

OLIVER RESSLER

The global 500

**STRONG &
GROWING**

edition selen e

The global 500

"To beat the competition in today's global marketplace, a company needs astute strategies."
(Mobil, Annual Report 1997)

Oliver Ressler: The global 500

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Oliver Ressler

The global 500



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The global 500

Oliver Ressler

The deregulation of the financial and working spheres, which has been progressing since the 1980s, the systematic reduction of barriers to trade and the associated global penetration of the capitalistic world market are being discussed in the media under the term "globalization". Since more and more businesses are taking advantage of this regime to transfer even sophisticated work, such as electronic services, to "low wage countries", globalization of the economy in industrial states is equivalent to a loss of jobs. In countries where wages are (too) high, jobs are being lost which are only partly won back in other countries. The balance of jobs is negative, since the transfer is executed in the direction of those locations where productivity is comparatively higher and, thus, the labor cost per product unit is less.¹

The concept of globalization proves itself a very effective enterprise strategy which pits the employees in the north and the south against each other and brings the wages and labor legislation in both hemispheres to the lowest possible level. Through the radical deregulation of the labor markets, production is sub-contracted to suppliers, and thus more and more people are dropping out of regular working relations and ending up in totally unprotected working conditions. More and more workers are becoming completely "superfluous". Others have to sell their labor power below its value, and work illegally or without social security.

In many industries this means that as the companies' profits rise, the number of jobs are substantially reduced. The globalization of companies therefore means a long-term social rearrangement in favor of capital at the expense of the workers and employees.

“Globalization” is therefore not about mandatory necessities. It is a political strategy with which adjustment performances are being claimed and legitimized. This process of the “liberalization” and “deregulation” of economies is pushed through and enforced by transnational companies through efficient lobbying in governments and in international trade-organizations. Parliaments and citizens are being evaded and not informed. As the MAI negotiations (Multilateral Agreement on Investment) could be stopped in 1998 after two years of secret negotiations within the OECD, at the moment negotiations with similar aims are taking place with the exclusion of the public again within the WTO (World Trade Organization).² The attempt is undertaken to set companies’ rights above the right of states. Companies should get a direct right to go to court with governments, as soon as they fear negative effects on their investments and profits, even for national environmental or social laws. The aim of the negotiations is to enforce the influence of the corporations and to limit drastically the adjustment possibilities of governments at the same time.

This political development directed against the interests of the majority of humanity is also therefore possible because deregulation, flexibility, privatization and structural adjustment programs are given a positive connotation in most media. Yet the failure of neoliberal economic models is completely obvious: the crises in Indonesia, Malaysia, Russia, Brazil, Mexico etc. were so dreadful because these countries have been forced to open their markets to goods and capital, and therefore also to currency speculation by the conditions of the international finance institutions – the World Bank and IMF (International Monetary Fund) which are dominated by western governments. “Structural adjustment” for the people living in these countries means the cutting of social services, the loss of

state supported basic nutritional means, massive unemployment through the closing of industries rated as unprofitable, and as a result, impoverishment of the population, lowering of life expectancy rates and often homelessness. Since the formerly state-owned energy companies were privatized in Chile, the compliant prototype of a neoliberal development, the lights actually turn off three hours a day as the current private company is not able to fulfill its delivery requirements.³ The effects of capitalism on Russian society are so disastrous that they easily place in their shadow the decade long anti-capitalism propaganda of the socialist state regime.

Resistance, however, is slowly forming and not only in the Lacandonian rain forest in Chiapas. In Peru, a nationwide strike against neoliberalism and its effects took place on April 28, 1999 in which a repeal of the agreement with the World Bank and the IMF was demanded. Although 80 % of the entire economy of Peru was in a standstill on this day, the general strike was ignored by the international media. *The New York Times*, as one of few media, reported the event in a text of altogether sixty words!⁴ Yet in spite of increased critique, the IMF, World Bank and WTO denied their guilt in the collapse of entire economies and the resulting social effects.

After all, for at least a few of those involved the neoliberal politics of economic globalization is actually a huge success. While the salaries and wages of the majority of workers and employees have stagnated (and in some states even sunk), the profits of most of the large, globally active companies have grown to unimaginable sums. Presently, of the world's one hundred largest economic actors, there are only forty-nine nations and already fifty-one companies. This ratio will shift even more in favor of transnational companies in the next few years as the world economy in the

nineties grows yearly by about 2 – 3 % while the economic power of transnational companies increases by 8 – 10 % per year. Parallel to that, the paradoxical situation exists that in spite of steadily increasing profits, the taxable income of these companies continuously sinks.

It is therefore not surprising that the head of the Nestlé company, Helmut Maucher, who is also the president of the corporate-lobby-group ICC (International Chamber of Commerce) and chairman of the ERT (European Round Table of Industrialists), emphatically states at the Geneva Business Dialogue in 1998: "Globalization is already a success. There will always be losers, like everywhere in life, but globalization is almost win-win."

The project "The global 500" focuses on the transnationally acting "global players", who can be seen as the main protagonists of economic globalization. The 500 largest companies in the world, which are published yearly in a ranking by the financial magazine "Fortune", form the starting point for several weeks of research which I carried out at the end of 1998 based on annual reports and websites of the companies. The various related lines of argumentation relating to economic globalization chosen from this form the starting point of the project. The hegemonic globalization thesis was commented on and criticized by employees from unions and NGOs, theorists and an economist in a seventy-six minute video. The dialogue partners were the media theorist Charles R. Acland, the globalization theorist Arjun Appadurai, the US trade unionist Andy Banks, the Mexican trade union chairman Aquiles Magana, a coworker in the NGO "Corporate Europe Observatory", Olivier Hoedeman, and the economist Birgit Mahnkopf.

This video is the central element of the international

exhibition series of the project “The global 500”, which has solo exhibitions in the Galerie Stadtpark in Krems (Austria) and the artist-run centre Truck in Calgary (Canada), and is shown in the exhibitions “The global 500 and other stories” in W139 in Amsterdam (Holland) and “Social Machine Money” in the O.K – Center for Contemporary Art in Linz (Austria). The interview passages chosen for the video are printed in full in this book (pages 65 – 107), the text version was personally worked out by the dialogue partners.

Chosen pages from the annual reports of the transnational companies, which address and visualize the important parameters of economic globalization, can be seen in a manipulated photographic version in the exhibitions (see picture section, pp 49).

Here, “Leading the world” is advertised by the world’s largest airplane manufacturer Boeing with little restraint. The decisive question, to where transnational companies are leading this world, remains unanswered. The US trade unionist Andy Banks, in the dialogue carried out for “The global 500” regarding this page, said: “Companies are ‘Leading the world’ in taking high-tech manufacturing to developing countries that don’t have the freedom to use it like we have.”

Companies set the standard for the development of products (“Quality in product and process”), but also for labor conditions. With the slogan “Setting the Pace”, in an image from Pfizer, the manufacturer of the potency pill Viagra, workers march in a multi-cultural idyll, in loyal tempo to the welfare of the company. Because everything is subordinated to the welfare of the company it is also not a contradiction when Boeing proudly announces in its annual report “Our strength is our people” while in the course of rationalization measures after the merger with the airplane manufacturer McDonnell Douglas they lay off 48.000

employees. At the same time (1998) Boeing's net profit climbed to a billion dollars.⁵ Countless further examples of the relationship of mass layoffs and an increase in the company's profits can be found in the "global 500". In addition to economic strength, also military belongs to "Leading the world", a condition which finds its correspondence in the open praise of death bringing weapon systems in the photo with the slogan "Commitments honored".

These pages from the annual reports of the companies were crumpled up for the photo series and photographed in black and white. Through the contextual shift of the pages in the exhibition of "The global 500" the graphics refer to transnational companies generally and their vision of globalization ("Sharing a vision").⁶

In many popular analyses, "globalization" is presented as a project which can't be stopped. With concepts such as "turbo capitalism", "casino capitalism" or the "brutal market", the current form of capitalism is described as a type of exception without fundamentally questioning capitalist accumulation principles. It is suggested that only the most extreme formulations of capitalist trade must be limited or regulated and then the economic system can again be in balance.

In contrast, the project "The global 500" makes room for the assessment that capitalism has never known a "normal" balanced state because its only chance for existence lies in expansion. A relative social security for most citizens in western Europe (i. e. in the eighties) is related to a historically specific situation which was only made possible by a transfer of capital and welfare from exploited regions of the world. A capitalism with a human face seems to have existed in Europe only as long as communism with its inhuman face. The "globalization" of capitalism is therefore not only an economic but also a political process. The de-

cisions to privatize a company, lower import duties, make foreign investment possible, and destroy welfare states are political decisions.

Resistance to these neoliberal government and company driven policies can, however, be thoroughly successful as the international activities against the MAI negotiations have made clear in an exemplary way.

1. see: Elmar Altvater/Birgit Mahnkopf, Grenzen der Globalisierung, Münster 1996
2. the "Millennium Round" with negotiations on the "General Agreement on Tariffs in Services" (GATS) or the "Transatlantic Economic Partnership"
3. see: Iván Saldías, Proteste gegen neoliberalen Kurs – In Chile wächst der Widerstand, ak – analyse und kritik No. 428, 8. July 1999
4. Earl Gilman, "El Nuevo Topo" magazine, 1999
5. see: e. g. Der Standard, 2. 12. 1998
6. This description of the nine photos from "The global 500" was printed in an insert for the magazine EIKON No. 29, 1999.

The global 500

Oliver Ressler

Die seit den 80er Jahren voranschreitende Deregulierung von Finanz- und Arbeitswelt, der systematische Abbau von Handelshemmnissen und die damit verbundene globale Durchsetzung des kapitalistischen Weltmarktes finden seit geraumer Zeit unter dem Stichwort „Globalisierung“ ihren medialen Niederschlag. Spätestens seit auch als anspruchsvoll geltende Arbeiten (wie z. B. elektronische Dienstleistungen) in „Billiglohnländer“ verlagert werden, wird diese „Globalisierung der Wirtschaft“ in den industrialisierten Ländern immer öfter mit dem Verlust von Arbeitsplätzen gleichgesetzt. Dort, wo die Löhne im globalen Vergleich (zu) hoch bleiben, gehen demnach Arbeitsplätze verloren, die nur zum Teil woanders gewonnen werden. Die Bilanz der Arbeitsplätze ist aber auf jeden Fall negativ, da der Transfer in Richtung jener Standorte vollzogen wird, an denen die Produktivität im Vergleich höher ist.¹

Das Konzept der ökonomischen Globalisierung erweist sich als höchst effektive Unternehmensstrategie, die ArbeitnehmerInnen in den entwickelten und in den hinunterentwickelten Ländern gegeneinander ausspielt und die Löhne und Arbeitsgesetzgebung auf beiden Seiten auf ein möglichst niedriges Niveau drückt. So werden ganze Produktionszweige an Zulieferer ausgelagert, wodurch immer mehr Menschen aus geregelten Arbeitsverhältnissen herausfallen und in ungeschützten Arbeitsverhältnissen landen. Immer mehr ArbeitnehmerInnen werden gänzlich „überflüssig“, andere müssen ihre Arbeitskraft unter Wert verkau-

fen, illegal oder ohne soziale Absicherung arbeiten. Das bedeutet in vielen Branchen, daß die Gewinne der Unternehmen steigen, während die Arbeitsplätze massiv abgebaut werden. Die „Globalisierung“ von Unternehmen ist daher eine langfristige soziale Umverteilung zugunsten des Kapitals und auf Kosten der BezieherInnen von Löhnen und Gehältern. „Globalisierung“ beschreibt nicht zwingende Notwendigkeiten, sondern ist eine politische Strategie, mit Hilfe derer Anpassungsleistungen gefordert und legitimiert werden.

Diese „Liberalisierung“ und „Deregulierung“ der Wirtschaft wird von transnationalen Konzernen durch gezieltes Lobbying bei Regierungen und in den internationalen Handelsorganisationen forciert und erzwungen. Parlamente und BürgerInnen werden umgangen und nicht informiert. Nachdem das von den internationalen Konzernen angestrebte, zwei Jahre unter Ausschluß der Öffentlichkeit innerhalb der OECD verhandelte MAI-Abkommen, das „Multilateral Agreement of Investment“, 1998 durch internationalen Widerstand gerade noch verhindert werden konnte, finden nun wieder geheime Verhandlungen mit ähnlichen Zielen innerhalb der WTO (World Trade Organization) statt.² Konzerne sollen rechtlich Staaten gleichgestellt werden und ein direktes Klagerecht gegenüber Regierungen erhalten, sobald die Konzerne negative Auswirkungen auf ihre Investitionen und Gewinne befürchten – was nach den Abkommensbestimmungen z. B. durch verschärzte nationale Umwelt- oder Sozialauflagen der Fall wäre. Ziel ist es, den Einfluß der Konzerne zu festigen und gleichzeitig die Regulierungsmöglichkeiten der Regierungen drastisch einzuschränken.

Diese gegen die Interessen der Mehrheit der Menschen gerichtete politische Entwicklung ist auch deshalb möglich, weil Deregulierung, Flexibilisierung, Privatisierung und Strukturanpassungsprogramme in den meisten Medien positiv konnotiert werden. Dabei ist das Scheitern neo-liberaler Wirtschaftsmodelle ganz offensichtlich: Die Krisen in Indonesien, Malaysia, Rußland, Brasilien, Mexiko etc. waren auch deshalb so verheerend, weil diese Länder durch die Auflagen der von den westlichen Regierungen dominierten internationalen Finanzinstitutionen Weltbank und IWF (Internationaler Währungsfonds) gezwungen waren und sind, ihre Märkte für Waren und Kapital und damit auch für Währungsspekulationen zu öffnen. „Strukturanpassung“ bedeutet dabei für die in diesem Staat lebenden Menschen die Kürzung von Sozialleistungen, den Wegfall staatlicher Stützung von Grundnahrungsmitteln, Massenarbeitslosigkeit durch die Schließung von als unrentabel eingestuften Betrieben, eine daraus folgende Verarmung breiter Bevölkerungsschichten, das Sinken der Lebenserwartung und oft Obdachlosigkeit. In Chile, dem willfährigen Prototyp einer neoliberalen Entwicklung, gehen seit der Privatisierung des ehemals staatlichen Energieunternehmens täglich drei Stunden lang die Lichter aus, weil das nunmehrige Privatunternehmen seine Lieferbedingungen zu erfüllen nicht imstande ist.³ Die Auswirkungen des Kapitalismus auf die russische Gesellschaft sind derart desaströs, daß sie die jahrzehntelange Propaganda des staatssozialistischen Regimes über den Kapitalismus locker in den Schatten stellen.

Langsam regt sich jedoch Widerstand, und nicht nur im lacandonischen Urwald in Chiapas. In Peru

fand am 28. April 1999 ein landesweiter Generalstreik gegen den Neoliberalismus und dessen Auswirkungen statt, bei dem die Auflösung der Vereinbarungen mit der Weltbank und dem IMF gefordert wurden. Obwohl 80 % der gesamten Wirtschaft Perus an diesem Tag stillstanden, wurde der Generalstreik von den internationalen Medien einfach ignoriert: Als eines von wenigen Medien überhaupt berichtete die New York Times in einem insgesamt 60 Wörter (!) langen Text.⁴ Doch trotz vermehrter Kritik weisen IWF, Weltbank und WTO ihre Schuld am Kollaps ganzer Ökonomien und den daraus resultierenden sozialen Auswirkungen meist zurück.

Denn zumindest für einige Beteiligte ist die neoliberale Politik der ökonomischen Globalisierung auch wirklich ein großer Erfolg. Während die Löhne und Gehälter der Mehrheit der ArbeiterInnen und Angestellten stagnieren (und in manchen Ländern sogar sinken), wachsen die Gewinne der meisten großen, weltumspannend agierenden Konzerne auf unvorstellbare Summen an. Zur Zeit sind von den 100 größten wirtschaftlichen Akteuren der Welt nur mehr 49 Staaten und bereits 51 Konzerne. Dieses Verhältnis wird sich in den nächsten Jahren weiter zugunsten der transnationalen Konzerne verschieben, da die Weltwirtschaft in den 90ern jährlich um geschätzte 2 – 3 % wächst, während die Wirtschaftskraft der transnationalen Konzerne um 8 – 10 % pro Jahr zulegt. Parallel besteht die paradoxe Situation, daß trotz der ständig steigenden Gewinne das Steueraufkommen der Konzerne kontinuierlich sinkt.

