

# Deconstructing “Non-spaces”

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*Inquiries into Contemporary Public Art in Budapest from a Feminist Point of View.*

By Riánsares Gómez Olmedilla

Submitted to

Central European University

Department of Gender Studies

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Erasmus Mundus Master’s Degree in  
Women’s and Gender Studies.

Main Supervisor: Prof. Dr. habil. Andrea Pető

Support Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Rosemarie Buikema

Budapest, Hungary

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## Abstract

This paper examines different public art interventions developed in Budapest, Hungary. My approach embraces a transdisciplinarity between aesthetics, activism, identity and history. Focusing on the social and spatial consequences implied by the actions, the study explores dialogical approaches to the artwork. Accordingly, I analytically examine the concepts of “democracy”, “publicness” and “identity” in their interconnectedness with the projects. Moreover, understanding the city as a conceptualized bounded space structured around gendered binaries, I explore public art in terms of its potential to disrupt the dichotomous approach. As a consequence, my argument deals with the transgression of geographical and corporal binaries as a feminist strategy of resistance. Throughout my study, I reflect on the concept of space as something that does not derive from the physical context, on the hierarchy established between vision and the other senses, and on the conceptualized masculine public sphere. Moreover, I examine the connection between Hungarian social history and the projects. Thus, this study aims to explore how the different interventions redefine public space through horizontal participation, and how audience and the artist(s) reinterpret and redefine paradigms and identities in a fluid and volatile experience of relatedness with the artwork.

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This study is dedicated to the loving memory of my friend and dog Hugo who taught me another kind of communication.

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## 1. Introduction

Traditionally, art production is examined independently, as if it were not affected by its surroundings. This approach also affects the study of public art. Art historians and critics normally analyze cultural production independently and the individuality of the artist. In this study I argue that this approach lays its foundations on the categories established to structure our knowledge.

Since I was a child I have learnt to locate myself in opposition to the other. The identification of the other defines my identity as woman/man; academic/activist; young/old; artist/theorist, etc dragging in that movement an implied hierarchy. However, I believe that something should go beyond this dichotomous approach. This oppositional thinking establishes hierarchies among fixed definitions of our identities. My feminist approach attempts to go beyond them in the analysis of public art.

In addition, spaces do not escape from this dichotomous paradigm. Focusing my study on the conceptualized city, I argue that urban spaces are organized around static geographical boundaries that structure the access to the public domain of political and social participation. While emotional and personal items are labeled as private, the conceptualized gendered city identifies the public domain with masculine values of reason and intellect.

These implied hierarchies built upon oppositional thinking are strengthened under conservative environments, when other issues such as economic aspects are considered more relevant. In this economic environment, the structural causes of inequality are forgotten, thus dissenting bodies continue to be excluded from the public domain. Both Hungary and Spain are now dominated by this conservative atmosphere known as “crisis.” I note parallels between the current Hungarian environment and my own lived experiences. During the

Spanish protests of May 2011, I realized how bodies are excluded from the public sphere of participation due to their social categorization. In this regard, social movements sometimes continue the same logic, establishing a hierarchy upon the supposed relevant issues and the other ones, such as gender inequality. In doing so, they do not embrace the process as the real achievement.

As a consequence, I aim to explore the dynamics that perpetuate this exclusion of the dissenting bodies in public spaces. Thus, I attempt to analyze how some public art interventions developed in Hungary have the potential to subvert hierarchical binaries throughout the process and the engagement of the traditionally considered irrelevant domains, in relation to the inanimate matter and the city.

Therefore, I aim to explore public art's potential to transgress oppositional thinking in the gendered conceptualized city, the hierarchy of the senses and the connectedness with inanimate matter. With this in mind, I introduce my methodological approach in chapter 2. In chapters 3 and 4, I review the relevant literature concerning my inquiries, and in the process, I create my own theoretical framework built upon the concepts of democracy, public sphere, space and identity.

In the second part of the study, I explore different Hungarian art interventions focusing on different aspects. In chapter 5, I focus on a more inclusive and horizontal democracy. Therefore, through the analysis of the community art project "20 Forintos Operett," I examine its strategies to involve dissenting bodies, lived experiences and emotions labeled as private in the public sphere. In chapter 6, I aim to challenge traditional aesthetics paradigms through a study of "The Eight Sea-exhibition camp" and "PLACCC Festival." As a consequence, I analyze the definition of "public" and public art strategies to challenge the hierarchy of the senses established in the approaches to the artwork.

Finally, in chapter 7, I focus my study on the individual and internal experience of the audience, the artwork and the artist through two experiences developed by the activist groups Magyar Kétfarkú Kutya Part and 4K!. In the analysis, I examine the possibilities to turn empty non-places into public spaces through dialogical art interventions.

## 2. Methodology

On the whole, I analyze contemporary public art interventions in Budapest within its fluid border between politics, aesthetics and activism. I explore them in the conservative moment Hungary is currently living, as I explain in chapter 3. Conservative historical environments are normally considered periods when discrimination around categories such as class, gender, age, race or religion increase. The study of *dichotomical categories* has been a main topic in feminist and postcolonial studies. Many scholars have analyzed the power relations established in dichotomical frameworks of oppositions, such as inclusion/exclusion (Gregorio, 2004), public/private (Rosaldo, 1979), or production/reproductive systems (Narotzky, 1995). However, feminist studies have not normally tried to subvert the dichotomical oppositions inscribed in art history.

Although I agree that criticizing the absence of women in art literature is necessary, the point of departure of this study can be summarized in a question posed by Griselda Pollock (1988, p.1). She asks, “Is adding women to art history the same as producing feminist art history?... As early as 1971, Linda Nochlin warned us against getting into a no-win game by trying to name female Michelangelos’.” As a result my analysis does not focus on women artists but on the potentiality of the art interventions in the disruption of *geographical and corporal binaries* as a strategy of feminist resistance. Throughout my study, I focus on three main research questions: a) the definition of public as something that does not derive from physical space; b) the hierarchy established among vision and the other senses; c) and the parallelism among space and a masculine view (Miles, 1999).

Subsequently, my argumentation will examine the concept of “publicness,” “democracy,” and the different strategies carried out in public art through a review of the written theory in chapters 3 and 4, and the analysis of Hungarian artistic collectives’

interventions in chapters 5, 6, and 7. I have chosen the art interventions raised by “20 Forintos Operett,” “PLACCC Festival,” “Magyar Kétfarkú Kutya Párt,” and “4k!” because of the social and political implications that they attempt to challenge in the Hungarian public domain. My methodology encompasses qualitative interviews to participant observation and content analysis as I explain later in this chapter.

## 2.1. Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is commonly defined as a method that links different disciplines in a horizontal and transdisciplinarity way (Denzin, 1998). Therefore, in this study I attempt to open a *dialogue* between my academic background in art history and social anthropology and my experiences as an activist in the social movements. Although the collectives analyzed are not self-considered feminist, nor do they focus on feminist topics, my research techniques attempt to deal with the feminist inheritance. Therefore, as I have already stated, I analyze geographical binaries as a cause of inequality forgotten in art history literature (Olesen, 2003). My attempt is to carry out *horizontal* qualitative research in which the participants are active researchers in the study (Code, 1991). As I explain in chapter 3, the masculine domain is normally related to rational and abstract concepts, while the feminine is associated with emotional aspects. Therefore, I am interested in how the interventions can bring that supposed private domains into an organized and rational conceptualized structure of the city.

My research does not attempt to be an objective study, and I am aware that my personal experiences as a middle class, white, Spanish feminist have influenced the way I got engaged in the research. The political and economic conservative environment Spain is currently living has influenced the approach to the case of study. I am concerned about my *own location* while exploring the Hungarian environment (Rich, 1986; Haraway, 1988). At

the same time, I actively participate in some of the art interventions carried by the collectives, such as the “The Eight Sea-exhibition camp.”

### Research process

The methods to collect the empirical material have focused on six sources of evidence: documentation, archival records, physical artifacts, direct observations, interviews and participant-observation (Yin, 1988), as I am going to explain later on this section. Prior to collecting the empirical material, I have reflected on the methodology suitable for the study. *Intersectionality* has been commonly taken into consideration as a feminist technique, since Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) first coined it in order to embrace all power relations in social research (structural, political and representational). However, it has been developed in different ways in the last years. Leslie McCall (2005), for instance, introduces three different approaches to it: *categorical complexity* (rejects categories), *intercategorical complexity* (uses categories strategically), and *intracategorical complexity* (in between). Intracategorical complexity aims to analyze the boundary-making itself, in that way rejecting fixed and static categories. Along the lines of Leslie McCall, Haraway (1985) explored the cyborg as a way to undermine binaries (humans, animals and machines), while others emphasized the “doing” over the matter (Barad, 2003; Butler, 1990).

Taking into consideration my aim to disrupt oppositional thinking in art analysis, I consider not only Leslie McCall’s (2005) intracategorical complexity approach, but more specifically Jasbir Puar’s (2011) queer assemblages as a suitable method. Puar points out the reification of binaries that Crenshaw’s intersectionality (1989) unconsciously develops: “But, in precisely in the act of performing this intervention, it also produces an ironic reification of sexual difference as a/the foundational one that needs to be disrupted –that is to say, sexual and gender difference is understood as the constant from which there are variants” (Puar, 2011, p.50). Subsequently, in my analysis I do not focus on women and men participants but

in the relatedness among the object (artifact/place) and the subject (participants/experiences). On the other hand, I do not want to criticize intersectionality studies, but my aim is to explore new possibilities to analyze the art interventions. I do not consider there to be a right way to analyze nor understand culture. What appears in this study is my own personal attempt influenced by my experiences, knowledge and relationships with the participants.

With this in mind, I have explored public art interventions carried out in Budapest from 2006 to 2013 through an analysis of the scholarly and non-scholarly literature, archival records, physical artifacts, direct observations, interviews and participant observation. As I do not understand Hungarian, I have specially paid attention to content analysis, participant observation and unstructured interviews as the suitable techniques in order to collect the empirical material. The fieldwork has been developed from February to May 2013 in Budapest. The theoretical and spatial implications of Hungary, relevant to my study, are examined in chapter 3 and 4.

On the whole, the fieldwork design has been continuously rethought and reformulated. Valerie J. Janesick (2003) suggests the metaphor of *choreography* to visualize the complexity in the research design. She highlights how a research methodology is always changing, while stating that it cannot be fixed to only one approach. I have utilized improvisation, while reviewing the research questions. For instance, when we first face an interview, we have to be aware of the unexpected changes that can affect our methodological approach. It is important to bring an open stance towards the fieldwork.

First of all, I have done a deep analysis of the previous literature written on the topic. The main aim is to get familiar with the specific concepts, the Hungarian situation and the artistic environment. At the same time, this analysis provides me tools to engage with the participants. On the other hand, due to the broad literature published, I specially focus on the

analysis of politically-engaged artistic interventions. On the whole, public art literature is organized among the analysis of commissioned/sponsored and community engaged public art. As the reader can explore in chapters 3 and 4, I pay special attention to the literature that analyses art as a process rather than an object, involving the audience as active participants.

At the same time, I have also done content analysis of pictures, videos, fanzines, and statements written or recorded by the different collectives and the participants of the artistic interventions. The different collectives provide me with some of this material (they have previously collected it by themselves). At the same time, I have done research through internet sources and archival ones. With this virtual ethnography, I conceive of the internet as an empirical and dialectical space where another kinds of activism is possible. On the other hand, I consider that not everybody has access to a computer, nor an internet connection, thus the space continues excluding bodies. Nevertheless, due to the broad topic of virtual activism, I have specially focused on the interventions raised in conceptualized empirical locations.

Additionally, from February 2013 to May 2013 I have carried out seven in-depth interviews, several informal conversations<sup>1</sup> and participant observation in the art interventions and the collectives' regular meetings. As I have already stated earlier in this chapter, I consider the participants as active agents in the research, trying to develop a horizontal way of doing research (Denzin, 1998). Therefore, I locate myself not only in this personal text, but also in the empirical fieldwork, making the participants aware of my own location as a middle class, white, Spanish feminist activist, and of the main aims of my research (Rich, 1986; Haraway, 1988). For instance, in several occasions, the participants have asked me about my participation in the Indignados' movement<sup>2</sup> in order to create a connection between Spanish

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<sup>1</sup> In Appendix B I mention the interviewees of both the recorded in-depth interviews and the informal conversations cited in the core of the thesis.

<sup>2</sup> Popularly known as the Spanish revolution or the Spanish protest of May 2011.

activist experiences and their own attempts. In my view, we share historical parallels, setting aside the differences, as I explore in chapter 4.

As a result of this, I held seven qualitative interviews as a strategy to collect empirical material. The interviewees have been chosen due to their participation in the interventions as artists, curators, “specialists”<sup>3</sup>, and audience. I have structured the *in-depth interviews* around an agenda with open-ended questions. At the same time, I have normally contacted my interviewees through the internet, while the interviews have always been face to face. Each interview has been tape recorded, with a duration from twenty minutes to four hours. The transcriptions of the tapes have been reviewed for academic analysis. The place chosen to hold the interviews was determined by the own participant, as an attempt to create a comfortable environment. At the same time, following a feminist method of interviewing, I try to involve the participant in the research process. As an example of this, I openly talked about the troubles and difficulties found. At the same way, I paid special attention to the emotions expressed by the interviewee. Moreover, I attempt to involve the interviewee into a conversation instead of being constrained by fixed questions (De Vault, 1990). Ann Oakley (1981), for instance, suggests intimacy, and the importance of believing in the interviewee. On the other hand, the eight informal conversations cited in the thesis have not been tape recorded as the interviewees do not feel comfortable being recorded, and they were mainly held while doing observant participation. However, I took notes of their impressions and opinions in my fieldwork diary.

Taking into account the methodological literature analyzed about interviewing (Fontana & Prokos, 2007), I pay attention not only to the interview design (agenda related with the research questions) but also to the context of the interview: how to introduce myself in the interview and the rapport established between the interviewer and the interviewee.

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<sup>3</sup> Although I refer to them as “specialists” because of their work developed in the public art field, I do not establish hierarchies among the participants’ statements.

Although having designed suitable questions or areas in my in-depth interviews, I have allowed space for *improvisation* (Janesick, 2003). Subsequently, through *creative interviewing* (Douglas, 1985) my purpose is to let the participants feel free to express themselves. At the same time, I accept possible changing situations. My aim is to create fluid movements within the process and our relationships as a participatory practice, turning the interview into a conversation.

Finally, I pay attention to both *emic* and *etic* interpretations. In consequence, I have done participant and direct observations to broaden the empirical material collected. The observations have been made where the artistic interventions have taken place (“Tolnai Lajos utca”, “Corvin-Negyed station”, “Clark Ádám Tér”, and open spaces in district eight of Budapest). I have also attended regular meetings of one of the art collectives (“Pneuma Szov”), and self considered activist cultural spaces (“Siraly”, and “Müszi”). The observations have been registered in my fieldwork diary. However, I have been open to changes in the spaces where observant participation is developed, focusing my gaze on the participants’ attitudes toward each other and the objects that surround them. Each of the actions has been photographed and analyzed. Moreover, in order to design my *observation guide*, I embrace Orum and Neal’s (2010) useful toolkits in analyzing public art. They mainly focus on: a) what is said; b) what is performed; c) where the intervention takes place; d) who the participants are; e) where the participants comes from; f) what the participants think of themselves and of the intervention.

In sum, my purpose is to create knowledge through the mutual participation of the researcher and the participants. Due to this, I have not only done literature analysis, but also participant observation, content analysis and unstructured interviews. At the same time, I try to develop a transparent study, where the difficulties found are also visible.

### Difficulties in field research

Even being a long-discussed debate inside feminism, the dichotomy between “private” and “public” as well as the study of public art concerns many disciplines such as sociology, social anthropology and art history. One of the main difficulties found is related to the literature published. It has been difficult to find public art analysis on the Hungarian case either written in English or published outside of the country, as I explain in chapter 3. Therefore, the reader should be aware that my study has been highly influenced by the literature published in the Western/Euro-American context. Subsequently, the limitations of the study derive in a prior phase from my own position as a foreigner and the theoretical framework available in English. Furthermore, although trying to develop a study that subverts oppositional thinking, I have noticed how I sometimes reproduce it. In my attempt to find specific characteristics of the post-communist countries, I am in some way reinforcing a dichotomy between these countries and the Western/Euro-American environment. Therefore, I have realized how deeply the influence of oppositional thinking limits my study. Although I have tried to constantly reflect on the topic, it has been really difficult to escape from the bias created since my childhood. I have learnt to behave in society in opposition to the other. As a result of this, even though my aim is to create a study that avoids dichotomical categories and overgeneralizations, I sometimes found myself reproducing the same logic I try to subvert (i.e. academy/social movements that exoticize post-communist countries).

In addition, not knowing Hungarian influences my methodological approach. Thus, I have adapted my strategies in order to collect the empirical material. “The translation of language” is an important task when it comes to social research (De la Peña, n.d.). The issue not only has to do with the linguistic level, but also with a deep understanding of the Hungarian context (Whorf, 1967; Jakobson, 1987). As a consequence of this, I consider the participants as active agents of the research. When it refers to the interviews held, I have

taken into account the experience, knowledge and active involvement of the participants. Therefore, my theoretical sampling includes artists, non-artists participants, curators and one urban sociologist. Temple and Edwards (2002) suggest this strategy in order to create dialogue and exchange ideas with the participants. They highlight this strategy, as “particular concepts may therefore have a history, that is, they can be temporally as well spatially differentiated; they also carry emotional connotations that direct equivalents in a different language may not have” (as cited in Gonzalez & Gonzales, 2006, p.195). As a consequence, I specially thank not only the collectives that have carried some of the meetings in both Hungarian and English, but also some of the participants and individuals that have had patience translating and explaining to me the meaning of several Hungarian statements and cultural meanings.

Finally, I have also found difficulties in participant observation. The location of the art interventions have continuously changed. As an example of this, Siraly, one of the cultural centers where I have done observant participation was evicted in March 2013. Similarly, another artistic collective (“4K!”) planned to do an intervention in the “Liberty Statue” that was finally cancelled. As the organizers explained to me, due to political implications, no company wanted to rent them the material needed for the action.

### 3. Literature Review

Current feminist studies have seen in Cartesian philosophy an inherent oppression over women (Irigaray, 1985; Flax, 1983, Langton, 2005). In Langton's opinion, dualism lays the foundations of a model that provokes "the denigration of the senses, the denigration of matter, the divorce of mind from matter" (p. 234). Descartes first introduced this logic that opposes mind and body; emotion and reason. These gendered concepts create a hierarchical logic among the feminine (body/emotion), and the masculine (mind/reason). Although many feminist scholars have analyzed oppositional thinking from different perspectives (Narotzky, 1995; Rosaldo, 1979; Gregorio, 2004), my aim is to analyze geographical dichotomies from a queer assemblage perspective (Puar, 2011), as I explain in chapter 2. Therefore, I do not question the invisibility of women in art history, but rather my attempt is to analyze public art interventions as a bridge between the object (artwork) and the subject (participants). I explore the possibilities of these experiences in connecting the emotional private in a masculine conceptualized domain (Miles, 1999).

