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# PORTRAITS AND MEMORIES OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN SERBIA BEFORE THE HOLOCAUST: FACING THE INSCRIPTION OF THE HOLOCAUST IN THE POSTMEMORY MEDIA REPRESENTATION CONTEXTS

One of the main problems of research and representation of the Holocaust is closely linked with the idea of the original source. The original source is usually considered to be a visual or textual testimony and/or document of the actual historical event. However, we are always-already dealing with the multitude of complex (re)presentations mediated through the post-situation of a heavily layered knowledge and also with the segmented character of broken, suppressed debris of memories and traumas. The Holocaust seems to inscript itself in the very core not only in the memory of that occurrence, but also in the memory of the whole period before, which was the primary aim of the project „The Portraits and Memories of the Jewish Community of Serbia Before the Holocaust“. Further approach to the problem reveals two parallel stories (one of before- the Holocaust past and one of the Holocaust past) that eventually become one – the one that becomes the actual source of knowledge of the Holocaust in the present, the source we are dealing

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with when we try to present, interpret and speak about it. The implication of multimedia environment of the Internet and its mediation of such conflicted discourse is an interface through which we receive this complexity of knowledge. This paper deals with these many problems of the inscriptions and re-inscriptions of the knowledge of the Holocaust, as well as with the issue of opening the questions of the further construction and mediation of a Holocaust-related discourse.

### The Holocaust in its Post-memory Complex

As we look deeper into the problem of memories, it suddenly transforms itself to its essentials – the problem of *transmitting* the memories and turning them into the „translatable“ document – a sound, a picture and, in the end, a readable and decipherable text. It appears that a memory complex is not as nearly smooth and even as some imagined narrative would be, which is especially prominent when we talk about the Holocaust. Mostly being a trauma, a greatly hidden place in the corpus of personal memories and also communal memories of Jewish Community in Serbia (as elsewhere), the Holocaust remains a cryptic space laid very deep under the layers of later interpretations, reinterpretations, narrations and various metanarrations which sometimes aim towards remembering, sometimes towards distorting or masking a memory, and sometimes towards forgetting or hiding from it.

Either way, it seems that the Holocaust reveals itself as a cluster of loss – a personal loss, a communal loss, a loss of everything that constituted the reality for the individual before it, even a loss of identity, and finally, a loss of memory itself (Laqueur & Tydor Baumel 2001, 122; Köhler 2003; Davis 2007; Hutton 2005), which leads to the traumatic point of not having anything to uncover, not anything to recover (Laqueur & Tydor Baumel 2001, 121). Or, as Collin Davis puts it, „...their truth lies in the fact that their truth will never be revealed“ (Davis 2007, 102). In this sense of the word, the Holocaust remains a dreadful, perhaps unfathomable void (Laqueur & Tydor Baumel 2001, 122). But is it really so?

One of the main problems of the Holocaust testimonies is that they are often given under the pressure to remember something that the subject, the witness doesn't quite want or can not remember, due to the trauma or to the different posttraumatic attempts to erase or to rewrite the traumatic event (Laqueur & Tydor Baumel 2001, 123). Also, there is another dimension of the testimony that tears up the traumatized subject – the need to *speak* about it (but about *what*, if „there was so much to say, so little that could be said“ [Laqueur & Tydor Baumel 2001, 625]?), the need to find the words that would fill the gaps, the cesures, the blank points created by unconsciously suppressing the traumatic event or by the conscious activity of the subject itself, willing to forget and trying somehow to forget, to overpass the trauma. The witnessing subject is thus often found in the conflict state within