Es verwundert deshalb nicht, daß der Nestlé-Konzern-Chef Helmut Maucher, der auch Präsident der Lobbyorganisation ICC (International Chamber of Commerce) und Vorsitzender des ERT (European

Round Table of Industrialists) ist, beim Genfer Wirtschaftsforum 1998 emphatisch erklärte: „Globalization is already a success. There will always be losers, like everywhere in life, but globalization is almost win-win.“

Das Projekt „The global 500“ fokussiert die transnational agierenden „global players“, die als die Hauptprotagonisten der ökonomischen Globalisierung anzusehen sind. Die 500 größten Konzerne der Welt, die jährlich vom Wirtschaftsmagazin „Fortune“ in einem Ranking veröffentlicht werden, bildeten den Ausgangspunkt für eine mehrwöchige Recherche, die ich Ende 1998 in den Geschäftsberichten (Annual Reports) und Websites der Konzerne durchführte. Die dabei ausgewählten verschiedenen Argumentationsstrategien in bezug auf die ökonomische Globalisierung bilden in Form von Statements den Ausgangspunkt einer internationalen Ausstellungsserie, die in der Galerie Stadtpark in Krems (Österreich) und im artist-run centre Truck in Calgary (Kanada) in Einzelausstellungen, in W139 in Amsterdam (Holland) im Rahmen der Ausstellung „The global 500 and other stories“ und im O.K – Centrum für Gegenwartskunst in Linz (Österreich) in der Ausstellung „Sozialmaschine Geld“ stattfindet.

Diese hegemonialen Globalisierungsthesen werden in einem Video von Mitarbeitern von Gewerkschaften und NGOs, von Theoretikern und einer Ökonomin kommentiert, analysiert und kritisiert. Gesprächspartner waren der Medientheoretiker Charles R. Acland, der Globalisierungstheoretiker Arjun Appadurai, der US-Gewerkschafter Andy Banks und der mexikanische Gewerkschaftsvorsitzende Aquiles Magana, ein Mitarbeiter der NGO „Corpo-

rate Europe Observatory", Olivier Hoedeman, und die Ökonomin Birgit Mahnkopf. Das 76minütige Video „The global 500“ ist in diesem Buch von Seite 65 – 107 vollständig transkribiert, die Textfassung wurde von den GesprächspartnerInnen persönlich bearbeitet.

In den Ausstellungen sind weiters ausgewählte Seiten aus den Geschäftsberichten der transnationalen Konzerne, die wichtige Parameter von ökonomischer Globalisierung ansprechen und visualisieren, in einer bearbeiteten Fassung als Fotografien zu sehen (siehe Bildteil S. 49f.).

„Leading the world“ wird da vom weltweit größten Flugzeughersteller Boeing mit wenig Zurückhaltung propagiert. Die entscheidende Frage, wohin transationale Konzerne diese Welt führen, bleibt unbeantwortet. Der US-Gewerkschafter Andy Banks meinte im für „The global 500“ geführten Gespräch in Hinblick auf diese Seite: „Companies are ‚Leading the world‘ in taking high-tech manufacturing to developing countries that don‘t have the freedom to use it like we have.“

Die Konzerne setzen die Maßstäbe in der Entwicklung von Produkten („Quality in product and process“), aber auch von Beschäftigungsverhältnissen: In einem Bild des Herstellers des Potenzmittels Viagra, des Konzerns Pfizer, mit dem Slogan „Setting the Pace“ marschieren die ArbeitnehmerInnen in einer multikulturellen Idylle loyal im Gleichschritt zum Wohle des Konzerns. Da alles dem Wohlergehen des Konzerns untergeordnet wird („Strong & Growing“), ist es auch kein Widerspruch, wenn Boeing in seinem Geschäftsbericht vollmundig „Our strength is our people“ verkündet, während der

Konzern im Zuge von sogenannten Rationalisierungsmaßnahmen nach dem Zusammenschluß mit dem Flugzeughersteller McDonnell Douglas 48.000 MitarbeiterInnen entläßt. Im gleichen Zeitraum (1998) ist Boeings Nettoverdienst auf eine Milliarde Dollar gestiegen.⁵ Für den Zusammenhang von Massenentlassungen und die Steigerung der Konzerngewinne ließen sich unzählige weitere Beispiele unter den „global 500“ finden. Neben ökonomischer Stärke gehört zu „Leading the world“ auch militärische, ein Umstand, der in dem Foto mit dem Slogan „Commitments honored“ und in der offenen Anpreisung todbringender Waffensysteme seine Entsprechung findet. Diese Seiten aus den Geschäftsberichten der Konzerne wurden für die Fotoserie zerknüllt und in Schwarzweiß fotografiert. Durch die kontextuelle Verschiebung der Seiten in den Ausstellungszusammenhang von „The global 500“ beziehen sich die Grafiken auf transnationale Konzerne generell bzw. deren Vision von Globalisierung („Sharing a vision“).⁶

In vielen populären Analysen wird „Globalisierung“ als unaufhaltbarer Prozeß beschrieben. Mit Begriffen wie „Turbokapitalismus“, „Casino-Kapitalismus“ oder „entfesselte Märkte“ wird die aktuelle Form des Kapitalismus als eine Art Ausnahmezustand beschrieben, ohne daß kapitalistische Akkumulationsprinzipien grundsätzlich in Frage gestellt würden. Es wird suggeriert, daß nur die extremsten Ausformungen kapitalistischen Wirtschaftens beschränkt bzw. reguliert werden müßten, damit das Wirtschaftssystem wieder ausgeglicher wären.

Das Projekt „The global 500“ gibt hingegen der Einschätzung Raum, daß der Kapitalismus nie einen „normalen“, ausgewogenen Zustand gekannt hat,

weil seine einzige Möglichkeit fortzubestehen die Expansion ist. Eine relative soziale Absicherung für die meisten BürgerInnen der westeuropäischen Nationalstaaten (z. B. in den 80er Jahren) hängt wohl mit einer historisch spezifischen Situation zusammen, die nur über einen Transfer von Kapital und Wohlstand aus ausgebeuteten Weltregionen möglich war. Einen Kapitalismus mit menschlichem Antlitz scheint es in Europa nur so lange gegeben zu haben, wie es den Kommunismus mit unmenschlichem Antlitz gab. Die „Globalisierung“ des Kapitalismus ist also nicht nur ein ökonomischer, sondern auch ein politischer Prozeß. Es sind politische Entscheidungen, Unternehmen zu privatisieren, Zölle zu senken, Auslandsinvestitionen zu ermöglichen und die Sozialstaaten zu zerstören.

Widerstände gegen diese von neoliberalen Regierungen und Konzernen betriebenen Politiken können aber durchaus Erfolg haben, wie die internationalen Aktivitäten gegen das MAI-Abkommen exemplarisch gezeigt haben.

1. vgl. Elmar Altvater/Birgit Mahnkopf, Grenzen der Globalisierung, Münster 1996
2. die „Millenniumsrunde“ mit Verhandlungen zum „General Agreement on Tariffs in Services“ (GATS) oder zur „Transatlantic Economic Partnership“
3. vgl. Iván Saldías, Proteste gegen neoliberalen Kurs – In Chile wächst der Widerstand, ak – analyse und kritik Nr. 428, 8. Juli 1999
4. Earl Gilman, „El Nuevo Topo“ magazine, 1999
5. vgl. z. B. Der Standard, 2. 12. 1998
6. Diese Beschreibung der neun Fotografien von „The global 500“ wurde in einem Insert für die Zeitschrift EIKON Nr. 29, 1999, abgedruckt.

Art in the Era of Globalization

Georg Schöllhammer

In “The global 500” Oliver Ressler critically examines the effects of the new neoliberal world economic order on the self presentation of its initial actors, major monocapitalist corporations. This book presents the project within which this research is framed. These actors are apprehended in word and image and through interviews confronted with critical knowledge of the partially disastrous effects: cultural and especially social, on the economies and societies which are dependent on them. And in particular, the effects on the subjects whose labor power is used as a base for their financial emporiums. In my opinion, Ressler’s work does not need a cultural theoretical introduction – its didactics and means are self-explanatory. Instead of an affirmative piece of writing and the mimetic or supplementary re-telling of this artistic work, it seems to make more sense to deal with a few transmission difficulties which appear in the course of the globalization process and the accompanying talk of increasingly global (and leveled off) cultural spaces as it concerns artistic practice and the cultural industry. Parallels between the field analyzed by Oliver Ressler and the one to which I want to dedicate myself could be read at any time without having them specifically pointed out. They are obvious. An addition from my position as art critic is perhaps still of importance. In contrast to earlier projects, this time Oliver Ressler also increasingly concentrated on how visual text is dealt with in power industries and has therefore gone a step further in the decoding of symbol contexts.

In the meantime it has become commonplace to see economic globalization as a homogenizing, universal-

izing model which absorbs cultural differences and therefore ultimately rejects them. Nonetheless, much of that which is, for example, considered local – with a reference to tradition or as having the nature of a localized culture –, which is put forward against this tendency as worthy of preserving, is based on just the same foundations – for example on the myths of unmediated social relations and cultural essentialism. The concept of cultural difference, which is constitutive, for example, in the cultural paragraphs of the European Union, somehow assumes that regional cultures are transparent for all of those who take part in them. But also the concept of community which has achieved so much importance in art dialogues of the past few years, is founded on a similar concept of social and cultural transparency. A community is, according to this, a socially and culturally homogenous space within which everyone is completely clear about the intentions of their own, and other “cultures”.

Here too, although it is spatially or socially a different dimension, the concept of difference collapses within a totaling perspective that harbors the danger of indiscriminately eliminating all that does not conform to this perspective. The normalizing of the European states, to name just one example of cultural spatial consequences of neoliberal politics and economies which has been strongly thematicized in the cultural realm in the past few years, is therefore in no way merely an economically imposed phenomenon, but is closely connected to ideas of transparency which are likewise co-founded in ideas of community. The principle of the heterogeneous cosmopolitan city is replaced by that of the village and its surveillance schemes.

In a space such as the present cultural and economic one, in which different and unequal power relations unfold, a clearly defined site and a community within,

or a local cultural tradition of course no longer exist in and of themselves as a solid field of reference. Sites are the result of cultural, economic, ethnic, technological and medial constructions. It is to Oliver Ressler's merit that his work analyzes the symbol politics behind the self-presentations of the global players in economic life. Series of parallel arguments can be gained from his texts for the field to which this observation is dedicated. Here one needs to mention only the most obvious motif of the firm as a community. Communities constitute themselves within hierarchically structured spaces, within unequal fields of power. Cultural construction processes and the arising fields of reference and underlying power relations which remain largely ignored during these transports would therefore be precisely the central themes to which postcolonial aesthetic and representational practices must dedicate themselves.

But unlike Oliver Ressler most of them avoid it. The American anthropologist and cultural studies expert Arjun Appadurai explained his concept of the new globalized spatial organization in an interview with Ressler. Appadurai has always provided, in other places as well,¹ a methodological model for the analysis of these spaces with his differentiation between "locality" and "neighborhood". According to him, the world is covered by a pattern of deterritorialized ethno-landscapes. Sites which are "charged" in terms of identity, are less and less in line with actual lived-in spaces. That which is commonly associated with the concept of the "local", previously expressed by the term "homeland", increasingly contains a virtual character. For Appadurai the relevant frame for examination consists of imagined worlds which are created in a creative process. These sites are not to be understood as replicas or imitations of a site which actually exists

yet is nonetheless distant and abandoned by immigrants. It is the experience of deterritorialization itself which must help significantly in shaping this new creation.

But even today this contradicts the powerful, old, western-centered art industry. It still sees in art a global paradigm which supports the interests of its metropolitan centers. In New York, with the move of several galleries from Soho to West Chelsea in the eighties, it was possible for a second city district to be gentrified through art. The price is that the professional public no longer wants to acknowledge in any way what is sold in these galleries to finance the move as quality products of a long style-defining art metropolis. Berlin is modernized with youthfulness by an ambitious Biennial which presents the young mainstream of gallery art in a cool ambient; with public spaces by construction site art actions at the Potsdamer Platz; and with cultural consciousness by the Holocaust memorial.

The consumer good in all of these efforts, art, is a stylistically institutionalized half-hearted mainstream post-modernism of painting, objects, installations, large format photography, which should, so to say, maintain the power position of the old – and in the art boom years of the eighties – golden triangle of market, media and museum against the new relations which have again begun to stabilize in the past two or three years around a new personnel.

The globalism fever has also gained ground within this power cartel. In the meantime even the guardians of western avant-garde such as the great Swiss curator Harald Szeemann have fallen prey to its virus. As the head of the Venice Biennial 1999 he bought from institutions such as the New Yorker P.S. 1 – as of late merely a dependence of the MoMa – entire exhibitions

with People's Republic of China contemporary art and spread them within his exhibition show. But also most of the others in Szeemann's collection of world art with the almost neoliberal dream motto "Everything Open" from young studios in Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America found its means of transport to Venice through representation by both larger and smaller western trading houses.

Increasingly, critical voices are being raised in opposition to this new idea of world art of the hybrid. They suspect no more behind its boom than a refined version of the old postmodern strategy of artistic accompaniment to a differentiated market economy of lifestyle goods in a worldwide commercialized cultural environment. In the multitude of exhibitions, for example those with contemporary African art which have assured visitor numbers in the past few years in Europe's art houses, they see a totally different mechanism in play: As a bazaar for non-Western artifacts – which totally satisfies the needs of the powerful in the global markets – such exhibitions delivered, so to say, finer and finer versions.

For the recently courted artists from Africa, Latin America or Asia this means that a balancing act is necessary for them to succeed in such contexts and at the same time make local and specific aesthetic and political issues understandable. It is precisely the local points of reference of their art which form the indispensable requirements for success. This balancing act is becoming increasingly difficult in the current economic situation.

It is primarily the youth, namely the immigrant children of the second or third generation in London, Paris, Los Angeles, New York and other "global cities", who no longer fit into the identity models brought over and whose social positioning "in-between" must be regard-

ed as a typical phenomenon of our times, who have become the darlings of the glocal exhibition scene. Their identities appear to be built for the needs of the European world-culture exhibition industry: they carry the genetic traits of the ethnic other, clearly bringing the cultural capital of family or social experience of break and continuity, the knowledge of another social or historical construction and a complex network of experiences into their work. The question of to what or for what they belong, becomes an existential challenge for them.

Many of the exhibitions and art transports under the new self-appointed “glocal” art industry have also served to make visible the metropolitan art scene which until now has been unexposed in the west. But even then they still significantly contribute to obscuring the in- and exclusion relationships still dominant in the translocal art industry.

The burning question is namely: can local potential still be seen at all after being transported into the exhibition and art industry of the western metropolis?

How such localities of artists can be built, how changes in a political situation at the transnational level and how an effect of the globalization process can directly influence the representation in such localities in the art industry can be explained using several examples. Here I would like to choose an example which is significant not only because it deals with a real cultural, political, economic and medial border but also with a later appropriation of critical art strategies by institutions and their new interpretation in the sense of a pleasant postcolonial universalism. In 1984 a group of local artists, activists, journalists and people from the educational system in coalition with artists from LA, San Diego, New York and Mexico City, from both sides of the border in Tijuana and San Diego, began to confront the problems of this border, one of the best

guarded in the world, with a series of projects, performances, exhibitions, info-evenings, video pieces, etc. which involved the local population and the local media.

It was not only about the border as a site of provocation², the disparity of a clash of a superpower with a fast developing nation, about the exploitation of the Mexican workers in the American factories near the border, about the people who died during the illegal attempt to emigrate, but also about the empty space of the border itself which must be reinterpreted. With that, one does not only tie into the long Mexican tradition of cooperation of intellectuals, artists and activists or, along the same lines, onto the activist traditions of the New York scene, but rather attempts to make from both experiences a third, locally transplanted one. English speaking Chicanos and Americans, but also Hispanic immigrants on the one side and people from Tijuana who don't feel themselves at all to be Chicanos on the other, were involved. A paradigmatic situation. The motto was, among others: We cross, because we cross in different identities. The activist work lasted for several years and was severely and repeatedly impeded primarily from the American side. At the time the negotiations for the American free trade agreement (NAFTA) were under way. When this was agreed upon in the nineties, the representation and relationship of the American institutions with respect to the activities of the Border Arts Workshop changed fundamentally. Although it was clear that NAFTA was concerned with the free movement of goods and not people – in contrast, the borders which were still penetrable in the eighties were even more strongly secured. The border-crossing for business people was actually made significantly easier but for the rest it was made more difficult.