The wide public art debate has involved (and still does) different disciplines and contexts that attempt to draw a theoretical base for an analysis that moves beyond traditional aesthetic paradigms. Although I structure the chapter in chronological order, I especially pay attention to art as a process (rather than an object) that embraces participation with the community involved. Trying to set out a sort of *transdisciplinarity* in the study of public art, I not only review the literature written by art historians, but also artists, curators and social researchers. On the other hand, as I explain in chapter 2, my own limitations have made me focus on the literature published in Western countries, instead of Hungarian studies. Nevertheless, I also explore the post-communist cultural environment in a brief section at the end of this chapter.

### 3.1. Genesis: From Site-Specific Artworks to Critical Site-Specific Art (1960s-1980s)

From an historical perspective, many of the authors analyzed set the beginning of public art in the 1960s (Deutsche, 1996; Miles, 1999; Willett, 2007). They normally focus their studies on the site-specificity of the artworks. In doing so, they introduce into the debate a sort of relatedness between the artwork and the place where it is located. Thus, they derive the *publicness* of the artwork from the place where it is situated. As an example of this, John Willett's *Art in a city* was first published in 1967; the same year that other authors identify the genesis of public art (Miles, 1989; Deutsche, 1996). Willett analyzes how art can take the challenge of developing a better society, linking his inquiry to the education of the gaze. Along the lines of Willett (2007), some scholars claim the necessity to create critical theoretical frameworks to analyze artistic interventions (Phillips, 1988).

The concept *site-specific* was introduced into the debate to describe the artworks that derive their publicness from the place where they are situated (Deutsche, 1996). To put it other words, the artworks done in the 1960s were created independently, and later on, they were placed in *open* spaces. There was no relation between the artwork and the environment where they were later inserted. Deutsche (1998) considers that the *inside* of the artwork was separated from the surrounding environment, conceiving of it a “fetishization of context at the aesthetic level”(p.159). Therefore, the concept *site-specific* critically describes a sort of boundary between the artwork and the space. Deutsche also coins the term *critical site-specific art* to embrace a connection between the artwork and the surrounding environment. Therefore, she considers that the spaces are socially constructed, positing an intervention of the artwork in the site. Deutsche states that “the reciprocity between artwork and site altered

the identity of each, blurring the boundaries between them and preparing the ground for a greater participation of art in wider and social practice” (p. 160).

Alternatively, Lucy Lippard (1997) identifies public art historical genesis in the New Deal’s murals (1933-1938). In her historically-oriented analysis, Lippard pays special attention to the artistic interventions done in the 1970s, analyzed in their attempt to *challenge the status quo* established in the art world and the state. She highlights the collective aspect of these artistic performances. This collective approach connected with an activist agenda has enriched my study. However, these issues are mainly addressed in the art interventions and studies published during the 1980s.

### **3.2. Concerning an Activist Agenda and Urban Regeneration in the late 1980s**

Although some art historians started analyzing public art in the late 1960s (Willet, 2007), it is in the 1980s when a more theoretical approach arises. Malcolm Miles (1989) and Arlene Raven (1993) are considered the most relevant scholars of the decade. While Miles focuses this first study on art and urban regeneration in the United Kingdom, Arlene Raven mainly explores (activist) public art in North America.<sup>4</sup>

Arlene Raven (1993) offers insight into the critical issues that the artwork involves. She pays special attention to the political conflicts addressed in the art interventions. By doing this, she introduces the *activist agenda* as an important point of concern in the study of public

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<sup>4</sup> This approach can be linked with traditional art history theories. A traditional approach to contemporary art has commonly identified artistic epicenters from where the avant-garde is spread. Before the First World War, art historians analyzed France and Italy as these aesthetic epicenters. However, in the Inter-War Period (1919-1939), the center moved to Germany (Staatliche Bauhaus, 1919-1933). After the Second World War (1939-1945), the artistic epicenter branched off in two places: Europe and North America. However, we should be aware of the ethnocentrism of this approach, as it supposes no interesting avant-garde outside of the Western area.

Although my approach attempts to explore a Post-Communist country, due to my linguistic limitations, Anglo-Saxon literature has also been an important part of my study.

art. In addition, when exploring *group working* strategy, Raven emphasizes the process over the object. This perspective has been important to my study as it subverts the independence of the object in its connection with the environment, the artist(s) and a static time framework.

From an activist perspective of public art, the German artist Joseph Beuys (1921-1986) introduces the term “Soziale Plastik” to talk about *micro utopian communities* in which art can be a strategy to involve people in small communities. He sheds new light into the debate exploring an empirical way of creating community through the encounter of the participants and the artworks. His approach interests me in the way that inspires a sort of bridge between the body and the object as if the supposed inanimate matter provides and influence people’s behaviors (Chen, 2012). In a similar way, Alejandro Meitin (2007) considers that Beuys’ *Soziale Plastik* attempts to be:

[A]n escape from the aesthetics out of their disciplinary boundaries and their functional sphere. It redirects to a less site-oriented artistic space. It also blurs boundaries between the artist and his/her audience by taking account of the experience of interconnectedness (interwoven subject/object) that was lost in the Enlightenment dualistic philosophies.” (p.2)<sup>5</sup>

From a feminist point of view, this approach is particularly interesting as it challenges the Cartesian way of thinking. The (reason) center is disestablished, involving the whole body in the experience. Connected to his attempt, the anthropology of the senses field explores another way of approaching the physical world that can be linked to posthumanist perspectives. Their attempt is to challenge the hierarchy of the senses established in the

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<sup>5</sup> “un escape de la estética de sus confines disciplinarios y de sus ámbitos operativos por una relocalización a un operar artístico menos espectadorialmente orientado, diluyendo la distancia entre artista y audiencia para recuperar la experiencia de la interconectividad (el entretrejado sujeto/objeto) que fue perdida en el dualismo de las filosofías iluministas” (Meitin, 2007, p.2 own translation)

nineteenth century. As an example of this, Patrizia Di Bello and Gabriel Koureas (2010) point out:

The visual has been privileged as a rational source of knowledge, able to transcend lowly sensuality, while the proximity senses have been marginalized by aesthetics, art history and criticism; disciplines that rely heavily on mechanical and reproduction techniques that have been available since the nineteenth century but only for sight and sound. (p.1)

Many public art theorists have embraced Raven's (1993), and Miles's (1989) perspectives over the years. An activist agenda and the urban regeneration analysis have been essential in the study of public art since the 1980s. On the contrary, public art has also been explored within the avant-garde tradition, involving artists such as Claes Oldenburg or the polemic Richard Serra's Title Arc. Although I focus my study on participatory approaches, we should also pay attention to this. Therefore, I address the issue later in this chapter.

### **Community-sponsored art projects and community art.**

Art historian Rosalyn Deutsche's text *Public Art and its Uses* (1998) sheds new light on the public art theoretical framework by exploring the relationship between public art and urban redevelopment projects. In the text, she critically analyzes redevelopment projects emphasizing their social function. Deutsche considers that "the claim that objective, natural, or universal needs determine the uses of space neutralizes the political conflicts that actually shape urban spaces" (p.158). In her innovative approach, Deutsche highlights the limitations of traditional art history approaches. She considers that public art blurs boundaries between aesthetics and social-awareness. Therefore, an aesthetic perspective moves from the center of analysis. Later on, Kwon (2002) criticizes this approach, as I explain later in this chapter.

To summarize, as the reader can already notice, the *interconnection* between the artwork and the audience/artist is one of the main topics found in public art literature. It challenges a traditional art history perspective that analyzes the artwork (object) in a universal timeless framework (Deutsche, 1996, 1998; Meitin, 2007). To put it other words, these authors consider that the traditional art history perspective produces a separation between art (object) and the environment (subject). Deutsche highlights the importance of the artwork in its relatedness to people's identity (within its encounter with the site). Therefore, she also highlights the process over the object.

At the same time, Deutsche (1998) argues that the "power" takes advantage of public art strategies<sup>6</sup> in order to spread its capitalist propaganda. They spread their ideology through something *beautiful, public, and useful*. "This is the real social function of the new public art: to reify as natural the conditions of the late capitalist city into which it hopes to integrate us" (p.164). In her attempt, Deutsche distinguishes the interventions of "community-sponsored" art projects and "community art projects." By using the term *community-sponsored* art projects she emphasizes a state-imposed way of understanding the community (capitalist propaganda), while *community art projects* address the social-awareness of the dwellers.

Finally, Deutsche supports a "new public art" that challenges the supposed neutrality of public spaces by bringing something that moves beyond *decoration*. To put it in other words, she avoids aesthetics paradigms to explore public art. She considers the artworks as something "integrated" in the space, instead of defining it as something "in" the space. From this perspective, the art interventions should remain independent of urban politics. In my study I connect this supposed neutrality of the public space with the abstract (masculine) value of reason, thus the encounter of people's identities in *open* spaces can be considered a sort of geographical boundary transgression.

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<sup>6</sup> She mainly identifies the state and corporate companies as the "power".

### 3.3. Crossing Boundaries and Challenging the Concept of Community

(1990s-2000s)

In a later article, Patricia Phillips (1998) lays the foundations of a *non-dichotomical* perspective in the study of public art by analyzing the concept “time” and “public”. Grounded in United States of America’s cultural production, she argues that the concept “public” is socially constructed. Built upon Richard Sennett’s theory, she considers “public” as something defined by political, civic transitions, and our individual definition of the “private.” Connected to the feminist analysis of the opposition public/private (Rosaldo, 1979), Phillips explores the definition of *publicness* in public art.

If the ‘public’ in public art is construed not as the audience for the art but as the body of ideas and subjects that artists choose to concentrate on, then public art cannot be examined for its broadness of communication, for its popular reception, for its sensitive sitting. A temporal public art may not offer broad proclamations; it may stir controversy and rage; it may cause confusion; it may occur in nontraditional, marginal, and private places. In such an art the conceptual takes precedence over the more obvious circumstances. (Phillips, 1998, p.298)

Artists and theorists such as Irigaray, Barbara Kruger and Cindy Sherman have addressed this perspective as a strategy of resistance, as Miles (1999) points out. In their definition, publicness embraces not a fixed physical boundary but a juxtaposition of experiences and emotions. Therefore, the private domain (normally connected to emotions, experiences and the feminine) is brought to a traditionally-considered neutral, abstract and conceptualized space. Miles argues that these artists’ attempt is a redefinition of the masculine public realm. At the same time, aside from challenging the idea of temporality in traditional art history, Phillips (1998) argues that the concept of democracy should be achieved through

“conflict.” In her view, public art efficacy derives from the introduction of issues that normally remain in the private. In sum, a static and fixed concept of “publicness” is not only subverted in Phillips’ perspective, but also she emphasizes the idea of participatory democracy through conflict.

This *participatory approach* is also embraced by other theorists and artists in their attempt to challenge social structures. For instance, the feminist artist Suzanne Lacy<sup>7</sup> (1995) coins the term “new genre public art” to explore successful public art interventions that connect the community and the artist in the issues addressed. Similarly to Deutsche (1996), Lacy highlights the process over the object. In Lacy’s definition of *new genre public art*, the artist is just the one who opens a dialectic space of encounters to non-artists’ creativity.

### **An attempt to disrupt formerly defined concepts**

As the reader would probably have noticed, the literature reviewed avoids traditional aesthetics paradigms and fixed concepts. In an attempt to challenge social structures creating a sort of interconnection between the artwork (object) and the people involved (artist, community), the issues addressed in the interventions vary (i.e. capitalism, democracy, redefinition of the urban space). On the whole, the post-1980s authors analyzed avoid modernist-sponsored monuments. They consider these projects unsuccessful, as they do not involve the community nor embrace an activist agenda (Mitchell, 1990).

In addition, I consider Gablik’s (1991) attempt to challenge traditional aesthetics paradigms an inspirational one in my study. By claiming “that the most fruitful developments are likely to take place where these opposing lines of thought meet” (p.9), she develops a kind of boundary-crossing approach. She criticizes traditional aesthetics paradigms, as they value both the artist’s individuality and the object independence. By doing this, she moves from a

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<sup>7</sup> She developed a project called “Three Weeks in May” (1977) with the collaboration of Leslie Labowitz, in which they addressed identity issues as well as sexual violence against women.

perspective that explores the artworks as objects separated from the surrounded environment. At the same time, she highlights public art's potential to challenge a Cartesian representation of space that is founded on dichotomies (object/subject). As I have advanced earlier in this chapter, subverting an analysis based on oppositional thinking is one of my main aims.

On the other hand, Alison Green (2013) argues that contemporary public art interventions already include temporality and awareness of the surrounding environment. Therefore, the inquiry moves to the real political effect these interventions could actually have achieved. In her study, Green explores the possibilities to address an effective activist agenda in the interventions. In the last years, universities, cultural centers and institutional policies have opened up spaces to study and promote public art projects. Different sponsored programs have taken advantage of public art strategies to spread their ideology (Deutsche, 1998). This has also affected the Hungarian case, as I explore later in this chapter. Does this environment erase the activist purposes these actions attempt to have?<sup>8</sup>

### Literature review of the late 1990s- nowadays

The art historian and curator Alison Green (2013) draws attention to Lippard (1997), Kester (2004) and Kwon (2002) in her analysis of relevant public art literature. A connection between the space and arts is highlighted in Lippard's perspective that analytically uses the concepts of "locality" and "place" to explore "innovative art practices". Her study is particularly interesting as she moves from big cities to small villages and suburbs. Although Lippard does not specify the practices done (i.e. photography, sculpture, performance), she emphasizes "*provocation*" as a successful strategy to build a dialogue between the art intervention and the place. Lippard also addresses an earlier debate in public art literature. She

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<sup>8</sup> In fact, I have found a lot of studies that analyze the economic consequences of public art interventions. For instance, Annabel Jackson Associates point out that the intervention: "Attracts visitors and generates local spending; Supports artists; Changes professional work practices; Improves the image of places; builds support for public art; Increases land values" (Annabel Jackson Associates, 2007, p.8-9).

critically opposes the term “*place-specific*” to the former “*site-specific*” to examine artworks imposed on the place (place-specific), instead of being created from the place (site-specific). In her own words, she “is concerned not with the history *of* nature and the landscape but with the historical narrative as it is written *in* the landscape or place by the people who live or lived there”(p.7). Therefore, Lippard’s definition of site-specific moves from the traditional one established in the 1980s.

On the other hand, coming back to one perspective advanced earlier in this chapter, Miles (1999) explores the relation between activism and urban regeneration in a later work. In *Art, Space and the City. Public Art and Urban Futures*, he severely criticizes the modernist influences embracing new technologies from a poststructuralist perspective. Miles considers that “the reception of public art, then, crosses the gendered boundaries of public and private domains, just as public issues are not bounded by space and television and electronic media are public in terms of access but consumed in domestic spaces and controlled by corporate interests”(p. 36). In doing so, he transgresses the physical spaces to open new possibilities of resistance on the web. He structures his analysis into three main topics: the validity of the artwork; the education level required to understand it; and its physical dimensions. He argues that the city is not neutral, but compounded by ideologies, hence his study also focuses on the power relations inserted in the “structured” city, as the exclusion of the body. Miles’ perspective analytically uses gender, class, age and ethnicity categories to study the logic of exclusion in a conceptualized city. In sum, his approach can be connected to Crenshaw’s interdisciplinary (1989). Nevertheless, as I explore in chapter 2, my study attempts to embrace Puar’s (2011) queer assemblages in the study of gendered geographies. Consequently, I do not explore male or female bodies in public art interventions, but the blurred boundary of spaces and encounters among the participants, the artists and the artworks.

Picking up the topic of an activist agenda in site-specific community actions again, some scholars have focused their study on the social transformations that public art can really develop (Kester, 2004; Kwon, 2002). While Kwon severely criticizes the lack of freedom given to the artist in socially engaged “new genre public art” from a traditional aesthetic approach, Kester focuses his study on the individual autonomy in community art projects. According to Kwon, new genre public art moves from the aesthetic field, becoming a sort of “social work.” At the same time, Kwon argues that the interventions that attempt to challenge social structures do not achieve real goals. In relation to this, she distinguishes “site-oriented” practices (social-awareness) from “discursive-art” (aesthetic purposes).

Grant Kester (2004), on the contrary, introduces the term “Dialogic art” to explore public art from a theoretical, aesthetic and communitarian perspective. He introduces Deleuze and Guattari’s (1988) theory in his analysis of the interventions that attempt to create community, thus considering identity as something fluid and nomadic. By doing so, Kester considers that the interventions that aim to “represent” a community embody *violence*. At the same time, in his opinion, the only “dialogical” or “activist art” practices that have achieved their goals are the ones that escape from critical literature, moving from the academic literature to the margins.

Finally, although the public art theories developed throughout these decades, and explored in this chapter, unfasten spatial boundaries, many authors continue defining the publicness of public art in relation to the site where it is located (Orum & Neal, 2010). In doing so, they still embrace a Habermasian definition of public sphere, as I examine in chapter 4.

### 3.4. Literature in the Context of Post-Communist Europe

As I have advanced in chapter 2, the limitations of my study also derive from the literature found. It has not been easy to find authors that explore public art in post-communist<sup>9</sup> countries that either do not write in their mother tongue or publish outside of their countries. This *invisibility* is examined by some scholars, who claim that the production is not so limited, but the works are not translated and distributed outside these countries, especially in scholarly texts (Pejić, 2010; Pachmanová, 2010). As an example of this, Pachmanová states:

None of these books that were published in English in the Anglo-Saxon world has any significant reference to Eastern Europe. The situation is better in non-academic publications, such as exhibition catalogues. However, even here, Eastern European women artists are often not only underrepresented, but without proper analysis of the social, cultural, and political contexts of their work, they are also misinterpreted. (p.37)

Moreover, Martina Pachmanová (2010) argues that a particular approach should be taken when examining art practices in post-communist countries because of its particular political, cultural and social environment. Therefore, she analyses women artists from this perspective, in which different concepts should be reconsidered, such as artists' non-identification with feminism.<sup>10</sup> Although I do not want to either exoticize or generalize Hungarian's practices as a whole, I take account of its history in my study.

In spite of this invisibility, some attempts have been done. As an example of this, IRWIN (2006) tries to create a sort of cartography of contemporary art in post-communist

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<sup>9</sup> Although some authors use the terms Eastern countries and Central European countries in their analysis, I prefer Post-Communist countries as I explain in chapter 4.

<sup>10</sup> Taking the example of Czech women artists, she explains how "although the work of many of the interviewed artists contained critical aspects related to body politics and women's and men's roles in society, they perceived their work as part of a universal/ist and, thus, genderless activity." (Pachmanová, 2010, p.38)

countries. In a similar way, *Gender Check* is a project commissioned by the Erste Foundation and edited by Pejić (2010), that aims to support artistic publications in this area that examine "how gender affects the conception, reception, and interpretation of art" (p. 14). In this regard, Pachmanová (2010) identifies an ambivalence of the women artists towards a feminist agenda with a fear of "ghettoization". However, she argues that they actually address (in the pre-1989 period and afterwards) feminist issues, such as identity or the body. At the same time, Pachmanová also embraces the concept of "active Otherness" to explore artists'<sup>11</sup> attempt "to resist the colonializing and chauvinistic gaze of Western European women from the 'East' but also subvert the sometimes similarly patronizing image of the East as pictured by Western feminist" (p. 46).

Along the lines of *Gender Check*, edited by Pejić (2010), Piotrowski (2012) creates a theoretical base to examine art in post-communist countries. He analytically uses the terms "Agoraphilia" and "Agoraphobia" to explore the artwork of well-known artists such as Krzysztof Wodiczko, Dorota Nieznalska, or Marina Abramovic that address an activist agenda in their projects. By doing so, Piotrowski connects the communist memory, art, public sphere and activism, as I explain further more in chapter 4.

