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THE PLEASURE OF TRANSGRESSION: CONSUMING IDENTITIES

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TRANSGRESSION AND THE IDEOLOGY OF TRANSGRESSION

Postmodern philosophy abounds with the ideas of flouting, breaking and overcoming of various socio-cultural boundaries, the ideas that are generalized by the concept of transgression. Any reflection on a boundary presupposes a possibility of crossing it, for the act of mentally grasping a boundary amounts to already transgressing it, which will sooner or later manifest itself in creative or practical action. Philosophy, if based on the notion of postmodern deconstruction, does precisely this: it reflects on the boundaries and thus reveals their conditional nature, the incessant interaction between the pre-boundary realm (of the self-evident, the familiar, the normal, and the stable) and the realm across the boundary (of ambiguity, unfamiliarity, abnormality, and open-endedness). It also brings up the social and cultural struggle for the establishment and reinforcement of boundaries, which is the decisive factor in creating individual and group identities connecting the body, consciousness and a territory. The deconstructivist approach to transgression works by 'turning' unconditional things into conditional ones, 'turning' unconditional evidence, identities, taboos and norms into conditional social constructs, which are fixed in some established field of the configuration of power. In this sense philosophical deconstructivism is related

to modernist artistic practices that were consciously breaking (transgressing) various social, cultural and psychological taboos, especially those linked to the expression of sexuality and the social control over that expression exerted by the clear-cut differentiation between the feminine and the masculine. It was the modernist artistic practices that effectively spread an artistic political ideology of liberation: transgression conceived as the *breaking of various taboos and norms through artistic action on the* 'boundary' came to be considered as crucial for the individual's liberation from various limitations imposed by the society, for a revolutionary break-through. However, as a matter of fact, various acts of transgression subsequently turned into repetitive artistic practices and were thus commodified as peculiar brands.

Influenced by modernist artistic practices and encouraged by their supporting ideology an individualist conception of transgression evolved and got finally established: the breaking of taboos and norms came to be seen as an individual and creative act of liberation *par excellence* as well as the essential means of self-expression (and then imitation, ultimately leading to commodification). In part, such an understanding of transgression promoted the romantic imagination about the creative genius, but it simultaneously socialized, politicized and de-spiritualized it. Let us consider the underpinnings of the individualist idea of transgression. It is easy to identify a basic premise of such an imagination: the resolve of an individual determines the action, and liberation is the goal as well as the condition he or she experiences. However, this premise evades several important points: the social nature of an individual, the social contents of freedom and, most importantly, the socially regulative character of taboos and norms. The ideology of liberation that underlies transgression represents taboos and norms as something socially given, something opposing transgression, standing against and restricting the expression of individuality. This is considered to be self-evident needing no grounding. Transgression breaks or transgresses a norm (no matter, whether secular or sacred) and thus produces a shock wave across the social system. There are abundant examples in history about tragic destinies of the 'breakers'. However, we are here concerned not so much with historical systems as with the specific capitalist system we all live in, under conditions of which not only transgressive artistic practices are being developed, but also the concepts and the ideology of transgression are being established.

An important feature of recent approaches to transgression is that transgression is increasingly understood as a condition of both established and emerging norms as well as of all kinds of identities and normalities. It is the idea George Bataille has infused into much of postmodern theory: what transgression does is not to negate the taboo, but to transgress and complete it. Transgression is needed in order to institute and establish all kinds of

boundaries. Of course, the motif of completion sounds slightly ironically in this case: the very act of transgression (and conception) presupposes repetition, a repeated completion; and a taboo can only survive under conditions of the impossibility of transgression. The aporetic nature of a reflection on a norm thus becomes evident: the establishment of a norm (e.g., a constitution) is an 'abnormal' act. In the following I will discuss the transgressive nature of the very capitalist system and the commodifying power of transgression, which fully manifests itself under conditions of consumer capitalism. In particular, I will argue that the sexual aspect of transgression is important in establishing the identity of a consumer and the ideology of consumption and thus that the liberation of the body and sexuality unavoidably acquires an ideological character that is both marketable and conceals the pressure of the system of consumption.

