

AURA - MARKET - TRUTH

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Abstract

The relationship between the traditional notion of truth and the phenomenon of the aura has been significantly altered in contemporary times; this has been supported by the processes of rapid technological growth (general digitalization and virtualization) on one side, and globalization of the market on the other. Following an era of predominantly industrially produced artwork, which led to the gradual loss of the aura, or else, its vanishing from the sphere of cultural production, a time of new epistemological and ontological foundations is occurring; of ones that break connections to jurisdiction and the notion of truth, and that transform the very phenomenon of aura, by transferring it from the field of art into the domain of advertising and market branding of reality. This is how the desire of contemporary culture for the aura is being satisfied, primarily in the field of market communications, while truth is actually disappearing as a presumption, process and final destination of movement of dialogical streams of thought and creation of present time.

Keywords: *Aura, Market, Truth, Artwork, Cultural Production.*

Art and truth can be interpreted as particular realities, then, as parallel grounds that are in a certain correlation, interaction, dialectic relationship, etc., or, as if they present the same, levelled reality seen as multi layered in its totality. Art can, in different ways, incorporate the truth in itself (for instance, as intrinsic artistic or ontological value), and *vice versa*. Both of these notions, however, can also present subjective projections of certain metaphysical contents in which foundations are simply "plain names", as was believed by the nominalists, that is, as it is assumed by contemporary anti-essentialists. Sometimes, truth and reality are seen as one, while art, on the other hand, has been occasionally interpreted considering *factum* of reality; whether as *mimesis*, or as a certain mode of representation, or as one specially constructed artistic reality. However, art often does not present the agent of true values, neither in the ontological, or the epistemological sense of the

word, and truth is not perceived as an attribute of artistic creation. This means that current meanings of these fields can be revealed in an entirely different light.

These, usually complicated, mutual relations realized by ideas, notions and phenomenon of art, truth and reality between themselves, interpreted in the traditional corpus of philosophical opinions and adequate background theories, present something completely different from present meanings that these notions obtain in contextually changed configurations of their complex inner relations, while, it seems, a border notion of all interactions and dialectic intercessions present the aura¹ as defined by Benjamin, that is, its effects on the generation of the new ontological-epistemological paradigm that marked the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. In short, the so-called "information era", or else, the age of general media spectacularization and digitalization has influenced the radical change of the epistemological framework of explaining and understanding the world, as well as its reflections on the sphere of social relations and art, but it has also revolutionized traditional cosmology, by reducing it to the actual paradox of being in so-called "virtual reality"². And that actually means that cyber space today is interpreted as a parallel, or for some, the single (socially) relevant reality, which presumes a certain transformation and expansion of the very idea of cosmos, that is to its digital dimension, which threatens to completely supplant and replace previous conceptions of the real world.

The change we have been talking about seems to have occurred first in the domain of contemporary art creation, but transcended the borders of the art world, and entered all of reality. Since then, the differences between artificiality and reality have been questioned and

they have become flexible and extremely changeable. Thus, the previous ontological unity of being and truth, that is, of art and truth, has shifted so that they are finally separated, no longer able to coexist, which has resulted in the ontological hypostasis of either being, or the art world, without truth orientated presumptions and references. But, this distancing of reality and art from the instance of primal truth, no matter how we interpret it, has not implied their mutual distancing from each other – on the contrary. The concept of “virtual reality”, according to our understanding, pleads ideas of one ontology in which the artificial dialectically intertwines with the real, and *vice versa*, and persists because of the moment of aesthetic illusion, the common denominator of these two varieties, which gradually grows and multiplies to a sequence of its own various reflections and modalities. Aesthetic illusion, moreover, becomes the foundation of art, as well as our understanding of reality; the immaterial, through the means of mechanical reproduction run by contemporary techniques, is being translated into referent frameworks of the material world.