### **Hungarian political and artistic environment**

Located within a post-communist environment, Hungary draws specificity from other countries that share the same Soviet inheritance. Its political and historical events have influenced the artistic environment of the country. Therefore, the connection among art and the political and historical context is emphasized in this particular case. Subsequently, within this section, I aim to draw an overview of the Hungarian case throughout different historical

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<sup>11</sup> She explains this "active Otherness" position through the work of Badovinac

events considered turning points. I identify the Hungarian Revolution of 1956; the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989; and the 2006 protests in Hungary as pivotal events.

On the other hand, some scholars argue that women have continued to be excluded in the political participatory spheres over the years (Petö & Szapor, 2004). From the 1918 Bourgeois democratic revolution through 2004, Petö and Szapor draw a sort of continuity of women's lack of participation in political issues. Even when the policies attempt to achieve equality, the real consequences still maintain gendered social structures. For instance, they highlight the elimination of women's political collectives in the Stalinist period and a reinforcement of maternal thinking during the revolution of 1956. That is also the case of Romani population, who suffer marginalization and discrimination in the Hungarian public sphere. As an example of this, during World War II, over thirty thousand Roma were killed in the country. Nowadays, they continue facing discrimination, unemployment, poverty and unequal access to educational resources that normally derives in social immobility (Verdorfer, 1995).

As I already introduced, the Hungarian case is particularly interesting as it shows artistic resistance within a generalized overview of post-communist countries. Although the former Soviet world attempted to create a unified artistic style in the *Socialist Realism*, original reinterpretations of the demands were addressed in Hungarian marginal art (György, 2003). György identifies the Soviet Block's aim to impose a compulsory style based on its practice of totalitarianism and their ideal of *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Nevertheless, Hungary has historically been connected with the community of the West. Hungarian artists under the communist struggle, not being conscious of the market-based society, connect the freedom of the artist with Western arts (mainly abstract expressionist and the "New York School").

Nevertheless, the cultural policies under the Kádár regime changed after the Revolution of 1956. Trying to embrace the society, the Party developed a cultural policy known as the “Three Ts”: “‘Tiltás’, ‘Tűrés’, ‘Támogatás’; ‘Prohibition’, ‘Tolerance’, ‘Support’” (György, 2003, p. 179). Although the Party gave up the idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the cruel revenge after the revolution resulted in hundreds of dissidents’ executions, hanging Imre Nagy, and banning later memorials. I consider that the trauma of this unreflected past has influenced the current artistic practices, as Bálint (2010) also points out.

After the revolution of 1956, the regime did not impose one style, but rather it prohibited art projects that were critical of the system. In this environment, Hungarian Impressionism and a tacky Realism reemerged. However, counter-cultural artists such as Sándor Piczehelyi used the strategies of irony and double meaning to attack the system without being banned. In the period between the late 1970s, and the 1980s a young generation of artists and architects developed strategies of resistance through performances or theatrical events, as the artist group Indigo or The Congress of the Radical Party in Budapest (1988). At the same time, by developing the actions in open spaces, they introduced a new form of resistance. Moreover, in their institutional critique, an emancipatory fight of women was latent (Maja & Fowkes, 2007; György, 2003; Bálint, 2010). This politically engaged strategy is also addressed in the performances and art interventions after 1989. As an example of this, the artists Tibor Várnagy, Miklós Erhardt and Róza El-Hassan argue about the lack of historical and cultural self-knowledge or the fear of (non-allowed) dissidence in an interview compiled by Turai (2003). They claim that the art interventions must embrace an activist agenda.

Later on, with the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 the artistic canon collapsed, and the memory of the revolution became a symbol of the Hungarian avant-garde that still remains. Although revolutionary, the symbol is embraced by both left and right-wing politicians. As an

example of this, the reader should be aware that the current Prime Minister Viktor Orbán gave a speech in the memorials of Imre Nagy celebrated in June 1989. Along the lines of these memorials, Hungarian artists continued to develop politically engaged art in galleries, while the cultural policy changed again to support a supposed freedom of the artists. In the period after 1989, the discourse focuses on memories of the past (Bálint, 2010); while exploring the local context and the meaning of identity (György, 2003).

Moreover, the protests raised in 2006 are a crucial turning point in Hungarian social history. In a moment when the country was facing a terrible economic crisis the Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány publically shows the corruption of the Socialist Party. His explicit declarations about how the party unmasked the economic situation in order to win the elections derive in street riots highly repressed by the police. The event was connected with the revolution of 1956 in the collective memory. In fact, the riots occur in the same period as the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the revolution. Fidesz Party took advantage of the situation by organizing support protests at the edge of the street riots (Riots in Hungary, 2006). After a short period, the conservative party won the elections in 2010. Since then, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has developed a right wing environment that oppresses minorities and centralizes the power. The current government embraces anti-semitism, homophobia and anti-EU rhetoric in their decisions and statements (Hungarian Spectrum, n.d.).

As a consequence the National Cultural policy developed by the current government has been centralized in the figure of the state, as the *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe* (2012) states. Written by Péter Inkei and János Zoltán Szabó, this compendium shows how the cultural administration became part of the Ministry of Human Resources, and the former legal act achievements in the performance arts and film domains were lost. At the same time, it highlights the lack of programs to promote women in culture, and how the art institutions are no longer independent. As an example of this, the former

independent “Hungarian Public Foundation for Creative Art” belongs to Fidesz Party, and the private “Hungarian Soros Foundation” does not economically support Hungarian art projects since 2003. This centralized approach to Culture policy is highly criticized by Associations of artists like NEMA (2012) who states how Hungarian contemporary art have decreased. As an example of this, they show their concern about how “The Hungarian Academy of Arts” that has become a public body in 2011 rules contemporary cultural Institutions and Museums. Women artists face as a consequence multiple discrimination in the artistic field. However, as I already explained, I aim to focus on the transgression of oppositional thinking in the relatedness of the participants and the artwork (Gablik, 1991; Kester, 2004).

### **3.5. Conclusions**

As we have seen, public art literature is very complex and wide. The authors analyzed highlight the limitations of traditional art history approaches to achieve the complexity of the practices. At the same time they explore public art strategies within an activist agenda, through the concepts of time, space and publicness. Although some authors and artists maintain a traditional aesthetic paradigm, others attempt to subvert oppositional thinking. As I have earlier advanced, this approach is crucial in my study. In their analysis, they transgress the artist’s individuality and the object independence in relation to each other and the space where they are inserted, thus focusing on the relatedness of the practice.

The authors reviewed propose public art interventions that go beyond decoration to engage with critical issues that affect the people involved. In doing so, they define the practice in a transdisciplinarity between aesthetics, activism, identity and history. At the same time they highlight the process over the object through communitarian participation. Therefore, they not only emphasize the relatedness of the artistic intervention, but they attempt to create a sort of participatory democracy.

At the same time, if we apply these perspectives to the Hungarian context, the important question should not be what, but how. My inquiries are set around the possible dichotomical disruption, by bringing private concerns to the public space. Moreover, the challenge to analyze public art strategies in relation to conservative ideologies is urgent and controversial nowadays, as we have seen in the Hungarian cultural policies. Taking into account these contributions has been essential to my analysis. Therefore, in chapter 4, I mention some of them again in order to build up my own theoretical framework structured among the concepts of spaces, social spheres and democracy.

## **4. Theoretical Framework**

Women artists face a hostile artistic environment. In my view, questioning that invisibility should not be the unique solution (Pollock, 1988), as it only fits them in the ideal of modernist success. As Gablik (1991) claims:

Art as a closed and isolated system requiring nothing but itself to be itself derives from the objectifying metaphysics of science –the same dualistic model of subject-object cognition that became the prototype for Cartesian thinking in all other disciplines as well. (p.62)

In this regard, other scholars argue that this oppositional representation derives from a masculine logic that structures societies' values around classifications such as gender, language or cultural production (Miles, 1999). Therefore, trying to subvert Cartesian philosophy as I already explain in chapter 2, I explore theories of space, place, participation or the hierarchy of the senses relevant to my study. Subsequently, my theoretical framework not only concerns arts, but also spatial and identity politics.

### **4.1. Post-Communist Europe: Further Considerations**

Hungary is normally identified as a post-communist country. Even though it is essential to look not only in its global aspects, but also in its local ones (György, 2003), as I already explored in chapter 3; what follows in this section is an overview of some theories that concern the general political, historical and social consequences of the former Soviet world. Although I do not want to either overgeneralize or exoticise these countries, in some way I connect with their experiences and situation. Hungary has faced (and is facing) turbulent times like Spain. In some ways, their social history is connected, as both countries have endured dictatorships and similar historical events under different names (Franquismo/Soviet

past; coup d'état of 1981/Revolution of 1956; political transition; Spanish movement of 2011/Hungarian protests of 2006). Although the differences are obvious in the local aspects, I cannot avoid feeling a sort of connection when I face some photos and statements of the political events. For instance, when comparing a political collage of the Hungarian protests of 2006 (figure 1)<sup>12</sup>, and how the Spanish protest were repressed in 2011 (figure 2), I not only feel emotional pain, but also some similarities among both. Both pictures connect a current moment with a painful historical one (tank from the revolution of 1956/police repression during Franquismo) while identifying the cause in the economical system (Ford symbol/El Corte Inglés' label). At the same time, both countries remain in the margins of Europe, in a dialectical or geographical way. As many scholars argue, this is obvious in post-communist countries, as they bear an historical legacy with Europe that was interrupted after World War II (György, 2003; Pachmanová, 2010).

Martina Pachmanová (2010) proposes an “in between” position when approaching the case of post-communist countries, as these countries geographically and historically belong to Europe inheritance. But on the other hand, their Soviet past defines their cultural inheritance as something different, but not as much as the Post-Colonial Other. However, as I argue in chapter 3, the Hungarian case shows differences from other post-communist countries (György, 2003). Nevertheless, this “in between” perspective gives us a chance to contextualize the country beyond two oppositional worlds (Western/The Other). Furthermore, it helps me locate myself when approaching the case. As a foreigner who does not speak Hungarian, understanding the social and historical meaning makes me connect my own lived experiences. At the same time that I try to participate in art interventions (Naples, 2003), I bring with me some bias even though I reflect on them. Moreover, I am nowadays in a nowhere place. Although I know that I cannot come back to Spain due to the difficult and

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<sup>12</sup> See Appendix A.

dangerous political and economic period, I do not know what I should do or where I should go after finishing this master's thesis.

My own personal situation is also connected to the “in-between” perspective when analyzing public art. Instead of emphasizing the problems, this position provides a rich framework of potentiality. Pachmanová (2010) introduces Homi Bhabha to explore a context "in between that reflects the specificity of the local whose aims can produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion" (as cited in Pachmanová, 2010, p.38). When it comes to analyzing the specific artistic experiences in Budapest, I have taken into consideration the “in-between” framework. At that point, the artistic interventions introduce in a public domain critical issues such as homelessness, the communist memory or how the current political moment affects the people. From homelessness to the economic situation, the artists interviewed<sup>13</sup> in a compilation done by Turai (2003) agree in the necessity to address an activist agenda in the artistic interventions. The feminist perspective remains in the analysis of these experiences. It deals with the way in which these “private” topics (lived experiences, emotions) are addressed in the public domain. I want to explore how public art can possibly open a gap “in between” oppositional thinking.

## **4.2. Non-Places; Places and Spaces**

In order to build up my own theoretical framework, I have taken into consideration Marc Augé's (2000) study of “non-places”. He aims to analyze *non-places* in a postmodern context. With the term non-places he refers to places where people transit, but they are not considered significant enough to be defined as “places”. However, he argues that within these non-places the identity is built and defined through the encounter and relationship with other people (i.e.:

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<sup>13</sup> Róza El-Hassan, Tibor Várnagy and Miklós Erhardt

Highway, street, or a market place). In Augé's own terms: "non-places are like palimpsests on which the confused game of identity and relations is continuously rewritten"<sup>14</sup> (p.84).

At the same time, Augé's (2000) analysis is built upon De Certeau (1990) and Merleau-Ponty's theories. Michel De Certeau distinguishes between places and spaces in his study. In his view, it is the encounter of different identities that turns the place into space. As a result, De Certeau considers "space" as an abstract concept defined by the active participation of the dwellers. Similarly, as explained by Augé, Merleau-Ponty distinguishes "geometric" and "existential" spaces. Both "space" and "existential space" draw connections with Fraser's (1995) definition of public sphere, as I explain later in this chapter. Additionally, Augé pays attention to images and time as an analytical category. He takes the challenge to analyze both non-places' pragmatic purposes (i.e.: transportation or leisure), and the relationship between non-places (object) and the people that transit them (subject). He finally embraces a negative perspective of non-places in the "super-modernity" context<sup>15</sup>. Therefore, he metaphorically identifies non-places with *empty* ones. In his own words, "non-places oppose utopia: they exist and they do not stand for any kind of organic society"<sup>16</sup> (p. 114).

Finally, Although Marc Augé (2000) finally embraces a negative perspective; I do not believe that the attempt can be immediately rejected. What does he mean by organic society? Why over individualism is a negative concept? As I examine these concepts later in this chapter, my perspective considers that "public spheres" must embrace differences and conflict rather than dominant consensus (Mouffe, 2010). Nevertheless, it is not normally the case either in the empirical way or the theoretical one.

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<sup>14</sup> "Los no lugares son palimpsestos donde se inscriben sin cesar el juego intrincado de la identidad y de la relación" (Augé, 2000, p.84. Own translation)

<sup>15</sup> He identifies this context's characteristics in the "overabundance of events", the "overabundance of spaces", and "over individualism."

<sup>16</sup> "el no lugar es lo contrario de la utopía: existe y no postula ninguna sociedad orgánica" (Augé, 2000, p.114. Own translation)

### 4.3. Public Spaces

When it comes to define public art, some different questions arise in the debate. Which one is the public space? How is it related to the public sphere? How the spaces are linked to public sphere and democracy? Harding (1996) accepts the challenge to explore public art through the definition of the spatial concepts. He defines public art as the one done in external urban spaces. Although he forgets suburbs and rural spaces (Lippard, 1997), his study still provides us some tools to analyze the practices.

First of all, Harding (1996) understands urban spaces as the ones accessible to everyone, in opposition to galleries and art Museums. In doing so, he does not consider the non-neutrality of the city (Deutsche, 1998; Miles, 1999). Harding argues that the “publicness” of those spaces such as art galleries is limited. On the other hand, Harding also explores site-specific monuments inserted in urban spaces, paying attention to its connection with the surrounded environment. In his attempt to subvert traditional aesthetics’ paradigms, Harding considers that public art challenges traditional considerations of art itself, spreading its influence to democratic challenges. At the same time, he points out the negligence of public art curators to embrace the challenge in their decisions. In my view, although he tries to challenge traditional aesthetics paradigms, he fails in emphasizing the necessity of success (Gablik, 1991).

On the other hand, Harding’s (1996) study of public art and public spaces is especially interesting because he introduces Lawrence Alloway and Barrie Greenbie’s contributions. In their analysis of public spaces, they first coin the terms “Proxemic spaces” and “Dixtemic spaces”.

Proxemic spaces are those which can claim a very defined community or group, such as one might find in the residential areas of cities where people feel a strong territorial

claim to their front street and surrounding area. Dixtemic spaces are those major shared spaces in the centers of towns and cities used by all citizens and visitors. (p.4)

This approach emphasizes the dwellers' spatial and emotional appropriation of urban spaces, helping us understand some implicit purposes of the art interventions as I explore in chapters 5 and 6. Similarly, Rosalyn Deutsche (1998) goes beyond the aesthetic paradigm. She also criticizes the interventions sponsored by the “power”, highlighting the technocratic vision that has been used to take advantage of public art strategies. As I explain in chapter 3, this perspective draws connections with the Hungarian case.. Instead of the critical issues addressed in “new genre public art” (Lacy, 1995), these commissioned projects aim to design *well-managed* and *beautiful* cities. Finally, Deutsche makes us aware of the necessity to address critical issues in the analysis of public art. She introduces a political perspective to study the issue. How does democracy works in the public sphere? Is homelessness identified as the “Other” in order to unify an organic society? Can we build democracy through horizontal and inclusive participation?

#### **4.4. The “Publicness” of Public Art: Public Sphere and Democracy**

The definition of publicness in public art has changed over the years. Although early theories limit the concept to the site where the artwork is emplaced (Willett, 2007), the public sphere is later taken into consideration. On the whole, spatial boundaries among the public and the private domain are blurred. Therefore, I aim to analyze those theories through its relation with public art.

##### **a) Public art theories**

As I explore further more in chapter 3, public art analysis sometimes shows transdisciplinarity among aesthetics, activism and cultural research in their attempt to create a theoretical base

not so limited as traditional art history perspective. As an example of this, I pay special attention to the theories that emphasize the relatedness between the object and the subject while embracing critical issues (Phillips, 1998; Lacy, 1995; Gablik, 1991).

New genre public art proposes a practical way to create community during artistic interventions (Lacy, 1995). Subsequently, the political creativity is valued over the traditionally considered artistic skills. In other words, *new genre public art* can be understood as a means for non-artist participant's creativity. In addition to this, Lacy rejects modernist aesthetics in its relation to the bourgeois realm. She claims that new genre public art challenges social structures in its attempt to build a critical realm to reclaim social responsibility. In doing so, she rejects the bourgeois Habermasian public sphere, as I explore later in this chapter. Similarly, Gablik (1991) also questions the validity of traditional aesthetics. She connects traditional aesthetics paradigms and a masculine conceptualized aim of success built upon the binary object/subject. Therefore, she emphasizes the experience of interconnectedness with the artwork, "re-enchanting" the audience through its body, the object and the environment. In her analysis, the boundaries between matter, time and space are crossed (Barad, 2001).

Along the lines of Gablik (1991) and Lacy (1995), Phillips (1988, 1998) explores public art interventions through its publicness. In Phillips' analysis, the concepts time and space bear relevance. She argues that the publicness of the practice derive from the issues addressed, highlighting issue-based interventions. At the same time, she explicitly considers the concept public as a socially constructed one, in which "the public dimension is a psychological, rather than a physical or environmental construct" (1988, p.93). On the other hand, she also questions the timeless framework where the artwork is inserted in a later article (Phillips, 1998). That is to say, she opposes aesthetic paradigms in the study of public art along the lines of Gablik (1991). In addition, her perspective connects with Mouffe's (2010)

approach to democracy. Mouffe argues that the public sphere should embrace conflict in order to be “democratic”:

The public is diverse, variable, volatile, controversial; and it has its origins in the private lives of all citizens. The encounter of public art is ultimately a private experience; perception outlasts actual experience. It is these rich ambiguities that should provide the subject matter for public art; the temporary provides the flexible, adjustable, and critical vehicle to explore the relationship of lasting values and current events, to enact the idea of the commons in our lives. A conceptualization of the idea of time in public art is a prerequisite for a public life that enables inspired change. (Phillips, 1998, p. 304)

#### **b) Public sphere and democracy**

As I have already advanced, boundaries between the public and the private spaces are fluid, as many scholars have analyzed. However, when we talk about “public sphere,” we inevitably must refer to Jürgen Habermas (2010). He first coined the term to define a dialectic space of mediation between the state and the individuals. As Crossley and Roberts (2004) argue, “agents formed themselves as publics in an effort to control a state which was at once more remote and more demanding”(p.3). Thus, Habermas (1989) defines public sphere as an effective bourgeois space of debate in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. In doing so, he creates a static border between the public and the private domain that supports the public sphere located in coffee houses, newsletters and journals as places of social debate. His definition of “public sphere” is a place where the dwellers deal with social issues through dialogue. Therefore, Habermas supposes political participation in the genesis of the public sphere. On the other hand, he sets the end of a successful public sphere with the participation of non-bourgeois people. On the whole, the Habermasian public sphere is built upon male and

bourgeois values. However, it lays the foundations for a further analysis of political spaces of participation, such as that of Nancy Fraser (1995).