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himself/herself which brings the need to remember,<sup>3</sup> and also a need to remain silent.<sup>4</sup> But silence here doesn't necessarily mean inexpressivity – on the contrary; silence is often as expressive and as informative as words (Lang 2005, 17) and although they are untranslatable into an intelligible sentence, they nevertheless *produce* meaning. As Giorgio Agamben noticed, „...here the value of testimony lies essentially in what it *lacks*“ (Agamben 1999, 34, cursive added). So, if the horrors of the Holocaust can not be said – because of the posttraumatic effect, or because of a lack of words that could be lined with the traumatic experience, or just because those who *saw* the Holocaust in its most tragic and incomprehensible form (those who experienced the death in the Holocaust) are not here to give the testimony and on the other side, those who lived couldn't testify for them (Agamben, 1999, 33; Felman, Laub 1992, xvii, Faurisson 2003) in which case the very notion of witness and witnessing comes into the question,<sup>5</sup> then the focus of the Holocaust research and the (im)possibility of representing the Holocaust lies exactly in what is (or seems) untranslatable, in what always remains unsaid or untouched, what floats in the both witnesses' minds and in the minds of generations which listen to the witnessing as something quite unsayable or untouchable (Davis 2007, 102; Hutton 2005, 35). So what is important is a continual trying to locate, to decipher, to define these *elsewheres*, these empty traces within the text which we are left to grapple with (Rashkin 2008, 1, 16).

In the numerous transcripts of interviews done during the realization of the project *Portraits and Memories of the Jewish Community in Serbia before the Holocaust* which we used as a case study for this theoretical paper,<sup>6</sup> we discover all kinds of personal grappling

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- 3 Besides the need to bring back the memories in order for the traumatized subject to create the consistent story that would help her/him fill in the tearing gaps (Hutton 2005, 26; Kohler 2003, 91), there is also a reason often cited by the witnesses who were willing to speak about their memories and experiences in the Holocaust which leads to the point of having the need, even the urge to remember and honour the dead, and also to prevent further possible ignoring or forgetting the Holocaust. The main line of the urge was not to forget so it would never happen again (Laqueur & Tydor Baumel 2001, 206).
  - 4 As some of the survivors stated, „I couldn't talk about it, I couldn't say anything, and besides people wouldn't have believed me, they would have thought I'd gone mad. So like the other deportees, I kept quiet.“ And also: „Even if I were to tell you all this, and much more, you would still know nothing; luckily for you, all of this will remain remote from you, because only we can ever know what our life was like“ (Hutton 2005, 6).
  - 5 „Testimony takes place where the speechless one makes the speaking one speak and where the one who speaks bears the impossibility of speaking in his own speech, such that the silent and the speaking, the inhuman and the human enter into a zone of indistinction in which it is impossible to establish the position of the subject, to identify the 'imagined substance' of the 'I', and, along with it, the true witness“ (Agamben 1999, 120).
  - 6 The project *Portraits and Memories of the Jewish Community in Serbia before the Holocaust* is a research, educational and art project of Federation of the Jewish Communities of Serbia. The project is launched in 2014 and it focuses on the period before the Holocaust, aiming at collecting the information about Jewish life in Serbia between the two World Wars. The project will result in the public online archive with all the interviews, photographs and video material collected, and also with the art exhibition of the photographs and important items from that period which are connected to the Jewish community in Serbia. There is also an educational dimension to the project, which will offer the educational material to the school teachers and the others interested in better preparing for seeing and understanding the exhibition. The project is supported by the European Union (EU Support to the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society).



with memories – both of the person interviewed and of the person interviewing, and there's a third one – a grappling of a person that reads the transcript after the interview is done. These personal grapplings in reception of the memory as such, these frictions of unsaid, covered and uncovered dimensions of the spoken text sometimes provoke a very painful, phantomic effect – and I shall borrow the term *phantom* from a theoretical-psychoanalytic approach that Esther Rashkin develops using the theories of Louise Kaplan and Judith Kestenberg who speak exactly of the phenomenon of the Holocaust when they are explaining it (Kaplan 1995, Kestenberg 1982, Rashkin 2008). So the *phantom* in this sense would be a kind of the unsaid trauma which, quite paradoxically, interpolates itself into the spoken text through the ruptures, through fragmented segments and voids in speech (and memories also!) and that is, besides to the person that originally witnessed that what is unspoken (and perhaps unspeakable, as seen!), also transmitted to the listener – to the receiver of the text that represents the memory for the recipient.