On both sides however, the representation of the border changed. In Mexico, official Chicano artists were brought into cities to acquaint the population with the population of Mexicans from the North using the structures of the Border Arts Workshop. In the USA on the other hand, the Border Arts Workshop label was reinstrumentalized into a festival label although not by the artists but rather by a series of cultural institutions. Suddenly there was plenty of money, artists with big names were invited to participate in these activities and the critical confrontation with the border mutated into a series of events used to indirectly profit tourism, advertising purposes and the promotion of good neighborly relations. Increasingly, the original participants were excluded or left the initiative of their own accord.

This story in particular shows that for many projects of the globalized art industry, it is when they land in institutions that they no longer perceive questions of inclusion and exclusion from society, the rights of groups and the ways and means that the binary models such as public/private, active/passive formulated by them are used to differentiate citizenships. In this these works also dispense with the task of adequately presenting the concept that they profess to present. Nation and state as the concepts from which citizenship is represented symbolically but also concretely through initiatives from the art realm, must also be attentive to the many subnational border closures which have arisen under new economic conditions.

In addition to his concept of locality, Appadurai has also brought another concept into the discussion, that of “neighborhood”. This refers to the virtual or actual spatial realization of locality through social relationships. Neighborhoods arise not only in confrontation with the ecological and economic conditions but primarily in

contrast to and as a dismissal of other neighborhoods, other “ethnoscapes”. Appadurai’s considerations about the social construction of locality are the result of thinking over the consequences of a “global cultural flow”. According to that, the local, the site, is essentially a fragile social achievement.

Techniques of the production of locality however are still given too little attention. If one goes into the cultural sphere, eastern Europe is a good example of this. “Eastern Europe functions like a symptom of the highly developed West, especially in terms of media and avant-garde art strategies. If one observes the parallels between East and West, then one finds in eastern European media and art production important examples of a perverted and/or symptomatic logic with regard to western strategies and visual representations which are tied with each other in various ways”, wrote the Slovenian theorist and video artist Marina Grzinic in *springerin*³. Grzinic probably has, among others, quite a particular aspect of this logic in view: the import function of the Soros Centers. As we well know, the financial speculator Georges Soros has calmed his Popperian conscience calling for the development of an open society in eastern Europe with a financial support program for social science, educational programs, social programs and also centers for contemporary art. Through these centers, imports from art discourses were brought into local scenes which had already proven their critical ability in the West. Many, including even those who profited from these activities, complain that this led to a shift in attention away from local points of juncture. It is from these points of juncture, also at a level of symbol politics, thus in art, that the resistance against incessant western imperialism should actually still be developed. The newly imported use of western discourse tools from cultural

studies, race and gender studies to a universalizing postcolonial approach, certainly bring with them the danger that the on-site cultural production merely orients itself according to their standards. The art which results from that is a type of locally colored rehashing of New York's media critical neo-conceptual art of the late eighties. Yet now that the Soros Centers have become the refuge for curatorial and journalistic information from Manifesta through documenta to the feature story of journals of western European art, much of what has come out of eastern Europe in the international exhibition industry of the past few years has gone through precisely this filter. This is also because the centers were the only ones which financed catalogues, worked out exhibition projects, were highly present in the Internet with their info-pages, and continuously supported the development of Internet art.

Grzinic asks even further: "What, if in contrast to the fantasy of the Internet and its overpowering globality which imagines itself to be the utopian dream of a (virtual?) community in harmonious and universal exchange relations, the eastern European 'monster' is introduced as not only 'monster' but also as a terrifying neighbor (at least some of the eastern European artists, media activists and theorists fall under this category) which rejects the philanthropic western ideology of sharing and pure exchange?"

Already at the beginning of the nineties, with a somewhat different focus, Martha Rosler pointed out the dangerous burdens of representing a cheerful globalizing multicultural culture industry: "From the perspective of an industry which is driven by the dictates of fashion and the arrival of identity politics, multiculturalism in the art world means no more than the inclusion of a fringe group of producers who stir up public interest with their novel glance. A handful of young colorful, gay or lesbian artists are thrown into the system for an

undetermined amount of time, they are given shows in international museums and galleries. A few are offered highly paid sponsorships and stipendiums. A smaller number of already older artists are recruited for university posts – whereby, I'll quickly add, these reasons for being recruited are of course no worse than any others. What differentiates the fashion of 'multiculturalism' from the art world's 'Marxism and political art' fashion of the seventies is the size of the reward. Powerful cultural institutions such as the Rockefeller Foundation and many universities which did not really pay much attention to the older version of political art, are now quickly clambering into the sponsoring of multiculturalism which sets up more the support of integration than an economic restructuring. Multiculturalism accepts that artists represent communities beyond the art world. Who then do artists represent when they work on political critique? It is naturally quite possible that the two, despite the shift of rhetoric, are bound only by the common status of being passing fashion phenomena. But what remains certain is that these marginal shifts don't change the 'white' power structure of curators and high officials in museums."⁴

The statements from Grzinic and Rosler clearly support exactly how fictional this supposed globalization of the art industry is. A convincing conception of critical and political aesthetic practice beyond the traps of a pleasant multiculturalism necessarily goes along with a radical redefinition of the concept of political/critical artist. Oliver Ressler's work on such a conceptual change and his insistence on the emancipatory ability of such work also in the art realm has led with "The global 500" to a shift in attention away from local points. It is from these points that most of the resistance to the incessant western imperialism is developed, also at the level of symbol politics, i. e. in art.

Then if, as is commonly desired, it can be assumed based on the advancing globalization processes that exhibitors and exhibits no longer belong to two different socio-cultural “totalities” but rather are part of a global economy of reciprocal connections, then how can the common differentiation between internal and external be maintained and described as inclusion/exclusion in models of exhibitions?

1. see the interview by Christian Höller with Arjun Appadurai in *springerin – Hefte für Gegenwartskunst* Vol. 3/98.

My argumentation also further follows: Peter J. Bräunlein & Andrea Lauser, “Grenzüberschreitungen, Identitäten. Zu einer Ethnologie der Migration in der Spätmoderne”, in: *kea* 10, 1997.

2. also see Ursula Biemann’s video work “Performing the Border”, 1999, and the documentation of the project: *Money@Nations.access* der shedhalle Zürich in November 1998 and the project presentation in: *springerin* Vol. 2/99.

3. The manuscript presented at the symposium “translocation (new) media/art” in January 1999 in the Viennese Generali Foundation, planned by Christian Höller, can be read in: *springerin*, Vol. 1/99.

4. Martha Rosler’s “PlacePositionPowerPolitics”, in: “The Subversive Imagination”, Ed. Carol Becker, London 1994.

Kunst in Zeiten der Globalisierung

Georg Schöllhammer

Die Auswirkungen der neuen neoliberalen Weltwirtschaftsordnung auf die Selbstdarstellung ihrer ersten Handelnden, der monopolkapitalistischen Großkonzerne, hat Oliver Ressler in „The global 500“ kritisch untersucht. Das Projekt, in das diese Untersuchung geframed war, ist in diesem Buch dargestellt: diese Handelnden beim Wort und beim Bild zu nehmen und ihnen das kritische Wissen um die kulturell sowie insbesondere sozial teils desaströsen Folgen für von ihnen abhängige Wirtschaften und Gesellschaften, insbesondere aber für die Subjekte, mit deren Arbeitskraft sie ihre Finanzimperien begründen können, in Form von Interviews entgegenzustellen. Resslers Arbeit braucht meines Erachtens keine kulturtheoretische Einordnung – ihre Didaktik und ihre Mittel sind selbsterklärend. Anstelle einer affirmativen Lektüre und der mimetischen oder ergänzenden Nacherzählung dieser künstlerischen Arbeit erscheint es mir sinnvoller, näher auf einige Transmissionsschwierigkeiten einzugehen, die im Zug der Globalisierungsprozesse und der damit einhergehenden Rede von immer globaler (und nivellierter) werdenden Kulturräumen in bezug auf die künstlerische Praxis und den Kulturbetrieb auftreten. Parallelen zwischen dem von Oliver Ressler analysierten Feld und dem, dem ich mich widmen will, lassen sich jederzeit lesen, ohne daß darauf gesondert hinzuweisen ist. Sie sind evident. Eine Ergänzung aus meiner Position als Kunstkritiker aber ist vielleicht doch noch wichtig: Im Gegensatz zu früheren Projekten hat Oliver Ressler diesmal vermehrt auch auf die Bearbeitung visueller Texte aus

den Machtbetrieben gesetzt und ist damit einen Schritt weiter in der Dechiffrierung von Symbolkontexten gegangen.

Es ist mittlerweile zum Gemeinplatz geworden, die ökonomische Globalisierung als homogenisierendes, universalisierendes Modell zu sehen, das auch kulturelle Differenzen absorbiert und damit letztlich ablehnt. Dennoch basiert vieles von dem, was zum Beispiel lokal – mit Hinweis auf Tradition oder eine wie immer geartete verortete Kultur – gegen diese Tendenz als bewahrungswürdig ins Treffen geführt wird, auf ebensolchen Fundamenten – zum Beispiel auf den Mythen von unmedialisierten sozialen Beziehungen und kultureller Eigentlichkeit. Der Begriff von kultureller Differenz, der etwa in den Kulturparagraphen der Europäischen Union konstitutiv ist, geht irgendwie davon aus, daß regionale Kulturen in sich für jeden, der an ihnen teilhat, transparent sind. Aber auch der Begriff der Community, der in den Kunstdiskussionen der letzten Jahre so viel Bedeutung erlangt hat, beruht auf einem ähnlichen Konzept sozialer und kultureller Transparenz. Eine Community ist demnach ein sozial und kulturell homogener Raum, in dem jeder gänzlich über die Intentionen und die „Kultur“ des oder der anderen Bescheid weiß.

Wenngleich in einer räumlich oder sozial anderen Dimension, kollabiert auch hier der Begriff von Differenz in einer totalisierenden Sichtweise, die in sich die Gefahr birgt, all das unbesehen auszuschließen, was nicht mit dieser Sichtweise konform geht. Die Normalisierung der europäischen Städte, um nur ein Beispiel der kulturräumlichen Konsequenzen neoliberaler Politiken und Ökonomien zu nennen, das in den Kunstmärkten in den letzten Jah-

ren sehr stark thematisiert wurde, ist also keineswegs nur ein ökonomisch oktroyiertes Phänomen, sondern hängt eng mit diesem Transparenzgedanken, der im Communitygedanken ebenfalls mit begründet wird, zusammen. Das Prinzip der heterogenen kosmopolitischen Stadt wird durch das des Dorfes und seiner Überwachungsschemata ersetzt. In einem Raum, in dem sich unterschiedliche und ungleiche Machtbeziehungen entfalten, wie dem kulturellen und ökonomischen der Gegenwart, existieren ein klar definierter Ort und eine Community in ihm ebenso wie eine lokale kulturelle Tradition natürlich nicht mehr in sich und aus sich selbst heraus als festes Bezugsfeld. Orte sind das Ergebnis kultureller, ökonomischer, ethnischer, technologischer und medialer Konstruktionen. Oliver Resslers Verdienst ist es, in seiner Arbeit die Symbolpolitiken hinter den Selbstdarstellungen der Global Players im Wirtschaftsleben analysiert zu haben. Aus seiner Lektüre lassen sich eine Reihe von Parallelargumenten zu dem Feld gewinnen, dem sich diese Betrachtung widmet. Man braucht hier nur das offensichtlichste Motiv der Firma als Community zu nennen. Gemeinschaften konstituieren sich innerhalb hierarchisch organisierter Räume, innerhalb ungleicher Machtfelder. Kulturelle Konstruktionsprozesse und die dabei entstehenden Beziehungsfelder sowie zugrundeliegende Machtverhältnisse, die bei diesen Transporten weitgehend unberücksichtigt bleiben, wären daher genau das zentrale Thema, dem sich postkoloniale ästhetische Repräsentationspraxen zu widmen hätten.

Das aber vermeiden, anders als Oliver Ressler, die meisten von ihnen. Der amerikanische Anthropologe und Kulturwissenschaftler Arjun Appadurai erläutert in einem Interview mit Ressler sein Konzept der

neuen globalisierten Raumordnungen. Appadurai hat immer wieder, auch an anderer Stelle,¹ mit seiner Unterscheidung von „locality“ und „neighborhood“ dafür ein methodologisches Modell der Analyse dieser Räume bereitgestellt. Die Welt ist ihm zufolge überzogen von einem Muster entterritorialisierter Ethnolandschaften. Orte, die identitätsmäßig „aufgeladen“ sind, fallen immer weniger mit den aktuellen Lebensräumen zusammen. Das, was herkömmlich mit dem Begriff des „Lokalen“, älter gesprochen mit dem Begriff „Heimat“ verbunden wird, erhält zunehmend virtuellen Charakter. Für Appadurai besteht der relevante Untersuchungsrahmen aus imaginierten Welten, die in einem kreativen Prozeß erschaffen werden. Diese Orte sind nicht als Replikat oder Imitat eines real existierenden, jedoch fernen und vom Migranten verlassenen Ortes zu verstehen. Die Erfahrung der Entterritorialisierung selbst ist es, die diese Neuschöpfung wesentlich mitzugestalten hätte. Dem widersetzt sich aber bis heute der mächtige, alte, westzentrierte Kunstbetrieb. Er sieht in Kunst noch immer ein globales Paradigma, das die Interessen seiner metropolitanen Zentren befördert. New York läßt sich nach Soho in den 80ern jetzt durch den Umzug vieler Galerien nach West Chelsea einen zweiten Stadtteil über Kunst wohlstandssanieren. Um den Preis, daß die Fachöffentlichkeit das, was in diesen Galerien nun zur Umzugsfinanzierung als Ware angeboten wird, keinesfalls mehr als die Qualitätsprodukte einer lange stillbildenden Kunstmetropole würdigen will. Berlin rüstet mit einer ehrgeizigen Biennale, die den jungen Mainstream der Galerienkunst im schicken Ambiente präsentiert, auf Jugendlichkeit, mit den Baustellenkunstaktionen am Potsdamer Platz auf den öffentlichen Raum

und mit der Holocaustgedenkstätte auf kulturelles Gewissen nach.

Das Konsumgut all dieser Anstrengungen, die Kunst, ist eine stilistisch institutionalisierte laue Mainstream-Postmoderne aus Malerei, Objekten, Installationen, großformatiger Fotografie, die sozusagen die Machtstellung des alten und in den Kunstboomjahren der 80er auch goldenen Dreiecks von Markt, Medien und Museen gegen die neuen Verhältnisse aufrechterhalten soll, das sich in den letzten zwei, drei Jahren rund um ein neues Personal herum wieder zu stabilisieren beginnt.

Das Globalismusfieber greift auch in diesem Machtkartell um sich. Selbst die Gralshüter westlicher Avantgarden wie der Schweizer Großkurator Harald Szeemann sind mittlerweile vom seinem Virus befallen. Als Leiter der Biennale von Venedig 1999 kaufte er aus Institutionen wie dem New Yorker P.S. 1 – neuerdings ja nur mehr die Dependance des MoMa – ganze Ausstellungen mit Gegenwartskunst aus der Volksrepublik China und verstreute sie in seinem Ausstellungsparcours. Aber auch viel von all dem anderen, das aus jungen Ateliers in Südostasien, Afrika und Lateinamerika auf Szeemanns – unter dem fast als neoliberaler Traummotto zu lesenden Titel „Alles offen“ stehender – Weltkunstsammlung fand seinen Transportweg nach Venedig nur über die Vermittlung der großen und kleineren westlichen Handelshäuser.

