph. In a conflict situation, besides the need for a dialogue, there are rooters. To note the need for the dialogue would be the first important thing for the future use of this data in designing the model for the reconciliation of conflicted parties, taking into account all other slight modalities (including rooters), which presents the possibility of realising the dialogue.

Another type of dialogue includes the latter bringing the former to his senses:

Who are these people?

*Would you wonder if your family were in this line? (ph38: The Croats, expelled
by Serbian forces after the fall of Vukovar)*

Where are the images of the destroyed bridges, burned-out factories?

Ask Slobo, Šešelj, Pavković, Pelević (ph40)

One type of dialogue refers to the feeling of responsibility, but the second one rejects this and transfers the discussion to another perspective:

It's true we destroyed our town for no reason. "We're all guilty for not saying anything"!

AMA MORE

Perhaps, the second person considered that the previous statement was pathetic, and not sincerely responsible. Faced with clear responsibility another person does not want to accept it, but wants to talk.

The following example is more expressive in this sense:

The truth hurts!

Stop bullshitting, damn it (ph60)

The intention to accept the responsibility is obvious, but not any party is favoured:

All parties are equally disgusting to me!!!

Except the Serbian parties. (ph38)

Here, we may see that two interlocutors have already found proper dose of co-operation, disgust with war of two parties is common, the thing that the other person does is sticking to its party. In order to go to the other side, he needs a bridge. Who is this bridge? It may be persons, white paper, and many other things...

The fact that the interlocutors in the dialogue are not seen in one place and at one time, enables them to behave in more intolerant manner, without any visible responsibility. It is expected that both forces could make their blades less sharp in direct communication, thus in this the possibility of mediation is seen – instead of white paper, this is a person, or medium (which, unfortunately, was not the case here) and the forms of the dialogues of persons who have different expectations than reconciliation. From the analysis of particular dialogues, a tendency to co-operation regarding responsibility through the dialogue as a basic form of human communication may be observed. Both sides are provided by the dialogue as a universal tool, however, they, in many cases, use it in vain. Only a small number of dialogues search for facts:

All this without date and place, year, it's not true!

Manipulative lies against Serbs!

Do you know because you were there, or do you believe Slobo's Radio-Television Serbia
(ph59: Albanian house is burning during the offensive of Macedonian forces against National Liberation Army)

The first message testifies that the person understands that it is about burning houses, that this is evil and unfortunate, but he looks for evidence (time, place...). The other one refuses the truth, and the third one puts it in front of a mirror “have you been there, or do you believe in lies”. We may see that often a third person may, within the dialogue of two opposite parties, direct the dialogue in such a way that these two parties feel frail, if facts are proved and shown. In this sense, these dialogues are important to show that reconciliation does not include only opposite parties, but the range of participants is much wider and their scope is always dynamic. We ask ourselves over and over again: who are good negotiators who may direct the discussion in a desirable direction, when provable facts already exist?

The dialogue where several people of the same opinion are grouped gives hope to the negotiations for reconciliation and forgiveness:

The worst thing is to give freedom to people who don't know how to handle it. As can be seen above...

Bastard!

I agree!

Me, too! Me, too

The series of messages, characterised by the same attitude, show that there are people of the same opinion. This is the stage when the reconciliation may be discussed not on an individual level, anymore, but at the level of some smaller groups united by the same attitude in relation to an act or evidence.

There are just a few, as we have shown, statements where a visitor clearly writes that he feels responsible. There are many more such messages in the dialogue as a reply to some already expressed opinion, or attitudes with the meaning “I think the same, too”. In this sense, it means creating circumstances for the reconciliation where these “shy” voices will gain more courage to express their attitude.

From the following dialogue, it may be seen how close two persons, who seemingly think differently, are. Only one question is necessary “how do you know” to turn the whole truth in another direction:

Please also make an exhibition of burned-out Serbian houses and victims, for God's sake!