As the recipient here can be either the interviewer or a child of a Holocaust survivor, we are talking about the whole next generation, the *post-Holocaust* generation that is working with the Holocaust not as with a part of the history line, but as with a collection of scattered and shattered debris of memories which, in the end, are not the Holocaust itself and cannot ever represent the horror of the Holocaust situation as such. So we are left with the need to understand what is somehow denied to us and what we inherited in the form of crypt – mostly not by purpose, but by the inability of the witnesses to transmit the *witnessing*. Or, to go back at Rashkin's definition of a *phantom*, what is inherited is „a traumatic situation or drama that has actually occurred and that cannot be undone. Too shameful to be put into words or integrated within the parent's ego, yet too central to the parent's experience to be expelled or foreclosed, the drama is silenced and buried alive along with the shame attached to it, and transmitted cryptically into the child's unconscious. (...) In phantomic transmissions the parent transmits to the child not only the unspeakable content of the secret, but also the unstated obligation to keep the secret invisible and unreachable and to prevent anyone from discovering it, including the child“ (Rashkin 2008, 106). So the phantom is a kind of *other within the self* (Rashkin 2008, 94), an empty yet hauntingly meaningful alien not exactly within the subject with the initial trauma, but within the next generation subject, the subject who inherits it, who is trying to listen, to see, to feel and to liberate the parent (and in the same time himself or herself!) from the weight of shame which was induced by departing the initially traumatized subject from his/her old self in the situation of trauma and by later unsuccessful attempts (or running from the attempts) to connect these departed selves (Hutton 2008, 10). What is especially frightening in the exact case of the Holocaust is the proximity, the nearness, the friction and the often inexpressible unity of the victims and survivors, of the dead and alive. In the Holocaust memory complex (and in the subsequent postmemory complex that a second, third or even fourth postHolocaust generation discovers and creates for themselves) the



boundaries between life and death have been erased – everything that represented the core of the subjectivity for those who survived died in the Holocaust – their dignity, their identity as parents, children, sisters, brothers – it all vanished with their families which were killed, tortured, humiliated in the concentration camps and other places. In the same time those who died continued living within the survivors who relentlessly tried to pick up the shattered pieces of their lives and their subjectivities irreversibly shattered during the trauma of the Holocaust. „I died in Auschwitz and no one can see it“, Charlotte Delbo said in *Mesure de nos jours*, as cited in Davis 2007, 101. The death is thus incorporated into the living,<sup>7</sup> forming „perfect image of this survival-in-death and death-in-survival“ (Davis 2007, 100). So after the Holocaust the death is always-already within the life of survivors (and the next generations), and the endurance of the dead, of a memory of their life incorporates itself within the silence of the living.<sup>8</sup>

The experiences of both the victims and the survivors, of the dead and of the living are thus unexpressible; they are mute and, in the same time, they need speech (textual – visual, spoken, heard or other representation) to be understood. So the speech – the text – is the only thing that we are left with in the attempt of understanding, representing and not forgetting the Holocaust. As Walter Laqueur and Judith Tydor Baumel point out, if there is a way to speak about the Holocaust, if there is a way to potentially understand the situation and the consequences of the Holocaust for the generation that is already distant from the Holocaust as

7 We could find a similar state of subject's relationship with his/her body, life and death in the example of *musselman* in Agamben, 1999: „One hesitates to call them living: one hesitates to call their death death, in the face of which they have no fear, as they are too tired to understand“ (Agamben 1999, 44).

8 „I am returning from another world  
 in this world  
 that I had not left  
 and I do not know  
 which is true  
 tell me have I returned  
 from the other world?  
 For me  
 I am still back there  
 every day a little more  
 I die again  
 the death of all those who died  
 and I no longer know which is true  
 of that world  
 of other world back there  
 how  
 I no longer know  
 when I am dreaming  
 and when  
 I am not dreaming.“

Charlotte Delbo, a part of the poem *Une connaissance inutile*, cited and translated in Davis 2007, 98.



a historical event in time, it would be through the producing of the text about it, of the text of it, through *it* as a text (Laqueur & Tydor Baumel 2001, 127) – through the speech, through the art, through the *communication* that would search through the archive of the memory and postmemory complex, through the complexity of relations between said and unsaid, sayable and unsayable, between the possibilities and impossibilities of speech and understanding.<sup>9</sup>

