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Models of Networking in Croatian Art of the 20th Century

Based on theoretical assumptions of the current *spatial* and *global turn* in art history, the dissertation will offer an interpretation of central examples of collective artistic activity in the history of Croatian art of the 20th century, and by using examples of local artistic practices support the thesis that the network is the central trope of modern and contemporary art of the period in question.

This kind of approach follows current efforts of the discipline to ultimately and convincingly deconstruct the center–periphery dichotomy and to create assumptions for non-hierarchical models of interpretation (*horizontal* and *circular* art history, *critical geography* of art history etc.). Therefore, in the focus of the research are not particular *oeuvres* and individual artistic achievements, but the movement of people, circulations of objects, exhibitions and concepts, and the processes of cultural translation, which are based on them. Alongside subjects of circulations and their trajectories, I will also take into account the modes of exchange between the Croatian and other European *milieus* – the socio-political and cultural framework of the exchange, as well as the nature of social and artistic contacts of the actors that participate in it. Descriptions and analysis of formal and informal artist groups are already a part of art historiography in Croatia, but – with rare exceptions – the main approach consists of regarding these phenomena solely in relation to the local situation. Following the above-stated hypothesis, these art phenomena – interpreted also as social phenomena – will be regarded as components of transnational networks of European art and presented with the help of contemporary methods of data visualization. Their properties will be shown through the analysis of models of networking of three case studies of 20th century art history that are crucially influenced by collective work – the magazine *Zenit* in the interwar period, conceptual art of the late 60s and early 70s, and artistic and curatorial platforms after 1990.

My research will be based on the combination of several methodological approaches. In the segment of gathering and processing of primary material (archives, documentation, newspaper clips) I will use ingrained art historical methods (archival research, analysis, contextualization, interpretation). In the process of interpretation of gathered material I will also use recent models of interpretation – *horizontal* and *circular* art history, *critical geography* of art history, as well as some theoretical tools of cultural translation. This kind of approach implies a focus on transnational relations of chosen examples and it gives an opportunity to critically examine the center–periphery dichotomy, to reevaluate the relationship between high and popular culture, and to examine the interrelation between networked artistic practices and mass media technologies. In the identification and interpretation of models of networking, which are in the background of chosen artistic phenomena, I will use network theories and analysis developed within sociology and other social sciences. Since the interpretation of artist networks is based on data accumulated through traditional art historical methods, and because of the distinct nature of particular case studies (dependent on the socio-political context and the current level of technological development), the application of the given methodological model will have to be applied heuristically, i.e. the case study itself will dictate the choice of strategy of its interpretation. My presentation at the *4th International Forum for Doctoral Candidates in East European Art History* will include a brief introduction in the research topic, a discussion of the methodological apparatus developed up to this point and an illustration of the methodology with the help of data visualizations of a chosen example of artist networking after 1990.