Gegen diese neue Weltkunstidee des Hybriden erheben sich allerdings vermehrt kritische Stimmen. Sie argwöhnen hinter deren Konjunktur eine bloß verfeinerte Version der alten postmodernen Strategie künstlerischer Begleitung einer differenzierten Angebotsökonomie von Lebensstilware in einem weltweit ökonomisierten kulturellen Umfeld. Sie se-

hen etwa in der Vielzahl von Ausstellungen zum Beispiel mit afrikanischer Gegenwartskunst, die in den letzten Jahren in Europas Kunsthäusern hohe Besucherzahlen sicherten, einen ganz anderen Mechanismus am Werk: Als Bazar für nichtwestliche Artefakte – der ganz die Bedürfnisse der Mächtigen dieser globalen Märkte befriedigt – lieferten diese Ausstellungen sozusagen immer feinere Versionen. Für die neuerdings hofierten KünstlerInnen aus Afrika, Lateinamerika oder Asien bedeutet das: Um sich auch in solchen Zusammenhängen erfolgreich durchzusetzen und gleichzeitig lokale und spezifische ästhetische – und politische – Anliegen verstehtbar zu machen, ist ein Balanceakt notwendig. Bilden doch gerade die lokalen Bezugspunkte ihrer Kunst oft die unabdingbare Voraussetzung für den Erfolg. Dieser Balanceakt wird in der gegenwärtigen Konjunktursituation immer schwieriger. Es sind nämlich vor allem auch die Jugendlichen, Migrantenkinder der zweiten oder dritten Generation in London, Paris, Los Angeles, New York oder anderen „global cities“, auf die überbrachte Identitätsmuster nicht mehr passen und deren gesellschaftliche Positionierung eines „Dazwischen“ als typisches Phänomen unserer Zeit gelten muß, die die Liebkinder des globalen Kunstveranstaltungswesens geworden sind. Ihre Identitäten scheinen wie gemacht für die Notwendigkeiten des europäischen Weltkultur-Ausstellungsbetriebes: Sie tragen die genetischen Züge des ethnisch anderen, bringen ganz offenbar das kulturelle Kapital der familiären oder sozialen Erfahrung von Bruch und Kontinuität, das Wissen um eine andere soziale oder historische Konstruktion und ein komplexes Netz an Erfahrungen in ihre Arbeit ein. Die Frage des Dazu(wozu?)gehörens wird für sie zur existentiell-

len Herausforderung.

Viele der Ausstellungen und Handelstransporte des unter seiner neuen Selbstbezeichnung „glokalen“ Kunstbetriebs haben aber auch das Verdienst der Sichtbarmachung von bislang im Westen unbelichteter metropolitischer Kunstszenen. Aber selbst dann tragen sie oft wesentlich zur Verdunkelung der noch immer herrschenden Einschluß- und Ausschlußverhältnisse im translokalen Kunstbetrieb bei.

Die brennende Frage nämlich ist: Lassen sich lokale Potentiale überhaupt nach einem Transport in den Ausstellungs- und Kunstbetrieb der westlichen Metropolen noch lesbar halten?

Wie solche Lokalitäten von KünstlerInnen gebaut werden und wie die Veränderung einer politischen Situation auf transnationaler Ebene, wie ein Effekt des Globalisierungsprozesses direkt auf die Repräsentation solcher Lokalitäten im Kunstbetrieb einwirken kann, lässt sich an vielen Beispielen beschreiben. Ich möchte hier ein Beispiel wählen, das signifikant ist, weil es nicht nur von einer realen kulturellen, politischen, ökonomischen und medialen Grenze handelt, sondern auch von der späteren Aneignung kritischer künstlerischer Strategien durch Institutionen und deren Umdeutung im Sinn eines fröhlichen postkolonialen Universalismus.

Um 1984 begann sich eine Gruppe aus lokalen KünstlerInnen, AktivistInnen, JournalistInnen und Leuten aus dem Bildungswesen in Koalition mit KünstlerInnen aus L.A. San Diego, New York und Mexico City in Tijuana und San Diego, an beiden Seiten der amerikanisch-mexikanischen Grenze, in einer Reihe von Projekten, Performances, Ausstellungen, Infoabenden, Videoarbeiten etc., in die die lokale Bevölkerung und die lokalen Medien eingebunden waren, mit dem Problem dieser

Grenze auseinanderzusetzen, die eine der bestbewachten der Welt ist.

Es ging nicht nur um die Grenze als Ort der Provokation², der Disparität, des Aufeinandertreffens einer Supermacht mit einem Schwellenland, um die Ausbeutung der mexikanischen ArbeiterInnen in den grenznahen amerikanischen Fabriken, um die Menschen, die beim illegalen Versuch der Emigration ums Leben kamen, sondern um den leeren Raum der Grenze selbst, den es umzudeuten galt. Man knüpfte dabei nicht nur an die sehr lange mexikanische Tradition der Zusammenarbeit von Intellektuellen, KünstlerInnen und AktivistInnen an, wie im gleichen Zug an aktivistische Traditionen etwa der New Yorker Szene, sondern versuchte aus beiden Erfahrungen eine dritte, lokal umgesetzte zu machen. Englischsprechende Chicanos und AmerikanerInnen, aber auch hispanische MigrantInnen auf der einen Seite und Leute aus Tijuana, die sich keineswegs als Chicanos fühlten, auf der anderen waren beteiligt. Eine paradigmatische Situation. Das Motto war u. a.: We cross, because we cross in different identities. Die aktivistische Arbeit dauerte über mehrere Jahre und wurde vor allem von der amerikanischen Seite heftig und vielfach behindert. Es war die Zeit der Verhandlungen über das amerikanische Freihandelsabkommen NAFTA. Als dies in den 90ern geschlossen wurde, änderten sich die Repräsentation und das Verhältnis der amerikanischen Institutionen zu den Aktivitäten des Border Arts Workshop grundlegend. Obwohl klar war, daß es bei NAFTA um den freien Verkehr von Gütern und nicht von Menschen ging – im Gegenteil, die Mitte der 80er noch durchlässige Grenze wurde immer stärker befestigt. Zwar wurde der Grenzübertritt für Geschäftsleute wesentlich erleichtert, für den Rest

aber erschwert.

Auf beiden Seiten änderte sich jedoch die Repräsentation der Grenze. In Mexiko brachte man offiziell Chicano-KünstlerInnen in die Stadt, um die Bevölkerung sozusagen mit den nördlichen Mexikanern bekannt zu machen, und bediente sich der Strukturen des Border Arts Workshop. In den USA wiederum wurde das Label Border Arts Workshop zu einem Festivallabel uminstrumentiert, und zwar nicht von den KünstlerInnen, sondern von einer Reihe von Kulturinstitutionen. Plötzlich gab es Geld in Hülle und Fülle, KünstlerInnen mit großen Namen wurden eingeladen, sich an diesen Aktivitäten zu beteiligen, und die kritische Auseinandersetzung mit der Grenze mutierte zu einer touristisch umwegrentablen und für Werbezwecke und die Promotion gut nachbarschaftlicher Beziehungen genutzten Veranstaltungsreihe. Zunehmend wurden die ursprünglich Beteiligten ausgeschlossen oder verließen die Initiative freiwillig.

Gerade diese Geschichte zeigt, daß viele Projekte des globalisierten Kunstbetriebes, wenn sie in den Institutionen landen, blind sind, was die Fragen des Einschlusses und Ausschlusses aus der Gesellschaft betrifft, die Rechte von Gruppen und die Art und Weise, auf die binäre Modelle wie öffentlich/privat, aktiv/passiv von ihnen auch entworfen werden, um BürgerInnenschaft zu differenzieren. Damit entbinden sich diese Arbeiten auch der Aufgabe, adäquat das Konzept vorzustellen, das vorzustellen sie vorgeben. Nation und Staat als die Begriffe, vor denen BürgerInnenschaft symbolisch, aber auch konkret in Initiativen aus dem Kunstraum dargestellt wird, müssen eben auch gegenüber den vielen subnationalen Grenzziehungen aufmerksam sein,

die unter neuen ökonomischen Bedingungen entstanden sind.

Appadurai hat neben seinem Begriff der Lokalitäten auch noch einen anderen, den Begriff „neighborhood“ – Nachbarschaft –, in die Diskussion eingeführt. Dabei handelt es sich um die virtuelle oder aktuell räumliche Realisierung von Lokalität über soziale Beziehungen. Nachbarschaften entstehen nicht nur in Auseinandersetzung mit den ökologischen und ökonomischen Gegebenheiten, sondern vor allem in Kontrast mit und in Absetzung gegenüber anderen Nachbarschaften, anderen „ethnoscapes“. Appadurais Überlegungen über die soziale Konstruktion von Lokalität sind Folge eines Nachdenkens über die Konsequenzen eines „global cultural flow“. Das Lokale, der Ort, ist demnach eine an sich fragile soziale Errungenschaft.

Techniken der Produktion von Lokalität jedoch wird immer noch zuwenig Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt. Geht man in den Raum des Kulturbetriebes, ist ein gutes Beispiel dafür Osteuropa.

„Osteuropa funktioniert wie ein Symptom des hochentwickelten Westens, speziell was die Medien oder avantgardistischen Kunststrategien betrifft. Betrachtet man die Parallelen zwischen Ost und West, so findet man in osteuropäischen Medien und Kunstproduktionen wichtige Beispiele einer pervertierten und/oder symptomatischen Logik in bezug auf westliche Strategien und visuelle Repräsentationen, die auf verschiedene Weise miteinander verknüpft werden“, schrieb die slowenische Theoretikerin und Videokünstlerin Marina Grzinic in Springerin³. Grzinic hatte dabei wohl unter anderem einen ganz speziellen Aspekt dieser Logik im Blickfeld: die Importfunktion der Soros Centers. Der Finanzspekulant Georges Soros hat bekannterweise sein pop-

perianisches Gewissen, das die Entwicklung einer offenen Gesellschaft in Osteuropa fordert, flächendeckend mit einer finanziellen Unterstützungsaktion von Gesellschaftswissenschaften, Bildungsprogrammen, Sozialprogrammen und eben auch Zentren für Gegenwartskunst beruhigt. Über diese Centers werden Importe von Kunstdiskursen in lokale Szenen geleitet, die im Westen ihre Kritikfähigkeit schon bewiesen haben. Das, so beklagen zumindest viele auch der ProfiteurInnen dieser Aktivitäten, habe zu einer Aufmerksamkeitsverschiebung weg von lokalen Anknüpfungspunkten geführt, von denen aus auch auf symbolpolitischer Ebene, also in der Kunst, der Widerstand gegen den anhaltenden westlichen Imperialismus eigentlich zu entwickeln gewesen wäre. Der jetzt neu eingeführte Gebrauch westlicher Diskurswerkzeuge zwischen Cultural Studies, Race und Gender Studies oder ein universalisierender postkolonialistischer Ansatz bringe durchaus die Gefahr mit sich, daß die kulturelle Produktion vor Ort sich nur mehr nach deren Standards orientiere. Die Kunst, die daraus entstanden sei, sei eine Art lokal kolorierter Aufguß der medienkritischen Neokonzeptkunst des New York der späten 80er Jahre. Da aber nun die Soros Centers von Manifesta über documenta bis hin zu ganzen Journalschwerpunkten westeuropäischer Kunstmagazine die Anlaufstelle für kuratorische und journalistische Information geworden sind, ist vieles, was aus Osteuropa in den internationalen Ausstellungsbetrieb der letzten Jahre kam, genau durch diesen Filter gegangen. Auch weil die Centers die einzigen waren, die Kataloge finanzierten, Ausstellungsprojekte erarbeiteten und im Internet mit ihren Infoseiten hochpräsent sind, ja die Entwicklung von Internetkunst immer gefördert

haben.

„Was wäre“, fragt Grzinic weiter, „wenn man sich im Gegensatz zur Phantasie des Internet und seiner überwältigenden Globalität, wie sie sich im utopischen Traum einer (virtuellen?) Community in harmonischen und universellen Austauschverhältnissen darstellt, die osteuropäischen ‘Monster’ nicht nur als ‘Monster’ vorstellt, sondern als furchteinflößende NachbarInnen – zumindest einige der osteuropäischen KünstlerInnen, MedienaktivistInnen und -theoretikerInnen fallen unter diese Kategorie –, welche die philanthropische westliche Ideologie des Teilens und des reinen Austausches ablehnen?“

Mit einem etwas unterschiedlichen Fokus hat auch Martha Rosler schon Anfang der Neunziger auf die gefährlichen Repräsentationslasten eines globalisierenden fröhlich multikulturellen Kulturbetriebes hingewiesen: „Aus der Perspektive einer Industrie, die vom Diktat der Mode angetrieben wird, bedeutet die Ankunft der Identitätspolitik, des Multikulturalismus in der Kunstwelt nichts anderes als die Einbindung einer Randgruppe von ProduzentInnen, die mit ihrem neuen Blick das öffentliche Interesse neu beleben. Eine Handvoll junger farbiger, schwuler oder lesbischer KünstlerInnen werden für eine unbestimmte Zeit in das System geworfen, bekommen Shows in internationalen Museen und Galerien. Einigen werden hochdotierte Förderungen und Stipendien angeboten. Eine kleinere Anzahl schon etwas älterer KünstlerInnen wird für Lehrstühle rekrutiert – woran natürlich diese Gründe für eine Berufung prinzipiell um nichts schlechter sind als andere, beeile ich mich beizufügen. Was die Mode ‘Multikulturalismus’ von der Kunstwelt-Mode ‘Marxismus und Politkunst’ der siebziger Jahre unterschei-

det, ist der Umfang der Belohnungen. Mächtige Kultur-Institutionen wie die Rockefeller Foundation und viele Universitäten, die sich um die ältere Version von politischer Kunst nicht gekümmert hatten, stiegen jetzt sehr schnell in das Sponsoring von Multikulturalismus ein, der ja doch eher die Forderung nach Integration als nach ökonomischer Neustrukturierung stellt. Multikulturalismus akzeptiert, daß KünstlerInnen in Wirklichkeit Communities jenseits der Kunstwelt repräsentieren. Wen aber repräsentieren dann KünstlerInnen, die an politischer Kritik arbeiten? Es ist natürlich gut möglich, daß beide – trotz der Verschiebung der Rhetorik – nur der gemeinsame Status einer vorübergehenden Modeerscheinung verbindet. Was aber sicher bleibt, ist, daß diese marginalen Verschiebungen die 'weiße' Machtstruktur aus KuratorInnen und höheren Chargen in den Museen nicht verändern.⁴

Die Statements von Grzinic und Rosler belegen evident, wie fiktional diese angebliche Globalisierung des Kunstbetriebes ist. Eine überzeugende Konzeption von kritischer und politischer ästhetischer Praxis jenseits der Fallen des fröhlichen Multikulturalismus geht notwendigerweise mit einer radikalen Neudeinition des Begriffes politisch-kritische KünstlerIn einher. Oliver Resslers Arbeit an einer solchen Begriffsveränderung und sein Beharren auf der emanzipatorischen Fähigkeit einer solchen Arbeit auch im Kunstraum hat bei „The global 500“ zu einer Aufmerksamkeitsverschiebung weg von lokalen Anknüpfungspunkten geführt, von denen aus auch auf symbolpolitischer Ebene, also in der Kunst, der Widerstand gegen den anhaltenden westlichen Imperialismus meist entwickelt wird. Denn wenn, wie es der Gemeinplatz will, aufgrund des fortschreitenden Globalisierungsprozesses davon aus-

zugehen ist, daß Ausstellende und Ausgestellte nicht mehr zwei verschiedenen soziokulturellen „Ganzheiten“ angehören, sondern Teil einer globalen Ökonomie der gegenseitigen Verbindungen sind, wie läßt sich dann jene üblich gewordene Unterscheidung von intern und extern auf- rechterhalten und in Modellen von Ausstellungen wie inklusion/exklusion beschreiben?

1. vgl. das Interview von Christian Höller mit Arjun Appadurai in *springerin – Hefte für Gegenwartskunst*, Heft 3/98.

Meine Argumentation folgt im weiteren auch: Peter J. Bräunlein & Andrea Lauser, „Grenzüberschreitungen, Identitäten. Zu einer Ethnologie der Migration in der Spätmoderne“ in: *kea* 10, 1997.

2. vgl. dazu auch Ursula Biemanns Videoarbeit „Performing the Border“, 1999, und die Dokumentation des Projektes *Money@Nations.access* der shedhalle Zürich vom November 1998 und die Projektdarstellungen dazu in *springerin*, Heft 2/99.

3. Das beim von Christian Höller konzipierten Symposium „translocation (new media/ art)“ im Jänner 1999 in der Wiener Generali Foundation vorgestellte Manuskript ist zu lesen in : *springerin*, Heft 1/99.