As already explained, the initial aim of the project *Portraits and Memories of the Jewish Community in Serbia before the Holocaust* was the mapping of the period *before* the Holocaust, which is also the period of flourishing of the Jewish community in Serbia. The primary idea of this project in the beginning was to shed some light at the period before the Holocaust as at the period which always seemed somewhat pushed behind, somewhat covered by the predominance of the Holocaust experience itself. So the old photographs from the period before the World War II were drawn out of the closets in order their owners to tell the stories, the interviews began and led us exactly to the point of *not* being able to get past the Holocaust, of *not* being able to create a memory that is completely free from the Holocaust experience and the Holocaust knowledge, even if the memory itself represents the period *before* the Holocaust. What was particularly striking in that sense was the way that the Holocaust *inscribed* itself retroactively into the memories from the time before. In the other words, after the Holocaust, there was no memory that could be conceived outside of it. It was just like it was systematically pervading all the existing memories of the person that witnessed it, which also had its share in the next generation's knowledge about themselves and their personal and communal histories. So the memory exposes itself not in the means of a continual, linear line, but as an intertwined assemblage of stories, impressions and not-quite-speakable affects which position the time of Holocaust, the time before the Holocaust and the time after the Holocaust one by the other, one inside the other uncovering only one (attempt of a) story – and we are suddenly facing the Holocaust itself in all its post-memory dimensionality that in the same time turns us back to the questions of the (im)possibility of its representations. Or, to put it in different words, what appears to be the one of the main challenges is how to work with this broken pieces that, in an attempt to reconnect, cut one into another recalling the painful void (of the Holocaust!) instead of a cohesive story. So, as a post-Holocaust generation in the widest sense of the term, we are finding ourselves, if I may say, locked into a post-memory situation in which we don't find the Holocaust as such, and we don't really find the time before or after the Holocaust either without the Holocaust itself, which swirls us into a specific vortex made of the attempts to *know* the Holocaust through its representations – through the signs that practically stand in the place of the Holocaust *instead* of the Holocaust, and not *as* the Holocaust as such.

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 9 According to Agamben, the relation between the archive and the testimony are analogue to the relation of the concepts of *langue and parole*. Thus the testimony, however partial or incomplete or fragmented it would be, recovers much more of a total memory archive structure – even with its inconsistencies and even with its silences which are also the vital part of the memory archive complex (Agamben 1999, 146).



So the history and the memory are not the same in the case of the Holocaust (Hutton 2005, 18); *the source* is not quite existent; it is eternally hidden, unapproachable, unattainable. The source is a happening, an impression, an affect and/or act which can not be recreated by any other means or representations which can only stand *in the place of it*, not *as* it or as they were it and this is what keeps the Holocaust studies at the complex side of the problem spectrum. But, on the other side, if the representations – the attempts to decipher the Holocaust and to translate it to some intelligible form (a speech, a written text, an image) – are the only thing that the Holocaust has left us with, then this is exactly what we should work with. In the post-memory media representation contexts the Holocaust is nothing but the textuality, but on the other hand, as any reception of act or an affect quickly petrifies into a (flexible) textuality in an attempt of the subject to understand it in an intelligible way, it may be that the Holocaust memories are not entirely lost – on the contrary. Although we are not touching it in its form of an imagined source, it is the presence of its textual representatives – interpretations and representations – that keep the knowledge of the Holocaust vivid; and as the textual dimension of the Holocaust evolves, the knowledge about the Holocaust broadens, provoking the continuity of further discussions, further asking questions and searching for the possible answers relevant for the present time and space, which is precisely what keeps the Holocaust from not being forgotten. It is only by the continual speech – continual production of the textuality of any kind that keeps the platform of any knowledge alive – and the Holocaust knowledge is certainly an important, actual and relevant knowledge not only for the Jewish history of a certain place, but also for a wider social history, thus becoming a great responsibility.

### Communicating the Holocaust

In this part of the paper we shall discuss some of the questions that come with this kind of Holocaust representation and research being based on the Internet as a digital archive, a database of personal memories and documents structured for the viewing public. The questions I want to ask are: what specific aspects does the media form of the Internet bring, and secondly, how can we position such a representation within the contested field of the Holocaust Studies today?