Built upon the Habermasian public sphere, Fraser (1995) severely criticizes it. She introduces a postmodernist perspective in the study of public sphere, where a feminist agenda and a criticism of capitalist societies are embraced (Miles, 2009). Fraser argues that a postmodernist public sphere should address three main characteristics:

Participatory parity requires not merely the bracketing, but rather the elimination, of systematic inequalities;

A postmodern multiplicity of mutually contestatory publics is preferable to a single modern public sphere oriented solely to deliberation;

A postmodern conception of the public sphere must countenance not the exclusion, but the inclusion, of interests and issues that bourgeois masculinist ideology labels 'private' and treats as inadmissible. (p.295)

Along the lines of Fraser (1995), some authors have connected an inclusive public sphere in their analysis of public art (Deutsche, 1996; Miles, 1999). As an example of this, Deutsche severely criticizes Habermas' (1989) perspective, naming its concept, "the lost public sphere." She considers that this sort of exclusion must be avoided, as "Founded, like all impartial totalities, on the loss of others, the lost public sphere closes the borders of the very space that to be democratic must remain incomplete" (p.326).

Moreover, some authors attempt to analyze the public sphere in post-communist countries (Petö & Szapor, 2004; Miles, 2009). While Petö and Szapor outline a type of continuity in Hungarian social history that discriminates against women, Miles avoids the dualistic model in his study. He conceives of the public sphere as something ephemeral and volatile, where the people determine their own values and different identities. He suggests an

open-ended alternative of public sphere. Miles' alternative is built upon a juxtaposition of the "public", "the domestic", and "the personal". In doing so, the public sphere is built upon the political engagement of differences. Both texts draw a sort of identification between the state and the public sphere in the pre-1989 context that nowadays is connected with the capitalist system (becoming private). However, both analyses were published before Fidesz late period. As I argue in chapter 3, the current Hungarian situation faces an historical moment with the capitalist system and centralized politics. Therefore, the situation is more complex, as the population not only has to face a capitalist labor market, but also is suffering an increasing environment that identifies public sphere with the ideals of Fidesz Party. However, marginal and countercultural experiences subvert this perspective in order to highlight a public sphere based on the conflict. As I explore in chapter 5, some public art practices have accepted the challenge in their interventions, introducing critical issues in the public space.

In addition, Piotr Piotrowski (2012) provides an interesting perspective connected to Pachmanová's (2010) "in between" position, as his theoretical framework is built upon Anglo-Saxon literature in the context of post-communist countries. Avoiding "censorship", Piotrowski opposes the terms agoraphilia to agoraphobia. He describes agoraphilia as "the drive to enter the public space, the desire to participate in that space, to shape public life, to perform critical and design functions for the sake of and within the social space" (p. 7). In his attempt to identify a common perspective to approach cultural production in post-communist countries, he argues that the agoraphobic tendencies have not disappeared after the fall of the Iron Curtain (1989), but the power strategies have been refined. He considers the neoliberal market economy, religion, nationalism, and the interest of corporations as the main agoraphobic tendencies. As a consequence, he explores agoraphilic tendencies in arts through critically-engaged interventions that use the strategies of political activism.

Finally, my approach links Miles (2009) and Piotrowski's (2012) subversion of the Habermasian bourgeois public sphere. Therefore, the acceptance of all minorities and excluded groups is essential in the creation of the public sphere. Subsequently, this approach is connected with the idea of democracy based on participation that I explore in the next section.

### **c) Conflict and democracy**

Not just a few public art interventions and analyses aim to build democracy through communitarian participation (Deutsche 1996; Miles 2009; Piotrowski 2012). As a consequence, I explore Mouffe's (2010) concept of "agonistic democracy" as an important part of my theoretical framework to analyze the Hungarian art interventions.

Chantal Mouffe (2010) argues that the critique of total consensus is necessary in a democratic society; hence, its perspective emphasizes conflict. In a later article published in 2007, Mouffe connects the enchantment of conflict with the artistic field, as other authors do (Deutsche, 1996; Piotrowski, 2012). There, she points out the actual cultural environment, where art criticism becomes a strategy for the capitalist system. Although this perspective is not new, she introduces the necessity to unveil the repression of the dominant consensus in critical art. In doing so, she highlights the strategy of dissensus as a suitable one to create democracy based on conflict.

## **4.5. Conclusions**

Although I embrace the "in-between" position as a strategy to connect with the case of study, I also pay attention to the local aspects of it. Therefore, I aim to look for a metaphorical space of transgression of dichotomies and the Cartesian representation of space. In doing so, I

analyze public art interventions in its potentiality to subvert these binaries not only in space, but also in the interwoven subject/object.

As a result of this, I especially pay attention to art as a process that attempts to create community through the participation of non-artist participants. In relation to this, the creation of a democracy based on conflict is crucial to my study, in the attempt to build a horizontal and inclusive society. Subsequently, the issues addressed and the activist strategies are also important to my study. On the other hand, trying to transgress the denigration of the senses (mind/body) in a traditional aesthetic paradigm that values the sight over the other senses, I pay attention of how artist, participants and artwork connect.

Moreover, I embrace a definition of public that already transgresses boundaries. As other scholars have also argued, the concept “public” varies from person to person. I consider that is built upon each own consideration of the personal, the political, the domestic and the private. Therefore there is transgression in bringing traditionally conceptualized private issues to gendered public spaces.

## 5. “20 Forintos Operett”. When the Game Creates Community

“20 Forintos Operett” was a community art project developed in district VIII of Budapest (figure 3)<sup>17</sup> since July till September 2012. It was organized through the collaboration of the open network “Pneuma Szöv”<sup>18</sup>, the German artist collective “Mobile Albania”, the Homeless Artist’ Association “Vagyunk Egyesület” and the musicians collective “Bélamühely”<sup>19</sup>. They aimed to create an open meeting point in the area (figure 3). In their own words, “The ‘20 Forint Operetta’ is a street fantasy designed to foster a common space, a living open society of trust and cooperation through art.” (Pneuma Szöv, 2012, n.pag.)

The planning of the project started in December 2011, when some of the members of Pneuma Szöv began reflecting on the Hungarian public space. After attending the festival “I am visible” organized by the Association Vagyunk Egyesület in January 2012, they decided to build something together that concerns homelessness. Subsequently, they started out with the idea of Brecht’s “Threepenny Opera” and developed it into an issue-based project. The project’s first plan concerned homelessness in district VIII. They did not only wanted to visibilize the situation, but they also aimed to explore potential collective solutions, as we can see in their statements. As an example of this, one of the participants told me in an interview that they wanted to “focus on what is happening on the streets and how we can deal with that or transform it” (S. Günther, personal communication, February 19, 2013)<sup>20</sup>. Therefore, they designed this artistic intervention in an empty lot of the district where performance, fine arts, sculpture, poetry and music would be connected.

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<sup>17</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>18</sup> “Pneuma Szöv” is a creative network founded in 2008 by Sarah Günther, Viktor Markos, Réka Manvárhegyi and Zsuzsa Berecz. Their first projects deal with Budapest air pollution and CIA secret experiments in Hungary.

<sup>19</sup> “Bélamühely Soundart” is an association of Hungarian musicians that attempt to build new instruments and experiment how people relate with music and sounds (<http://belamuhely.com/>).

<sup>20</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 1.

## 5.1. Analytical Concepts

As I introduce in the precedent chapters, my study aims to transgress oppositional thinking in the analysis of public art. In an attempt to challenge spatial and dialectic boundaries among the object/subject, and the mind/body, my approach focuses on the interrelatedness thereof (Gablik, 1991). As part of this project, I explore public art strategies to bring lived experiences and emotions that usually are relegated to the domain “traditionally” conceptualized as private, into the public sphere.

In this undertaking, I employ Fraser’s (1995) and Mouffe’s (2010) inclusion of conflict in the creation a more participatory and horizontal public sphere. In this regard, Mouffe introduces the term “Agonistic Democracy” to define the attempt to embrace a broader and intense reality through a horizontal participation. In an attempt to interrogate the Hungarian local aspects, I engage with Piotrowski’s (2012) concept of Agoraphobic tendencies in Post-Communist Europe.

Nancy Fraser (1995) and Chantal Mouffe (2010; 2007) consider the public realm to be shaped by constant renegotiations of the inhabitant’s personal identities. Built upon Mouffe’s consideration of critical art as a suitable strategy to unmask the dominant consensus, I analyze the strategies developed in the “20 Forintos Operett” that attempt to unveil repressed personal stories. Along the lines of these authors, I emphasize art as a process that involves the community through horizontal participation (Raven, 1993).

Piotrowski (2012), as well as other scholars, argues that post-communist Europe bears a legacy with Western culture that was interrupted by World War II (György, 2003). Nowadays this region is often known as the “grey zone of Europe” referring to its (supposed) ambiguous location (Pachmanová, 2010). As I explain in chapter 3, Hungary, among other countries, later faced a Soviet regime (1944-1989) whose memories influence the behavior,

strategies and specificities addressed in the public domain. Some scholars such as Piotrowski (2012) identify in this period some of the particularities that characterized the social and cultural context in post-communist countries. In his analysis, Piotrowski opposes the terms Agoraphilia to Agoraphobia, avoiding using the term “censorship”. With Agoraphilia, he examines the drive to participate in the public space that the inhabitants of these countries have felt during the Cold War. However, due to the strategies of the Party to centralize and control cultural production, the participation was limited during the communist period. Subsequently, Piotrowski connects these Agoraphobic tendencies with the current moment, identifying its sources in nationalism, the neo-liberal market economy and religion.

## **5.2. In-depth Analysis of “20 Forintos Operett”**

### **Spatial considerations: District VIII**

As I have already introduced, the action explored was developed in District VIII of Budapest (figure 1)<sup>21</sup>. Specifically, the project was mainly placed in the surrounded area of Tolnai Lajos utca, 23 and Blaha square (spots highlighted in figure 1). Officially called Józsefváros, the district is popularly known as the poorest area of the city. At the same time, it is emplaced from the center of Budapest to the suburbs. Although it is popularly identified as the Roma district, people from different economic, social, and religious backgrounds live there. Taking a look inside the area, we can find remarkable buildings like Semmelweis University or the Academy of Drama and Film. However, the rest of the area have been criminalized and objectified by institutions and the state. It is considered the poorest district of the city and it is popularly imagined as a place of prostitution, homelessness and drugs. The local government has deal with the “problem” by placing cameras and police cabins on the streets, segregating

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<sup>21</sup> See Appendix A.

the *non-accepted* heterogeneity in an organic society<sup>22</sup> (Mouffe, 2010). In doing so, the local government reinforce the process of discursive and spatial criminalization. Moreover, the discrimination stressed by the dwellers of the district is not only manifested in the current governmental policies. Private institutions also play a crucial role in the intertwined phenomena of criminalization and discrimination. As an instance of this, in March 2013 I attended a walking tour titled “Urban Tour: Vulnerability & Crime & Violence”, organized by an international university buying into the discourses of criminalization and marginalization.

### Public sphere and democracy

As I argue in chapter 3, Hungarian social history have lived turbulent times that controlled people behaviors in the public sphere. In 1989, the regime started its transition from communism to capitalism. Since then, a bipolar political system between right wing and left liberals emerged, later interrupted in 2006. Some of the people interviewed identify the beginning of political extremism in the corruption showed by the Socialist Party (András<sup>23</sup>); while others link the problem with the racist, homophobic and anti-EU rhetoric showed by Fidész Party (Luca, Juliana, Livia<sup>24</sup>). As explored in chapter 3, there is continuity in the state control over the population (under different names). One example thereof are the policies of racial segregation against Roma population orchestrated by the current government<sup>25</sup>. These policies have been widely internationally criticized. However, dissident voices have found their way to act as it happened during the Communist period. Although Hungarian cultural policy avoids critical art interventions, politically engaged collectives find their way to criticize the current environment.

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<sup>22</sup> The district has been increasingly populated by Roma and Chinese dwellers. This fact have influenced in the marginalization of the bodies in the public sphere linked with the current nationalist prejudices.

<sup>23</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 4.

<sup>24</sup> See Appendix B, interviewees 11, 9 and 12.

<sup>25</sup> For instance, in June 2013 the government attempts to legalize racial segregation in schools.

Additionally, coming back to Piotrowski's (2012) concepts of Agoraphobia and Agoraphilia, I have been interested in the subjectivities that go underneath this (inhibited) drive to participate in the public sphere. When I inquired my interviewees about their personal stories and perspectives that shape their way to behave in the public domain, they mostly talked about the popular history I have already touched upon (II World War-Communism-Capitalism); but they hardly address their own personal and familiar experiences. Andrea Tompa<sup>26</sup> sheds new light on the debate in an informal conversation, highlighting that World War I was the beginning of a kind of "trauma". If we consider trauma as a dramatic event that has not yet been resolved, we can see how the Agoraphobic tendencies also are bound up with a lack of historical and cultural self-knowledge (Turai, 2003).

Moreover, these personal lived experiences and "trauma" take shape in the individually defined public space. As Rosalyn Deutsche (1996) states, the definition of public space is not a static one, but is created by its inhabitants (from their private concepts, their meaning of the society and the political community). To summarize, if we consider public space as something unfixed and nomadic built upon fluid identities (Kester, 2004), the personal identities and subjective historical perception should be addressed in the art interventions. Therefore, an involvement of the personal experiences and individual memory of the historical events is part of the public sphere. Additionally, most of the authors analyzed in chapter 3, highlight the necessity to address an activist agenda in the art interventions (Lippard, 1997; Raven, 1993; Lacy, 1995; Miles, 2009).

Coming back to the specific case of study, when interviewing and reviewing documents focused on the "20 Forintos Operett", I have noticed a latent and personal definition of public sphere. As an instance of this, they claim:

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<sup>26</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 13.

*Hogy a színház olyan találkozásokat generáljon, amelyek nincsenek betervezve a fennálló rendszerbe, és felvesse a kérdést, hogy milyen életre vágyunk valójában. És hogy mindezt magunk is élvezzük, hiszen a művészetnek alapvetően játékosnak kell lennie. (Rádai, 2013, n. pag.)<sup>27</sup>*

Analyzing this fragment, we can identify two main focuses: the playfulness of life/art; and the randomness of life. At the same time, the frame also highlights the limitations of the State to understand people's desires and engagement in public spaces. In my view, with "unexpected encounters", "20 Forintos Operett" is embracing the creation of a public sphere built upon relatedness among the differences of its inhabitants; a kind of "open society" as they claim in their web site (<http://pneumaszo.org/>).

Furthermore, it is interesting to connect Pneuma Szöv's definition of "open society" to Mouffe's agonistic democracy (2010), and Fraser's review of Habermas' Public Sphere (1989). The public dimension is a psychological one (Phillips, 1988), where the boundaries between public and private no longer are valid. The public is ephemeral and at the same time, is connected with our own personal issues. Therefore, in opposition to Habermas' bourgeois and bounded concept of public sphere (1989), Fraser considers the public sphere as a dialectic one built upon participation and inclusion rather than exclusion. Additionally, Mouffe (2010) considers the inclusion of conflict in the creation of democracy that does not exclude bodies from the public sphere. Consequently, placing this community fantasy around the issue of "homelessness" in district VIII does not only criticize the invisibility of certain groups in the conceptualized space of the city, but it also opens a door that leads to reflection over the concept of democracy.

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<sup>27</sup> "In order to build a stage for the unexpected encounters, which the system cannot foresee; and explain therefore how real life is. It is at last also to enjoy, because art, above all, should be a game." (own translation).

As a legacy of the masculine Enlightenment era, fixed borders are usually delimited in order to build “organic society”. However, as many scholars argue (Mouffe, 2010; Fraser, 1990), each individual identity is built upon the encounter with other people; hence, in the relatedness. Therefore, if we consider identity as something in unceasing movement, democracy can only be understood through conflict (instead of consensus). On the other hand, focusing on the Hungarian case, we should be aware of how governments and economic corporations have used public art strategies to emphasize the dominant consensus. Hungary is no exception in this matter. As we have seen in chapter 3, the current Hungarian cultural policy centralizes artistic decisions in body of the government.

### **Homelessness and the dissensus of the organic society**

Budapest municipality promotes initiatives to deal with homelessness identifying and criminalizing it as a problem. For instance, one of the interviewees explained to me how police behaved in some activist protests against Fidesz regulations over homelessness<sup>28</sup>. Janos<sup>29</sup> highlighted how different activists started sleeping in the street as an act of protest. However, when the police showed up and asked for identification, they did not fine the activists as the police realized they actually lived in houses. Therefore, the policies raised by the government do not affect a practice (sleeping in the streets), but people, thus objectifying and criminalizing identities. In doing so, they not only place homeless people as “The Other”, but they also objectify them. At the same time, homelessness is popularly linked to Roma population. Subsequently both homeless and Roma people are objectified by the dominant consensus logic. Therefore, homelessness remains in the margins from where an organic society can be built. In this way, homeless inhabitants are a scapegoat for the power ideology.

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<sup>28</sup>In December 2011, the Hungarian government approved a legal regulation to punish homelessness.

<sup>29</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 6.

This scenario becomes dangerous in the current economic, political and social environment. Hungarian government has dealt with the "trouble" through the strategy of isolation and neutralization, instead of solving its structural causes. By doing this, they not only criminalize people, but they also create new hierarchies between the inhabitants and the territory. Rosalyn Deutsche (1996) also explores many public art initiatives supported by the local government that concerns homelessness. However, she claims that the discursive construct of "homelessness" is a pretext to turn society homogeneous. To put it other words, if we apply Mouffe's Agonistic Democracy concept (2010), we can see how the term "homelessness" is an ideologically imbued and constructed one. It tries to displace negative characteristics in the "organic society" such as "disorder", "anxiety" and "conflict." In short, in order to avoid "conflict", homelessness is used as an ideological paradigm to identify the (organic) society as the opposite (Deutsche, 1996). In my view, homelessness has been relegated to the private sphere where critical issues traditionally remain hidden. Women are also segregated from the public spaces of participation, thus, both homeless people and women are identified as the disorder (emotion) of the organic society that must remain excluded from the public sphere.

Additionally, while reviewing the interviews held I have noticed how some of the participants define the public sphere. As an example of this, Günter said:

What I like about the eighth district is how heterogeneous it is. (S. Günter, personal communication, February 19, 2013)<sup>30</sup>

With her statement, Günter not only highlights the differences and multiplicity of the area, but she also appreciates it. In doing so, she embraces differences and conflict. In my view, identities are fluid and crossed through conflict that transgresses the gendered

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<sup>30</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 1.

boundaries of the organic society. On the other hand, the conceptualized and socially constructed organic society is built upon fixed spatial boundaries (public/private). In that sense, the homelessness paradigm can also disrupt the “organic society” as a sort of demiurge located in between boundaries (they are always in public spaces, but they do not participate in the public domain). As an instance of this, Iris Marian Young promotes "politics of difference that brings the values, experiences and voices of those traditionally confined to the private sphere into realm of democratic politics" (as cited in O'Sullivan, 2009, p. 56).

