

With the shift of the ideas of labour and the working modes of the artists, various arenas of thought exchange have established themselves as independent sites of production. The articulation of the problem in language no longer operates merely as a post-description of the artistic product adding a surplus value to it, but as a vehicle for creation of the problem itself. Since the discursive processes happen in relations among people, they produce a contingent social space whose features and capacities offer the possibilities of rethinking the architecture, terms, consequences and promises of assembling today.

C: I agree with what you said before and I think it would be interesting to discuss it in the context of the crisis of political representation.

A: I just think that as long as we continue thinking of discursive practises as modes of production, as long as we stay focused on our labour and all its consequences we are neglecting the crisis of political representation. And that one is connected to the tendency of political philosophy towards object-avoidance.

B: How do you then relate to the ideas of community and to conversation as its mode of self-realisation and self-preservation?

A: Here I am not interested in conversation as a social behaviour but as a form that creates and disseminates issues, that matters in a different way than art production does.

C: Is this then the promise of the discursive? That it can deliver content without wrapping it up in a form?

A: That is also to say that if we want to understand not only the events and streams in art today, but also its potential, the way how it can operate not as an autonomous sphere of experience and existence, but how it engages in social life, we have to analyse the structures that enable the sharing of ideas, namely conditions, promises and consequences of the discursive processes. No to autonomy!

F: So here you see the potential of stepping out of the autonomy of art?

A: Yes, which is not to say let's open the doors so that people from the street can also come in and share their knowledge and issues at stake, but maybe this is our chance. Autonomy of art is based on the translation of the problem or concept into an aesthetic circumstance or medium. It is based on the shift of the battlefield if we can say that there is something we are fighting for.

D: The optimistic way of looking at it comes with the heritage of conceptual art and it is that the statements are events. That they exist not as a supplement or a side product of the art work, but that they are as independent and real. That if you rearticulate the world, it changes.

I: And the pessimistic?  
(laughter)

**D:** The pessimistic way of looking at it goes with Badiou when he describes our social space as worldless, sorry, wordless. The revolutionary subject emerges and outbursts irrationally, without in discourse elaborated agenda.

**B:** To put it broadly, the question would be – How do people assemble and what do they produce when they assemble? Or, how do we assemble and what do we produce when we assemble?

**C:** Is a lab situation really an assembly?

**B:** I would say that it has the potential of becoming one. Or we shouldn't lose the opportunity into making it one. When more individuals gather in a space/context, it is their task to rewrite the rules of the game of that context.

**A:** Bruno Latour in his call for object-oriented democracy distinguishes matters of fact from matters of concern. Matters of fact, great narratives that resolved people's differences and positioned them on the basis of their relation to them, have now been replaced by their relation to objects, to issues. What happens today is that the techniques of political representation no longer seem capable of absorbing the multiplicity of positions and, in any case, they are no longer capable of standardising them. Let's say that parliament is completely inefficient today.

**I:** To translate this problem into a theatre circumstance. Let's try to perform this in a chorus part. See, it's not working. Because chorus as a machine is not any more appropriate. There is no unison, no common cause. The only thing there is are contaminations, traces, interpretations. And of course, there is rhetoric.

**J:** How does parliament translate into a chorus?

**C:** This is what we are trying to avoid, I would say. We claim that the discursive process can be another kind of arena of thought exchange and production. And consequently of action. It is exactly not about translating one machine into another, but we are trying to see if the discursive processes can offer a way of art operating in social life.

**A:** Yes, I said parliament doesn't satisfy us because there we can see in the simplest way where the problem lies. We don't say anymore 'We are concerned that the rain doesn't fall.' And we for sure don't all gather in a circle to discuss it. I am concerned about too much rain, you about airport security measures, his concern is swine flu, hers kindergarten regulations.

**P:** When I was a child I thought global warming was something that was happening in America. And why was that? Because we had more urgent problems to deal with.

**M:** When I say that we should reinvent the architecture of the theatre, I don't mean building crazy buildings, taking chairs out of theatres or some instant solutions like that. I'd try to think of how we can create such a conceptual architecture that absorbs our experience. The multiplicity of concerns and the multiplicity of positions we take towards them. Theatre as an apparatus has a certain way of distributing the public space. I would be curious how we can redistribute it in order to make voices emerge.