And how do you know this is not an exhibition of burned-out Serbian houses. Actually, this is an exhibition of the victims of all the peoples who took part in the war (Ph60)

E: Is there a basis for hope?

We are looking for it in those who left the messages. The messages next to the photographs were left by those who want to destroy the others, to glorify their own people to the detriment of the others, to discuss crime, but, above all, of the others, to lead the dialogue to where they may find some common elements, to involve the Almighty in the dialogue who solves conflict, and then, hopefully, to accept collective responsibility anyway, and finally, some smaller part of them, indeed, to accept personal responsibility. Within the total number of 5,000 visitors, 1,300 of them had their voices heard – every fifth one is willing to enter the dialogue. The data on those who left messages are important when we want to plan the actions for communities' reconciliation in some bigger area.

Who are the messages directed at? The photographs' author, organisers, everyone, and no one. In each of these intentions, certain elements of hope for accepting the responsibility and wish for reconciliation may be found, which may be used for the future reconciliation model taking care of whom one is to (wants to) talk to.

In what way should the dialogue be led? Abundant opportunities were presented: from the clear refusal of dialogue to the tiny threads of co-operation.

We may conclude that the messages left next to the photographs are precious material on the basis of which the levels of what we call responsibility may be noted – a prerequisite for the readiness for dialogue with the others. There are various degrees from expressive hatred and the denial of the values of the other, up to the traces of co-operation, but the latter may be reached. The mechanisms, with which these weak, perhaps single, threads will be connected, should be found. This is where the exhibition succeeded, for it made it possible to connect weak threads into some new rope.

Why didn't some have both the intention and wish to leave messages next to the photographs? May, on the basis of left messages, a judgement on the feeling of national responsibility for war events be generalised? Certainly not. Those who are tolerant, who think that the reconciliation must be reached, did not want to leave their attitude on the white paper anonymously, to some greater extent. There are more of such messages in the Book of Impressions (see section 3) and on the big poster (see section 2).

II. The Analysis of Messages from the Big Poster

Out of several big pack-papers of 1 meter size, on the whole wall, at the hall entrance/exit, clean papers with the following information hang: »The objective of the exhibition is to stimulate public discussion on war. Knowing facts is necessary in every society. We are also inviting you to present the documents and photographs you possess. Thank you.« (Next to the poster, there was a big table where persons on duty and a policeman in uniform were sitting.) The organisers' idea was to document various materials on posters (photographs and other materials, analysed here). Hand-written messages were left on these papers during all the time of the exhibition, in contrast to the white ones next to the photographs, which were changed several times a day. Thus, all visitors were able to read all 75 messages made in 10 days.

What we concluded from the messages left next to the photographs is the same for the messages left on the poster. The difference is that, in principle, two parties considered the issue of war and evil, and there are also several authors' (signed) messages.

III. Message Analysis in the Book of Impressions

The messages left next to the photographs are anonymous, those left on the poster diminish this anonymity, they are sporadically signed, and those left in the Book of Impressions are predominantly signed (unfortunately, always illegibly) – with their signature, the exhibition visitors left the trace of themselves, they were responsible for statements. The writing in the Book of Impressions is actually a custom, regardless of this exhibition. They are those who know for this custom, visitors mostly different to those who wrote next to the photographs: they left longer texts, with the explanation of their own attitude. In contrast to short and lapidary messages next to a photograph, the messages in the Book are more tolerant than former, there are several of them in foreign languages, which evidences that the exhibition was visited by foreigners. For example, a

Danish reporter wrote in German: »It is very sad to read what was written here as a reaction to the photographs. They show that they learnt nothing and that they do not want to learn anything«. The messages in the language of those who live here with everyone follow, in Hungarian:

»Thank the Lord for having had this exhibition organised. If organised hostile groups are left aside, it is important to start a dialogue – knowledge may be achieved only in a slow manner«.