Therefore, by identifying homelessness as “the Other” that prevents society from being organic, the power recognizes a problem “outside” of their context. Furthermore, if exclusions and homogenization build a Habermasian concept of the public sphere as an elitist bourgeois one, a public sphere built upon marginal collectives can possibly disrupt this conservative and fixed conceptualization of the public/private.

### **Art as a process**

In order to escape from universal timeless frameworks, I have focused the analysis on art as a process. “20 Forintos Operett”’s design was not finished prior to its emplacement, but it was developed during the ten weeks. However, the organizers earlier started reflecting on the issues that affect the community involved. This can also be seen in the name chosen as it relates to a homeless sign founded that claimed “For 20 Forint you are allowed not to take notice of me” (Ernst Schering Foundation, 2012, July 9). In doing so, they consciously situate their action in a history of artistic examples of social awareness; most notably the famous piece “Threepenny Opera”, written by Brecht and Weill (1928). When I asked Sarah<sup>31</sup> about the name of the intervention, she also emphasizes this opera and its parallels with the “20

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<sup>31</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 1.

Forintos Operett”. In her view, both pieces show a social reality that visualizes what traditionally remains hidden.

It was presenting the life in the streets in the 1920s. (S. Günter, personal communication, February 19, 2013)<sup>32</sup>

Bertold Brecht and Kurt Weill (1928) wrote this opera connecting “Threepenny” with the invisible people. They created an anti-bourgeois drama around the story of Mackie Messer (a supposed criminal) and Polly Peachum (her father controls the beggars of London). While criticizing the capitalist system, they also challenged conventional notions of poverty and theater. Later on, the structure followed by Weill and Brecht has been connected to “modern musical comedy genre”. The emphasis is done on how it shows a reality that does not exclude non-bourgeois people from the public sphere (Fraser, 1995). In this way, the elitist Habermasian (1989) concept of public sphere is challenged. At the same time, “Threepenny Opera” gives voice to the “invisible” population, addressing a multiple genres that in the moment were not appreciated enough to appear in an Opera (jazz, blues, tango, chanson de Weill).

Similarly, the “20 Forintos Operett” is a community art project (Deutsche, 1998) that addresses social issues that affect the people involved. The artist is only a facilitator of others’ non-artist creativity. Similarly, “20 Forintos Operett” also challenges social structures and the Habermasian bounded concept of public sphere; giving voice to the “invisible” people and highlighting the conflict over the dominant consensus (Mouffe, 2010).

However, in the interviews held with some of the participants, other aspects were highlighted. During the interviews, I sometimes fail in my inquiries using academic language instead of popular one. Nevertheless, the answers received provide interesting data to my

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<sup>32</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 1.

analysis. When I asked Sarah about the gendered public and the private space, failing in a dichotomical approach, she answered:

We are not talking about oppositions; it's more about creating meeting points (S. Günter, personal communication, February 19, 2013)<sup>33</sup>

In that way, she emphasizes another type of relatedness instead of structuring the space among categories. Connecting this issue to the creation of a public sphere that embraces diversity through the personal experiences labeled private, the first scene of the Operett took place in the streets around the empty lot in Tolnai Lajos, 23, and Blaha Square (spots highlighted in figure 3)<sup>34</sup>. In that space they organized “performative walkings” every Friday. As a sort of communication, the participants not only physically occupied the public space, but they brought their personal stories and issues that affected them into the public sphere. In doing so, each individual connects its own exclusion with homelessness issue. Women, unemployed, Roma, children bring their desires, troubles and emotions considered private to the public domain. As an artistic strategy they unveil their personal stories through songs about Mokus Maxi. Mokus Maxi is the main character of a tale that structures the Operett, as I am going to explain later in this chapter.

Bűnöd az, hogy ártatlan vagy,  
s nincs, ki szóljon érted,  
zsebed üres, ujjad sárga,  
szíved körül kéreg.  
Ria, ria, Kálvária!<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 1.

<sup>34</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>35</sup> Song written by Rejtő Gábor compiled in “20 Forintos Fanzine”(2012) “Your sin is being innocent /do not knowing how to speak/ empty your pockets, yellow fingers/ Barking around the heart/ Ria, ria, Calvary!” (own translation)

Moreover, as hinted in an earlier statement, Günter pays attention to the necessity of transcending verbal communication, and urges for the need to create another sort of communication that involves the whole body. At the same time, she continuously escapes from a categorical thinking.

This kind of military thing... you always have to present yourself in a real formal way. Body is important to other sort of communication (...) Art is a good form of communication to live in society” (S. Günter, personal communication, February 19, 2013)<sup>36</sup>

In claiming that, she not only escapes from categorical thinking, but also criticizes it. Moreover, she highlights art in its potentiality to transgress this logic in order to be included in society. Finally, she conceives the body in its re-enchantment within the person and the environment.

Moreover, the population of the district is heterogeneous. Not only class issues shape the streets, but also ethnic, age and gender ones. Most of the participants in the performances were children, women and unemployed people. Through physical objects (like the instruments built), the participants of the art intervention created a kind of communication to express their personal issues. They renegotiated their identities in the process while bringing their experiences and desires into the public sphere via recycled instruments (figure 4)<sup>37</sup>. Subsequently, they created a sort of communication not only through their own body, but also in connection with physical objects and songs. In that way, the relation between object and subject highlights the affectedness of the inanimate matter (Barad, 2001; Chen, 2012)

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<sup>36</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 1.

<sup>37</sup> See Appendix A

At the end of the project people claim that they don't really know that this was so much cooperation with homeless people. Something I really think is cool because it doesn't matter where you came from, everybody is too different. (S. Günter, personal communication, February 19, 2013)<sup>38</sup>

Although she does not include the oppression suffered by specific groups, Sarah's statement highlights the necessity to address democracy built upon conflict (Mouffe, 2010). The instruments built during the art project are a metaphor of all the issues addressed. They were built using recycled materials (poor, the forgotten objects of the society), creating a dialogue among individual emotions and the artwork (figure 5)<sup>39</sup>. Each of their personal identities was renegotiated through the encounter of other participant's ones (Kester, 2004; Mouffe, 2007). They unveil their personal stories in the public domain in the aim of Agoraphilia (Phillips, 1992; Piotrowski, 2012).

The songs were created during the project by the participants. The pretext to arrange and give voice to the hidden stories was a tale written by Csilla Horváth (HoCsi), one of the participants of "Vagyunk Egyesület". The tale tells the story of "Mokus Maxi"<sup>40</sup>, an unsuccessful squirrel politician that tried to deal with the situation of the snails<sup>41</sup>. At the end of the story, the squirrel died of a heart attack. Moreover, Mokus Maxi tries to learn English as a metaphor of a new communication for those who have no voice (at the same time, the Hungarian Language Institute is in the area). However, the tale may also fruitfully be

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<sup>38</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 1.

<sup>39</sup> See Appendix A. This picture is also particularly interesting as the girl looking from the inside of her house to the street can be a metaphor of the desire to participate in the public sphere, stopped by the Agoraphobic tendencies (Piotrowski, 2012)

<sup>40</sup> Mokus means Squirrel in Hungarian

<sup>41</sup> We should take account of snails as a metaphor of the people without a house. On the other hand, we should also be aware of the squirrel as a symbol in Jewish tradition. It has been traditionally linked with the oppressed poor. Additionally, from an iconographic point of view, it is the animal that climbs from earth to heaven. Even though Jewish are not directly affected as Roma people from Fidesz policies in the current moment, they have traditionally faced discrimination. Moreover, in the last months, some groups as the neo-fascist Jobbik Party have spread an anti-semitic, anti-roma and homophobic ideology.

conceived of as a means in the creation of a fantasy that involves the people from the district. This tale written by HoCsi was only the beginning, as the participants of the “20 Forintos Operett” started writing songs and stories around Mokus (and themselves, by doing so). Rather than considering the final product as the most salient component of the artistic project, the process itself is viewed by the participants as the most intrinsic part, fulfilling an end in itself.

At the same time, we can also identify Piotrowski’s (2012) Agoraphobic sources in the symbolism brought by the squirrel. In this regard, the neoliberal market economy is connected with the poor oppressed by the system; religion with the traditional oppression suffered by Jewish; and nationalism with the oppression that Roma people is facing nowadays. The design is grounded in the social issues that affect the people involved, through the strategy of group working (Raven, 1993; Deutsche, 1996; Phillips, 1998; Lacy, 1995). We should take into account that the bodies who shape the interventions were not only social men or artists, but most of the participants were social women and children that transgressed the domains where they are traditionally located. That is the private, the domestic, and the emotional.

They built community through artistic interventions that linked sculpture to performance, music, and poetry. Its main aim was to build a sculpture of the “Mokus” and organize performative walks around the district. Nevertheless, although the sculpture was built, it is hardly seen in the pictures collected and published on their website. That gives us an idea of the relevance of the artwork within a universal timeless framework. It is not the object in which we should focus our attention. Our gaze should focus on the process rather than the object. By doing this, the dichotomical paradigms of space/time and object/subject are unsettled.

The analysis of Mokus Maxi Sculpture (Figure 6)<sup>42</sup> highlights the strategies followed to disrupt spatial boundaries in a public sphere built upon personal lived-experiences. The construction of the statue attempts to involve the participants in the creation of an inclusive society. Therefore, the squirrel is only the visible presence of all memories, and human projects of the people involved. It stresses the personal and social concerns, and renegotiates people's identities.

It is a *mobile* sculpture of 5 meters, in which its different parts connects with the public sphere of the participants. In doing so, a sort of dialogue is created among subject and object (Gablik, 1991). However, before analyzing the different parts, we understand identity as something fluid, continuously renegotiated. As I furthermore explore in chapter 7, violence is generated when somebody (or a group) attempts to “represent” other people's identity (Kester, 2004). However, in the “20 Forintos Operett” case, each of the participants created their own personal identification with the Mokus sculpture. On the whole, the different parts are<sup>43</sup>: a) the base is an old boat (figure 7); b) the body is formed by recycled plastic bottles (figure n.8); c) the material of the head is real human hair (figure 9)<sup>44</sup>.

First of all, using an old boat as the base of the sculpture metaphorically links the inanimate matter with the participant's personal stories, and the historical events suffered in the area<sup>45</sup>. They took traditional symbols that identify a nation and played with them. They built up the “Mokus Maxi” land. They created their own uniforms, local currency (which apparently didn't work very well as the participants did not understand its meaning), and

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<sup>42</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>43</sup> The reason why I analyze its parts do not relate with the object's independence perspective (Gablik, 1991); but I want to explore the process of building community through the sculpture.(Lacy, 1995)

<sup>44</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>45</sup> District VIII is an area susceptible to constant flooding. For instance, in 1838 the area suffered a historical one that destroyed most of the buildings.

different hymns (songs that speak about encounters between the inhabitants, highlighting the renegotiation of identity through people's encounters).

In the same way, they designed this community art project (Deutsche, 1996) through the tale of "Mokus Maxi", and the fantasy of the "Eight Sea". Its meaning is especially interesting as it mixes fiction with the reality of historical flooding. However, this experience took a different meaning in the project. The raindrops of the Eight Sea are the tears of their inhabitants who cried about their daily problems. From this perspective, the uniforms (sailor style), and the construction of the sculpture (Mokus Maxi) over a former boat are metaphors. They mean a sort of community salvation supported by differences and conflicts of its inhabitants.<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, the Eight Sea is also a metaphor of how social awareness (private domain) is placed in the public sphere. The "personal" designs the public domain (Phillips, 1998).

Secondly, the body of the sculpture is formed by plastic bottles. During the first weeks of the project, the organizers visited shelters for homeless people, where they asked for plastic bottles in order to build the base of the sculpture. Paying attention to the symbolic domain, these bottles are associated to the personal economic situation of the dwellers, as they used to contain the cheapest wine in the city. Therefore, the bottles symbolize the current economic situation that a lot of people suffer in the district.

After visiting the shelters, the neighbors started to visit the lot, and so became involved in the process. They began to wonder what the art collective were doing there and subsequently joined the project. As Dorka Esze (personal communication, 24 April, 2013)<sup>47</sup> explained to me, the socialization was done in the daily actions. She explained to me how

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<sup>46</sup> Each of the uniforms was different.

<sup>47</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 10.

while she cleaned the bottles, people usually appeared and started asking about the project. After a while, some of them came back and joined the community.

Finally, the material of the Mokus' head is human hair collected in a previous artistic action that took place in the framework of the "20 Forintos Operett". In this artistic communitarian project, many actions were done. However, I have focused on the ones that attempted to blur the spatial border between the public domain and the private, taking into consideration that it is socially constructed. Understanding "public" as something defined by the own consideration of the private that each of us have within a specific political and civic context (Phillips, 1998), the public sphere is socially and personally constructed.

On the other hand, although there were many artistic actions involved in the "20 Forintos Operett", (from a soap opera to a poetry workshop or a puppets workshop), one was particularly interesting in the way it crossed boundaries. In the seventh and eighth week, they developed a hair cutting workshop in Tolnai Lajos street and Blaha square (figure 10)<sup>48</sup>. Throughout the artistic intervention, a daily action that normally belongs to the private was placed in the public domain. At the same time, the temporality of the artistic intervention was particularly interesting. It highlighted the process rather than the object (hair cut). The hair collected was going to be part of the Mokus' sculpture. Therefore the temporal and physical limits were not bounded. In addition, instead of showing the final version of an object/subject, they emphasized the interconnection with the audience. As a result, they disrupted traditional aesthetic paradigms supported by the artist's individuality and the object's independence (Gablik, 1991).<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>49</sup> This interconnection in an artistic action between the inside/ outside; the object/subject; the present/past/future; the public/private is also seen in other contemporary artists like St. Orlan.

Finally, as a consequence of the action of using the hair to build Mokus Maxi's head, they built a type of subjective community that was individually represented in the sculpture. Mokus Maxi's head was not built with the participants' hair, but it was only the physical object that embodied the experiences, problems, dreams and different identities of the participants. By doing so, the participants not only blurred spatial boundaries between the public and the private, and provide life to the inanimate matter (Chen, 2012). But they also disrupted Agoraphobic tendencies that prevent people from entering in the public sphere (Piotrowski, 2012), building democracy through participation that embraces conflict (Mouffe, 2010).

### **Possible influences and parallelisms**

Both Deutsche (1996) and Piotrowski (2012) have attempted to analyze Wodiczko's homeless project. Similarly to "20 Forintos Operett", he also designed an artistic project to visualize homelessness reality. The Polish artist took the challenge to criticize social structures both in his "homeless vehicle project"<sup>50</sup>(figure 11)<sup>51</sup> and "The Homeless Projection". Wodiczko identifies homeless people with the new monuments of the city. Therefore, he conceives them as mobile structures placed in public spaces that have no voice. Although homeless people are placed in a "public" space, they are socially identified as passive objects. In addition to this, Wodiczko consciously also stresses a democracy built upon conflict instead of dominant consensus (Mouffe 2010; 2007), in a similar way to "20 Forintos Operett". In Wodiczko owns words:

Aliens... want to become citizens, democratic subjects; they do not want to be exclusively objects of political manipulation. They want to be integrated into society and to contribute to the dynamics of democracy, which rely on disagreement.

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<sup>50</sup> It was part of the exhibition *Public Address: Krzysztof Wodiczko* (1992), but it was created in 1989-1990.

<sup>51</sup> See Appendix A.

Basically, that's the only thing that matters. This comes together with hope... for agonistic democracy, derived from the word *agon* as a point of competition in speaking of truth, or even shouting down one another. (As cited in Piotrowski, 2012, p.239)

On the other hand, the community art project "Marco Cavallo" (1973) also shows a lot of similarities with "20 Forintos Operett". Giuliano Scabia and Vittorio Basaglia, among other participants run this lab in an empty building of a psychiatrist residence in Trieste, Italy. The project involved the people of the psychiatric (the ones considered insane, the nurses, and the artists) in the creation of a temporal community (Princìpi & Princípi, March 28, 2012). They used the pretext a horse statue (in parallel with Mokus' one), trying to find a different way to communicate in society (figure 12)<sup>52</sup>. Giuliano Scabia, one of the artists involved, claimed in a later documental that the sculpture was only an excuse to run a game. They attempted to involve the participants in the society they wanted to create. Therefore, the horse is only the visible presence of "all the memories, desires and human projects of the people involved in the action"<sup>53</sup> (Marco Cavallo, 1976). To put it other words, the artwork becomes a kind of political statement that brings into life their political fights.

Although this artistic experiment shares a lot of similarities with "20 Forintos Operett" (a sculpture as a pretext to create community, the use of instruments in the performative walking, etc), Marco Cavallo better connects with Beuys' "Soziale Plastik" (Meitin, 2007). It was a micro utopian community that achieved the experience of interconnectedness, but it did not address the creation of an agonistic democracy. Their main aim was to build another kind of communication in theater and in psychiatry.

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<sup>52</sup> See Appendix A. The reader should also be aware of the similarities between this picture and figure 12.

<sup>53</sup> *il frutto della presenza de tutte le memorie, desideri di tutti i progetti umani di chi stava lí* (Scabia, 1976, 9'. Own translation)

### 5.3. Conclusions

In “20 Forintos Operett” attempt to create a public sphere where all the diverse realities are included, the conceptualized spatial boundaries were transgressed. In my reading, the arts project participants' definitions of homelessness, relatedness and communication are interesting in three main ways, as outlined in this chapter. To sum up, first of all embracing homelessness as the structural issue of the project not only includes an urgent critical topic that affects the people involved in the district, but it also creates a sort of paradigm from which the people can (individually) feel identified. The homelessness issue works in the art intervention as a sort of demiurge that although is permanently in the conceptualized public space, does not participate in the public domain. As a consequence, the people from the district, mostly unemployed, women and children feel connected with this lack of political and social participation.

Secondly, the actions developed highlight how the public space is constructed from the private and domestic domain each of us has. As a result, the intervention embraces *relatedness* as the suitable strategy to subvert fixed boundaries. The project works as a meeting point where differences and personal stories are included. At the same time, through the connection among different artistic disciplines, they create an environment that disrupts fixed definitions of subject/object (ie. statue of Mokus Maxi); or temporal frameworks (connecting past and present through the stories and lyrics written). Moreover, they emphasize another sort of *communication* that involves body, music and arts. In doing so, the participants not only transgress the binary mind/body, but they also highlight how the process is the solution itself rather than final illuminated endings.

Finally, Hungarian social history has traditionally (forced to) forgotten public manifestations of their past and political issues, as it happened for instance in 1956.

Subsequently, the citizens have developed a trauma visible in the lack of self-knowledge of their personal past. Therefore, in the act of bringing these past and personal stories into the public art intervention (i.e. Eight sea, Mokus Maxi tale, etc.), the participants' identities are renegotiated throughout the encounter with the artwork and other people's stories that normally remain invisible.