A characteristic example, that practically illustrates how previous rituals, which presented the base of auratic art together with the magical power of attraction, are today becoming the fragment of concrete installation or so-called “acoustic images” / presentations of different layers of reality, which through technical means of recording and reproducing the sound, in a series of characteristic media intercessions, create the aesthetic impression of a city ambiance, which is unique and unrepeatable as *interaction*, and which is determined by the technical possibilities of media used, is the project, “Glass Box – Intimate Rituals”, by director Branislava Stefanoviæ, realized at the 17th International symposium of composers in 2008 in Belgrade.³ This work demonstrates already through its structure the evident loss of the aura, or else, its transformation in the transparent glass box universe of the objected (glass as symbolic leash for Benjamin-like obsessions with the transparent constructional material), which metaphorically presents the

border of reality, inner and outer, the space and non-space, a ritual and its re-shaping through media in a multiplied, technologically coded, but personal impression of modalities of different “realities” within the reality.

This change in the sphere of art practice was, much earlier, prepared by the “cultural industry”, which through its actions rescinded the concept of autonomous art, leading to the gradual disappearance of the entire “cultural scene”⁴, as it was known then, together with its specifically performed artistic derivatives. It might also be noted that the interpretation of the “cultural industry” syntagm, in the way it was defined by Adorno and Horkheimer in the middle of the 20th century, turns more towards questions linked not as much to interpretations of art as autonomous field of human action, as to the treatment of art in the sense of a certain social fact – perceived either in the shape of market fetishism or the continuous attitude of resistance – as Adorno thoroughly elaborated in his incompleated *Aesthetic Theory*.⁵ “Undeniable is that art, before the emancipation of subjects, was, in a certain sense, in the most direct way, a social appearance, more than it became later. Its autonomy, independence in relation to the society, was a function of civil consciousness of freedom that again from its side grew together with the social structure. Before this consciousness took shape, art was – truth is, by itself – in opposition to social reign and its extensions within the way of living, but it was not that for itself.”⁶

In that sense of the word, it was necessary to transform not only the sphere of art itself, but also its social effects, in order for art to, as its own truth but at the same time as mimetic reflex of actual social relations, grow from its previous cult status according to itself, and through dialectic loss of aura, which has been gradually moving towards other domains of social activities. In this way Benjamin’s aura, as quality of originality and unrepeatability of magical objects of nature as well as of art in the era of its mechanical reproducibility, gains completely different functions. Its transferral from natural cosmology and the world of traditional art into

the field of market communications, has been enabled by industrial production of cultural activities and creativity (cultural and creative industries), which resulted in standardization of a copy, instead of an original – whether it is about natural or artistic modes of expression.

Adorno identified the process of distancing from art's being in contemporary time with mechanisms of art's alienation from itself (*Entkunstung*), which is actually similar to processes of the loss of aura of art work through mechanical production of its numberless copies. Unfortunately, in most cases, contemporary art has not, it seems, developed in the direction of the kind of socialization that would, as a result of the critical distance to dissonant reality of class struggles and inequality, provide a change of socio-economical conditions of its, and every other mode of production. By sacrificing its aura and by that also its autonomy, qualification and unrepeatability of artistic practice, it (art) has not reached the possibility, even of subjective, and least of all objective change of existing socio-economical constellations and relations. It has, however, certainly acted to cause certain changes, of which the basic quantifier has been presented as the rapid scientific-technological growth, that is, the uncontrolled expansion of the market.

Still, according to some opinions, despite the distancing of its primal nature, the auratic arts have not (yet) lost the battle in relation to the technological momentum of its self-transforming – on the contrary. In the lecture named "Art in the Time of Reproductive Reality" Dragan Aeloviæ introduces the attitude that the aura is "something that wraps the art piece, which makes its core, and which, as it is, determines it. Although neither a presentation itself, nor an artistic text, the aura becomes the trustworthy condition of the work's identity as such. Since the aura can not be reproduced (Benjamin), one art piece is always an original."⁷ However, if the aura is a constituent, and a sign of recognition of the art field and its particular difference in relation to the rest of the world, a situation could be imagined in which, by means of *Entkunstung*, art is separated from its aura. By

this loss, art remains art, while the decay of the work's aura does not have to mean its final and complete loss. Following this thought, it could be assumed that aura does not fully vanish from reality, as a previously important mark of art, but that it has been transferred to different fields of action.

The process of stripping art of aura began, as we saw, in the domain of cultural industry, that is, the entertainment industry, so that it would, after the first phase of the disappearance of the auratic phenomenon from the art world, be intrinsically connected with the era of complete digitalization. Rheingold, in his interpretations of the appearance of virtual space, rightly focuses on the history of the first video games, that is, on the effects of so-called "Sensorama". This was a type of machine that simulated a motor drive, and in that way it presented a harbinger of appearance of digital technology, or else, the computer industry of the present time.⁸ In this case, as well as in many later on, technical reproduction is replaced by a trend of global computerization, that is, digitalization, which was first implemented within spheres of photography and film⁹, and then in the majority of other artistic media of the 20th century.