THE UNIVERSAL TRANSGRESSIVITY OF CAPITALISM

Dare I say it that until now nobody has exposed the logic of capitalist development better or more profoundly than Karl Marx? Among other things, he made the important claim that industrial capitalism unavoidably turns into consumer capitalism and that this transition manifests itself in the form of globalization. It is worth going back to Marx, if only because his ideas have widely spread in the works of postmodern theorists discussing the peculiarities of consumer capitalism and its characteristic culture. However, there is another important reason: this is the time that we experience as the end of a certain period of history, 'late modernity' (the outspread of the essential premises of modernity) and 'postmodernity' (the 'transgression' of modernity highlighting its basic ontological corner stones), so we need to have a closer look at the roots of the system from the perspective of its possible future development.

It is commonly acknowledged that continuous disruption of social norms and social relationships is a characteristic of capitalist globalization and consumer capitalism. However, it was the *Communist Manifesto* that declared prophetically: "All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify." (Marx, Engels 1975: 12). We should consider several aspects of this idea, which Marx grounds in his studies of the self-evolution of capital. The capitalist system not only replaces the feudal one by breaking relationships, norms, attitudes and various taboos prevailing to it, but itself evolves by constantly breaking all newly emerging relationships without letting them 'ossify'. This means that transgressivity is considered as the necessary systematic characteristic of ca-

pitalism implicating individual acts of transgression. Therefore, we may assume that individual transgression is necessary to the capitalist system and that it constantly reestablishes that system (studies of consumption show how it does it). Another important thing is that the rhetoric of the classics of Marxism shows their admiration for the trans(a)gressivity of the capitalist system: the fixed, which means considered as normal by the society, is 'fast-frozen', and what is in the process of getting established is trying to 'ossify'. Thus we can say, somewhat ironically, that the Marxist spirit fits well the individualist concept of transgression as an act of liberation, since the classics of Marxism looked with contempt at all taboos and norms and considered breaking them necessary for the development of the capitalist system and the subsequent emergence of the new man.

This is the essentially transgressive feature of the capitalist system. However, we are here more concerned with the spread of transgressivity characteristic of the consumerist stage of capitalism. It is commonly assumed that consumption guarantees the vitality and development of contemporary capitalism. The index of consumption is considered one of the most important factors indicating the vitality of economy and society. Among the different aspects of consumer capitalism the subject of consumption is very prominent in the field of postmodern theory as it relates to essential changes in the production of culture and the spread of new information and media technologies. Researchers of consumption stress the significance of transgression in the processes of commodification, the spread of consumption and establishment of the ideology of consumption. They consider various aspects of social life in terms of consumption and try to find out how the economic, political and cultural powers join their efforts to encourage consumption and indoctrinate consumerism (for more see Strasser 2002). This again encourages us to go back to Marx who emphasized those essential features of the evolution of capitalism that have emerged in pure forms of consumption at the time of 'completion' or 'transgression' that we are living in, even though the pattern of consumer capitalism was already in place in 1920s.

Regarding the problems under our consideration here the most important is Marx's idea that consumption is the goal and the basis of all production under conditions of capitalism. The nature of consumption as a foundation becomes particularly prominent during the stage of consumer capitalism. It is a well-known fact that Marxism explains the life of society through economic relations and relations between productive forces, the evolution of which determines the nature of social and political institutions. However, one of Marx's crucial theoretical insights that is often overlooked is this: it is characteristic of the capitalist system that material production

is bound to the production of individuals necessary for it. Thus, material production in its expansion (and expansion is necessary for the accumulation and increase of capital) sets the guidelines for the production of socially determined individuals and the cultural methods of this production. A telling example may be the principle of ‘flexibility of workforce’ and, more generally, the concept of ‘human resources’, which is being implemented everywhere and pervades culture and education. People are trained to adapt automatically to the demands of the market, which operate as if they were the force or law of nature, and human beings are taught to consider the ability to adapt as the most important trait of personality guaranteeing success in life.

