

## Introduction

The theoretical position of this thesis considers mainly my interest in the results of short periods of residence in foreign countries and cultures. Questioning artistic identity, I will focus on some characteristics which influence some artistic prototypes, and hence of the contemporary art-making. I want to emphasize on the contradictions of different experiences, which influence the life of the contemporary artist/researcher/traveler, created through such circumstances. Therefore, I will indicate a way of how an "outsider" tries to create common ground, or, interact with public space, which becomes his environment. I will give further references to the contemporary language of image representation, which creates a universal, nomadic code of understanding. I will juxtapose and compare the virtual space and the physical place, threading them together, within the context of contemporary, spatial, and international politics.

I will present here my topic taking the position of a specific kind of *outsider* within a social structure and community. I will approach the topic from this point of view, as experienced also through personal anxieties, both existential and materialistic. Being on the move since some years, changing environments constantly, I want to present some thoughts I developed throughout this time. I also see this as a sequel to my previous thesis, "The transformation of the artistic identity in its environmental diversities", a critical reflection on Miwon Kwon's "One Place after Another, Site-Specific Art and locational identity". In this critical position I presented the "RADAR Project-Connecting Europe" as a paradigm. <sup>1</sup>

I will point out some of the areas of interest for my exploration: 1. The passage to post-modernity, 2. Individuality, and subjectivity, 3. Language, image, code and symbolism, as expressed in advertising, 4. Networking, and communication, 5. Art and politics.

In my opinion, not only these topics are directly connected to each other, but also they blend and mingle together. I will focus and give references to specific points representing the subjects of employment, travelling, and education.

I set myself in a place in which all of these things are happening. Positioning myself on a district, I understand I am becoming a member of a global city (Athens, Chicago, Berlin, Venice, Weimar). How is this global city represented and to whom? According to Saskia Sassen "*The global city is a border zone where old spatialities and temporalities of the national and the new ones of the global digital age get engaged*". <sup>2</sup>

Which roles do institutions, academies, businesses & corporations, and finally, networks & communication systems play in it? To whom, does this *global city* belong? What is the emotional contact created between members of international cultures?

Second, I question what is tourism but an industry for creating cultural economic capital? Does tourism stand as a cultural value? Is tourism an educational practice? What is the role of the international artist in connection to all of these points? Most importantly, how does visual representation function as artistic means of communication and interaction in public space? Is it all influenced by the new global economy, or, does it all happen for the sake of humanity? Where does the notion of democracy stand in between all these factors? Though I am not able to answer to these questions representing universal problems, I will at least try to present some of their important aspects.

Seeing the theme from all of these various perspectives, my first aim was to approach the specifics of a local, social and cultural structure, broadening my artistic point of view. I started on thinking about the multiplicity of my subject. I wondered how I should point out some of the perplexities of human behavior, focusing on the exception of a person who functions as a catalyst within a social structure, and finally pointing on the idea of how to formulate public space. The issue is of how I connect art with politics & space? How should I plan a good strategy to realize this action?

I built up a strategy of complexes for a micro-macro perspective, to grasp the totality of my surrounding. Practically I reduced this strategy to a tactic of practice in everyday life, within the form of an art project.

<sup>1</sup> For analytical information about the "RADAR Project-Connecting Europe" go to: [www.radarlab.net](http://www.radarlab.net)

<sup>2</sup> *The Global City: The De-nationalizing of Time and Space*, p. 27, Saskia Sassen, *Internationalism and Other, Modernist Myths*, Thesis, Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Bauhaus-Universitaet Weimar, (2000) Heft 4/5.