Parallel to these aesthetic processes, which are recognized as symptoms of the process of the disappearance of aura in art, technology, as a formal agent of various changes accomplished within the field of economy and social relations of contemporary times, rapidly moves towards an ideal of the information (post-industrial) society that presents not only a utopia, but the first-class ideological project of global development trends at the turn of the century. Aesthetics of technology also represent that realistic force that should radically perform an upheaval by annihilating not only work and sexuality as old phenomena of one social-productive practice, which rose out of previous value paradigms, but the very art itself, as well as all other sorts of sociability that are not (liberal)market orientated, that is, media based. Considering the fundamental role of science and technology in the attempt of revolutionizing the world towards new values, which is, on one side,

supported somewhat uncritically by the followers of futurism and the notion of progress, while, on the other side, is more or less radically challenged by its various critics, the question posed addresses the relevance of truth for valorization of the essence of these re-valuing processes.

"Supporters of the information society as a new historical reality", as said by Mirko Miletić in his book *Resetting reality*, "usually, within a functionalist-systematic or technocentric oriented cybernetic-information science framework, do not value the practical results of scientific-technological revolution, but notice them as a given circumstance in social life, and attempt to foresee what can be expected in the future."¹⁰ On the contrary, anthropologically based, neo-marxist, and other criticisms directed against revolutionary technological changes dated from the end of 20th and the beginning of 21st century, aim at the serious evolution of social, as well as historical consequences of scientific-technological-communicational mind expansion, and disadvantage of other fields of human activities. They articulate their own reactions not only in the direction of expressing doubt, that is, a belief that new communicational technologies do not always lead towards humanity well-being, but they often work on destruction of many present valuing indicators, and they also open absent questions of humanity crises, as well as entire, until now known, sphere of sociality. At first, there was a neo-ludistic¹¹ riot of workers and many syndicate organizations against the general cybernation of work processes that led to the necessary reduction of the human work force and mass proletariat job losses. With the time, it grew into a strategically articulated resistance to these changes, which are dialectically reflected in the situation, in which, analogically to the present status of technology, art, thought as *techne*, once was.

Still, the gradual disappearance of the aura from the domain of art creation and the process of reception does not mean, as considered by some theoreticians of advertising, that this phenomenon has completely vanished from the

historical stage. In becoming commodified, contemporary art appears to lend its aura to market products. This process is primarily supported by the industrial technology of advertising communications. By taking over the expressive means of applied arts, as well as industrial productive matrices in almost equal measures, the sphere of advertising communications is becoming the foundation for transferring auratic characteristics from works of art to everyday consumer products, in a movement from the space of aesthetic reception to pure consumption. The so-called creative industries combine all these processes in a unique action, sorting advertising and media communications in the same category as many works, processes and actions of contemporary art. Therefore, the actual auraticization processes of market products today, usually present themselves as the ascribing of the aura, through *advertising*, to the objects for everyday usage, or else, consumption.

However, it is not as simple as it may seem at first glance. Magical characteristics of art objects and rituals connected to them are by now only emanated by those commodities that possess a privileged status within the consumer market. For example, various monopolists and multinational corporations, such as *Coca-Cola*, invest a large part of their capital into advertising communications instead of the production of commodities, and, in this way, create brands and super-brands, which represent far more than the plain goods' trademark. Actually, the magical power of attraction of contemporary brands transforms the production itself into a mass consumption, but not as much of the commodities as of the auratic characteristics of brands that circulate throughout the global market. Contemporary brandomania is not, therefore, anything else than a massive manifestation of a return, that is, a desire for the aura as such.¹²

Parallel to this, present artistic tendencies have developed in two separate directions: one that has noticed a so-called retro-movement, that is, the search for auratic art through the use of archaic creative technologies (for instance,

calligraphy and characteristic return of the hand usage, etc.), and another that develops by following the newest technical-technological accomplishments, and moves towards a digital and multimedia concept of contemporary art creation. The context of the creative work and its reception has, however, in relation to previous eras, mostly changed and is determined by the invisible processes of the decay of aura. In both of the above options, the aura of the art work presents the crucial place of fracture in interpreting contemporary art when considered within different frames of reference – historical, auratic, digital or aesthetic.