The theoretical basis of all contemporary thinking about the consumer society (as a matter of fact, often superficial because the legacy of Marx is overlooked by declaring him outmoded or orthodox) lies in Marx’s idea, which he argues in various ways, that capitalist production creates not only the thing to consume but also the way of its consumption, and does it not only objectively, but also subjectively (Marx 1974: 13). What does ‘subjectively’ mean in this context? It means the production of subjectivity, of those psychological and spiritual traits that are necessary for the expansion of production. The subjective aspect in the production of an individual defines the domain of his or her needs, abilities, skills and cultural aspirations, which we usually tend to call the ‘inside’ of a human being. It is the subjective aspect of the production of individuals that is the main target of contemporary marketing and mass media related to it. Because of the intrinsic tendency of capitalism to break any established order of things it is reasonable to expect that this tendency is also realized at the subjective level: as a cultural development of transgressions leading to the increasing variety of needs as well as to the creation of markets satisfying them.

Another important aspect of Marx’s analysis could be described in the following way. The produced and consumed things are commodities. The essence of the capitalist system is that material production is the production of commodities designed for consumption; thus, the capitalist way of production establishes commodity oriented relationships, which acquire their universal and, we would say, pure form in consumer capitalism. The establishment and finally the dominance of commodity oriented relationships means one simple but very important thing: commodity oriented relationships include the special product of the capitalist production system, the consumer as a commodity. In other words, the consumer unavoidably acquires the form of a commodity, which, according to Marx, is expressive of the high level of capitalist development. We should remember that for Marx under capitalism “products (or activities) are exchanged only as com-

modities” (Marx 1974: 61)¹. Thus, the commodity form and commodity oriented relations cover the entire human being: his or her subjectivity and sociality, needs and life style. The commodified nature of activities emphasized in the quotation is the existential condition of our time, as we live in the world of service markets and perceive ourselves as suppliers and consumers of various services.

The exchange in commodities and their consumption takes place only under the condition that a method of establishing their equivalence is well developed and widely used. Marx thus draws the conclusion that commodity relations are monetary relations. However, these are special monetary relations: money ceases being the sign of a commodity and commodities come to mean money. Precisely this process of a commodity turning into money finds its expression in the consumption of cultural commodities/signs, or in the commodification of imagination.

CONSUMPTION OF IDENTITIES

At the stage of consumer capitalism a total consumer necessary for the system is produced, in other words, the consumer’s identity is created. However, the latter as a combination of one’s willingness to consume, to satisfy one’s needs and the anticipated pleasure of doing so is itself created by ripping and breaking all kinds of ‘hard’, stable, ‘ossified’ identities and social relations that underlie them. The production of individual identities takes place in various markets engaged in a competitive struggle. Identity thus becomes increasingly unstable and flexible, fragmented, liable for both construction and reconstruction. Postmodern thinkers describe it in various ways as multiphrenic, multiple, palimpsest, pastiche, vamped up, and its most prominent features are instability, flexibility, decentralization, all essentially bound with consumption. When culture become a force of production and an inexhaustible storage of signs and symbols, one starts producing fragments of identities needed for the construction of an individual identity according to a chosen model of identity. To choose an identity or to create it: these are the main slogans of our time supported by the consumerist ideology, which claims that the choice of identity and its assemblage from ‘elements’ supplied by the market is the only real act of the individual’s free will, and that the ‘assimilation’ of a new or improved identity will not only guarantee a new ‘dose’ of pleasure, but will also help to keep abreast with latest developments. Some researchers into the present condition observe that there is a tendency to seek for a more stable identity based on national, tribal, group

¹ Or see “The Grundrisse”, Notebook 1, October 1857, The Chapter on Money, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1857/grundrisse/ch02.htm>

and other forms of collective identity, to balance the individual construction of identity, and that it is getting stronger (Kellner 2002: 258). Nevertheless, the tendency denies neither the segmentation of markets so characteristic of contemporary capitalism and the process of the commodification of identities, nor – most importantly – that various collective identities can only be created from their marketable forms or ‘debris’ present in the market or discovered and spread through the channels of mass media. On the other hand, the need to create more stable identities may be encouraged by the need of restructuring the market of identities (life styles).