From the start we are faced with the issue of defining this project. Is it an archive? It certainly is that, but one with addition of structured ways of interacting with these information. We could then call it a database, as Lev Manovich explains, “a collections of items on which the user can perform various operations: view, navigate, search” (Manovich 2002, 194). Both of these terms have value for analysis, archive as a significant part of the answer to the question why this project exist in this form. Modern society has been drawn to archives, especially photographic archives ever since the rise of this technology. Database on the other hand is relevant to the ways in which we organize much of our information today, especially on the



Internet. When we talk about this project it is important to stress that the medium of the Internet is specific in as much, as Sarah Cook writes, it is „both where and how the work is made and displayed“ (Cameron & Kenderdine 2010, 117).

The database itself is structured in the way of providing us with people as historical sources of information about Jewish life in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, who through interviews available in video, audio and text on the website in turn provide information about themselves and others who are no longer present, as historical persons. The core of the research is set in photographic documents of these people lives. The interface of the database with tagging software (like Facebook offers) presents us with profiles of people with photographs of their lives, timeline of their birth, work life and residence, together with short texts, stories, describing their everyday experiences. The general idea comes with making accessible the material gathered for researches all around the world, as well as a structured online presentation aimed at a viewing public.

Our understanding of the Holocaust has mostly been guided by searching for *collective memory* of this event. Anne Whitehead quotes Wulf Kanesteiner in his definition of collective memory as a „shared communication about the meaning of the past“ (Whitehead 2009, 130). Many authors have rightly questioned the probability of success of this goal or even its legitimacy. It is this sort of universalizing the Holocaust that the Internet on the first look invites us to consider, that we must avoid in our reading. By presenting a collection of memories and photographic documents of Jewish population in Serbia what we get is only part of the story of destruction and trauma, closely tied to the contexts of Yugoslav and Serbian society. The Internet even more further develops the idea of universal Holocaust memory or history, gives voices to the many different opinions and consequences of it. It opens up a *space* that turns away from the shrine-like memorial type of the Holocaust representation to different and less controlled public reception and creativity. What is perhaps global about this project is the usability of its material outside of Serbian context. What we see here are two separate forms of usability which come from the Internet mediation, one which is an uncontrollable and unsystematic dissemination and re-usage of material for many different purposes, and the other which presents the digital flow of the research material over the Western world and beyond. Not only can others now take these materials for their own Holocaust memory research and projects, they by default share the ownership of it. It is this open source logic and practice that has proved most successful in recent explosive development of technology. Even though this database is set on the Internet, it is presented in Serbian language and therefore intended for Serbian reading public. This is important aspects that along with the issues that come with *digital divide* undermine the idea of the Internet as a universal medium. On the Internet we cannot pinpoint a specific geographical space we would call *Serbian Internet*, yet such a space can be conjured up through accessibility of the online material regarding both language and local contexts. Today's Web is a social space in which regardless of accessibility of



information social rules and interests dictate dissemination and recieval of information. The digital archive called *Portraits and Memories of Jewish Community in Serbia before the Holocaust* is made specifically for this part of cyberspace, motivated by dealing with collective memory and politics of memory in Serbia. It is perhaps by analyzing the impact, dissemination and reactions to this material on the Serbian Internet space that we can learn more about the possibilities the Internet as a medium offers in dealing with subjects such as traumatic memories as well as better understanding the motions and themes of Serbian cyberspace.

Serving as both archive and structured multimedia presentation of information, this project brings us into a contested world of museum and artistic practices affected by new media technologies. Museum practices have been strongly affected by two dominant discourses in using digital technologies - that of Jean Baudrillard (Baudrillard 1982, 1994) and Walter Benjamin (Benjamin 1970), of loss of *aura* as authenticity of an original work of art and the world of simulacrum, of copies without referent, hyper-reality spectacle. There is a still present dichotomy between the *real* and the *copy* in context of contemporary museum practices. As Fiona Cameron who was particularly interested in analyzing this pair writes: „Digital historical objects are (still, my emphasis) tied up with the fantasy of seizing the real, suspending the real, exposing the real, knowing the real, unmasking the real“ (Cameron & Kenderdine 2010, 69). There is an intention to transfer some of the original photographs into a Jewish Historical Museum archive for preservation, but most of these documents will continue to exist solely in their digital form. Still the importance of the physical space and objects still being present in any exhibition are felt in this project as well. The main focus is put on an exhibition of the photographs collected and stories behind them. We can tie this to some extent to the low development of digital culture by most institutions in Serbia, but nevertheless the prevalent focus is that of presenting the physical object in a designated exhibition space. Museums and other cultural institutions worldwide are only now coming to terms with situation where their visitors can now get hold of information and knowledge online and doing so in an inherently interactive manner.