## 6. “PLACCC Festival” and “The Eight Sea – Exhibition Camp”. Inquiries into the Publicness of Public Art.

Both “The Eight Sea-exhibition camp” and PLACCC Festival are public art projects carried out through different formats. While “The Eight Sea-exhibition camp”, organized by Pneuma Szöv, embraces the format of a participatory exhibition that attempts to continue the aims of the “20 Forintos Operett”<sup>54</sup>; PLACCC Festival embraces the format of a temporal event in *open* spaces of the city.

“The Eight Sea-exhibition camp” was organized by Pneuma Szöv, as a platform to visualize the work done last year in district VIII. Some of the artworks created in the “20 Forintos Operett” were shown since April 18<sup>th</sup> till 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in the cultural centre Müszi. Among the artworks exhibited there were some uniforms, a documentary about the project and some recycled instruments. At the same time, the organizers also included new artworks and workshops embracing the critical issues highlighted in the “20 Forintos Operett”. As a consequence, they created a sort of continuity among the projects.

Additionally, PLACCC Festival is an artistic experience run in Budapest since 2008. After attending a performative theater festival outside of Hungary, both Katalin Erdődi and Fanni Nánay decided to create a platform for local artists in Budapest. Since 2008, Artopolis Association<sup>55</sup> organizes this annual festival that takes place in the streets and squares of Budapest. They aim to create an international platform for local artist in *open* spaces of the city. At the same time, they also invite international artists and art collectives to take part of the project.

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<sup>54</sup> See chapter 5.

<sup>55</sup> Artopolis Association was founded by Katalin Erdődi and Fanni Nánay. Nowadays, Katalin Erdődi is no longer part of the project.

## 6.1. Analytical Concepts

Taking account of my research inquiries, with this chapter I want to analyze the definition of “public space” these art interventions embrace. At the same time, I examine how public art can challenge the hierarchy of the senses established in Cartesian mind/body dichotomy. Therefore, I will focus my study on the way these public art projects have the potential to disrupt traditional aesthetic paradigms that study the artwork and the artist in its independence and individuality (Gablik, 1991). As well as chapter 5, my analysis especially focuses on the relatedness between the object and the subject, in an attempt to transgress its conceptualizing. As a consequence, I analytically use Phillip’s (1998), and Miles (2009) definition of public; and Gablik’s connectedness approach to the artwork.

When we examine the publicness of public art, we should be aware that the definition of public varies from person to person. Further from being a fixed concept, its meaning relies on the particular experiences and the definition of the “private”, each of us carry (Phillips, 1998). Additionally, Miles (2009) points out that each person defines the public sphere on an open-ended juxtaposition of his/her own definition of the “public”, the “personal”, and the “domestic”. In doing so, he states an open-ended renegotiation of the identity in the public domain where some bodies are excluded, as we have seen in chapter 2 and 5 with the Roma population, homeless people, and women (Petö & Szapor, 2004). In a similar way, Miles points out that the public space of the city is not neutral, but hierarchically compounded around categories such as gender, age, ethnicity, class and religion. Nevertheless, my approach embraces Puar’s (2011) queer assemblages in the relatedness among the subject and the object within the horizontal involvement of the body with the artwork (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988).

As I explain at the beginning of chapter 3, Cartesian philosophy has established a gendered approach around the dichotomies mind/body and emotion/reason that have affected the conceptualization of the bounded reality. First connected to Aristotle's philosophy, it was rediscovered by Descartes in modern times. I argue that it has influenced the way we approach arts highlighting vision (linked to the masculine concept of reason) over the other senses, as Langton (2005) points out with "the denigration of the senses" (p.234). Some disciplines such as social anthropology explore the issue as I am going to explain later in this chapter.

## **6.2. In-depth Analysis of the public art interventions.**

As a consequence of my inquiries and personal approach to arts, I have structured the analysis of the art interventions around three main points. I aim to explore the location of the art project; how the body is involved in the intervention; and which critical and personal issues the projects attempt to embrace.

### **The location of the art project**

"The Eight Sea-exhibition camp"<sup>56</sup> was a participatory display organized in Műszi by some of the people involved in "20 Forintos Operett"<sup>57</sup>. Although they make an open call to all people interested in the project at the beginning of April; it was mainly run by the open network "Pneuma Szöv". Műszi is a cultural and social space in the heart of Budapest. Located close to Blaha square in district VIII (figure 3)<sup>58</sup>, is self-defined as "a venue attempting to combine its artistic and social mission with business principles in a sustainable manner" (Művelődési Szint, n.d.). Therefore, I did activist participant observation (Naples, 2003), getting politically involved in the project. For instance, I shared my experience of social movements, and help

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<sup>56</sup> From now on, I will refer to it as the "Eight Sea"

<sup>57</sup> See chapter 5.

<sup>58</sup> See Appendix A.

the organizers when it was needed. In that way, I also took a participatory approach to the case.

When it refers to the location of the centre, Műszi is a cultural *space* in the centre of Budapest, as it facilitates the encounter of the people (De Certeau, 1990). Although it is not politically engaged with any political party, its venues are rented and sometimes used as meeting points for different political groups, as András<sup>59</sup> explained to me. Therefore, we should consider Műszi as a privatized space, from an economic perspective. In contrast to this, Hungarian social history has centralized the decisions on the state. That also regards arts and culture in general, as we have seen in chapter 3. Although this decision is criticized by some individuals and collectives that identify a lack of artistic freedom as one of the Hungarian cultural policies' consequences (NEMA, 2012; Katalin; Andrea<sup>60</sup>), being private in economic terms does not mean that the centre is inclusive.

As an example of this, the access of Műszi is restricted with a doorbell. It is situated in a building close to Blaha square (spot highlighted in figure 3)<sup>61</sup>. Its door remains permanently closed. Subsequently, you have to ring the bell to get the door open. On the other hand, the *open space*<sup>62</sup> in this “private” culture centre is situated in the last floor of the building with no access for handicapped people. As a result, the access to the exhibition was limited by the space chosen. In addition, although the organizers of the exhibition stack informative posters in the surrounding area where the “20 Forintos Operett” was placed (figure 3)<sup>63</sup>; the open call was mainly done through Internet. Hence, the participation of the project is restricted not only to the spatial limitations of Műszi, but also to people's internet access (these restrictions are normally connected to class, gender and race categories). As well as the public space, Internet

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<sup>59</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 4.

<sup>60</sup> See Appendix B, interviewees 2 and 13.

<sup>61</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>62</sup> With “*open space*” in Műszi I mean the one in which everybody is allowed to be once they are already inside the building.

<sup>63</sup> See Appendix A.

also excludes bodies. However, as I explain in chapter 2, although I sometimes include web examples, I do not focus my analysis on this wide topic. Still, the reader should be aware of its potential to transgress space; time and matter, as the user participate in several places and spaces at the same time (Barad, 2001).

On the other hand, PLACCC Festival was conceived of as an itinerant festival developed in *open* spaces of the city, such as streets, or squares. I define them as *open* instead of public spaces on purpose. Taking account of the political ideologies and limitations inserted in a space (Harding, 1996), I decided to use the word *open* in italics to emphasize the exclusion suffered by some bodies in the public space (Miles, 1999).

In order to take a look into their definition of space, it is interesting to analyze their self-definition and statements. They claim:

To introduce site-specific performance and art in public space.

To make contemporary art accessible to a wider public.

To show the city from a different perspective through artistic interventions.

To support the creation of original and innovative artistic projects. (PLACCC Fesztivál, n.d.)

These statements can be explored through an aesthetic and political approach, but focusing on the limitations of the space some contradictions are highlighted. Although they claim that PLACCC Festival attempts “to make contemporary art accessible to a wider public”, since you have to buy a ticket to participate in the actions (Placcccsepel, n.d.), the class restrictions are obvious. At the same time this statement do not address how some bodies are excluded in the public space (Phillips, 1998), hence their definition of public derives from the place in which it is situated, rather than the issues addressed (Deutsche, 1996). On the other hand, in their attempt to “make contemporary art accessible to a wider

public”, they challenge the art world status quo (Lippard, 1997). Moreover, by claiming their desire “to show the city from a different perspective through artistic interventions”, PLACCC Festival is embracing public art potential of transgressing the conceptualized bounded view of the city.

### **Involving the whole body. Transgressing the hierarchy of the senses**

Since the end of the 1950s, many artists have looked for other materials and formats to express themselves. Avoiding traditional fine arts, they emphasize the process over the object. For instance, during the 1980s marginal and dissent Hungarian artists started developing stage art and performance as a strategy of political resistance, as I explain in chapter 3. Similarly, in the international landscape, artists developed their projects through unexpected materials, like photographic texts, recycled or industrial resources. By embracing process, a sort of dialogue is created between the artist and the piece that transgresses the boundary with the inanimate matter, instead of objectifying it (Barad, 2001; Chen, 2012).

Oppositional thinking has influenced art history discipline. As Gablik (1991) points out, traditional aesthetic analysis explores the artwork within its independence, and the artist in its male-value individuality of success. Subsequently I explore the art interventions through the relatedness among the audience and the artwork in an attempt to transgress the binaries mind/body and object/subject (Langton, 2005).

In a similar way, social anthropology has studied the issue in “the hierarchy of the senses” field. In this regard, Di Bello (2010) and Howes (2011) examine how the term “aesthetic” was first coined by Alexander von Baumgarten in the mid-eighteenth century. Although his attempt was to oppose fine arts to “utilitarian” crafts, he connected “aesthetics” with the sensorial body rather than the intellect (Gregor, 1983). In doing so, he embraced the experience of *interconnectedness*, as other contemporary public artists and scholars have

attempted (Gablik, 1991). Nevertheless, his contemporaries quickly distorted this approach. As Gregor points out, Baumgarten's contemporaries emphasized the sensuous disposition of aesthetics with a new taxonomy called "the five arts" (architecture, sculpture, painting, music and poetry). The so-called arts delimited and built sense hierarchies. As a consequence, only two senses were useful to approach arts: sight and hearing. Meanwhile, the other senses were useless to "understand" fine arts; thus useless to create knowledge.

As a result, we nowadays learn established codes of conduct to approach arts. In my view, art museums, and mainstream art galleries reproduce this schema. Although some artists like Kandinsky, and styles as "Futurism" or "Art Povera" embraced *intersensoriality* in their projects, art history discipline in general maintain these binaries (mind/body; object/subject) that reinforces the hierarchy. In fact, in museums and art galleries you are not normally allowed to touch, lick or interact with the artwork. However, many artists and some theorists have challenged this status quo that turns culture into a commercial product (Lippard, 1997). At the same time, the body in its iterative movement is excluded (Colebrook, 2009).

On the contrary, the public artworks analyzed in this chapter explore an approach of greater connectedness. Both PLACCC Festival and "Eight Sea" allow the audience to participate in the artistic experience. At the same time, art is redefined in the process (Deutsche, 1998). Although both experiences have several examples, I focus my analysis on Viktor Markos<sup>64</sup>, "Eight Sea Installation" (figure 13)<sup>65</sup> and PLACCC Festival's "Városi Szalon" (figure 14)<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 8.

<sup>65</sup> I name it "Eight Sea Installation" due to its connection with the exhibition and the "20 Forintos Operett", but no name was provided.

<sup>66</sup> See Appendix A

Viktor Markos's Installation was situated at the beginning of the "Eight Sea" exhibition. It was placed in the corridor that connects the *open* space of Müszi (bar) to the core space of the display. In a corridor without illumination, the following sentences were shined on the walls:

Salt water breaks up through the ground of a tiny Józsefváros playground. A new Genesis begins on planet Earth, the Eighth Sea has come to pass. A small group, led by Maxi Mokus, begins building a boat to help people navigate the new sea. Many join in, a mixed company: birds and mice, street urchins, drunken sailors and occasionally a camel peek in, curious about what's all this hullabaloo. Yet the story continues, continue it further, come see for yourself.

For the sea conceals a new home space, come on aboard, no time to waste.<sup>6768</sup>

The frame not only shows parallels with the "20 Forintos Operett" attempt to build democracy upon differences and conflict, as is emphasized on the frame "mixed company: birds and mice, street urchins, drunken sailors and occasionally a camel peek in, curious about what's all this hullabaloo" (Mouffe, 2010; 2007). It also challenges traditional aesthetic paradigms, in its focus on the process rather than the object (Gablik, 1991; Raven, 1993; Lacy, 1995). At the same time, the timeless framework is disrupted and the art intervention is redefined in dialogue with the audience (i.e. it claims that the experience should continue). Either the installation or the "20 Forintos Operett"<sup>69</sup> is not conceived of as a "finished"

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<sup>67</sup> "Sós víz tört fel Józsefváros egyik elhagyott óvodakertjében. A Földbolygón új Genezis kezdődik, létrejön a Nyolcadik Tenger. Egy kis csapat, Mokus Maxival az élén, hajót épít, hogy segítségével átkelhessenek a tengeren. Sokan csatlakoznak, vegyesen: madarak, egerek, uccaművészek, részeg tengerészek és néha betér egy teve is, mert kíváncsi, mi ez a sokaság. A történetnek nincsen vége, folytasd tovább, gyere el. Mert a tenger új hazát rejt, jer hajónkra, nem selejt". Viktor, Trans See Appendix B, interviewee 8.

<sup>69</sup> See A chapter 5.

artwork, but it is built throughout its relatedness with the participants (Deutsche, 1998; Kester, 2004).

Connected with this art installation, Marks (2000) explores hybrid arts, intercultural statements and multisensory perception in her text *The Skin of the Film. Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment and Senses*. She analyzes how art can evoke memories through sensorial experiences. To summarize, Marks examines how non-audiovisual sense experiences can be represented through film and video. Connecting Marks' attempt to Viktor Markos' installation, the reader should be aware that the different sentences earlier introduced were randomly projected on the walls of the corridor. These words/sentences changed depending on people's movements and sounds. In that way the installation physically involved other senses rather than only sight. At the same time, the dichotomous perception of the artwork was also challenged in the process (object/subject; inside/outside). As Deutsche (1998) states, the artwork is redefined, while the artists' individuality and the object's independence are transgressed (Gablik, 1991).

Additionally, the installation invites the audience to participate in the "game". It refers to the "20 Forintos Operett" art project, while emphasizing the continuity of the experience. In doing so, past, present and future are juxtaposed, disrupting a universal timeless framework traditionally connected with artworks (Gablik, 1991; Barad, 2001). At the same time, it also refers to the renegotiation of each one identity during the process (Mouffe, 2007). Deleuze and Guattari (1988) also explore identity through a positive analysis of the self and the body. They consider that our memories are unceasingly repeating from the inside. They talk about "a thousand tiny egos" affected from an encounter, taking into account each organ as a contemplative soul connected to the "Pure Past" (Colebrook, 2009).

Similarly, PLACCC Festival's art intervention "Városi Szalon" (figure 14)<sup>70</sup> also attempted to involve the whole body. The project was raised in association with "Újirány Csoport", a lucrative organization self defined as an "Office for Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Form, and Media" (Ujirany, n.d.). It was designed by the architect Dominika Tihanyi and the curator Katalin Erdődi in November 2010. As a consequence of this, my methodological approach has embraced content analysis and in-depth interviews to Tihanyi and Erdődi<sup>71</sup>.

In the square where there's nothing, is like a desert (D. Tihanyi, personal communication, April 11, 2013)<sup>72</sup>

When I asked them about the intervention, they highlighted the emptiness of the public space. The term "desert" can define either a physical space or a metaphorical one. Under the name of "Városi Szalon"<sup>73</sup>, they placed several hammocks in Pollack Mihály tér, a square close to the Hungarian Natural Museum in district VIII (figure 3)<sup>7475</sup>. The physical meaning of "desert" normally refers to a place where there is nothing. The metaphorical definition refers to a place where there are no people or life. In my view, both meanings are connected in this particular case, as the space chosen for the intervention fails to provide benches, grass or a garden where the inhabitants can rest. In doing so, the space not only provokes the mobility of the inhabitants, but also prevents them from connecting with each other (De Certeau, 1990; Augé, 2000). As a consequence, people only transit through them to their houses or jobs. Thus, the bodies that do not contribute to this systemic logic are excluded (Augé, 2000; Phillips, 1998). Taking account of how labor market is hostile to women, this

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<sup>70</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>71</sup> See Appendix B, interviewees 2 and 3.

<sup>72</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 3.

<sup>73</sup> Translated into Urban Salon.

<sup>74</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>75</sup> For the historical and social considerations of the district, see chapter 5.

desert spaces specially exclude social women (Fodor, 2005). At the same time, as we have examined in chapter 5, children and homeless people are excluded as well.

As a consequence, Erdődi and Tihanyi aimed to create a space for the exchange of lived experiences and desires in a forgotten place of the city (De Certeau, 1990). On the other hand, the intervention also attempted to involve the whole body in the process. The hammocks were there to be used, thus, the binary object/subject was disrupted in the interconnection among the artwork and the audience (Gablik, 1991).

On the other hand, when I asked Erdődi how the intervention was developed, she explained me the organization, planning and the results of it. In her speech she pointed out:

There was always one of the organizers there, trying to keep everything in order. (K. Erdődi, personal communication, April 11, 2013)<sup>76</sup>

In her statement we can analyze how the intervention was developed. Although they aimed to create a meeting point to share personal experiences in the “empty” city, they did not totally accept the process as a way to redefine arts (Deutsche, 1998). Passersby could use the hammocks and interact with other people, but the organizers did not give space for the unexpected events (i.e. someone breaking, painting, or placing the hammock in other places). As a consequence, the artists’ individuality was preserved, and the boundary among the object and the subject was not explicitly transgressed (Gablik, 1991; Chen, 2012).

### Issues addressed

In the conversation I had with Katalin Erdődi and Dominika Tihanyi<sup>77</sup>, both agreed that the intervention failed in engaging anonymous people. They considered that the cold weather was the main cause why not so many people participated in the action. The hammocks were

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<sup>76</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 2.

<sup>77</sup> See Appendix B, interviewees 2 and 3.

mainly used by friends, and other artists and curators that already knew the project. In doing so, the place unconsciously became an elitist bounded Habermasian public sphere (2010). Habermas argues that the public sphere is a dialectic space created to moderate the state and the individual. Nevertheless, Habermas restricts the participation in (his definition of) the public sphere to intellectuals and the bourgeois class. In parallel to Habermas bourgeois space, Városi Szalon only involved intellectuals and artists into the scene, instead of the multiplicity of different dwellers (Fraser, 1995).

In my view, it was also a consequence of the design of the action. In the interview held with Katalin Erdódi<sup>78</sup>, she showed her concern about the public sphere. She explained me that nowadays she is more interested in long term community art projects as they embrace critical issues. In fact, she is currently involved in another public art project in a rural area that connects social issues with art from an ecological perspective (Lacy, 1995).

It is not possible to work in process, for instance, because of the festival... no capacities to work long-term. (K. Erdódi, personal communication, April 11, 2013)<sup>79</sup>

In her statement, she emphasizes the time framework that structures the intervention. She affirms the necessity to embrace the process in politically engaged art interventions. In my view, that lack of critical concerned influenced Városi Szalon's final achievements. Moreover, the artworks were placed in the *open* space without taking into consideration the issues that shape the bounded private lives of the dwellers, as I explore in chapter 5 (Harding, 1996). At the same time, they designed a project and placed it in the square as something finished, keeping it "in order". Subsequently, the boundaries between the object and the subject were kept fixed, as the art intervention was imposed to the place rather than created from it (Lippard, 1997). At the same time, Városi Szalon's non engagement with the

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<sup>78</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 2.

