

2010

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manifesto of
PARASITISM

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PARASITISM*

An artist is bound to create art – it is both his occupation and raison d'être. He earns his living by either selling products, or by organising exhibitions or performances. However, it is not uncommon that an artist, despite putting best efforts into his work, cannot support himself... He is forced to gradually abandon his love for art, in favour of profitable career. Thus, he dies as an artist.

In order to survive – or even make art lucrative – I embraced the idea of parasitismology.

Nature is the basis of all art.

All art is created by man, who is a product of evolution. Thus everything created by man is sourced in nature – amoral and egoistic nature.

I.

„An impulse which made free-living organism turn to parasitism was the need for nourishment, protection, but also blind luck and right circumstances.”

(„Zarys parazytologii ogólnej”, K. Niewiadomska, T. Pojmańska, B. Machnicka, B. Drabda-Kazubska, PWN, Warszawa 1980, s. 30)

2.

„Parasites are part of virtually every phylum, creating a form of interspecies relations, arbitrarily called parasitism.”

(Neil A. Croll, „Pasożytnictwo i inne związki”, PWN 1977, s. 9)

3.

„Parasitism is unavoidable”

(C. Combes „Ekologia i ewolucja pasożytnictwa. Długotrwałe wzajemne oddziaływanie”, Wydawnictwo PWN, Warszawa 1999, s. 37)

„We may conclude, that parasitism appeared in nature, because it could not not appear, it is a part of the definition of life (...). All sources, may it be matter, energy, power or even a part of a computer program, they all lead to parasitism.”

(C. Combes, *ibidem*, s. 37)

Art uses survival methods accepted by nature, including parasitism. In nature, parasitism is unavoidable – the same applies to art.

4.

„Parasites are organism using other living organism as nourishment and habitat.” (Dogiel, 1947)

„In a typical parasite-host relation, one organism (a parasite), by inhabiting another organism (a host) exploits it in three ways: as a flat, a dining table and a vehicle.”

(C. Combes, *ibidem*, s. 321)

Artist is also a living organism:

- nourishment – in order to live another day, he has to obtain food (he can gather it himself, but he usually buys it – either by using money gained in the domain of art, or by his salary from his other job),

- a flat – he searches for a more or less safe habitat, i.e. a flat; he may rent it, buy it or even build his own house (ways of gaining resources are the same as in previous point),
- means of transport – an artist may move by feet or use a vehicle which he powers by using his muscles (in order to use such a vehicle, artist uses energy coming from food, and he has to buy it with money that gained in the domain of art, etc.). He may also use motorised vehicles or public transport (artist, of course need money gained...),
- lastly, one cannot fulfill their duties as an artist without calm, peaceful atmosphere. It is unachievable without aforementioned factors, i.e. nourishment, shelter, etc.

To sum up, an artist needs money. It is his spiritus movens, without it his existence is highly questionable. He does not need to get his flat nor food directly, one can use money to buy it; but it is impossible to substitute anything else for money.

5.

„Not only a parasite finds in his host shelter and nourishment, but he also does harm to his host by feeding of his flesh”.

(Holodkovskij, 1933)

„Gain and loss are very subjective criteria, rarely investigated by experiments. The biological sense of this term “loss” is still very vague.” (Neil A. Croll, *ibidem*, s. 34)

An parasite artist lives and is fed, but also is paid his salary. Both the place and the funds could be used for other; more important issues, thus a parasite artist does harm to his host.

A parasite artist gets profits, in form of a place to live, food or financial gain. All these resources could be used in different ways, thus a parasite does harm to the host.

6.

Can an artist be a parasite?

An artist, by definition, creates certain goods. Encyclopedias say that an artist is a person "creating (crafting) material or non-material products having qualities of a work of art". On the other hand, parasites do not create any products. On contrary – they always harm the host. However, parasitic actions as creating artistic situations should not be should not be analysed in all aspects using biological systemacy. Here, the "goods" are created by moving the idea of parasitismology into the domain of art.

7.

„Certainly, the main condition, without which parasitism is impossible, is the existence of host, which one can parasitize.”

(W. Michałow, „Biologia pasożytniczych Euglenoidina”, PWN 1978, s. 16)

„The term 'host' refers to non-parasitic element in a parasitic relation.” *(Neil A. Croll, ibidem, s. 31)*

„(...) today, science know numerous instances in which both host and parasite are protozoa (...).” *(W. Michałow, ibidem, s. 16)*

Possible hosts for parasite artist:

- individual people (including other artists)*
- galleries, musea, cultural institutions, etc.*
- any kinds of cultural events*
- and many, many else - parasite artist still developing host spectrum*

8.

„Animals living in common environment have the opportunity to mutually infect themselves with parasites.”

(Neil A. Croll, ibidem, s. 46)

9.

„Parasitism is a phenomenon which was developed on numerous stages of evolution of animal kingdom, it is possible that parasitism is also being developed right now (...).”

(W. Michałow, ibidem, s. 20-21)

10.

„(...) it needs to be stressed, that the mutual relation of two organism – the host and the parasite – leads to the deformation of proper functioning of host's organism, but on the other hand, it rarely results in his destruction.”

(W. Michałow, ibidem, s. 29)

Parasitism may touch on different problems in art, most important being the issue of profiting by parasite artist, and being able to maintain his artistic creation, i.e. being able to survive in the world of art. The creation itself and its effects depend of numerous factors.

However, we need to remember, that „A man lives his life, and so does the parasite” (G.P. Malachow, „Życie bez pasożytów”, Oficyna wydawnicza ABA, s. 7)

11.

„There is external parasitism (ectoparasitism), and internal parasitism, i.e. endoparasitism.”

(W. Michałow, „Wybrane problemy parazytologii ewolucyjnej”, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Oddział w Warszawie, 1971, s. 30)

In the world of art, parasitism may also take different forms.

12.

„A parasite may be simple, as the host it exploits is complex.”

(C. Combes, ibidem, s. 353)

13.

In the history of art, there has been numerous relation which had features of aforementioned relations, but they were not, in fact, parasitic, as parasitismology was not the idea laid at its foundations. In art, the consciousness of the actions is essential.

To sum up, it is objective and fairly biological approach to the idea that surrounds us. The parasitismology phenomenon is common enough to assume that there exist more parasite artist than non-parasite ones. As of artistic reasons, which led GN to the idea of parasitismology the most important is the lack of interest in creating new goods in with the intent of finding an adequate form of coexistence.

I do not want to interpret the action before its conception, but the course of realisation of the idea influences the parasite artist. When an artist starts his parasitic actions, he a priori realises his goal – survival at the cost of another living being.

One of my friends concluded, that this project criticises modern lifestyle, targets egoism, exploitation, always choosing the easier path, concentration on material goods, not caring about future. It all is extremely common in modern world. From nature to culture.

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