The systemic production of consumers is being realized also by training people to look at themselves as collections of characteristics that can be offered to the market, in other words, teaching them to use rationally and put a price on the features of their identity (body, soul, character, skills, abilities and self-awareness). Identity is increasingly understood as a life style or a way of life, or any combination of them that allows getting as much pleasure as possible. The marketing segmentation of the market divides consumers into the target groups of consumption not only for the ordinary commodities, but also increasingly for the products of style and identity (Willis 1998: 13). It corresponds to the changes in education and culture as well as self-education: learning to consume such products means learning to appreciate the relevant social formations.

LIMITS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRIVATE AND TRANSGRESSION OF DIFFERENCE

The domain of privacy is primarily defined by greater ‘permissibility’ compared to the public domain. The public domain is regulated by stricter norms than the private. The separation of the private from the public and the establishment of relevant delimitations is an arena of intense, though not always clearly pronounced, political struggles. The deconstruction of these delimitations, especially transgression, is also a political action constantly opening new areas of struggle for the establishment of private identities in the public domain. Perhaps the most important aspect of this struggle is the politicization of bodily and sexual expression, that is, legalization as publicly permissible of such behavior that yet recently was considered indecent, socially unacceptable or even punishable. The domain of such expression used to be ‘covered’ with categories of indecency, perversion and crime. Transgression and then citizenship established in the public domain by changing the accepted norms and attitudes – these are the two stages of all sexual movements for the right to express publicly the peculiarities of one’s sexuality. This process is marked by the concept of a *sexual citizen*. A sexual citizen

is a person consciously acting in the zone where the public and the private are separated/delimited: such a person generates socio-cultural and political tensions and attempts to establish his or her sexual identity in the public domain. Transgression is an incessant creation and recreation of the meanings of the self, while challenging the standard institutions and traditions that used to marginalize such identities (Weeks 1998: 36). Excess is a characteristic feature of the act of transgression because it breaks both social and political norms; it forces public institutions to include meanings generated from sexual expression into the concept of civil rights.

Such an act of transgression echoes the creation and recreation of identities, as encouraged by consumer capitalism, from 'elements' of identities produced for consumption with the code of breaking and transgressing socio-cultural norms engrained in them. We could describe the essential principle of consumer capitalism concerning the consumption of identities in the following way: all social norms restricting the expression of sexuality in any way are established in order to be transgressed due to multifaceted pleasure experienced in the process of transgression. Cultural industries producing identity markers for the wider population are closely related to sexual movements. Especially people from the urban environment present their complex social identities as well as individuality to the public and establish it there by combining the produced markers of difference in terms of gender, ethnicity (considered as natural or chosen), social class and cultural style (Zukin 1998: 835). In this environment cultural industries that acquire increasingly greater economical power encourage multiculturalism – the establishment of ethnic cultural diasporas, which is also expressive of the need for more stable collective identities.

The life of a sexual citizen characterized by transgressivity becomes an important driving force of cultural economy. On the one hand, new self-identities are created and constructed from industrially produced markers of difference and images supporting them; on the other hand, movements marked by transgression become an important area of cultural industry. For instance, parades and carnivals of gays and lesbians, transvestites and other queer individuals mark the exceptional places of the tourism industry and at the same time prompt the development and spread of a local cultural industry (entertainment, recreation, sexual consumption, etc.).

The carnivalization of transgression can be distinct as a special feature of transgressive action relating social and political aspects of transgression to consumption and culture as well as tourism industries and, at the same time, wrapping the action into the cloth of marvelous, voluptuous general merriment. The carnivalization of transgression helps to accustom the section of the public, which tends to preserve 'ossified' norms, to trans(a)gressive identities by seducing it with the pleasures of celebration and opportunities

of economic gains. Thus, the claim that carnivalization has become an important feature of globalization is quite plausible: cultural industries supply the public with many forms of shocking music, of shock TV and other mass media (Langman, Cangenie 2003: 167) while the tourism industry establishes itineraries for consuming carnival pleasures.