When dealing with Internet as place of *exhibition* what Gordon Fyfe calls „institutional claims of authority“ gets lost in uncharted vastness of cyberspace, at least for now (2010, 52). Sarah Cook similarly writes that in dealing with online projects artist manage to „resist both political and economic agendas in the creation and distribution of their site-specific artworks...“ (2010, 128). This is true in as much as the Internet is still politically unclaimed field, and this fact can be particularly significant when dealing with such pressure saturated topics as is the question of Holocaust remembrance in Serbia. What we experience on the Internet is the primacy of the social use of both technologies involved and subjects any online project deals with. The Internet is a people (social)? medium; it does not address a single group. Nor can anything placed on the Web be kept in a fixed frame of meaning. Even though there are many programs that focus on the Holocaust education and remembrance in all public



spheres, they are always presented with a challenge of bridging the gap between their already informed, goal oriented platforms and often disinterested public discourse. When we free *the Holocaust* from the many institutional frames we find ourselves in an environment that more than representing starts to deal with these many different contexts of the Holocaust on a much larger and diverse scale.

It should be noted that questions of preserving digital material of any sort has only recently gained significance. Preserving what is dubbed *digital heritage* is tied closely with issues from hardware and software out datedness, ease of deleting whole archives in matter of seconds, loss of technical knowledge and institutional management problems (2010, 245-261). It is therefore a problem in its own right keeping in function for a longer period of time any digital archive. This kind of preservation work will most likely not be conducted in its online space, but will present a challenge for Jewish Historical Museum in Belgrade that will harbor the immense size of digital material gathered during the project research phase. What actually characterizes the online part of the project was best explained by Wolfgang Ernst when he says: „...media analysis indicates that the future cultural emphasis will be rather on permanent transfer. There is already an implosion of storage into processual data flows, a different economy of the archive as dynamic agency online“ (Ernst 2013, 98).

Okwui Enwezor writes in his analysis of photographic archives that it is the photograph itself within the archive that always carries a certain surplus value and that surplus value is what moves further creativity (Enwezor 2008). When dealing with an archive, especially the one on the Internet, it is always the person reading these images that is controlling and creating meaning of what is encountered. We cannot of course view any archive as a random and meaningless collection without any presupposed value, this value is there from the very start, when we decide what is worth making an archive of. New media term *user* has been particularly useful in illuminating this form of relationship that any subject has when dealing with online material. On the Internet, we as viewers of content are also active participants not only in consuming the information as such, but in our ability to make further use of digital material offered. Images, and I would add all sorts of digital information in the information age, as Ron Burnett writes, seizes to be „purveyors of meaning and become contingent spheres of influence“ (Burnet 2004, 59). This is perhaps the most alarming aspect of Holocaust representation in cyberspace. Images and stories of people who lost their lives or suffered trauma that never left them, to which we give open access to all users of the Internet. What can possibly become of those images doesn't have to all follow the dictum phrased by Terrence Des Pres: “The Holocaust shall be approached as a solemn or even a sacred event, with a seriousness admitting no response that might obscure its enormity or dishonor its dead“ (Copley 2010, 3).

Robert Eaglestone spoke widely of history being the dominant form of the Holocaust representation in the past (Eaglestone 2004). By the rubric of history we can also count in survivor testimonies, photographic, video and musical documents left over from the Nazi

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regime. This sort of material has been used for decades in attempts to respectfully convey the personal horror and stories of both Holocaust survivors and those who are dead. Yet, it wasn't long before many art and fiction creations dealing with the subject of the Holocaust came to life, bringing with it discomfort and questions of Holocaust representation with most media and voices. This stream provided stronghold and legitimacy to historical and documentary discourses on this topic, within institutional, media and genre framework. These worries far from creating the enormous wave of creation *inspired* by the Holocaust, opened up the academic discourse to taking seriously many unorthodox Holocaust representations in the past decades. I would argue that both these different forms of Holocaust representations and representations we can find today on the Internet share something in common.