4. Martha Roslers „PlacePositionPowerPolitics“, in: „The Subversive Imagination“, Hg. Carol Becker, London 1994. Deutsch in: *springerin* Heft 2/97



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(Eastman Kodak Company, Annual Report 1997)



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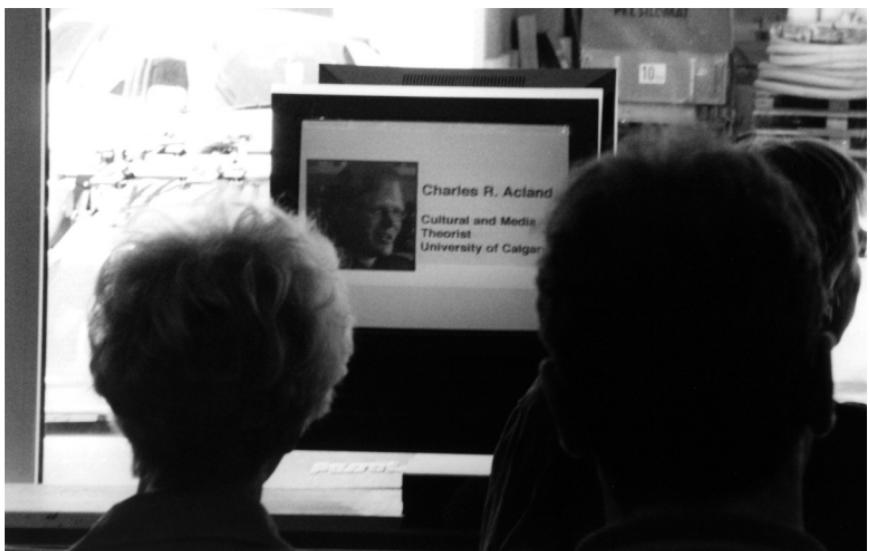
(McDonalds, Annual Report 1997)



Aquiles Magana

If we take up the ultimate theory that international trade improves the living conditions of Americans, then it must be made clear here that only the Americans of the United States can be meant by this - if at all.

takes part in this exploitation but also the European and Asian states.





Galerie Stadtpark, Krems





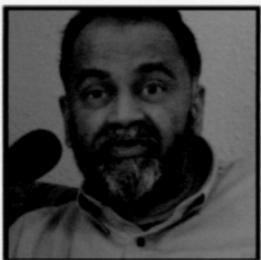
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(Chevron, Annual Report 1995)



Georg Schöllhammer introducing "The global 500"
at the opening in Galerie Stadtpark

Galerie Stadtpark, Krems



**What Enron
accounted in India
was a huge debate,
not a trend!
So here they say
“they are witnesssing a
trend”, but they are
forcing to create a
trend!**

Arjun Appadurai





We will achieve total customer satisfaction by understanding what the customer wants and delivering it timely. We will take personal responsibility for the results attributed to us and strengthen our organization so that success in satisfying our customers and increasing shareholder value is increasing.

U.S. Air Force Photo by Lt. Col. William A. Ritter, USAF



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workers take personal responsibility for their work.
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"With a committed, talented work force, a strong financial position and improving operations, Phillips is becoming the company we want it to be – one that can weather the storms and reap the rewards of a competitive global marketplace."

(Phillips Petroleum Company, Annual Report 1997)



Broadcast of "The global 500" on the Viennese privat TV-channel TIV,
Oliver Ressler in discussion with the economist Vanessa Redak



"The global 500 and other stories", W139TV, channel A1 Amsterdam,
24. 9. 1999



W139, Amsterdam

“The new building in Manhattan is a large one, and there is
the question of how it can be used. I have thought for
a long time about the problem of how to make better use of
the space available, and I have come up with some ideas that
I think will increase our efficiency and eliminate much of the
waste of space. I am looking forward to your suggestions
and comments.”

“I have thought a great deal about the problem of
how to make better use of the space available, and I have come up
with some ideas that I think will increase our efficiency and
eliminate much of the waste of space. I am looking forward to your suggestions
and comments.”



“one and improving
- one that can weather
changes.”





Screening of the video "The global 500" at W139

"To excel in the marketplace, just do what you do best."
(Microsoft Corporation, Annual Report 1998)

http://thing.at/the_global_500

"Corporate Europe Observatory" co-worker Olivier Hoedeman surfing the web at the opening at W139



Netscape: activities of corporations

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Location: http://thing.at/the_global_500/htm/aktiv.htm What's Related

More information on the activities of corporations:

Corporate Europe Observatory <http://www.xs4all.nl/~ceo>

Corporate Watch <http://www.corpwatch.org>

Maquila Solidarity Network <http://www.web.net/~msn>

The Council of Canadians <http://www.canadians.org/mai.html>

Clean Clothes Campaigns <http://www.cleanclothes.org>

Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch <http://www.tradewatch.org>

Pacific-Asia Resource Center <http://www.jca.ox.ac.uk/~parc/index-e.htm>

WEED and GermanWatch <http://www.weedbonn.org>

Coordination gegen BAYER-Gefahren
http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Critical_Shareholders/Bayerall.htm



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Beta II jacket on the left and on Wearing



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(The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company and Subsidiaries, Annual Report 1996)

GLOBALIZATION

discussion-group

Oliver Ressler
Globalization & transnational companies (TNCs)



Sharla Sava
Excerpts from *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* by Arjun Appadurai (1996)
reading available by the mail-boxes

Banff-Centre for the Arts
Glyde Hall Performance Space
Wednesday, 25th Nov. 98, 5 - 6:30pm



"But we're building for the future. The projects we're pursuing today will position
Philips to be an even stronger competitor as we enter the 21st century."

(Philips Petroleum Company, Annual Report 1991)

"To align the objectives of Chase business unit
shareholders, the primary measure of accountable
'shareholder value added' - which we define as a
company's economic output. That will encourage us
not only to earn an acceptable rate of return, freeing up
profitably or returned to stockholders."

(Chase Manhattan Corp., Annual Report 1991)



The term "being the
best" especially in the
US is everybody's
code-word.

William Arnett, Jr.



"With a committed, talented work force, a strong financial position and improved
operations, Phillips is becoming the company we want it to be - one that can weather
the storms and reap the rewards of a competitive global marketplace."

(Phillips Petroleum Company, Annual Report 1991)

W139, Amsterdam

**“The global 500”, video
76 min., 1999**

The video “The global 500” is the central element of the international exhibition series of the project.

The statements by companies come from research done on the websites and annual reports of the “global 500”. The 500 largest companies in the world are published yearly in a ranking by the financial magazine “Fortune”.

The interviews were carried out for the project in Canada, Austria, The Netherlands and Germany in 1998 and 1999. The following text version was personally worked out by the dialogue partners.

Arjun Appadurai
*Director of Globalization Project
University of Chicago*

These statements are not merely public relations in the classical sense that they are trying to put a publicly acceptable appearance on their real strategies. I think they are actually also rhetorical efforts to convince their own people, their staff, their stockholders, etc., that they understand this process of globalization. So to me, one of the interesting things about this is that it is an effort of the companies to try to convince *themselves*, so that they have a kind of map of the world and a map of what this process is.

LIBERALIZATION AND DEREGULATION

Globalization is one of the engines of General Electric growth, now and well into the next century. There will be dislocations and speed bumps on the road to prosperity in all the world's critical markets, but one cannot afford to write off any region in difficulty.

Bad business management or bad government policies that weaken competitiveness can be remedied by tough restructuring and policy change.

(General Electric, Annual Report 1997)

Charles R. Acland

*Cultural and Media Theorist
University of Calgary*

I have to say that these quotes make me shiver. They are rich, and there is so much embedded in them here. They are so familiar, so jargon-ridden, so laden with presumptions and with a certain common sense. On the one hand their familiarity comes from the fact that they are also remarkably specific to our age. It is only in our contemporary context that these kinds of sentences could even have been imagined. If I may read one of the General Electric-Annual Report of 1997, when they talk about "... bad business management or bad government policies that weaken competitiveness can be remedied by tough restructuring and policy change": This is a classic instance of a new right policy argument with respect to how government, corporations and business sectors operate in conjunc-

tion with one another. It is really a product of a kind of Reaganite and Thatcherite vision of how the economy is supposed to work coming out in the 1980s, a vision that is now taken for granted in the 1990s.

Anything that is related or attached to governments is presumed to be the enemy, to be the problem. It is what one must fight against. What you see is, of course, people are winning positions of power, based on precisely that sentiment. So in other words we see governments formed that are based on the mandate of the abolition, the reduction or cutbacks to precisely that sector they have now won.

In developing countries around the world - places such as Brazil, China and India - we are witnessing a trend toward the liberalization of economic policies.

For the first time in many nations, governments are altering their policies in favor of private energy infrastructure investments that will strengthen their economies and position them to compete in the global marketplace.

(Enron, Annual Report 1997)

Aquiles Magana

Chairman of the Mexican Union FALD

When we talk about privatization, which this quotation is about, I can say in regard to Mexico that the process is so far advanced that of all the once large state-

owned sectors only the fossil oil sector and the energy sector have not yet been privatized. For a while it was claimed that with its entry into NAFTA Mexico would become part of the "First World", which was obviously not the case, rather the opposite: the free market and privatization have brought nothing other than a deterioration in the standard of living for the majority of Mexicans. This privatization is part of an aggressive strategy by the USA to assert their interests in the "Third World". Up to today only a few countries have been able to resist it. These are countries like Cuba and Iraq, whereby the population of Iraq is dying of hunger and Cuba has large economic problems. Most countries can do nothing against privatization because they have enormously high debts. They simply do not have the money to repay them along with the interest and so are subject to the conditions imposed by the World Bank etc ...

In 1994 Mexico joined NAFTA – the North American Free Trade Agreement – to which the USA and Canada also belong.

Magana: When we talk about the direct negative effects of NAFTA membership, it must be said that, since the establishment of NAFTA, incomes have lost 300 per cent of their purchasing power and thousands upon thousands of people have lost their jobs through privatization. Many of them did not have any other possibility to feed their families than to emigrate to the USA and scrape a living there, to be exploited and suffer inhumane and illegal conditions. Both the private and the public sector in Mexico do not have any more capital or resources. The public sector is full of corruption and so indebted that it has no money left. The private sector – Mexican industry and Mexican trade – could not compete successfully against US and Cana-

dian products, which again led to thousands upon thousands of dismissals. Speculation has taken on such proportions since the liberalization of foreign exchange transactions that the Mexican Peso could collapse again at any time with all the negative effects on purchasing power. This means that Mexico is less sovereign and has fewer jobs through NAFTA. As a result the country is on the verge of social upheaval and this is not just any country, it is the fourth largest in America.

Appadurai: As you can see in this middle quote from Enron: “private energy infrastructure investments that will strengthen their economies ...” – Enron has been involved in some huge controversies in India, particularly in the last five years, in their efforts to build some mega-projects for the production of power which were hugely profitable for Enron. But active resistance was going on to Enron, although after a mass of struggles it seems Enron has more or less won. They are now building a very big project in Western India, but for about five years there has been life in these struggles between activists of various kinds and Enron and Enron-supporters both in Delhi and in the regional state where this project is going to be built. What Enron encountered in India was a huge debate, not a trend!

So here they say “they are witnessing a trend”, but they are being forced to create a trend. There are counter-tendencies, but they are moving in one direction. They don’t say there is a debate and we are on one side, they say there is a trend. Liberalization is one of these lovely words, because it has liberal in it and reminds of liberalism. So they are able to make the progressive connection between the market and democracy, which is of course the big ideological prerequisite of this statement.

Opening up markets is a very particular understanding of the principle of freedom. The link-word is liberalization. But in some ways liberalization is a very specialized process for these countries, it means allowing basically foreign manufactures and investors, people from outside the national economy.

Andy Banks

Faculty member, AFL-CIO, national Labor College and former international coordinator, Strategic Campaigns Office USA Teamsters Union

The US American transport workers union, Teamsters, lead a successful and momentous strike against the parcel service UPS in 1997.

In this hole area of liberalization, deregulation, privatization we have to say: Who are the winners and who are the losers? Liberalization is a great idea for the winners. The question is: Are there more winners or more losers? Any serious scientific look at the facts shows that there is an incredibly larger amount of losers in the deregulation and globalization process than there are winners. And there is an increasing gap between how much the winners have and what the losers have. People, with the support of the International Monetary Fund, came in to Russia and said: "Let's use a pure liberalization strategy" and then adjusted it every year for the last ten years. And now you can see the results of that. The economy has collapsed. Right now the total shares of all the industries that were privatized in Russia are worth less than they were the day the stock-marked opened in Moscow. Privatization has been a disaster for developing countries and it hasn't been mitigated at all by protections for workers and consumers.

Deregulation and globalization of the financial system appear to be progressing at a fast pace, and, for the operations of banks, becoming an active leader in the new financial era will demand major decisions and bold strategies.

(Sanwa Bank Ltd., Annual Report 1997)

Olivier Hoedeman

*Corporate Europe Observatory
Amsterdam*

CEO are an Amsterdam-based non-profit organization set up to monitor and report on the activities of European corporations and their lobby groups.

Clearly globalization is a political project, it is not a natural law, something that is in the bible that should happen or something like that. It is the outcome of a long list of political decisions that were made in the 70s, 80s and 90s of liberalizing of trade and investments and removing all barriers for the so-called free market. That is the main reason why there is a process of economic globalization today. Of course in combination with some technological developments, but without these political decisions there would not be a globalized economy as we see it merged today. And this is important, because these political decisions can

be evaluated, they can be rolled back basically. There is a growing critique today about the globalized economy, basically the increasing marginalization of large parts of the population of the world, the increasing gaps between rich and poor, the environmental problems related with the globalized economy, the economic and political power of ever larger transnational corporations. This critique is becoming more and more mainstream and as people see that these are facts of political decisions that were made by governments it is clear that they can be changed as well.

Birgit Mahnkopf

*Professor for European Politics
Berlin School of Economics*

If there is one central characteristic of globalization at the end of the 20th century then it is the way the dynamic of the money and capital markets has made itself independent to a large extent from the level of the real economy. In precise terms globalization at the end of the 20th century is the rule of global money and financial markets over the real economy and, along with this, over the politics which can still be made inside those spheres created by people through politics – which is to say on a national level.

This effect of financial markets has become possible through the deregulation and liberalization directly following the breakdown of the Bretton-Woods system; that is to say, with this aspect of globalization, as with a number of others, we are dealing with a political project and not with a natural phenomenon. This must continually be made clear: Globalization is desired politically, especially the deregulation and liberalization of the money and capital markets, which is causing countries so many problems today. Just so, the liber-

alization of world trade through the dismantling of customs within the framework of the GATT negotiations has been a political project which should have allowed for a peaceful co-operation in the political economy after the Second World War. At the same time we must point out that the liberalization and deregulation of the financial markets have clearly gone too far, and this can be heard from World Bank circles and IWF managers. The point is that it is obviously much more difficult to regulate financial markets than to deregulate them. There are simply too many profiteers.

Wenn es ein zentrales Charakteristikum der Globalisierung am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts gibt, dann besteht dies darin, daß sich die Dynamik auf den Geld- und Kapitalmärkten von den Entwicklungen auf der Ebene der Realökonomie sehr weitgehend abgekoppelt hat. Am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts ist der Begriff der Globalisierung gleichbedeutend geworden mit der Herrschaft der globalen Geld- und Kapitalmärkte über die Realökonomie, und damit zugleich über all die wirtschaftlichen, sozialen und kulturellen Prozesse, die innerhalb des Raumes stattfinden, den Menschen durch Politik gestalten können, also auf der Ebene des Nationalstaats. Möglich geworden ist diese Wirkung von Finanzmärkten durch die Deregulierung und Liberalisierung im Anschluß an den Zusammenbruch des Bretton-Woods-Systems. Wir haben es bei diesem Aspekt der Globalisierung gewiß mit einem politischen Projekt zu tun – und keineswegs mit einem Naturereignis. Dies gilt es immer wieder deutlich zu machen: Globalisierung ist politisch gewollt, insbesondere die Deregulierung und Liberalisierung der Geld- und Kapitalmärkte, die heute vielen Ländern zu schaffen macht. Genauso wie die Liberalisie-

rung des Welthandels durch den Abbau von Zöllen im Rahmen der GATT-Runden ein politisches Projekt gewesen ist, das im Anschluß an den Zweiten Weltkrieg ein friedliches Miteinander der Volkswirtschaften ermöglichen sollte. Zugleich müssen wir heute aber feststellen, daß die Liberalisierung und Deregulierung der globalen Finanzmärkte zu weit gegangen ist. Diese Einschätzung ist heute selbst aus Kreisen der Weltbank und von einzelnen IWF-Managern zu hören. Das Problem besteht nun darin, daß es ganz offensichtlich sehr viel schwieriger ist, Finanzmärkte zu re-regulieren, als sie zu deregulieren. Denn von der Deregulierung profitieren viele, zu viele!