<sup>79</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 2.

surrounded area maintains the artwork in traditional art history frameworks. The art experience turned the square into something more *beautiful, organic, and well-managed* that attracts tourists and visitors interested in public art, but it did not involve the community of the surroundings (Orum, 2010; Deutsche, 1998).

On the other hand, as they explained me, PLACCC Festival depends economically on the grants or financial aid they can get. At the same time, they ask for permission of the municipality when they organize any art intervention. I argue that taking account of the current Hungarian cultural policies that centralizes the decisions on Fidesz Party<sup>80</sup>, the financial aid directly affects the kind of art projects developed. In this way, addressing political issues that oppose the government ideology have consequences in the financial aid achieved.

In a similar way, “Eight Sea” addressed political issues but the community involved did not participate actively in the intervention, as one of the participants expressed (Bojtár)<sup>81</sup>. The organizers tried to move the political conflicts that shape district VIII to an exhibition, but the limitations of the space affected the artistic experience. As Kirsty Robertson (2012) points out, “Museums and galleries are seen to act vampirically, encouraging the creation of subversive work, sucking the active opposition out of it, and leaving an empty shell that nevertheless conveys a sense of edginess upon the institution” (p. 80). In order to subvert these limitations, Robertson proposes “participatory exhibitions” as “Eight Sea” attempted to develop. However, the people who participated in the workshops organized were mainly friends, and other artists.

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<sup>80</sup> See chapter 3.

<sup>81</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 14.

In their attempt to move the district's public sphere<sup>82</sup> into the gallery they forgot the dwellers' personal considerations about public space. Harding (1996) introduces Alloway and Greenbie's terms "proxemic spaces" and "dixtemic spaces" in his analysis of public space. In Harding's own words:

Proxemic spaces are those which can claim a very defined community or group, such as one might find in the residential areas of cities where people feel a strong territorial claim to their front street and surrounding area. Dixtemic spaces are those major shared spaces in the centers of towns and cities used by all citizens and visitors. (p.4)

The people who participated in the "20 Forintos Operett"<sup>83</sup> did not feel Múszai as their own space. Those streets around the formal nurse playground where the communitarian experience took place are their "proxemic space". The surrounding of Tolnay Lajos (figure 3)<sup>84</sup> is the area where they feel this "strong territory claim". Subsequently, "Eight Sea" challenged the (dichotomical) traditional aesthetic paradigm, but failed in bringing the public sphere into a private domain (Múszai) through an artistic participatory exhibition.

### 6.3. Conclusions

After analyzing both experiences, some conclusions found are valuable for my study. On the whole the contributions can be explored through the accessibility these interventions have. With accessibility I not only mean the people that can participate and get engaged in the project, but also how the whole body is included in the experience through a horizontal and inclusive approach of the senses.

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<sup>82</sup> I refer to public sphere as something heterogenic and personal built upon individual meanings of the "public", the "domestic", and the "personal" (Miles, 2009)

<sup>83</sup> See chapter 5.

<sup>84</sup> See Appendix A.

The place chosen influences the accessibility achieved. However, placing an artwork in *open* spaces does not mean that it embraces public issues that affect the people involved; and their desire of participation. When the art project is thought prior to the intervention, it not normally takes into account how the participants relate with it. In addition, trying to keep everything “in order” highlights the individuality and independence of the artwork. Subsequently, the binaries object/subject; inside/outside are kept static, hence no redefinition of the artwork is done during the process.

On the other hand, the limitations of the space chosen can be subverted through the process of corporal engagement, but these limitations affect the participation of the people whose critical issues are addressed. Art galleries and museums limit the accessibility of the participants. Nevertheless, the way the artwork is planned can embrace a corporal accessibility of them once they face the intervention. In doing so, the art is redefined during the process, putting the emphasis on the *interconnectness* between the subject and the inanimate matter.

Finally, although both experiences did not engage the inhabitants of the surrounding area, they visualized the way the city is structured for the mobility of the inhabitants. The point that I want to make is that *open* spaces are normally thought of as transitory ones in an economic itinerant movement that excludes bodies that do not belong or contribute to the system. In my view, public art interventions have the potential to transform them in a more horizontal and inclusive way, but the design and process of the experience must focus on it.

## 7. Magyar Kétfarkú Kutya Part<sup>85</sup> and 4K!<sup>86</sup>. Opening Gaps in the “empty” City.

Both MKKP and 4K! are collectives that embrace activist strategies in their public art interventions. MKKP is an artistic and activist group founded in 2006. Although their first actions took place in Szeged, nowadays they mainly act in Budapest. The group was founded by former street artists that attempted to criticize the Hungarian political environment through the arts. Therefore, they planned this project called MKKP as a (fake) political party, in an economic and socially turbulent environment with the street protest that arose in 2006, which some of the interviewees highlighted (András Istvánffy and Janos Zolnay)<sup>87</sup>, and I will further examine in chapter 3. They play with the symbols of the city and the diverse popular cultural expressions. One example of this is the name MKKP itself, which translates in English to “two-tailed dog party.” They are popularly recognized with the symbol of a dog with two tails, displayed in open places of the city (figure 15)<sup>88</sup>.

In their campaign they develop plans to promote the party, making promises like eternal life or free beer (figure 15)<sup>89</sup>. Moreover, they transform billboards (figure 16), traffic signs (figure 17), and stick posters (figure 18) with confusing messages on the buildings of the city. In their interventions they mainly criticize capitalism, lack of environmental concern, and the political system.

Another example is 4K!, a Hungarian political party that has existed since April 2012, which used to be an activist group. Their former actions were linked with an International Anti-Globalization agenda. In an interview, András, the actual representative of the party, defined this period as “the good old times” (A. Istvánffy, personal communication, April 3,

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<sup>85</sup> I refer to them with the abbreviation MKKP

<sup>86</sup> The English translation is 4K!- Fourth Republic. I refer to them with the abbreviation 4K!.

<sup>87</sup> See Appendix B, interviewees 4 and 6.

<sup>88</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>89</sup> See Appendix A

2013)<sup>90</sup>. In their former actions, they organized flashmobs and performances in order to re-occupy the public space. By turning the city into a playground through “pillow battles” or “Hiding Flags” games, their main aim was to involve the dwellers of the city in participative actions in *open* spaces. At the same time they criticized the capitalist system during these events, as they have argued that capitalism has made public spaces inaccessible to the people (Szirko, February 2, 2012). Nevertheless, nowadays their actions have turned more politically explicit. As an example of this, in this chapter I explore one event they carried out in December 2011 in Clark Ádám tér (figure 19)<sup>91</sup>. In this artistic action they took a static monument and they transformed it by placing a flag with a hole over the shield of the monument.

## 7.1. Analytical Concepts

Public Art is normally considered a hybrid experience in between “arts” and “the social” (Kwon, 2002). Different concepts like “community”, “public sphere” or “aesthetics” are relevant in the analysis, as I have already explored in the previous chapters. Nevertheless, I will focus on the individual and internal experience of the audience in this chapter. At the same time, I aim to explore the actions developed by activist groups in their possibilities to open individual and engaged spaces in the bounded conceptualized city. As a consequence, I analytically use Augé’s (2000) concept of non-spaces and Kester’s (2004) dialogical art. As I explain in chapter 3 and 4, my aim is to transgress the “denigration of matter, the divorce of mind from matter” (Langton, 2005, p.234) established in oppositional thinking.

The art historian Grant Kester (2004) introduced the term “dialogical art” to explore the interconnection between artwork and the audience. While he explores the interventions from a social and individual approach, Gablik (1991) already analyzed this relatedness from

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<sup>90</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>91</sup> See Appendix A.

an aesthetic perspective as I explore in chapter 6. In addition, Kester argues that successful “dialogical” (and activist) art experiences normally remain at the margins of the critical literature.

On the other hand, many art critics, artists and art historians highlight the necessity to address an activist agenda in the art interventions (Lippard, 1997; Raven 1993; Lacy, 1995; Miles, 2009). In addition, Piotrowski (2012) emphasizes the strategies used, pointing out the utility of activist ones in an attempt to create debate about the relevant political issues. Both Kester (2004) and Piotrowski analyze the content rather than the context. The relation between arts and political propaganda is a long debate in the artistic field. Many authors criticize how the power has appropriated activist strategies in order to spread their ideology (Deutsche, 1998). Nevertheless, some activist groups have also taken the challenge to redefine the power propaganda in their actions, as I explore with the MKKP case.

As I introduce in the title of this study, I aim to explore the redefinition of non-spaces through public art. Marc Augé (2000) looks at the real significance contemporary public spaces have. He uses the concept “non-places” to describe those spaces like malls, streets or squares that although they are proclaimed “public”, they do not provide a space of encounter among the inhabitants. He argues that an organic society cannot be built in those non-places. However, as I have already stated in chapter 5, my aim is to explore the ways of creating an agonistic democracy built upon conflict rather than the dominant consensus of traditional organic societies (Mouffe, 2010; 2007). In addition, Augé grounds its theory upon De Certeau (1990) and Merleau-Ponty. Both of them consider that the encounter and relationship among different identities is what turns a place into a space. Nevertheless, Augé considers that in the contemporary age of superabundance of events, public spaces are limited in time (temperature of the streets, traffic lights) and do not stand for any kind of encounter. In Augé’s perspective,

the non-places are only sites of passage that inform us about our supposed location throughout signs or advertisements.

Finally, taking into account how marginal Hungarian artist developed strategies of resistance during the 1980s, I aim to explore these dissent discourses in the public domain. As an example of this, Fraser (1995) also explores how a public sphere of inclusive participation is created from the margins. Therefore, she defines subaltern counter-publics as “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter-discourses. Subaltern counter-publics permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities interests and needs” (Fraser 1995, p.291).

As a consequence, my aim is to analyze the possibilities of transgressing normative oppositional thinking in dialogue with the artwork. At the same time I explore the possibilities of opening gaps of interconnection in the city through these dialogical moments. Subsequently, I have structured the chapter into three main sections. First of all, I examine the international parallels of the events. Secondly, I focus on the possibilities of creating spaces through the strategy of provocation. In addition to this, I explore how “identity” is built and renegotiated in dialogue with the artwork.

## **7.2. In-Depth Analysis of the Interventions**

### **Activist strategies**

As I have already introduced, MKKP redefines political rituals in their actions. As an example of this, they self-proclaimed a political party in 2006, and started designing its campaign and the different symbols they were going to use, such as choosing a dog as the president of the party. When I asked one of the members of MKKP for the name of the party, he did not only

explain to me but he also interacted with his dog. Touching the tail of the animal, he compared the happiness of the dog to that of the people:

Somebody is as happy as a dog with two tails. (Gergő, personal communication, April 12, 2013)<sup>92</sup>

In their critique of the established system, they use irony and sarcasm as a strategy to visualize how political parties lie and do not embrace critical social issues that affect the population. At the same time, the reader should be aware when the collective was founded. It was founded in 2006 and considered a turning point in the Hungarian social history as I explore in chapter 3. The declarations of the Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány during the economic crisis provoked street protests of the population calling for his resignation, while other parties took advantage of the situation, as Fidész party did. As is cited in some news, Gyurcsány claimed:

Evidently, we lied throughout the last year-and-a-half, two years. It was totally clear that what we are saying is not true.

(...) Nothing. If we have to give account to the country about what we did for four years, then what do we say? (“Excerpts” September 19, 2006)

This lack of trust in the political class is shown in Gergő’ speech. He explained to me that although they could not register a nonhuman animal as a candidate for the elections, they provided a sarcastic approach to politics in the application form that highlighted how politicians lie:

As a candidate you can lie about anything. Superhero with abilities, throw fireballs, because everybody lies about what they’ll do.

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<sup>92</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 5.

(...) It's not important the Parliament, the campaign is what we want to do (Gergő, personal communication, April 12, 2013)<sup>93</sup>

In addition to this, I argue that their project is a process-based artistic action that concerns the way to achieve confusion through the “joke” rather than changing an established political system. Their strategy conceives “irony” as a political “weapon”. At the same time, they focus on the process as it can be understood when Gergő claims that they are only interested in the political campaign.

4K! on the contrary, became a real political party since one year ago. In the interview held, the current representative explained the genesis of the party and his own personal political engagement. He identified a turning point in the collective when they turned into an official political party. He states:

[Earlier we embraced the] issue of reclaiming the public spaces, but now as a [political] party, we deal with unemployment, insecurity, raising prices... social catastrophe. Although we still use these methods [flashmobs, performances, etc] because we have to generate media attention, we use however more formal things like open public discussions. We stopped [community actions] because we just want to give them political field: more speak about the political situation. (A. Istvánffy, personal communication, April 3, 2013. Brackets mine)<sup>94</sup>

Taking a look at this frame we can understand their meaning of public sphere. They claim that the performance they used to develop was not so engaged with critical social issues such as unemployment. In doing so, he perceives that the places of political participation are located in “formal” places, instead of squares or streets. Therefore, I argue that Istvánffy’s definition of the public sphere is more connected with the Habermasian original one, where

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<sup>93</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 5.

<sup>94</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 4.

not all bodies are included in the debate. At the same time, he highlights that the strategies they use to embrace are not useful anymore, as they are nowadays engaged in “more formal” things. In his speech, he points out that a critical action should embrace traditional political methods, thus activist art remains a tool for creating expectation. Therefore, the focus moves to the final goal, rather than the process itself.

This can be seen in the event they planned in December 2011. They transformed a monument in Clark Ádám tér, by displaying a flag with a hole in the middle (figure 19)<sup>95</sup>. First of all, we should be aware of the location chosen. Clark Ádám tér is a square next to Széchenyi Chain Bridge, the bridge that connects Buda side with Pest. Moreover, this spot where the 0km stone is placed was built in the nineteenth century as a prolongation of the bridge. All Hungarian roads are measured from this spot. In this action they took a static monument and they transformed it by placing a flag over the shield of the monument. Subsequently, 4K! used historical and cultural Hungarian symbols. Both the flag and the shield have important historical references. They used the shield with the holy crown and the 1956’s flag as a revolutionary symbol that links the current political environment with another oppressive moments Hungary has lived. By placing a hole in the middle of the 1956’s flag, they replaced the communist shield with the holy crown one. The action embodies political and historical significance, but do not challenge spatial boundaries as it is imposed on the place (Lippard, 1997). As I explore in chapter 3, 1956 is an important turning point in the collective memory. The cultural policy taken by the Party after the revolution influences the symbolism of the event. They banned memorials to the people executed in 1956. As a consequence, artists and activists have recovered its symbolism (as it happened in 2006). However, although 4K! rejects the Fidesz Party, the party of Viktor Orbán has also taken advantage of the 1956 revolution symbolism in several occasions.

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<sup>95</sup> See Appendix A.

These actions show many parallels with other artistic groups situated in between an artistic environment and an activist one. Since the 1960's many groups have experimented with techniques to develop active messages. For instance, "Situationist International" (SI), developed the technique of detournement (hijacking commercial images), or attempts to create "constructed situations" (Holmes, 2009). In a similar way, Drescher (2008) argues that contemporary billboard corrections are a critical response to power's control over public spaces. Therefore, Drescher considers that "In billboard corrections, the public sphere, which is the sociopolitical realm where private interests are discussed and expressed, garners its feeble assertions in the face of corporate-governmental dominance" (p.159).

Since the 1960s many groups have looked for other materials to blur the boundaries among fiction and reality. "Tucuman Arde" (figure 20)<sup>96</sup>, for instance, was a project raised in 1968 by some Argentinean artists such as Roberto Jacoby, Raul Escari and Beatriz Galvé (Betta, February 11, 2005). They took mass media strategies not only to criticize the state, but also to investigate the possibilities of creating unexpected events. They criticized the political environment (industrialization, lack of civil rights, etc), while they challenged the status quo established in the art world and the state (Lippard, 1997).

### **In between confusion, provocation, and transgression**

As I have already introduced, Augé (2000) defines non-places as the ones where people transit from one place to another such as streets, malls or squares. They are not considered spaces as they do not hold enough significance in people's identities (De Certeau, 1990). Although both MKKP and 4K! develop their actions in such places, I argue that their interventions have the potential to turn non-places into spaces. In their actions, they play with conventional signs or billboards in a way that attempts to open new gaps of self-

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<sup>96</sup> See Appendix A.

consciousness in relation with the location. In doing so, the inside and the outside of the audience is juxtaposed, and the binary object/subject is transgressed. Moreover, they achieve this unexpected moment through confusion and provocation. Patricia Phillips (1998) uses the term “confusion” to talk about the feeling experienced in the dialogue with public art. She considers that the interventions should be placed in nontraditional either marginal or private spheres in order to cause confusion, as MKKP especially attempts to do. In a similar way Lippard (1997) argues that provocation is a useful strategy to achieve connectedness between the artwork and the location chosen. Both MKKP’s and 4K! interventions provoke unexpected feelings toward the art work. However, 4K!’s explicit political symbols (1956 flag with holy crown shield, figures 19 and 20)<sup>97</sup> do not achieve confusion, but they engaged with the social memory of repression, as I explained earlier. The political message is so explicit that it can cause conceptualized identification rather than confusion.

MKKP’s interventions, on the contrary, emphasize the process. When I first saw one of their traffic signs, I was not sure if they were real, and in that moment a sort of dialogue with the artwork and the artist was created. MKKP’s traffic signs transgress a bounded perception of the inside and the outside in the dialogue created. Taking Foucault’s (2000) concept of transgression, MKKP’s artistic interventions move from confusion to provocation, and transgression.

The play of limits and transgression seems to be regulated by the simple obstinacy: transgression incessantly crosses and recrosses a line that closes up behind it in a wave of extremely short duration, and thus it is made to return once more right to the horizon of the uncrossable. (as edited in Faubion, 2000, p.73)

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<sup>97</sup> See Appendix A.

In an interview held with Gergő<sup>98</sup> in April 2013, he explained to me MKKP's aims and some examples of the different experiences they had. When I asked him about the location chosen for their interventions, he considered streets in opposition to art galleries or museums. He stated:

Once we did an exhibition, with other five artists, boring. It was also funny, many people believe in them, talking how good [this artwork, or the other is]. There was a boring Mona Lisa painting, with you know, a zoom of a big part, details the other; and there was one guy who talks very long about it: ‘- It is better than the original Mona Lisa’.

If you put things in a gallery you pretend that is art or something. They believe that is art or something. In galleries you cannot talk to people. There are only the people who own galleries, work in the university, writes articles in newspapers. On the street and in internet is where you really can talk to people. (Gergő, personal communication, April 12, 2013)<sup>99</sup>

Analyzing this frame of the interview, many interesting points are highlighted. He not only points out how the status quo of the artistic field is reinforced in art galleries, but also he states “they believe that is art or something”. In the statement there is a latent value of arts over utility crafts. At the same time, he highlights the masculine traditional value of success kept in those spaces (Pollock, 1988). However, although he rejects the same definition of arts that traditional galleries argued, he considers public spaces as the proper location to dialogue with the audience. In a similar way, by claiming that in galleries “there are only the people who own galleries, work in the university, writes articles in newspapers”, he opposes two different definitions of the public sphere. In his view, galleries provoke a Habermasian elitist

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<sup>98</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 5.

<sup>99</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 5.

public sphere, while “on the street and in internet” influence the creation of a more horizontal public sphere (Fraser, 1995). However, as I argue in the precedent chapters open spaces also exclude bodies. It does not depend on the location, but on the issues addressed and the approach developed. In his regard, Gergő highlights the dialogue created between the artist and the audience. In my view, it causes confusion within its creative possibilities of opening new gaps of self-consciousness.