I want to take some points Jessica Copley makes when she speaks about the Holocaust representation in world famous comic by Art Spiegelman *Maus* and short animated video *Silence* by Orly Yadin and Sylvie Bringas (Copley 2008). Art Spiegelman's *Maus* is an autobiographical comic book fiction that describes the relationship of Art with his Holocaust survivor father Vladek, and many issues with *post-memory*, as well as ruptures of memory fabric that he encounters. The short animated movie *Silence* presents us with a collage of impressions in different animation styles of a life story of another person dealing with Holocaust memory, a child survivor Tana Ross. Tana Ross was saved as a baby from Theresienstadt ghetto and brought to Sweden after the war where she was asked to remain silent of her experience. Jessica Copley illuminates for us that these much criticized examples of the Holocaust representation offer different, individual ways and aspects of dealing with the Holocaust memory. As she writes: "while a conventional narrative creates a level of mediation between the narrated events and their reader, the comic book has an almost filmic quality which plunges the reader inside the text, bringing them face-to-face with the events portrayed" (2008, 3). Also when analyzing *Silence* she writes that animation "...facilitates the exposition of the psychological effects of the war from a child's perspective in a manner which a more 'realistic' film technique could never achieve" (2008, 8). Comic book format as well as animation techniques provide tools for communicating these many layered experiences and thoughts. Both *Maus* and *Silence* in their different approaches express their own inability to fathom or understand the Holocaust. As was discussed in the first part of the paper, we can hope to come to better understanding of its impact on our societies. Only through these many and diverse texts about the Holocaust Internet with its hyperlinked and disseminative characteristics makes possible producing, sharing and reusing these texts on a much larger scale. As Ron Burnett writes "...as a sphere of influence, networks create the 'possibility' of interaction and exchange of information and meanings" (Burnett 2004, 62). Internet forces us to reconsider our views and uses any representation offers. Wolfgang Ernst in his study of digital archives and their relation to memory notes: "Although the traditional archive used to be a rather static memory, the notion of the archive in Internet communication tends to move the archive toward an



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economy of circulation: permanent transformations and updating. The so-called cyberspace is not primarily about memory as cultural record but rather about a performative form of memory as communication“ (Ernst 2013, 99).

The first generation dealing with Holocaust memory was faced with importance of commemoration and respect towards the deceased, the second generation was left with the burden of collective memory, dealing with it in multiple and mostly personal ways. Today, many of us are two generations a part from the Holocaust memory, and I would suggest that our perception is also changing. As I already mentioned, one of the problems with Holocaust representation on the Internet comes with uncontrolled environment where every information is subjected to manipulation and further use. The possibility unimaginable for our grandfathers of the memories of their loved ones being copied and reused in many different ways has become our reality. One must be aware, that by entering the digital flow of the Internet, context of this form of Holocaust representation becomes a networked flux of ever-changing information and at most time is subject of superficial attention. For more than half of the people living in the Western world this kind of mediation of information and meaning has become a strong rooted reality. Anna Reading in her own research of the early Internet days showed that out of 75 young people, most of them found their information about the Holocaust online (Zelizer 2001, 323-340). It is therefore this discourse that has a potential of being a dominant discourse of the Holocaust representation in the future. As neither Internet nor the Holocaust, indeed for very different reasons, are well understood fields, documenting and tracing the impact and reception, or better said, the significance of the information judged by Internet users and its dissemination, will constitute an important body of work for the future research. As Ron Burnett writes: „More often than not, information produces a series of encounters, clashes, and conflicts, all of which *extend* into potential spheres of knowledge and understanding“ (Burnett 2004, 63). Also the nature, if you allow, of digital archive such as this one is such that it only reaches its use in relation to the user, their interaction. The digital space of the Internet brings about the opportunity for Holocaust memory being put through the lens of hyperlinked and many-faced discourses of the Internet, bringing about many new forms of understanding and knowledge about this issue. The question I'd like to leave with is: Are we on the verge of stopping to talk about representing and start talking about communicating the Holocaust?

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\*motif from Miliš Bajić's drawing People Numbers

# Representation of the Holocaust in the Balkans in Arts and Media

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Nevena Daković (ed.)



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