At the same time, a new ontology, epistemology and aesthetics based on computer databases are being generated from this creative resource, ones that are based on digital "manipulation", as is clearly stated in the title of the text "The Work of Art in the Age of Digital Manipulation".¹³ Here, the term "manipulation" has an explicit political dimension, as suggested by Benjamin in his interpretations of the foundations of technical reproduction. By rejecting that historical context of the developments and receptions of works of art, which aura presumes, he translates aesthetics into the codes of actual political practice. From here comes also the reversible thesis on the politicization of (art) aesthetics, that is, the aestheticization of politics. Later in the article on digital manipulation it is stated that contrary to previous technological acts of mechanical reproduction, the change which took place within the frame of contemporary digital art, is not of key importance for understanding the new status of art work in relation to aura, but is, in fact, the very media in which it happened.

Firstly and most importantly, the novelty of art work created in a digital form is not its auratic, but a specific manipulation of that information, gathered in certain databases, which is seen as the core value of the piece. "In the time of a digital re-combination, the value of an object depends (...) upon its openness to manipulation".¹⁴ The contemporary notion of "beauty", linked to the user's manipulated databases, is no longer "located" within the

static interpretation of the spectator, but rather in the dynamics of founding the various interactions within the (computer) given frameworks or fields of meaning¹⁵, which brings us back to the visual-acoustic installations of Branislava Stefanoviæ's Glass Box.

According to all this, the difference between installations performed in real space (visual, acoustic, urban, personal, etc.), and the ones realized in the virtual dimension of reality, is in its core the one of media, although their aesthetic conceptions based upon notions of installation and interaction are very similar. To put it more precisely, technical reproduction and digital manipulation of art work differ not so much because of the notions, as contextually, that is, because of the type of media. Reproductions are always already reproductions of something, situated in a real historical time, while the ontology based upon databases is, by nature, a virtual one. Out of this, of course, comes one new concept of culture – as of one totally digitalized universe – but not only of culture, but of the world of nature, seen in the context of the constant growth of virtual surroundings.

As it is shown, this new ontology, not only of art but also of the world of culture and nature, does not preserve the relation with truth as a basic value of artistic, cultural, social and natural appearances. Regardless of its post-historical character¹⁶, it still operates with certain auratic characteristics, relics of previous times. Digital series of data, as suggested by de Mul in the following text about art work in the era of digital manipulation, can present a sort of "auratic copy" of historically vanished appearances, like dinosaurs for instance, which are now present in the drastically changed context of one total digital environment. Still, neither these, nor reproductive copies of art works from previous eras, are less political, since, generally speaking, political as well as social and economic power in the contemporary world is above all based on information manipulativity.¹⁷

In contrast to Benjamin's understanding of the dialectics of film images that act at the level of political unconsciousness in the sense of social critics, here, we are talking about an intentional

(conscious) media manipulativity, which collides with the fundamental principle of (mass)media ethics, and that is, again, truth. Because information manipulativity in the domain of artistic creation soon spread, and was later generalized to the field of action of mass and new media, by interrupting the previous relations with truth, as in metaphysical as well as in an empirical domain of the notion. Mass and new media, operating with data as self-referent information structures – which represent reality by itself and for itself – create a digital reality to which the truth is not necessarily a requirement for existence, nor a criteria of value of any kind: facts that are themselves in digital form become media facts, through which their ethical dimension, as well as the auratic one, has been lost, leaving the space for politics to be the technique of media manipulation.

It is obvious that contemporary media, instead of delivering the truth (*Truth telling*)¹⁸ have taken onto themselves the task of telling stories (*Storytelling*) – which is, as is known, the *credo* of advertising today – while their mythical base presents, at the same time, political answer/accommodation to the requests of the contemporary market, as well as the entire concept of new socialibility. And that same mythical base is founded on the fact that media today takes on the role of story teller, that is, the interpreter of events in a certain culture, in the same way that it was done in the era of oral communication and the domination of cultural patterns by important tribe members, who took on themselves the responsibility of interpreting facts and events from the “outside world” for all the other members of the community.¹⁹

A digital copy is, therefore, a media interpretation of the world of culture in its becoming, which is, at the same time, the very medium of general cultural development in the contemporary world. The auratics of the copy (in absence of original) are its mythic base, but without any truthful foresight; the story is an interpretation of an interpretation, the one that is constitutive for reality itself. Therefore, it is, although a-historical, political in the sense of

establishing different media discourses and their inner relations.