Hoedeman: What we see at the moment is an enormous amount of money flowing around the world which has nothing to do with the real economy. At the moment 90 percent of all international money-flows are not related to real investments or to trade-transactions. So 90 percent are simply speculative! 20 to 30 years ago that used to be 10 percent, but because of the liberalization of capital flows all speculative tricks have been developed and at the moment this enormous amount of money is travelling around the world which has nothing to do with the real economy. The Tobin tax or other kinds of speculation taxes would limit that percentage, it would simply restore the balance between the real economy and the financial world by introducing a very limited tax – less than one percent – on international capital flows. It would make most of this speculation unattractive and at the same time it would raise a lot of money which could be used for sensible purposes.

Appadurai: What is called deregulation is only deregulation of *certain* laws and it is often accompanied by

putting other laws into effect, such as my colleague Saskia Sassen and other people studying globalization are pointing out:

There is a whole new structure of law which is accompanying global business now. No one talks about these new structures of law, treaties, arrangements and technical provisions for commercial law for example, which are going on facilitate globalizing. They are only talking about "deregulation", so they are generally simplifying the word. They are only removing certain laws, which are obstacles to movement, but other laws are growing. A whole body of experts and expertise is growing in the world for transnational company-to-company-dealings, sector-to-sector-dealings. So deregulation is a funny word to use, because it really means to take older laws apart. There is a very complex growth of law actually.

The entire world is our marketplace.
(Wal-Mart, Annual Report 1998)

Acland: The question about the relationship between contemporary transnational corporations and the op-

erations and organizations of the imperialist companies of the 18th and 19th century and further back is an essential one to pose. It is a crucial parallel to discuss and to investigate because the first aspect it reveals to us is that globalization is not especially new. I think the contemporary form of globalization is historically specific. But in terms of the history of capitalism it is a fairly ordinary and expected procedure, characterized by the expansion of the seeking-out of locations of resources and of the markets. Adam Smith even writes about this in "The Wealth of Nations". So globalization is not new, one of the arguments that has been circulating quite recently is that the idea of national economies really is a product of the first few decades of the twentieth century. The idea of a protective national economy has a relatively very short history. Our moment of globalization is not something that we have not experienced before, instead it is much more in line with a long and continuing history of the extension and extending interests and tentacles of capitalist power.

Continued access to global markets is extremely important to the company's future ability to fully realize its sales potential and projected long-term investment returns.

(Boeing, Annual Report 1997)

Hoedeman: These companies are organizing themselves politically. They are grouping together in corporate-lobby-groups with the clear aim to get political influence in countries and in international organizations. This is a trend that is extremely disturbing. The goal of these companies organizing themselves in lobby-groups like the “European Roundtable of Industrialists” or the “International Chamber of Commerce” is to shape the rules of the economy to their interests. These corporate-lobby-groups do not only deal with the rules of the economy, they do not only deal with deregulating the markets, privatizing the markets or arguing for business-friendly international rules for trade and investments: They deal with all aspects of society. For example a very influential lobby-group like the “European Roundtable of Industrialists” are very active proposing governments to restructure their education policies to make sure that the education system contributes to the competitiveness of industry, so basically streamline education to provide the industry with the kind of employees that they would like. But it does not stop there, the “European Roundtable of Industrialists” is active on almost every aspect of society that you could imagine, e. g. proposing very strongly to governments to adjust all aspects of society to what is best for industry and to what is best for international competitiveness.

Governments have chosen almost without exception that economic globalization is the model they would follow. This gives companies enormous power over policies on all fields you can imagine. The competitiveness of countries is dependent on these large corporations and this makes politicians very vulnerable and open to the suggestions of the large corporations and of the political lobby-groups that they have organized themselves in. Basically it is their economic power which gives them leverage, which gives them access

to politicians and to decision-makers. In a globalized economy you almost automatically have this very strong political dominance from the corporations which dominate the economic field.

One thing you will not find in the annual reports of corporations is an overview of their political activities. They fail to report anything on that, although it is quite significant for their work: They have a lot of people working on influencing governments all over the world. They have a lot of people working actively in corporate-lobby-groups like the “European Roundtable of Industrialists”. But in their annual reports you will not find anything about these activities. And if you ask corporations directly most of them will deny that they have any political activities. This is a very significant problem of accountability and transparency. Corporations should not get away with not being transparent about what they are doing on the political field in this situation we have today where they are extremely influential politically.

EMPLOYMENT

We believe in being the best employer,
recognizing our employees as our greatest
asset, preparing them to be the best,
expecting the best from them,
acknowledging their contribution and
rewarding them accordingly.
(Unilever, Website, 1998)

Appadurai: In a way of course a statement like “We believe in being the best employer, recognizing our employees as our greatest asset, preparing them to be the best, expecting the best from them ...”, in a way this is part of traditional kinds of ways that large companies are always marketing themselves, in terms of both recruiting people as well as general corporate public relations that show that they believe in excellence. The term “being the best” – especially in the US – is everybody’s code-word. Everybody wants to be excellent, you must pursue excellence and the best business is of course competitive. Because in this world of uncertainty and technical complexity you want to keep and find very good people. And in that sense it is a surprise, it is not in the old-fashioned sense false statements, they are not ideological distortions. They are generally representing not just an image – as we used to say “this is the image of the company” –

but it is also a strategy, it is a way of telling people to come to us, and "you will be the best". The intention of this sentence "preparing them to be the best, expecting the best from them ...", which is also saying we are expecting the best from them. But I think the statement "recognizing our employees as our greatest asset" is the positive side of what is in sound of the other quotation, which is to say: flexibility, we can't any more. All these companies seem to be saying: We can not simply take everybody and become their patron forever, as we used to think was true in Japan where there were companies that when you joined them they would pay for ever if you are loyal and do your work. Of course people pointed out that this was only true, even in Japan, in very big companies. Labor conditions were always very unsafe. Now no one can afford to do as IBM did: You can come, you will join and then you will be an IBM-person for ever.

All statements are saying: We can only take care of some people, and we take care of all of you in different ways, which is the flexibility ...

The company's complementary work force comprises equivalent full-time employees hired under temporary, part-time and limited-term employment arrangements to meet specific business needs in a flexible and cost-effective manner.

(IBM, Financial Report 1996)

"... part-time and limited-term ..." – I found that IBM quote interesting, "The company's complementary work force comprises equivalent full-time employees ...", which is a wonderful phrase, in the United States we call this FTE. Full-time employee is not a person, it is a unit, it is a measurement, it is a concept, it is an abstraction. Part-time can be part of full-time, which is very curious. That can only happen by mathematics: if you have a lot part-time, you can add them up. They are equal to a certain unit of full-time. Persons are part-time, temporary, limited etc., but for counting purposes they can be converted into equivalent of full-time. It is a fascinating linguistic way of trying to use the image of full-time-employees.

To help employees manage their jobs more effectively and more flexibly, we looked at ways to eliminate non-value-added work that didn't support Merck's strategy for growth. And we increased the use of alternative work arrangements, such as flex-time, telecommuting and job-sharing.
(Merck, Annual Report 1997)

Mahnkopf: When talking about casual work, short-term employment and forms of freelance employment contracts etc. in relation to "globalization", then an im-

portant point is touched upon, namely company-based work is on the decrease. Employment contracts, the legal instrument binding employer and employee, are losing their importance. A great many working relations are now of a commercial legal nature, which runs under the motto "employees are becoming enterprises". There are large problems attached to this.

If employment contracts are only to be for a limited term in the future, if I cannot be sure whether I will have the same wage or salary tomorrow, if I am hindered in my present activity by the incidence of illness or some other life event, this means that the growing casual character of work also greatly impairs the ability to plan one's own life (e. g. buying a house).

Totally disregarding whether it is a characteristic of humans to permanently adapt themselves to new situations, that emphatically highly praised "life-long learning" which goes hand in hand with these new working relationships has a lot to do with globalization, this unreasonable demand to permanently forget the learnt has very much to do with globalization. Indeed it can be said that globalization has a lot to do with an acceleration of learning phases but also with unlearning phases. Knowledge is rapidly devalued and experience apparently becoming useless.

Wenn in Zusammenhang mit der „Globalisierung“ von Gelegenheitsarbeit, von befristeten Beschäftigungsverhältnissen, von Werkvertragskonstruktionen etc. die Rede ist, wird ein wichtiger Punkt angesprochen: Mit dem Druck, die Arbeitsverhältnisse „am Ort“ globalen ökonomischen Sachzwängen anzupassen, sie also zu deregulieren und zu flexibilisieren, geht die Tendenz einher, daß Erwerbsarbeit immer weniger betriebsförmig organisiert wird, gemäß den Formen und Normen nationalstaatlich regulierter „Normalarbeitsverhältnisse“. Genauge-

nommen verliert der Arbeitsvertrag, also das rechtliche Instrument, das Arbeitgeber und Arbeitnehmer aneinander bindet, seine bisherige Bedeutung. Viele Arbeitsverhältnisse sind heute handelsrechtlicher Natur. Das läuft dann unter dem Stichwort „Arbeitnehmer werden zu Unternehmern ihrer eigenen Arbeitskraft“. Damit sind riesige Probleme verknüpft. Wenn Arbeitsverhältnisse immer häufiger zeitlich befristeter Art sind; wenn zweifelhaft ist, ob ich mit den Einkünften, die ich durch Erwerbsarbeit erzeile, auch morgen noch meine Existenz sichern kann; wenn ich damit rechnen muß, daß ich im Falle von Krankheit oder anderen einschneidenden lebensgeschichtlichen Ereignissen aus der Bahn geworfen werde, so übersetzt sich der wachsende Gelegenheitscharakter von Arbeit in eine immer geringere Planbarkeit des eigenen Lebens. Einmal ganz abgesehen davon, daß es keineswegs ein Wesenszug von Menschen ist, sich permanent auf neue Verhältnisse einzustellen. Daher gibt es auch nicht nur positive Reaktionen auf das von Politikern und Publizisten hochgelobte Prinzip des „lebenslange Lernens“, das mit diesen neuen Beschäftigungsverhältnissen einhergeht. Dieses Prinzip hat viel mit Globalisierung und also mit der Beschleunigung auf der Zeitachse zu tun: Es beinhaltet, das ahnen viele Menschen, eben nicht nur die Aufforderung, immer wieder Neues zu lernen, sondern zugleich die Zumutung, Gelerntes immer wieder zu vergessen. Globaler Wettbewerb hat für die Einzelperson daher auch die Bedeutung einer beschleunigten Entwertung von Wissen und Erfahrungen.

CUSTOMERS

Industry consolidation and increased globalization will require us to respond more quickly to changing customer needs and to add value through improved service.
(Exxon Corporation, Annual Report 1997)

Mahnkopf: The question is who is really meant by the consumer to whose needs corporations want to adapt? They are above all clearly the consumers of the wealthy industrial nations. We know that in the wake of globalization, that is over the last thirty years, the wealthy have become wealthier and the poor poorer. The gap has not closed at all but has got bigger. It is certainly no longer the case that the wealthy are *only* in the industrial nations and the poor *only* in the so-called developing countries. A class of consumers relevant for transnational corporations has been developing in these developing countries. It is certain that not everybody who exercises their needs through buying and selling on markets is meant by the term consumers, but rather more that particular group of people who can exert a powerful purchasing demand. This also infers that the satisfaction of needs is only

possible through the market. Globalization is ultimately the imposition of the principle of making everything into a commodity, of capitalization, of making everything into goods all over the world. This principle of subjecting each and every thing to the market has penetrated at the end of the 20th century into the once very last blank regions on the map – as far as China – and in this sense there are no more large territories for the principle of capitalization to encompass. Along with this globalization also came to its spatial end. Exactly for this reason it must develop its dynamics on a time axis in the form of an acceleration in the time of capital turnover.

Es stellt sich die Frage, welche Konsumenten es sind, an deren veränderte Bedürfnisse sich die Unternehmen schneller anpassen wollen? Ganz offensichtlich sind dies ja vor allem Konsumenten in den reichen Industrieländern. Wir wissen, daß im Zuge der Globalisierung, also innerhalb der letzten dreißig Jahre, die Reichen reicher und die Armen ärmer geworden sind. Die Lücke hat sich nicht etwa geschlossen, sondern sie ist größer geworden. Sicherlich ist es nicht so, daß Reiche *nur* in den Industrieländern und Arme *nur* in den sogenannten Entwicklungsländern leben. In vielen Entwicklungsländern ist eine Schicht von Konsumenten, die für transnationale Unternehmen zählen, nachgewachsen. Mit dem Verweis auf Konsumenten, deren Bedürfnisse zu befriedigen seien, sind sicherlich nicht all die Menschen gemeint, die ihre Bedürfnisse durch Käufe und Verkäufe auf Märkten tätigen müssen, sondern jene ganz bestimmte Gruppe von Menschen, die für eine kaufkräftige Nachfrage sorgen. Zugleich wird aber unterstellt, daß Bedürfnisbefriedigung einzig und allein über den Markt

möglich sei. Globalisierung ist ja letztlich die Durchsetzung des Prinzips der Kommodifizierung, der Vermarktwirtschaftlichung, des Zur-Ware-Machens von allem und jedem, auf dem ganzen Globus. Dieses Prinzip, alles und jedes dem Markt zu unterwerfen, ist Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts bis in die letzten Winkel der Erde vorgedrungen. Weiße (und rote) Flecken, die von diesem Prinzip noch (nicht) erreicht wären, gibt es seit der beginnenden Durchkapitalisierung Chinas nicht mehr; es gibt heute also keine großen Territorien mehr, die für das Prinzip der Vermarktwirtschaftlichung noch zu erschließen wären. Damit kommt die Globalisierung gleichsam an ihr räumliches Ende. Genau aus diesem Grund muß sie ihre Dynamik auf der Zeitachse entfalten, im Sinne der Beschleunigung von Zeit, gerichtet auf den beschleunigten Umschlag von Kapital.

Acland: There is a quote here from Mobil from their website ...

What prompted this series is what some economists call “globalphobia” - a fear among many Americans that increasing globalization of the world economy is bad for the nation. As a company with more than a century of international experience, we know that trade does matter. We know the benefits and the problems of trade. Overall, we’re convinced trade improves the lives of Americans.
(Mobil, Website 1998)

... I just heard the news that they are now forming a new massive oil-company with Exxon, one of the largest mergers in the recent history of transnational capitalism. The quote here refers to a complaint that many economists are voicing concerning the sentiment of "globalphobia", that is the feeling that many people have this sense of fear and concern about the process of globalization. Of course this is something they wish to combat and in their terms they wish to educate the American public: "There is no reason to have this 'globalphobia'!"

What I think is interesting about this is first of all: Yes, while there is a lot of fear of the process of globalization, there is a rational element to be found in the response of concern: What will happen to the nation? What will happen to the local cultures? What will happen to the various forms of rights that many people now enjoy? It makes sense to be afraid of the process of globalization. On the other hand I think it is a mistake for us to equate all forms of globalizations as though they are equal. Indeed I would go even further and say: It no longer makes sense to either be for or against globalization. That kind of black-and-white, either-or proposition is no longer available to us. Instead we have to think: Which forms of globalization should we combat and which forms of globalization should we celebrate? And there are many forms of globalization that are worth celebrating. There are many forms of movements between international borders that we need to champion.

The problem is that the dominant discourse of globalization, the main way globalization is now talked about, the main way in which globalization is presumed, is purely an economic discourse. It has economic designs, it is in order to further the interests of certain strata of international entrepreneurs. This is the globalization we must fight!

Appadurai: The Mobil message is interesting because it is a direct appeal. Mobil Oil Company in the US is well-known for taking big newspaper space to make general essays or opinion-statements about nature problems and the environment and so on. The texts of these ads are always written as if they are philosophers and not actually an oil-company at all. They create a kind of impression of a Habermasian public sphere, they are also in dialogue and so on. Mobil has been very brilliant at creating the impression that they are actually outside, and they discuss or debate a certain approach to get oil, to the environment or pollution. They have this very sophisticated sound. I find this particularly interesting: “*Overall*, we are convinced trade improves the lives of Americans.” Of course their whole strategy is simply not based on carefully balancing the pros and contras, but the voice is a voice of solo-prudence of judging pros and cons, of thinking long and hard about what is good and bad for all of us. “*Overall*” is the keyword here.