PLEASURE AND TRANSGRESSION

The concept of a sexual citizen relates to three different 'versions' of pleasure: sexual, the pleasure of power (political) and liberation (ideological). There is a tendency to treat liberation as the liberation of sexuality and the establishment of new forms of its expression in the public sphere by changing the configuration of socio-political relations and acceptable (ordinary) identities dominating there. Thus, there is a political aspect of violence in an act of transgression: breaking social norms and taboos forces others to adapt to the new social and cultural condition. It is understandable that the fans and ideologists of transgressive action will argue that by undertaking such actions they liberate not merely themselves, but also help the society liberate itself, for the new possibilities of sexual expression, new precepts and discourses of experiences help it understand itself better, and this is presumably serves public good. However, a transgressive act is often a violent interruption of other people's normal life and their understanding of normalcy. It is important to consider this aspect of violence with respect to the others while analyzing pleasure of transgression. Pleasure is obtained both by the liberation of sexual expression and by its enforcement (through power and politics) on others by wrenching off a public area from them. To use religious terms, pleasure is obtained by the legalization of sin extorted from the society that tends to 'ossify' and by the desacralization of sacred things (e.g., the sacrament of matrimony). Image-products of violence and of helpless victims of violence that are so wide-spread in contemporary art and mass media culture echo this duality of pleasure, as do various 'artistic' manifestations of desecrating sacred symbols or their linking to pornography. Artistic practices based on transgressivity characteristically use the shockingly seducing effect of open sexuality, obscenity and desecration demonstrated in public because this attracts not only the audience but also draws the attention of mass media. It is well worth to attend to P. Virilio's reminder (in his analysis of the prevalence of obscenity in contemporary art) that the word "obscene" originates from Latin *obscenus* meaning the sign of a terrible fate (Virilio 2000: 50). He provides a characteristic example: in an art gallery in London, 1997, the American Angela Marshal was selling her works in package with a sexual act with herself, explaining that unless the audience sleeps with her, it is not her audience.

Regarding the logic of consumer capitalism one can say that the ideology of liberation is used to enlarge the market of consumer identities and establish the principle of incessant consumption. At the end of the 20th century popular and consumerist culture established the value of idealized images of the body: bodies are perceived as concentrations of commodified forms of health, beauty and fashion encouraging consumption where commodified bodily pleasures set the guidelines for the creation of identities (Langman 2003: 223). No expression of sexuality and the body is imaginable without the market of sexual services. Sexuality and the body are segmented and commodified, as any liberated 'segment' (for instance, areas for decorating or injuring the body) generates a market servicing it. Commodification is a way of establishing property relations, and property relations call for control and subordination, not liberation.

An eloquent example of commodification and transgression wrapped into the mantle of the ideology of liberation and art are sculptural bodies by the professional anatomist Dr. Günther von Hagens. He has invented a way to preserve dead bodies by coating them with special plastic. When various layers of the corpse are taken away, and the 'remnants' are consolidated with plastic, peculiar sculptures emerge. Prepared corpses were used for the purposes of science only in specific places, and artists used animal bodies instead. In 1998, in Mannheim, G. von Hagens arranged an exhibition entitled *Body Worlds (Körperwelten)*. The scandalous exhibition attracted 780 thousand visitors. The bodies that he 'produced' were standing like classical Greek sculptures; some were holding their skin as trophies, while others were showing their entrails. G. von Hagens performed an act of multiple transgression, transgressing more than one boundary and braking more than one taboo, and yet it was a very profitable operation that bestowed on the author the status of a world celebrity, a kind of capital he can put to use. First, a grave was opened, dragged into the daylight, so that the separation between the public space and the grave was transgressed. The exhibition space was turned into a kind of cemetery with prepared corpses exposed. Museums do something similar when they show mummies, but there is a tendency to treat this as normal. The preparation itself can be understood as an act of burial: after all, in all cultures the body is prepared in some way before burial. The visitors of the exhibition are offered an opportunity to enter the graves and participate in an otherworldly 'process' when the bodies appear as artistic objects. The dead bodies have been turned out: they demonstrate their insides; they are manipulated like simple objects. In this sense, archaeology has been also deconstructed: archaeologists have been digging burial places since long ago, but they do not consider their activity as sacrilegious or desecrating the dead. The common understanding is that scientific research