Novum brought by this sort of reproduction, and in relation to the previous mechanical copy, is concerned with digital data storage, which includes among other things, their permanence, or else, the chance to erase it is at its minimum: “This possibility (*of reproduction – added by D.V.*) is not limited only to the Internet; it presents the characteristic of computer and information technology in general. Electronic information exists in a form in which it is easy to copy it, and the process of reproduction does not lead to the loss of value: copied data or software can be used without any problems. Further more, there is no need for evidence of data or software having been copied.”²⁰ Here, we are discussing that digital reproduction does not damage the basic information value of the copy, although this does not mean that other values are not lost. Potential permanence of a copy diametrically opposes to the auratic dialectics of *here* and *now*, as defined by Benjamin: “Frozen images” are not the same as permanent copies of the “original”, which is still the one only in a conventional sense of the word. The shortage of originals, as they were defined in the past, determines, since the primarily auratic does not exist, that it is in a certain way still being constructed.

Manipulation of digital content is, therefore, not only the technique of their shaping in databases, and then of systematic storage; it is a construction, or else a reconstruction of, at first, a non-existent aura, and therefore it presents a politically defined project of total reality aestheticization. Actually, digital manipulativity is here equalised with processes of virtualization and aestheticization of reality, which evidently manifests another general, political dimension of this process. An unerasable copy can be supervised, and that can be done permanently, whether we are dealing with an information, act, transaction or event that has been privately or publicly reproduced. Considering the data erasing, an effort needs to be made for it to happen, which is also valid for the auratic field of copy. And while the magic power of attraction of a copy itself is based on its mythical-auratic

backup, whose effectiveness is of a market, that is, a political nature, the supervising itself, by participating in the reproduction of the auratic, means a reflection of these processes and their further politicization.

This leads to the conclusion that the aura could also be copied, that is, produced, by standardized market measures of technologically developed communities. Branding in the sphere of art and culture is similar to processes that are present in a domain of circulation of other commodities and favours and, finally of the man whose "charisma", as well as his influence on the masses is, in contemporary market conditions, also being media reproduced. Created in this way, the aura of the art work, person or event, is definitely different from the previously identified auratic phenomenon, associated with the world of nature or art. What divides them, that is, what differentiates them, does not depend on the works themselves, in the ontic sense of the notion, but on the actual ontology of media, which has overruled traditional ontology that we have been used to for millenniums.

There from comes this new cognitive scene, developed on the presumptions of one media ontology that does not take truth as a marker of reality, but instead strategically generated varieties of media reality, which emanate nothing other than auraticity as such. Because the total contextual field of almost all possible social events and global flows of activities today, adds up, as it seems, to the complex concept of information society. In the book *Media Unlimited* it is said that "*Information society glows with a positive aura*"²¹, and thus this basic auraticity further on colours all individual events that happen to be there. And that is exactly the meaning of the catchword - *being with media*, or else, existing in symbiotic relation to it. Aura presents a general metaphysical horizon for any action, including those that take place within art creation and reception.

The aura is thus, something that surrounds everything that carries individual marks in media and in the art world today. It is a presumption of a difference within that world, and is

something almost realistic, although also equally virtual by its character. As primarily metaphysical, it is not noticeable by senses, but its presence is by routine determined by the new, digital technology of media reproducibility. Its dialectics are connected with politics as (accelerated) consumption of images, as well as with magic, that is, its aesthetic characteristics, in a sense of power of attraction and imagination. In the world without truth, the only thing left is the assumption of differences - apparent and real, aesthetic and political, magical and market at the same time. This aura is self applied and in an empirical sense it unconditionally follows the movement of the global market, that is, it is determined by an expansion of mass media and new technologies. Also, it is, in relation to the previous eras of its appearances, shorted to the level of a hero from Disney's workshops, growing under the "mark of Mickey Mouse & co" in one, Baudrillard-like described, total Disneyland or an invisible "electronic gulag".