What I do has no sense in a gallery, only in the street is where it works... if we change a billboard, it works if the people just think is a real one, for five minutes. (Gergő, personal communication, April 12, 2013)<sup>100</sup>

MKKP’s interventions have the potential of opening gaps of relatedness in public spaces of the city. By correcting a billboard (figure 16) or transforming traffic signs (figure 17); they challenge the empty perception of the place (Augé, 2000). For one moment of confusion, the dwellers dialogue with the artwork. They bring their experiences and memories in order to understand the significance of the billboard. This sort of encounter with the object challenges a bounded conception of the inside and the outside. These signs and billboards provide a way to transform Augé’s empty non-places into a playground where identity is built upon the encounter with unexpected events and inanimate matter.

### **Building identity**

As I explain throughout this section, I argue that MKKP’s interventions challenge a fixed conceptualization of identities. By transforming traffic signs or correcting billboards they highlight a diversity of identities that gather on public spaces. The identity is not static, but fluid and variable. It is built upon the relation with the outside (Phillips, 1988). Their interventions take into account the fluidity of the relations. How identity is built and

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<sup>100</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 5.

renegotiated in the public sphere has been explored by some scholars. Miles (2009), for instance, explores the issue in post-communist countries. He concludes that identity is built throughout the process rather than being a prevailed aspect. In Miles' analysis, the variability of encounters is highlighted. He maintains that the subject's identity is an open-ended alternative of his/her experiences, memories and meanings of the "public", the "domestic", and the "personal". In a similar way, Kester (2004) considers identity as something fluid. His approach is particularly interesting as he does not only include the memories or experiences in the interconnection, but also the inanimate matter. As I have already introduced, his study focuses on the interaction between the artist and the audience, and subsequently, between the artwork and the audience, challenging the object-subject binary in its relatedness.

On the other hand, Kester (2004) also identifies violence in the attempt to represent a group and its individuals. With his dialogical approach, Kester aims to involve identities within its fluidity. Before holding the interview, I already met Istvánffy<sup>101</sup> once in the countercultural social centre Siraly that was later evicted in March 2013. That evening we were arguing for hours about my topic and the Hungarian environment. Therefore, when we met for the interview he already knew what my aim was with this study. That impression first influenced his approach to the interview, as he started talking about the aims and political program of their party<sup>102</sup> from the beginning.

As a consequence of this, I deal with the interview turning it into a conversation to explore his engagement with the issue. Although we later thoroughly explore his political, social and personal experiences, when I asked him about the purposes of 4K! in relation with the public space he claimed:

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<sup>101</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 4.

<sup>102</sup> András Istvánffy is the current political representative of 4K!

[It] should be reclaimed and protected. (A. Istvánffy, personal communication, April 3, 2013. Brackets mine)<sup>103</sup>

Taking into account that the public space embraces a fluidity of identities that are renegotiated in the encounter with each other and the place, his perspective attempts to take the responsibility of protecting this fluidity. In doing so, Istvánffy in the name of 4K! moves his own consideration of “public” to the whole community. In relation to this aim of protection, Deutsche (1996) introduces Craig Owens’ approach in her analysis of public art and urban redevelopment projects. Owen claims that the protection of public spaces can also be understood as an alibi for a new kind of imperialism.

As a result of this, although 4K!’s attempt is social engagement, they finally develop a fixed representation of the community in their political intervention (figure 19)<sup>104</sup>. By identifying the 1956’s flag and the holy crown as revolutionary symbols, they unify the multiplicity of identities that shape the public space. Moreover, in doing so, they do not take into account how each one’s identity is diverse, volatile and controversial. As Phillips (1988) argues, each one identity is not fixed or static, but depends on the memories, experiences and relatedness with the outside. Nevertheless, 4K! discourse considers the public as something fixed, that does not provide space for the encounter of diverse identities (De Certeau, 1990).

However, his consideration of public also depends on his own definition of “the private”, “the domestic”, and his lived experiences (Miles, 2009). Therefore, his own self-consideration was shown in the intervention. In the interview I asked him about his personal approach to politics. In his speech, he highlighted his personal consideration of how a politician should be:

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<sup>103</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 4.

<sup>104</sup> See Appendix A.

[You have to know] how you react to things; which is your motivation. You have to be self-disciplined and focus on a goal to achieve it. (A. Istvánffy, personal communication, April 3, 2013. Brackets mine)<sup>105</sup>

In this frame of the interview two main points are emphasized that in my view affected his approach to the art intervention. By emphasizing the necessity to know “how you react to things”, his approach shows fixity in the encounter with the environment. With this frame he does not embrace the fluidity of identities, either focus on the process. In doing so, he does not account for the experience of relatedness with the outside, and how it affects each individual. As a consequence, his discourse reinforces the boundaries between the self and the other, inside/outside; object/subject.

As a consequence, his statement is related with the intervention in Clark *Ádám tér*. The transformed 1956 Hungarian flag is placed on the top of the monument, where you have to look up to observe it. As a result of this, the artwork unconsciously draws a hierarchy among the audience and the fixed political meaning they want to impose, reifying a masculine abstract and bounded space. In a similar way, the artwork is located in the 0km of Hungary, emphasizing its (violent) attempt to represent and protect the whole community. In my view, although they attempted to embrace social and revolutionary issues in the intervention, they finally moved their own definition of public and “national” identity. Subsequently, they unconsciously generated violence in the attempt to represent a community and taking the paternalistic responsibility to protect the public space. Maintaining, on the contrary, its conceptualized bounded and gendered spaces (inside/outside; private/public; mind/body).

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<sup>105</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 4.

### 7.3. Conclusions

The main points found in the analysis of MKKP and 4K! that can contribute my study, revolve around the concept of identity and the experience of the audience with the artwork. Taking into account identity as something volatile, and fluid, it varies throughout the encounter with the inanimate matter. Consequently, the *interconnectness* of the audience and the artwork can provoke a moment of self-consciousness between the inside and the outside of the person. These moments have been explained through dialogical instants of confusion, provocation and transgression.

On the other hand, we should be aware that those instants and identities are neither fixed nor static. Therefore, trying to represent a community or its individuals generate violence, and a masculine value of protection. Public art interventions can only turn non-places into public spheres where counterdiscourses and dissident voices are included by providing dialogical spaces of individual and volatile self-consciousness. As a result, these moments transgress the conceptualized boundary between the inside and the outside, the inanimate matter and the subject.

## 8. Conclusions

Once, while I was doing observant participation in the social centre Siraly, I met a Hungarian art student and we started talking about the social environment. During the interview she stated, “You are travelling all the time [train, bus, internet], but you’re not moving at all, also you don’t move in society” (Dorottya, personal communication, March 8, 2013. Brackets mine)<sup>106</sup>. This feeling of not being included in an apparently modernized and democratic society has structured my study, and subsequently my conclusions.

The masculine conceptualized city *excludes* bodies from the sphere of political and social participation. Roma population, homeless people and women are excluded. They remain at the margins of political and social participation, and thus in the private domain. However, I argue that this logic is based on a reinforcement of binaries in the definition of space, the hierarchy of the senses and the exclusive public sphere. Analyzing public art in its potentiality to transgress this oppositional thinking that labels emotion and the private in relation to the excluded bodies, some interesting conclusions arose. As a result of this, I have organized this chapter around the concept of Identity and the successful strategies public art develops.

Public art strategies and achievements demonstrate that Hungarian social history has influenced people's identities. As we have explored, during Kádár's regime dissent and marginal voices were either excluded or oppressed in the public sphere. Although the revolution of 1956 produced some changes in cultural policy, the Party continued banning and excluding not only contemporary critical art, but also the memory of that repression. The Hungarian population was not allowed to remember what had happened, developing a *trauma* that continues to the current moment. Nowadays, under a supposed democracy, the state

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<sup>106</sup> See Appendix B, interviewee 7.

develops a capitalist economy and at the same time is centralizing all decisions under the figure of the Prime Minister. This social environment influences a sort of continuity in the exclusion of bodies from the public sphere, and a lack of self-knowledge of their past. Nevertheless, as in the past, I argue that some dissenting voices appear in the arts that challenge the paradigm.

The experiences analyzed challenge dichotomic thinking in their attempt to bring personal stories, lived experiences and emotions labeled as private to public spaces. In doing so, empty non-places turn into spaces of horizontal and inclusive participation. To put it other words, public art interventions that embrace conflict and differences attempt to build democracy based on conflict that involves dissent and excluded bodies. At the same time, the individuals work in their self-knowledge of the personal and familiar past that they were not allowed to remember. For instance, in one of the experiences analyzed, the participants wrote lyrics based on their personal concerns, emotions and lived experiences, and later on, they sang them in *open* spaces of the city. Subsequently, bounded and gendered spaces (private/public) are transgressed, and the identity is redefined in the encounter with the past, present and future.

On the other hand, the actions developed by the art collectives have *parallelisms* with the international activist avant-garde as we have seen with the different case studies. For instance, they develop recreations of fictional stories or songs, or they embrace the political use of irony and double meaning. In my view, it can be influenced by the historical legacy Hungary bears with Europe. The country used to be part of the Western area until this was interrupted by World War II. In addition, as I explain in my study, artists, mainly during the communist period, have tried either to be included in or to embrace European inheritance. However, the issues addressed and the internal connotations relate to Hungarian social history. Subsequently, they are geographically, historically and dialogically in an “in

between” location. On the other hand, this drive to enter the public space has its foundations in the attempt to challenge the lack of self-knowledge of their emotional past, and the oppression suffered that have continuity even today.

The public art interventions analyzed embrace activist *strategies*. These strategies focused on the process of disrupting temporal frameworks and male values of success. While subverting traditional aesthetic paradigms based on the individuality of the artist and the independence of the artwork, they redefine the artwork and provide the audience a space of self-consciousness of his, its or her volatile and fluid personal identity. In the encounter with other people and the artwork, they involve their body and a connectedness with the inanimate matter as a sort of communication. In doing so, the binaries mind/body, reason/emotion and subject/object are transgressed.

Additionally, disrupting geographical boundaries not only concerns interventions that embrace critical issues labeled as private, but also the way the whole *body* is involved in the process. Inside the body some hierarchies are inserted. Enlightenment masculine values that continue into the current era highlight the mind (reason) over the body (emotion). Consequently, sight is valued over the other senses. Successful interventions that aim to transgress oppositional thinking should involve the whole body in the relatedness with the artwork and the other participants. Only in developing this interconnection between the inside and the outside can the dichotomical paradigm that supports exclusion be challenged.

Finally, although my study has limitations mainly due to the time constraints of a Master's Thesis, I have tried to explore the issue and highlight the necessity to embrace another kind of approach in art history. Even though I also find social studies that analyze oppression from a categorical perspective useful and needed, in my view it is urgent that we deconstruct the paradigms and logics that support this inequality. Identifying oppositional

thinking as this paradigm, I have tried to explore the potentialities of public art within its discourse of interconnectedness. Feminist art history analyses normally focus on the status quo established in the artistic and cultural field that oppresses women. Therefore, women artists face multiple burdens mainly based on gender, class, race, age, education and aim of success. However, these studies do not normally focus on the constructed logic that supports these categories and that thus provoke inequality. In my analysis I have tried to subvert this oppositional approach, developing a strategy of interconnectedness or queer assemblage. In doing so, I attempted to explore another approach and perspectives in feminist art research. I hope this analysis contributes to future social researches and hope to collaborate in such researches in order to do my part in the fight against gender conceptualized inequalities.

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Figure 21. Tucuman Arde (1968).

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<sup>107</sup> Grease used to be the popular name given to the police during Franquismo.



Figure 1. Activist collage of the Hungarian protests of 2006. Reprinted from *Riots in Hungary*, by Subba, 2006, Adapted June 16, 2013 from <http://riotsinhungary.blog.hu/>



Figure 2. Grease strikes back this spring. Reprinted from *Asamblea antirepresiva en Madrid*, 2012, Adapted June 16, 2013 from <http://asambleaantirepresivaenmadrid.wordpress.com/category/convocatorias/>



Figure 3. District VIII. Adapted from *Wikimapia*, n.d., Adapted June 6, 2013 from <http://wikimapia.org/#lang=hu&lat=47.499576&lon=19.083252&z=13&m=b&show=/42662>

14/hu/



Figure 4. Girl playing a recycled instrument. Reprinted from *20 forintos operett*, 2012, Adapted June 6, 2013 from [http://pneumasov.org/20ft\\_eng/gallery.html](http://pneumasov.org/20ft_eng/gallery.html)



Figure 5. Performative walking. Reprinted from *20 forintos operett*, 2012, Adapted June 6, 2013 from [http://pneumasov.org/20ft\\_eng/gallery.html](http://pneumasov.org/20ft_eng/gallery.html)



Figure 6. Performative walking with Mokus Maxi sculpture. Reprinted from *20 forintos operett*, 2012, Adapted June 6, 2013 from <https://www.facebook.com/20ForintosOperett?fref=ts>



Figure 7. Mokus Maxi sculpture base, Reprinted from *20 forintos operett*, 2012, Adapted June 6, 2013 from <https://www.facebook.com/20ForintosOperett?fref=ts>

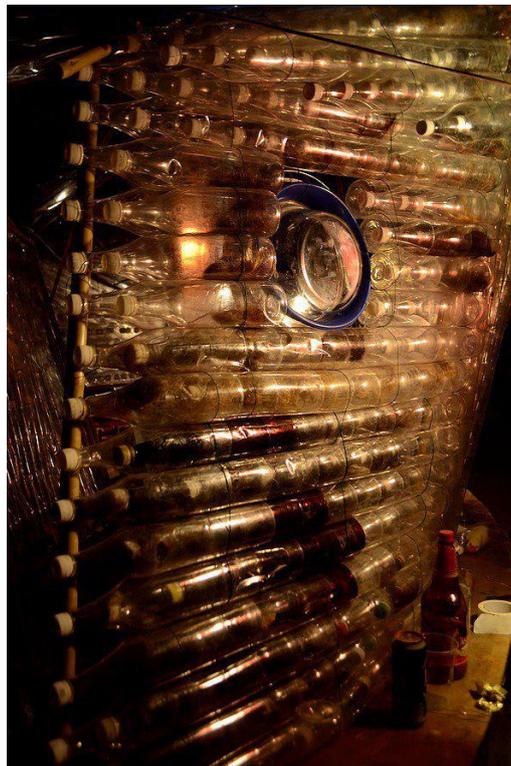


Figure 8. Mokus Maxi sculpture body. Reprinted from *20 forintos operett*, 2012, Adapted June 6, 2013 from <https://www.facebook.com/20ForintosOperett?fref=ts>



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Figure 10. Hair cutting in Blaha Square. Reprinted from *20 forintos operett*, 2012, Adapted June 6, 2013 from <https://www.facebook.com/20ForintosOperett?fref=ts>



Figure 11. Krzysztof Wodiczko's Homeless vehicle project. Reprinted from *Elisava TdD*, by A. Figueres, 2010, Adapted June 6, 2013 from <http://tdd.elisava.net/coleccion/12/figueres-es>



Figure 12. Marco Cavallo. Reprinted from *Principi & princípi*, 2012, Adapted June 6, 2013 from <http://principieprincipi.blogspot.hu/2012/03/il-ritorno-di-marco-cavallo.html>



Figure 13. Viktor Markos' *Eight Sea* installation, own photograph.



Figure 14. *Városi szalon*, Reprinted from *Picasa*, by Necc, 2010, Adapted June 6, 2013 from <https://picasaweb.google.com/106060496387288230290/PLACCC2010HASZONDESIGNPROJEKTUjiranyCsoportVarosiSzalon#>



Figure 15. “Eternal life/Free beer/Tax cuts”. Reprinted from *BKV hátra online*, 2009, Adapted

June 6, 2013 from <http://www.bkvhatra.hu/modul.php?modul=cikk&cikk=819>



Figure 16. “Banana genetically modified”. Reprinted from *Kétfarkú kutya hülyeség*, Adapted

June 6, 2013 from [http://mkkp.hu/wordpress/?page\\_id=821](http://mkkp.hu/wordpress/?page_id=821)



Figure 17. MKKP traffic sign. Reprinted from *Kétfarkú kutyás hülyeség*, Adapted June 6, 2013 from [http://mkkp.hu/wordpress/?page\\_id=821](http://mkkp.hu/wordpress/?page_id=821)



Figure 18. We intentionally do not clean the trains.

I travel by train. Hungarian State Railways. Figure 17. Reprinted from *Kétfarkú kutyás hülyeség*, Adapted June 6, 2013 from [http://mkkp.hu/wordpress/?page\\_id=821](http://mkkp.hu/wordpress/?page_id=821)



Figure 19. 4K! project in Clark Ádám tér. Reprinted from *hvg.hu*, by H. Levente, 2010,  
Adapted June 6, 2013 from [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20111216\\_4k\\_clark\\_adam\\_ter](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20111216_4k_clark_adam_ter)



Figure 20. 4K! project in Clark Ádám tér. Reprinted from *hvg.hu*, by H. Levente, 2010,  
Adapted June 6, 2013 from [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20111216\\_4k\\_clark\\_adam\\_ter](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20111216_4k_clark_adam_ter)



Figure 21. Tucuman Arde. Reprinted from *Decir silencioso*, by M. di Croce, 2012, Adapted  
June 6, 2013 from <http://marthadicroce.blogspot.hu/2012/01/artistas-de-vanguardia-responden-con.html>

## Appendix B (Table of Interviewees)<sup>108</sup>

### In-depth Interviews

Interviewee 1: Sarah Günter, 28 years old, artist, February 19, 2013.

Interviewee 2: Katalin Erdódi, 25-35 years old, curator, April 11, 2013.

Interviewee 3: Dominika Tihanyi, 36 years old, architect, April 11, 2013.

Interviewee 4: András Istvánffy, 31 years old, politician, April 3, 2013.

Interviewee 5: Gergő<sup>109</sup>, 33 years old, artist, April 12, 2013.

Interviewee 6: Janos Zolnay, 40-50 years old, urban sociologist, April 18, 2013.

Interviewee 7: Dorottya<sup>110</sup>, 23 years old, art student, March 8, 2013.

### Informal Conversations

Interviewee 8: Viktor Markos, 25-35 years old, artist, April 28, 2013.

Interviewee 9: Julianna Prieszol, 59 years old, German teacher, March 10, 2013.

Interviewee 10: Dorka Esze, 23 years old, artist, April 24, 2013.

Interviewee 11: Luca Szabados, 24 years old, artist, March 10, 2013.

Interviewee 12: Livia<sup>111</sup>, 38 years old, unemployed, March 17, 2013.

Interviewee 13. Andrea Tompa, 42 years old, theatre critic and writer, May 7, 2013.

Interviewee 14. Bojtár<sup>112</sup>, 40-50 years old, unemployed, March 18, 2013.

Interviewee 15. Peter<sup>113</sup>, 25-35 years old, artist-in-residence, May, 26, 2013.

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<sup>108</sup> The data follows the same structure: name of the interviewee, age, occupation, date of the interview.

<sup>109</sup> Did not wish his last name to be used.

<sup>110</sup> Did not wish his real first name or last name to be used.

<sup>111</sup> Did not wish his real first name or last name to be used.

<sup>112</sup> Did not wish his real first name or last name to be used.

<sup>113</sup> Did not wish his real first name or last name to be used.