naturally insulates the scientist from such evaluations of his activities, just like the renaming of a corpse into the 'object of research' breaks its links to religion and ethics. Why cannot the activity considered as 'artistic' do this? Thus, the boundary between the scientific and artistic activity is being transgressed, though it was still felt quite clearly in the areas related to human physical activities, diseases and death. G. von Hagens himself has proudly declared that he was destroying the last taboos, which means, liberating mankind. As far as there are those who would like to boast of such sculptures, a market for such objects and producers revealing new areas of artistic application of dead bodies will surely emerge.

THE LIBERATING DESIRING-MACHINES

Liberation – pleasure – economy of desire. As long as we overlook the economic imperative of liberation, which is also an aspect of social production, we are destined to circle in the environment of mythologems of subjective liberation. However, if the liberation of sexuality is understood in terms of the liberation of desire, the concept of the subject itself becomes problematic because desire annihilates the subject and subjectivity as social products. Consequently, in order to maintain the theoretical approach to the liberation of the subject it is necessary to consider social production as a direct investment of desire. Such an inversion characterizes the concept of G. Deleuze's and F. Guattari's desiring-machines. We will not discuss the peculiarities of the concept here; what is important to us is the liberating vision of the power of desire that draws together all the stages of their philosophical endeavor. Deleuze and Guattari consider desire as production: desire is not a desire for things that one lacks, and it cannot be related to lack, otherwise the duality of the inside and the outside is unavoidable, which desire has to overcome. Desire, first of all, produces psychic reality. When we relate desire to lack we have to admit that the thing one lacks is a product of imagination. This is how psychoanalysis explains desire. According to Deleuze and Guattari, desire produces reality because it operates in reality and nowhere else, because it is the 'autoproduction of the unconscious'. Desire does not lack anything because only a social product, the subject, can lack anything. Under the effect of desire we lose the subject. The only thing that desire lacks is the subject. In other words, desire lacks a constant, established subject because such a subject emerges only if the desire is controlled; thus, desire is identical to its object and it should be understood as a machine related to, and encompassing, the machine of the object (Deleuze, Guattari 1985: 26). The product of this machine is reality produced incessantly, and from the 'gap' that appears between the process of production and the product a residue is being

extracted – the nomadic subject that can originate and support the liberated subject. It is not the needs that support desire; on the contrary, the needs are counter-products in relation to reality produced by desire. Therefore, lack is the counter-effect of the desiring-machine: “it is deposited, distributed and vacuolised within a real that is natural and social” (Deleuze, Guattari 1985: 27). Social reality produces and distributes lack; thus, it also produces the needs, which it imposes on an individual by establishing the subject-like ways of desiring as the expression and satisfaction of needs. In this sense, the needs, as in Marx’s approach, are produced together with the products. Under conditions of market economy lack is the function of the market; accordingly, we can draw the paradoxical conclusion that the satisfaction of needs in market economy is simultaneously the production of new needs, that is, an incessant multiplication of lack. Although social reality is also a reality produced directly by desire, counter-production permeates it operating as desiring-machines mastering that reality, establishing the conditions of self-reproduction based on things that are ‘counter’.