The process of art work aura loss as Benjamin identified it, in the light of new media technologies, is actually illusionary. True, although it is not completely gone, the aura has been importantly transformed. The lack of originality has determined the situation in which each digital copy simulates the missing original, and, along with that, presents the possibility of "auratic" difference in relation to some other copy. But, its "here" and "now" are not the same "truth" and authenticity of art work, they seemed some time ago. Thus, auratic dialectics of art work, that take place in the field of contemporary media, do not carry any opportunities for criticism, nor an inner fraction (which would eventually refer to social antagonisms, while anticipating the spirit of a change) because it does not preserve, not even in traces, a relation to truth, no matter how we define it. And since even truth itself, as the lost value of the information era, does not participate in the presence of aesthetics, that is, the auratic impression of reality, it is the digital manipulation that adopted the sphere of auraticity as a domain for realization of market and vulgarly-political values.

Endnotes

1. Benjamin's "blurred" but certainly very inspiring notion of the "aura" served as an initiative for various discussions led and still existing in the domain of contemporary aesthetics, art philosophy, as well as other theories of art and media; related to questions of traditional notions of art and its truth transformation in a direction linked to the development of new art and information technologies. Auraticity, or uniqueness and unrepeatability of art work original, its here and now, or else, concrete spatial-time coordinates in which it, together with its own history, appears as some sort of cult object, gradually vanishes and is turned towards new possibilities brought by the technique of eternal copying of art products. "That which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art" says Benjamin. Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, in *Essays*, Nolit, Beograd, 1974. p. 119.
2. See: Ismail Tunali, "New Epistemological Meaning of the World and its Reflection on Art", in: *Aesthetics Bridging Cultures*, XVII. Congress of Aesthetics, Congress Book 1, SANART, Ankara, 2008, p. 460.
3. See the catalogue of the 17th International symposium of composers, under the name "New Miniatures", held in Belgrade, November 19-25, 2008, p. 91.
4. Ibid. p. 461.
5. See: Theodor W. Adorno "A Double Character of Art: Fait Social and Autonomy; Fetish Character of Art" in *Aesthetic Theory*, Nolit, Beograd, 1979, p. 367-373.
6. Ibid. p. 367.
7. The quotation has been taken from the text by Dragan Ćaloviæ, from the annual scientific gathering of Serbian Aesthetic society, based on the theme: *Art and Truth*, and under the title "Art in the Time of Reproductive Reality" that has been presented at the Center for Study in Cultural Development of Serbia, at December 18, 2008.
8. See: Howard Rheingold, *Virtual Reality*, Summit Books, New York, 1991, p. 50.
9. Here, according to Benjamin's opinion, starts the era of the decay of aura, as a result of art moving towards its industrial phase, which is most effectively illustrated by mass media, such are photography and film.
10. Mirko Miletia, *Resetovanje stvarnosti*, Protocol, Novi Sad, 2008, p. 27.
11. Ibid. p. 31.
12. For more details see: Divna Vuksanović, "Medijske egzistencije: postindividualizam i imaginacija", *Filozofija medija: Ontologija, estetika, kritika*, Institute for Theatre, Film, Radio and Television, Faculty of Drama Arts in Belgrade - Ćigoja, Beograd, 2007, p. 60-61.
13. Compare: Jos de Mul, "The Work of Art in the Age of Digital Mammipulation", in: *Aesthetics Bridging Cultures*, XVII, Congress of Aesthetics, Congress Book 1, SANART, Ankara, 2008, p. 228 and 229.
14. Ibid. p. 230.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. See: Ibid. p. 231.
18. This was in the beginning the postulate of journalism and media ethics, in both printed and electronic media.
19. See: "The Storyteller", in: *Media Ethics*, Fifth Edition (Cliford G. Christians, Mark Fackler, Kim B. Rotzoll, Kathy Brittain McKee), Longman, USA, 1998, p. 64.
20. Debra J. Jhonson, "Moguænost reprodukcije", in: *Kompjuterska etika* (the third edition), Službeni glasnik, Beograd, 2006, p. 162.
21. Todd Gitlin, *Media Unlimited: How the Torrent of Images and Sounds Owerwhelms Our Lives*, Metropolitan Books, New York, 2001, p. 5.