Magana: If we take up the ultimate theory that international trade improves the living conditions of Americans, then it must be made clear here that only the Americans of the United States can be meant by this – if at all – as international trade means nothing other than the exploitation of natural resources of those countries and the exploitation of the workforce of the Americans who live in and between Mexico and Argentina. This trade has brought nothing positive then, and of course it is not only the USA which takes part in this exploitation but also the European and Asian states.

SHAREHOLDERS

To align the objectives of Chase business managers more closely with those of shareholders, the primary measure of accountability has been changed to “shareholder value added” - which we define as net income, on a cash basis, less an explicit charge for capital. This will encourage managers to eliminate assets that do not earn an acceptable rate of return, freeing up capital that can be reinvested profitably or returned to stockholders.

(Chase Manhattan Corp., Annual Report 1997)

Banks: It is a real interesting phenomenon – which is definitely coming from America’s management – this influence of the financial markets into corporate behavior is now being exported across the globe. It is a very dangerous phenomenon, it is one that looks at very short-term, often less than one year, to quarter-by-quarter results, to increase the value of the stock, to increase the value of the dividend of the shares of a company. Part of a company may be profitable, but it may not make the level of profits that immediately reward shareholders today. If they waited another year or two maybe its profits level would be greater. But because it is not profitable today and because management is under pressure to increase share value, that part of the company will be shut down, it will be sold, it will be downsized. Real workers will be hurt, real communities will get hurt if these plants get closed, and the

economic situation of those people is horrible. This sort of philosophy is something I would strongly caution.

THE TAKE-OVER OF COMPANIES

Through increasing globalization, the tendency here is also to combine with other large enterprises in order to exploit economies of scale.

(Daimler Benz, Report Business combination Daimler-Benz/Chrysler 1998)

Hoedeman: The merger between Daimler-Benz and Chrysler last year is one of the most well-known examples of a in the fact quite disturbing trend which goes on in the global economy: It is the merger and acquisition of companies across borders on a scale that has never been seen before. In 1997 and 1998 it has reached a record level of more than 320 billion dollars of companies buying each others across borders. What is disturbing about that is on the one hand a mass of concentration of economic power on an increasing number of very large companies, which gath-

er control over global economy. On the other hand it is the related effects of these mergers, which are job-losses, in many cases closure of plants and local communities losing their economic activity, which are dependent on these companies. When they merge they are able to cut down the number of production and distribution facilities. What they call "economies of scale" produce the same on a smaller unit of production facilities.

Chrysler and Daimler was one of the biggest mergers in 1998 and in fact this is expected to continue and increase even further in the next years. The expectation is that in ten years almost all sectors of the global economy will be controlled by only five or six large companies. We see in the car-production, the chemical industry, in the biotechnology industry there are mergers going on and the number of companies is decreasing and they are getting larger and larger.

So with only five or six large companies reaching every country in the world and sharing the markets you get enormous mega-companies, which in size can be compared to most middle-sized countries. If this trend of economic concentration continues, in ten years' time only the G7 countries – the richest countries of the world – will be bigger than the top 100 transnational corporations, which is a quite disturbing sign.

So what will happen is not only that countries get more dependent on attracting direct investments from these transnational corporations, they will also be dependent to attract it from an increasing small number of corporations. These corporations get a lot of power over the economies of these countries, basically corporations can choose between markets all over the world to decide where to establish a factory.

They can play out countries against each other in order to make the best deal for the company. And this is

a trend we already see today that countries are competing with each other to attract investments and this goes to the expense of environmental policies, of wage levels, of worker protection and so on.

The only ones benefiting from this process of mergers and acquisitions of companies growing bigger and bigger at the expense of smaller companies are the shareholders. They put pressure on the companies to grow bigger and bigger to make higher and higher profits. The rest are losers, as job-cuts are part of almost any merger, also the Daimler-Benz merger was an example of that.

NEW PRODUCTS AND TECHNOLOGIES

The chemical and pharmaceutical industry is a growth sector that stands to benefit substantially from the globalization of the economy and from new technologies. Bayer is a key player with the expertise needed to take advantage of the opportunities that arise. Our stockholders will share in our success.
(Bayer, Annual Report 1997)

Mahnkopf: What is happening in the pharmaceutical industry is intruding into something which we have not been able to imagine until now as an object of market events: genetic analysis and genetic patenting. What

is happening here can generally be described as the "privatization of life". This is closely related to what I have already said.

By the end of the 20th century the process of creating the world market, which began in the 16th century with the so-called discovery of the "New World" by the colonial powers of Europe, when regarded spatially has simply reached its natural end. In my opinion that is one of the reasons why the capitalist dynamic, no longer able to take place in the areas we already know, is now focussing on either outer space, the ocean beds or areas which have not yet been subjected to capitalist evaluating dynamics to find still undiscovered blank regions. That is why it is turning to the micro- and nano-spheres of life, and genetic engineering is coming into the field of play.

An aspect of intellectual property rights which is not a central theme in this country is closely related to the fact that the patents under consideration are all established in the countries of the First World. The corporations and appertaining service industries in a position to profit from the patents are ones which are established here. These are the German businesses Bayer, Schering and Hoechst and the North American businesses Monsanto and Cargill. This is why these "future markets" can be identified with, in a similar way as with the financial markets. In Germany there are jobs which might be at risk, but also sources of revenue and – this is the most determining factor – income through the sale of these patents. In this sense it is quite simply all about interests which should be defended and secured at the cost of and to the detriment of Third World countries.

We are not only uninformed but also party. When we are continually admonished that "we" – that is for ex-

ample the EU countries – may not react towards globalization through the reduction of social standards, i. e. the race which is never to be won on the level of cost reducing competition, it is then foretold that “we” should confront globalization at the level of “innovation competition”. Behind this rests the fact that the “future technologies”, genetic engineering and biotechnology, are of far greater importance for Germany than, for example, information technology as the Americans have already established standards in that field. One cannot start from scratch when inventing something to secure property rights of one’s own when pitted against Bill Gates, but in genetic engineering and biotechnology there are a great many beneficiaries to be secured.

When “innovation competition” is continuously being talked about, then it is not as one might wish, innovations in the areas of environmental technology and very badly needed social innovations but rather technical innovations in this most explosive field of technology, where we have got too accustomed to say we can imagine useful developments issuing from the implementation of this technology in the field of medicine. And in the field of food-industry “we” belong to those who want to win, and that at the cost of those people whose very basis of existence is destroyed in this way. As a result they are made dependant on earning a salary because they can no longer feed themselves as peasant farmers and are driven to the job markets in the cities.

What this means above all for larger states where there are still a large number of people working on the land, namely India and China, can be imagined in horror scenarios. Potentially three million farmers, alone through mechanization and further advancement in automatization in India – genetic engineering is not

even being taken into account here – face the loss of their workbase over the next ten to twenty years; in addition to this the incalculable two or three hundred millions in China. A thousand million people more on the job market is what it ultimately means. Through our innovations and our efforts to secure jobs, for example here with genetic engineering and biotechnology, other jobs elsewhere are being lost.

Was derzeit in der Pharmabranche passiert, berührt etwas, das wir uns bislang gar nicht als einen Gegenstand von Marktgeschehen vorstellen konnten: das Genanalysieren, das Genpatentieren. Was hier stattfindet, kann man in einem sehr umfänglichen Sinn als „Privatisierung von Leben“ bezeichnen. Hier gibt es Zusammenhänge mit den Entwicklungen, von denen ich vorhin schon sprach: Am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts ist der Prozeß der Herstellung des Weltmarktes, der im 16. Jahrhundert mit den sogenannten Entdeckungen einer „Neuen Welt“ durch die Kolonialmächte Europas begann, rein räumlich betrachtet an sein natürliches Ende gelangt. Weil die kapitalistische Dynamik nicht mehr in dem uns bekannten Raum stattfinden kann, richtet sie sich ins Weltall, auf die Meeresböden oder auf die Mikro- und Nanostrukturen des Lebens, also auf jene Räume und Lebensbereiche, die bislang noch nicht der kapitalistischen Verwertungsdynamik unterworfen waren. Und hier kommt dann die Gentechnologie ins Spiel.

Ein Aspekt der intellektuellen Eigentumsrechte, der hierzulande wenig thematisiert wird, berührt den Sachverhalt, daß die Patente, um die es hier geht, ja vornehmlich in den Ländern der ersten Welt angemeldet werden. Bei den Industrieunternehmen und ange schlossenen Dienstleistungsunternehmen, die in der Lage sind, von diesen Patenten zu profitieren, handelt

es sich ja in erster Linie um US-amerikanische und europäische Unternehmen: Bayer, Schering, Hoechst oder Monsanto und Cargill kommen uns da zuerst in den Sinn. Nicht anders als mit Blick auf die Finanzplätze, die ja zumeist in der OECD-Welt angesiedelt sind und von denen ja nicht wenige Menschen in den reichen Industrieländern profitieren, ist eine positive Assoziation mit den „Zukunftsmärkten“ der Bio- und Gentechnologie für die „alten“ Industrieländer daher nachvollziehbar. Denn hier gibt es neben den vielen Arbeitsplätzen, die durch Prozesse der ökonomischen Globalisierung gefährdet werden, auch die begründete Erwartung, von jenen „Zukunftsmärkten“ profitieren zu können – sei es durch Steuereinnahmen oder durch Einnahmen aus dem Verkauf dieser Patente. In dem Sinne geht es hier auch ganz schlicht um Interessen, die auf Kosten und zu Lasten von Ländern der dritten Welt verteidigt und gesichert werden sollen. Wir sind nicht einfach nur uninformatiert, sondern Partei.

In der aktuellen Debatte wird immer darauf verwiesen, daß „wir“ – gemeint sind diejenigen, die in den EU-Ländern Verantwortung tragen für Wirtschaft und Politik – auf die Globalisierung nicht durch das Absenken von sozialen Standards und durch Lohnsenkungen reagieren sollten, weil der Wettbewerb auf der Ebene der Kostensenkung gar nicht zu gewinnen ist. Gerade von politischen Kräften, die sich einst „links von der Mitte“, heute aber wohl eher „in der politischen Mitte“ positionier(t)en, wird immer wieder betont, daß „wir“ uns den Herausforderungen der Globalisierung auf der Ebene eines Innovationswettbewerbs stellen sollten, also bestrebt sein müßten, die wichtigsten Konkurrenten europäischer Unternehmen durch Innovationen in den „Zukunftsbranchen“ der Bio- und Gentechnologie auszustechen. Dahinter verbirgt sich die wohl zutreffende Einschätzung, daß unter den so genannten „Zukunftstechnologien“ die Gen- und die

Biotechnologie für die meisten europäischen Ländern, darunter vor allem Deutschland, eine wohl größere Bedeutung haben dürften als die Informationstechnologie. Denn in diesem Bereich haben die Amerikaner bereits die Standards gesetzt. Gegen das Imperium von Bill Gates kann niemand noch einmal von vorne anfangen, Software mit „Weltstandard“ zu erfinden – und dank der Eigentumsrechte daran zum Milliardär zu werden. Doch in der Gen- und Biotechnologie sind noch jede Menge Pfründen zu sichern. Und wenn immer von „Innovationswettbewerb“ die Rede ist, dann sind dabei viel seltener, als man es sich wünschen könnte, Innovationen im Bereich von Umwelttechnologie und sehr wünschenswerte soziale Innovationen gemeint, sondern technische Innovationen in diesem höchstbrisanten Feld von Technologien, wo wir uns daran gewöhnt haben zu sagen: Ja, beim Einsatz dieser Technologie im medizinischen Bereich können wir uns sinnvolle Entwicklungen vorstellen. Und im Bereich des Ernährungskomplexes gehören wir zu denjenigen, die gewinnen wollen, und zwar auf Kosten von Menschen, deren Existenzgrundlage auf diese Art zerstört wird und die damit zu Lohnabhängigen gemacht werden, da sie sich schlicht als Subsistenzbauern nicht mehr ernähren können, und die dadurch in die Städte auf die dortigen Arbeitsmärkte getrieben werden.

Was das vor allem in Hinblick auf die großen Staaten bedeutet, in denen noch eine große Zahl von Menschen von der Landwirtschaft lebt, nämlich Indien und China, kann man sich an solchen Horrorszenarien verdeutlichen wie potentiell drei Millionen Bauern, die alleine durch Mechanisierung und voranschreitende Automatisierung in Indien – von Gentechnologie gar nicht zu reden – in den nächsten zehn bis zwanzig Jahren ihre Arbeitsgrundlage verlieren werden, dazu – unkalkulierbar –, zweihundert, dreihundert Millionen in

China. Eine Milliarde Menschen mehr auf dem Arbeitsmarkt, das heißt das dann letztlich. Durch unsere Innovation, unser Bemühen, Arbeitsplätze hier beispielsweise mit Gen- und Biotechnologie zu sichern, gehen anderswo Arbeitsplätze verloren.

Magana: In Mexico the term globalization is a negative one for union activists who have thought a lot about the subject, and one which will bring us all nothing but bad.

Globalization is probably going to be the best forcing function in teaching industry how to be fast, focused, and flexible in developing and building affordable products.

(General Motors, Annual Report 1997)

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

Banks: I think, the best question is: What is the purpose of the economy? The purpose is to make the society better! This is what everybody says, the capitalist

and the socialist. I think the acceptable balance is the one that gives people jobs, security, that gives people a decent standard of living, that gives people the right to certain democratic freedoms, the right of association, the right of speech, the right to elect representatives.

All those rights and standards seem to be undermined now by globalization. I think the goal is to have an economy that provides those rights and not undermines those rights!

Acland: One of the mistakes in so much work of resistance especially on the left is that they take up fairly traditional modes of resistance, that is ideas about attempting to get certain candidates elected, attempting to follow very traditional avenues of organized response. It seems to me that one of the things that have been made available in our context is the proliferation of the sites and contexts in which resistance can actually take place. I would argue that in fact forms of cultural resistance are far more effective in being able to demystify the process of economic transnationalization, providing a multitude of imaginative sites and positions of resistance. Forms of cultural subversion are exceptionally effective. This does not necessarily mean this has to happen in formalized and sanctioned art practice or inside various forms of an avant-garde. Even on an everyday basis, modes of tactical maneuver are possible.

One of the reasons why the dominant form of economic globalization has been achieved its position is that the right has very actively courted and recruited intellectuals. They have developed, guided, provided the institutes, the contacts, the money, the locations, the conferences for intellectuals to begin to talk about the wonders, the glories of global economic forms. The left has not done that as well, nor, sadly, does it have

access to the same means to do so in most contexts. It has not provided those intellectual spaces for developing counter-ideas, for developing new ways of thinking and reconceptualizing what it means to provide a political position in the new context of globalization.

Mahnkopf: For many things which are related to, for example, the currency speculation on the international financial markets I do not have the imagination to see that a reregulation will be possible within the existing system. There are many voices, and in the meantime I tend towards agreeing with them, that hold and make clear that a reregulation of the financial markets will only be possible through a crash, not a snowball system crash like recently, where single economies and therewith millions of people suffered, but a crash which will affect the wealthy industrial nations.

What it should really be about, namely a relief from the enormous pressure exerted by the global financial markets, can only be imagined as a “global currency reform”. This means nothing other than the devaluation of all this capital, of which only 10 % is needed to make world trade possible. A “global currency reform” means a substantial annihilation of debt claims, a substantial invalidation of the claims financiers can make on members of the working community in the whole world. I can no longer envisage this with the measures integral to the system as a crisis of global proportions would probably be required to create a willingness for reregulation.