How does desire liberate and how is it possible to use its liberating power? By using the so-called ‘shortcut’ social production: powerful social fantasies produced by artistic practices, accumulating desire and starting to affect social reality as institutions hostile to it. In other words, the products of artistic avant-garde and revolutionary utopias considerably reduce the investment of desire into the machines of social and institutional reality and thus weaken them. Another important point is that the ‘shortcut’ artistic production strengthens the remaining nomadic subjectivity, which means it increases the number of subjects who are changing social reality simply by their presence. Emphasizing the importance of the aesthetic “turn” under present conditions, Guattari claims it is artistic practices that have to create such “desiring-machines which break with the great interpersonal and social organic equilibria, which invert order, play the role of the other as against the politics of auto-centering of the self” (Guattari 1995: 32). However, a question arises: how could the ‘aesthetic turn’ avoid this commodifying trap of consumer capitalism, which has turned artistic practices into production resources increasingly including the ‘layers’ of nomadic subjectivity and involving creators into the preparation and realization of projects based on the marketing logic? After all, the transgressive nature of capitalism manifests itself as the ability to commodify antisystemic inclinations, movements and practices, and the social order is guaranteed as well as consolidated precisely by decentering self-identity and implementing the principle of constructing identity supported by transgression. The production of social fantasies and desired life styles is the domain of mass media and advertisement business that provide the means for turning social fantasies into individual ones. The

consumption industry has successfully mastered the production of fluid subjectivity by turning the liberation from the social shackles of subjectivity into the creation of consumption and identity, that is, into the principle of the consumption of identities. New markets of commodified identities open up by commodifying the genetic resources of humans and all live organisms. On the other hand, artistic practices have become an important branch of culture industry: artists create reproducible images and signs with a code 'inscribed' in their combinations creating an individual (chosen) identity, which is characterized by social exceptionality, and turning such an identity into collective fantasies of individual consumption.

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TRANSGRESIJOS MALONUMAS: TAPATUMŲ VARTOJIMAS

SANTRAUKA

Straipsnyje iškeliamas ir aptariamas sisteminis vartojimo ir vartotojiško kapitalizmo transgresyvumas, pasitelkiant marksizmo klasikų išvalgas apie materialinės gamybos ir jai reikalingos individų gamybos dermę, įrodinėjama, kad kapitalistinis transgresyvumas skleidžiasi įvairiais individualios, meninės ir kultūrinės transgresijos pavidalais. Pastarieji siejami su naujų kūniškumo ir seksualumo raiškos būdų sklaida, įgyjančia seksualaus piliečio pavidalą, kuris savąjį seksualumą įtvirtina sąmoningai veikdamas sociokultūrinės ir politinės įtampas kildinančioje viešumos ir privatumo skyrimo zonoje. Autoriaus manymu, esminiu vartotojiškumo ir vartojimo ideologijos veiksmu tampa kultūros praktikomis įtvirtinamas transgresijos ir malonumo susaistymas, teikiant tam saistymui laisvinimosi iš visokių tabu bei sociokultūrinių normų reikšmę, o sykiu suvokiant laisvinimąsi kaip galimybę susikurti naują tapatumą. Seksualaus piliečio ir jo veiksmams reiškiamo transgresyvumo sampratoje išskiriamos ir aptariamoms trys malonumo plotmės – seksualinė (individualioji), valdžios (politinė) ir išsilaisvinimo (ideologinė). Atkreipiamas dėmesys į vartojimui ir vartotojiškam kapitalizmui vis svarbesnėmis tampančias transgresija grindžiamas menines praktikas, kurių prekinę formą nuslepia išlaisvinimo ideologija. Svarstoma, kaip šiuolaikinio kapitalizmo aplinkoje gali skleistis išlaisvinanti „geismo mašinų“ bei nomadinio subjektyvumo galia, ir keliamas klausimas, ar vartojimo ir vartotojų kapitalizmas jau nėra tiek pažengęs, kad suprekinimo vyksmas sugeba „užbėgti už akių“ visokiems transgresyvaus išsilaisvinimo būdams.

RAKTAŽODŽIAI: ideologija, malonumas, riba, seksualumas, vartojimas, tapatumas, transgresija.