Julija

»Believe and do not be afraid!« – for bridges, according to Andrić, must always be rebuilt. The bridges connecting banks, people, and souls – that lead us to each other. In order to face ourselves, let's see what happened, so that we may start painful the reconciliation process at last. In order to be able to do so, according to Jožef Atila, »common things, which are our responsibility, and not a trifle«.

Gizela Tot Štanji

These messages show that minority representatives want to participate in the dialogue on responsibility, although everyone considers that this is, above all, a war where the Serbs should say something. If we now compare the messages left to the photographs with those on the poster, and in the Book of Impressions, we may see that there is one basic difference: when there is a possibility to state individual and concrete responsibility in an anonymous manner, the expression of hatred is higher. Unsigned messages next to the photographs have the most open kinds of hatred (swear words and curses), both verbally and in drawing (the drawing of male sex organ). The messages left in the Book of Impressions do not have this tone, they do not contain aggressive crossing out of the messages of the others. The Book of Impression is a specific discussion genre meaning that everyone may write his impression or experience. That is why it is called the book of (individual) expressions. Here, there is not almost any message in which so called somebody else's language, or the language of another is introduced, with which one wants to distance himself from his own message. In this Book, everyone is invited to state his impression, only some will actually accept an open invitation. We may already suggest that one of the work methods in the process of reconciliation may be the writing in the Book of Impressions.

Messages in the (Written) Media

This abundance of written messages in various forms at the exhibition is complemented with those sent in public through the (written) media (TV and radio messages were broadcast, without the possibility for the organisers to collect them). In the documentation of the exhibition organisers, there are 100 longer and shorter texts in total (information, notifications, critical considerations, case studies). Various texts testify to various echoes of this exhibition, mostly put in a political context – pre-electoral campaigns of two presidential candidates (Labus and Koštunica), i.e. the participation of the president of the League of Social-democrats of Vojvodina (Nenad Čanak) in the opening of, and during, the exhibition. The messages published in the media require

additional meticulous analysis (for which there is not enough space in this paper). The very analysis of text titles shows the editorial orientation of particular media.

On the first day, at the opening, there was disorder: a group of the young tried to disable the opening. There are headlines about this in several newspapers (11th and 12th September 2002):

"Politika" (government newspapers):

Headline: *Whistles for Ron Haviv*

Text: The exhibition of war photographs "Blood and Honey" by American photographer, Ron Haviv, was opened in Novi Sad last night, with the presence of police...

"Ekspres"

Headline: *Running away from Truth* (sub-headline: "Provocative exhibition of photographs by Ron Haviv "Blood and Honey" opened in Novi Sad thanks to – police..

"Danas"

Headline: *Photographs with the Message of Truth.*

Sentence in text: "The ceremony of the photograph exhibition opening was secured by around dozen uniformed members of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Serbia".

The writing about the exhibition by the widely read press is an important detail of the whole event, since those outside of Novi Sad could be informed about it, who were not able to see the exhibition. We may state that, unfortunately, making tension between confronted parties in the press for the sake of defending a Serbian idea, i.e. the need to consider truth, presents an even more dramatic contour. Some printed media were not willing to support the dialogue of two parties, so, we may even claim that some media hindered the organisers' effort to make the discussion possible and to establish it, for they insisted on separation and provoking policy: "Nacional", which is sold in many copies, in contrast to "Danas", which informed in a concrete manner, but the number of copies of this newspapers is far lower. Novi Sad "Dnevnik" was the only one to make an interview for and against the exhibition, using this event for the review of citizens' responsibility for war events. It also turned out this time that media cover of those events in the community which present the turning point of some trends, or ideas, with insufficient sensitivity, and which may focus public opinion on some better ideas on unity and mutual life.

The exhibition of the photographs by war photographer, Ron Haviv, showed the extent to which the exhibition visitors are thorough, contextually restricted, but, among them, there is a minority ready for dialogue. The richness of various possibilities for dialogue is precious datum of this analysis.

Notes

**I express my gratitude to Marija Gajicki for prepared material for the analysis and long and inspirational discussions on the issue we are both interested in.*

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