Bei vielen Dingen, die sich z. B. auf die Währungsspekulation der internationalen Finanzmärkte beziehen, fehlt mir die Phantasie, um mir vorzustellen, daß innerhalb des bestehenden Systems eine Reregulierung möglich sein wird. Es gibt viele Stimmen, und ich neige mittlerweile auch dazu, sie für berechtigt zu

halten, die deutlich machen, daß eine Reregulierung der Finanzmärkte nur über einen Crash möglich wird, einen Crash, der nicht wie jüngst nach dem Schneeballsystem einzelne Ökonomien und damit Millionen von Menschen ins Elend reißt, sondern einen Crash, der auch innerhalb der reichen Industrieländer seine Wirkung zeigt. Das, worum es hier eigentlich ginge, nämlich den enormen Druck zu mildern, der von den globalen Finanzmärkten ausgeht, kann man sich ganz schlicht wie eine „globale Währungsreform“ vorstellen. Das heißt nichts anderes als eine Entwertung all dieses Kapitals, von dem man gerade 10 % braucht, um den internationalen Welthandel zu ermöglichen. Eine „globale Währungsreform“ bedeutet die massive Vernichtung von Forderungstiteln, die massive Entwertung von Ansprüchen, die Geldbesitzer an die Mitglieder der Arbeitsgesellschaften in der ganzen Welt stellen können. Das kann ich mir nicht mehr mit systemimmanenter Mitteln vorstellen, da wird wahrscheinlich eine Krise von globalem Umfang nötig sein, um die Bereitschaft zur Reregulierung zu erzeugen!

Hoedeman: I think the only model that will really work is grass-roots organizing with very strong international components. Luckily in the last few years we have seen the emerging of successful grass-roots campaigns for example against international treaties which were part of the project of economic globalization, such as the Multinational Agreement of Investment, the MAI, and these are very encouraging examples that it is possible to raise awareness on issues that are quite complicated, that it is possible for people to organize themselves on a local level, on a national level and on an international level and to achieve something concrete, as was the case with the MAI which was stopped by a very strong opposition on an

international level. I think the strategy to follow is to raise awareness about the impacts of economic globalization and the social and environmental impacts and also what will happen to democracy in a system of globalized economy.

The negotiations around the Multilateral Agreement of Investment were conducted over two years behind closed doors within the OECD. A direct right to prosecute for transnational corporations against governments was provided for as soon as the companies feared any negative effects on their investments and profits, which would also have been the case in accordance with the conditions of the agreement through more stringent national environmental or social obligations.

Hoedeman: The MAI negotiations of the OECD were stopped because the opposition against the MAI was simply too hard to handle and the political risks for the governments were too big. But at the same time there was an offensive force in the kind of policies going on in a lot of different international forums, in the WTO, the World Trade Organization, and also in the Transatlantic Economic Partnership, which is an agreement between the EU and the US to deregulate their economies basically to create a single market between the EU and the US. This agreement suffers from a lot of the same problems as the MAI did, and one of the most fundamental ones is the lack of democracy. The intention of the Transatlantic Economic Partnership is to remove obstacles for trade and investment between the EU and the US, to harmonize a lot of legislation that at the moment by corporations in the EU and the US is seen as being in the way for their free trade.

This “harmonization” will happen in working groups of

civil servants from the EU and the US without much democratic control and more fundamentally the aim of the whole exercise, of creating a single market between the EU and the US, is not something which has been demanded by the voters of the EU or the US. It has been decided from the top after a very strong political lobbying from corporate-lobby-groups. It has been decided by the governments and the civil servants of the EU and the US and not by the populations, they have never been asked. Also the parliaments on both sides have hardly been involved in this project. It is another example of the elitist way that these international agreements are made and this is something that has to change.

So what is important to realize is that corporate lobby-groups like the European Roundtable of Industrialists have a very long-term consistent plan for how to change the rules of the economy and how to change the policies of society in general to make them fit with their interests. And over the last few years they have been working very particularly to achieve these changes, e. g. push politicians to liberalize trade and investment, and to achieve changes in the rules of economy in all kind of issues. And they have achieved almost all of their goals over the last few years and they will continue to work to achieve their goals for the future. We have been talking before about the MAI which has been stopped by basically an international coalition of grass-roots groups from all over the world. Corporate-lobby-groups will be fighting back, they will try to get MAI-like rules for the global economy but in the framework of the World Trade Organization for example.

They have their plans ready for how to convince governments to start negotiating about an international investment-agreement in the World Trade Organization. And this is something that is very important to be awa-

re that there is a consistent push from industry organized very efficiently to achieve their political aims. NGOs and grass-roots organizations need to understand this and have their counter-strategies ready and find a way to fight back basically.

Acland: Capital cannot stand still. When it stands still it is losing money. Capital has to keep moving, it has to keep in motion. The folklore, the ideology of change is in service of the continuous motion of capital.



**Capital cannot stand still.
When it stands still
it is losing money.
Capital has to keep
moving, it has to keep
in motion.**

Charles R. Acland

**Selected reviews on “The global 500”:
Ausgewählte Berichte über “The global 500”:**

Christian Felber, *America's Ride on the Global Express*, Volksstimme Nr. 31, 5. 8. 1999

Stella Rollig, *Setting the Pace*, EIKON Nr. 29, 1999

Harald Fricke, *Betriebssystem Öffentlichkeit – Über die Arbeiten von Martin Krenn und Oliver Ressler*, Kulturrisse, August 1999

Patricia Grzonka, *Oliver Ressler: The global 500*, Springerin, Band V, Heft 3, 1999

Doris Krumpl, *Reiten auf der Apokalypse – Verschiedenste Modelle des Unterganges in Kremser Ausstellungen*, Der Standard, 21. 6. 1999

Ein Kommentar zu diesem Text erschien in: Der Standard, 26. 6. 1999

Beat Weber, *Kapitalismus_live*, TIV, zweiteilige zweistündige Fernsehsendung über “The global 500”, 10. 8. 1999 und 17. 8. 1999

Gerhard Frommel, “*Global 500*” von Oliver Ressler, Starship Nr. 3, 1999

W139TV, channel A1 Amsterdam, 24. 9. 1999

Bellissima TV Amsterdam, Salto channel A1, WWVF 1999, 29. 9. 1999

Lucette ter Borg, De Volkskrant, *Engagement is nu wetenschap*, 22. 9. 1999

Die neun Fotos der Fotoserie zu "The global 500" wurden im Themenschwerpunkt *Überdosis Kultur – Kunst, Kritik und Cultural Studies* von iz3w – blätter des informationszentrums 3. welt, Nr. 240, Sept. 1999, abgedruckt.

The project "The global 500" has been published in the following catalogues/Das Projekt "The global 500" ist in folgenden Katalogen dokumentiert:

17th World Wide Video Festival, Amsterdam, 1999
"Sozialmaschine Geld", O.K – Centrum für Gegenwartskunst, Berlin: Anabas Verlag, 1999

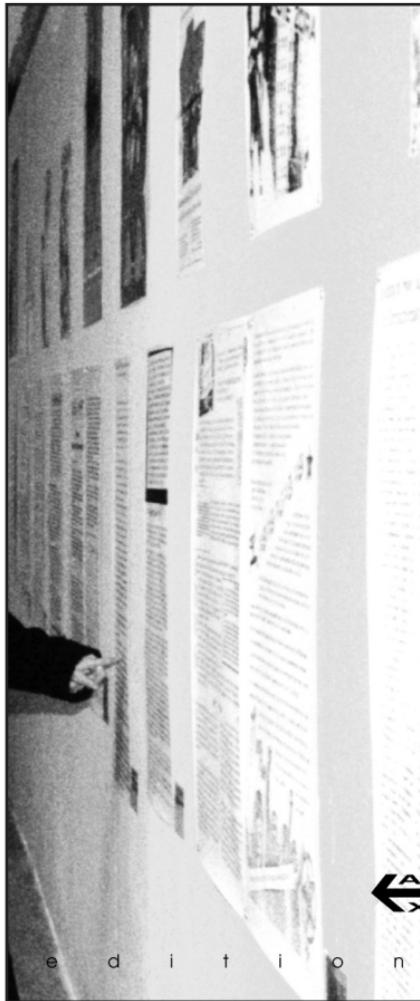
Galerie Stadtpark, Wichnerstrasse, 3500 Krems, Austria
T: +43/2732/84705, F: 81276, E: aeisatak@eunet.at

W139, Warmoesstraat 139, 1012 JB Amsterdam, Holland
T: +31/20/6229434, F: 6229434, E: w139@xs4all.nl

O.K – Center for Contemporary Art, Dametzstrasse 30,
4020 Linz, Austria, T: +43/732/784178-0, F: 775684,
E: ok-office@ok-centrum.at

Truck, 815 First Street SW, T2P1N3 Calgary, AB, Canada
T: +1/403/261-7702, F: 264-7737, E: truck@netway.ab.ca

Website “The global 500”:
http://thing.at/the_global_500



geGen-Welten

Widerstände gegen Gentechnologien

OLIVER RESSLER

Entgegen aller Beteuerungen seitens **Industrie und Wissenschaft** können sich gentechnisch veränderte Pflanzen im Ökosystem etablieren und es verändern. Gene können Organismen werden und kontrollierte Pflanzen- und Kultursorten kreuzen. Die freigesetzten Organismen und die neu konstruierten Gene können nicht wieder ins Labor zurückgeholt werden.



ACHTUNG - BIOLOGISCHE GEFAHR!



Dieses Projekt ist Teil des Projekts geGen-Welten: Widerstände gegen Gentechnologien und Gentechnik! Eine Ausstellung im Forum Freihafen Düsseldorf 1. - 20.10.1998, 10. - 11.10.1998 erweitert um die Ausstellung von Lisbeth N. Trallori: Widerstand adieu? – Zur Faszination der Biomacht. Eröffnung: Dienstag, 12. März 1998, 19.15 Uhr.

ART
EXIT

e d i t i o n s e l e n e

geGen-Welten bildete ein Gegengewicht zu den *Gen-Welten*-Ausstellungen, die von März 1998 bis Anfang 1999 in fünf Museen in Deutschland und der Schweiz stattgefunden haben.

Textbeiträge: Axel Köhler-Schnura/Coordination gegen BAYER-Gefahren: Stoppt BAYER-Gentechnik! • Renate Lorenz: Digital eingetragenes Warenzeichen. Gentechnikkritik & Kunst/Ausstellungsspraxis • Oliver Ressler: Gen-Welten • Lisbeth N. Trallori: Widerstand adieu? – Zur Faszination der Biomacht

Oliver Ressler, geGen-Welten: Widerstände gegen Gentechnologien, edition selene, Reihe ART EXIT, 84 S., zahlreiche Abb., 20 x 22,5 cm, ISBN: 3-85266-071-8, öS 198,-/DM 27,-

Michael Zinganel (Hg)

High Crime

Gesellschaft Kunst und Verbrechen

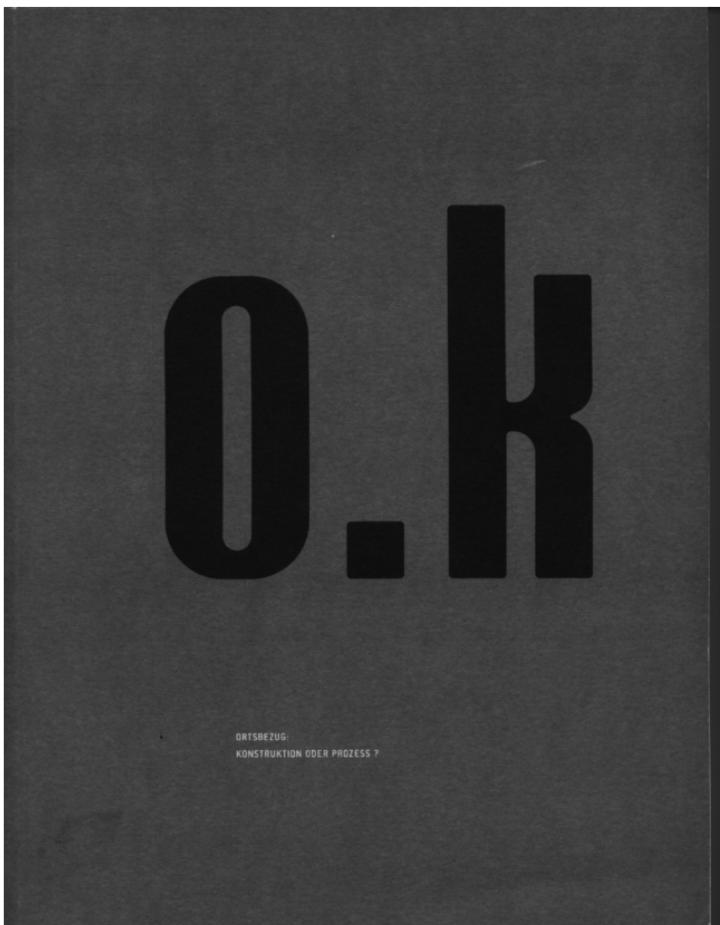


Künstler und Verbrecher haben ein ähnlich gespaltenes Verhältnis zu den Strukturen des Kapitalismus.

HIGH CRIME untersucht in Beispielen – **Elke Krystufek, Hans Makart, Schani Breitwieser, Karin Resetarits, Peter Weibel, Malcolm X u. a.** – die Wirkungsweise von Kunst, Verbrechen und ihrer medialen Vermittlung.

Mit Beiträgen von:

Sarah Hall, Matthias Dusini, Thomas Edlinger/Fritz Ostermayer, Mattl/Maderthaner, Irene Nierhaus, Jochen Becker, Oliver Marchart, Ruth Maurer, Michael Zinganel und Karl Marx (Freeware).



Es ist die Zeit der Revision eines Begriffes: Kunst im öffentlichen Raum. Allenthalben diskutieren, veranstalten, publizieren Kulturverwaltungen, Institutionen, Zeitschriften über Möglichkeiten und Grenzen des Handelns und Verhandelns von Kunst im öffentlichen Interesse. Dieses Buch bewegt sich auch in diesem Feld. Doch es beschreitet es von einer anderen Richtung her: Es ist ein Buch, das von KünstlerInnen angeregt, geplant und mitgeschrieben wurde. Es zeigt ihre Interessen, zeigt modellhaft das Netz von Bezügen, in denen künstlerische Arbeit steckt. Es sammelt Materialien einer Recherchereise in verschiedene Landschaften.

Autoren: Sabine Bitter, Lily van Ginneken, Barbara Holub, Achim Körneke, Oliver Marchart, Karl Heinz Maier, Otto Mittmannsgruber, Johann Moser, Klaus Ronneberger, Hedwig Saxenhuber, Georg Schöllhammer, Robert Schuster, Cathy Skene, Martin Strauß, Helmut Weber – Interviews mit Dan Graham, Miwon Kwon, Bart Lootsma, Berlage Institut, Mondrian Stichting, Holländisches Bautenministerium, museum in progress, u. a., herausgegeben von Hedwig Sa- xenhuber und Georg Schöllhammer.

Oliver Marchart

NEOISMUS



e d i t i o n s e l e n e

Die erste Geschichte und deutschsprachige Dokumentation der 1977 aus MailArt enstandenen Bewegung Neoismus, die sich durch eine „bis dahin unbekannte Identifizierung mit der Idee des Neuen, wie sie mit der Avantgarde assoziiert wird“ auszeichnete (John A. Walker: *Glossary of Art, Architecture and Design since 1945*).

Das Buch enthält Neuigkeiten und Replays zu:

Art Strike, Autonomous Astronauts, Black Mask, Class War, Dada Berlin, Futurismus, Fluxus, Historifizierung, Kanonisierung, K Foundation, Karen Eliot, Luther Blissett, MailArt, Monty Cantsin, Neoist Cultural Conspiracy, Neoist Alliance, Open Pop Stars, Plagiarismus, Psychogeographie, Punk, Retro-Avantgarden, Stiletto, Stewart Home, u. a.

From general concepts, the discussion arrives at concrete company activities and the meaning of the myth of world trade which excludes the so-called third world countries from profit, moving over to the problem of "corporate behavior" with which companies form political lobby groups, then leads into the altered use of language – the harmony-addicted word creations of neoliberalism – over to the necessary resistance to the total economizing of global capital.

(*Harald Fricke about the video "The global 500"*)

Von allgemeinen Begriffen kommt das Gespräch auf konkrete Firmenaktivitäten und die Bedeutung des Mythos vom Welthandel, der die sogenannten Dritte-Welt-Länder beim Gewinn ausklammert, geht dann über zum Problem des „corporate behavior“, mit dem Firmen politische Lobbygruppen bilden, und führt über einen veränderten Sprachgebrauch – die harmoniesüchtigen Wortschöpfungen des Neoliberalismus – zu einem notwendigen Widerstand gegen die totale Verwirtschaftlichung globalen Kapitals.

(*Harald Fricke über das Video „The global 500“*)



There are many voices that make clear that a regulation of the financial markets will only be possible through a crash which will also affect the wealthy industrial nations.

Birgit Mahnkopf

snowball system crash like recently, where single economies and therewith millions...