**G:** There is the question of how and there is the question of what. Dealing with 'how' requires unfolding of the techniques of assembly. How do we make the issues talk. It would mean to analyse

the mechanisms, relations and structures of, for instance, this lab. To understand how the machine operates. Dealing with 'what' would mean to analyse the content of what we are talking about (if there is any). Why? Because when I am talking I am creating an issue. And this is, as he said, an event. I am making something public. So to deal with 'what' would mean asking 'why'. Why am I making this issue public and not the other. I'm not saying any of them are better, on the contrary I want to find out how are they interdependent.

**P:** When you look up the word 'concern' in the Oxford dictionary, here is what you get: One- anxiety, worry (such unsatisfactory work gives cause for concern), a cause of anxiety or worry (the new techniques raise some safety concerns).

Two - a matter of interest or importance to someone (oil reserves are the concern of the Energy Department, the survival of an endangered species is of concern to wildlife biologists), (concerns) affairs; issues (public awareness of Aboriginal concerns).

Interesting examples, no? So it presupposes an object. I am concerned for this or that. And it also presupposes an urgency. Couldn't we try just as an experiment, as we are in a lab, to formulate each of us his or her concern. Because I am interested in not only what these concerns could be, but in what happens with them, how do they interrelate, how they contaminate each other, do they merge into groups or the opposite, do they become more specific.

**D:** Yes, but to return again to what I said before. Today we have the emergence of the non-assembly. People gathered outside of the organised social space. They are not at all interested in giving voice to any kind of problems. Opposition to the system can no longer articulate itself as a possible alternative or even as a utopia, as a different organisation proposal. In fact, it doesn't articulate itself at all it just smashes and shouts.

**C:** Why is this interesting to talk about in the lab? Is this the real WHAT? As I can see it, the only thing we can talk about is this what is happening here with us. The only content we can provide is the analysis of the relations and structures formed here and now. We are taking so much for granted the parole - everything is political - that we will never act politically. In other words, what can we talk about and is there a point in asking the question 'what is to be done' without sounding like an old school Marxist?

**N:** No, there is a what and there is a how. We can no longer satisfy ourselves with claiming that how is a what.

**F:** For once, I am happy we are in the Museum of Contemporary Art and I am happy we are not talking about the war.

**A:** What would it mean to act politically? I think it is interesting that a lab is a structure we appropriated from science. Let's see what's happening. Say I am a scientist in a lab and I am examining the molecule of oxygen. I will come to certain conclusions, which I will then make public. So I will create the voice for the molecule of oxygen and I will deliver it as a fact. What is similar is that we too are here giving voice to certain problems/issues.

**C:** Isn't what we should aim at, as you said, the reinvention

of the lab/gathering/assembly? Since the old ones seem to be inappropriate to what we are talking about. To use your metaphor, we have not all assembled here to make the molecule of oxygen speak, to deliver the truth about it. We are here to first of all create issues/concerns that we could examine. And then to, by creating knowledge about them, make them speak. And that requires a different apparatus of assembly than the one we inherited.

**D:** Is this now an attempt at democracy? Who says theatre has anything to do with democracy?

**J:** Maybe we can attack this question of democracy if we try to analyse how this deals with the notion of contemporaneity. It is no longer contemporaneity in relation to time, but rather contemporaneity in relation to space. Multiple juxtaposed contemporaneities.

**D:** Where do you see the relation between democracy and contemporaneity?

**E:** I wonder if this problematic of assembling is so easily applicable to all contexts. Can we say – sinus infection patients, immigrants, agricultural workers, artists – they all assemble with the same things at stake? Because I am wondering isn't it so that today discursive production is a production the same as any other production is a production. In this sense isn't this context also a market? Can we talk about creating concerns, gathering around them without having in mind that in this place we are also trading them? Can there exist something as the sharing of ideas? Or to stretch the point to the extreme, can we say that in the situation of idea sharing the best thing to do is to shut up and simply absorb/steal other people's ideas and sell them afterwards as yours?

**F:** So we return to what we discussed this morning?

**E:** I think we should acknowledge the historical moment of which we are subjects.

**C:** So is this our concern?

**P:** That's just too easy. We can't just form some kind of immaterial labour union and go on strike.

**E:** Would this change the conditions of this assembly or, how you put it, reinvent the conceptual architecture?

**C:** That we reshape this space into a labour union meeting?

**P:** Couldn't we try tomorrow with this formulation the concerns I proposed before? That we individually formulate a concern. One concern each.

**G:** Sure, we formulate it at home but we keep silent about it?  
(Laughter)

**B:** Ok, this thing is evaporating, let's finish and move on tomorrow.

**A:** Sure, thank you all.

**G:** Thanks, see you.

**C, P, I, J, M:** Great, see you!

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