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PRACA DOKTORSKA

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DIAPAUZA

**PRACA DOKTORSKA
AKADEMIA SZTUK PIĘKNYCH
IM. JANA MATEJKI W KRAKOWIE**

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DIAPAUSE

STRESZCZENIE PRACY DOKTORSKIEJ W JĘZYKU ANGIELSKIM

DIAPAUSE

Notion

Diapause is the time of delayed ontogenetic development, usually triggered by external factors and directed internally – in a hormonal or neurohormonal manner. Organisms in a period of dormancy may exhibit a greater than usual resistance to adverse external conditions. It is a period of concealed life used by organisms in environments that undergo major changes in the living conditions or due to metamorphosis.

All organisms possess mechanisms of tolerance or avoidance of difficult living conditions. However, if the environmental factors act too aggressively on the organism, and it is not possible for it to migrate, the only means of survival is to generate resting forms.

Resistance to external conditions and diapause are simultaneously occurring phenomena, but they do not depend on each other. Not always are organisms in a resting form more resistant than the active ones. A major role is played by the reduced metabolic rate itself.

Dormant forms are mainly characterised by resistance to the influence of extreme physical factors, such as dryness, high and low temperatures, and high salinity.

Process

The notion of *diapause* as a certain process of change was the point of reference in my many months' work. Initially, this term associated only with the domains of biology and physiology was treated in a more comprehensive manner. Diapause became a term describing a quite characteristic human mental and physical condition. I treat diapause as a transient form, a process, a time of stopping, hesitation, and a decisive moment. Crucial become all the limits and barriers – physical, mental, geographical, memory, oblivion, fear, juxtapositions of opposites, contrasts, characters as well as broadening the spectrum in which the environment is felt and perceived.

The basic intention that I had at the beginning of work was an attempt to specify more precisely the condition that I wanted to discuss. Crossing the limits, stagnation, change as well as all the related psychological,

philosophical, medical, artistic and cultural aspects constitute an incredibly wide range of issues. Therefore, I have determined several fundamental assumptions that constitute the basis of my study:

> diapause as a moment in development – the past, memory, and oblivion

> diapause as a barrier or separation from the world – mental obstacles – fear as a basic condition connected with stagnation or with change – a limiting or motivating factor – unspecified anxiety, fear and time, alarm signals, fear associated with integration – physical obstacles – maladjustment of an organism to given conditions

> diapause as a *cocoon*, a type of filter through which we see, the way we see also in art, how we are perceived by others, and how we see ourselves

> diapause, concealed life – a moment of stopping, retaining a certain type of privacy, one's own way of seeing the world, reading it, and thinking.

> stagnation and change in my own creative work

In my opinion, diapause is a time of metamorphosis. It is a transitional period – an important one because it is based on that which has been experienced so far (consciously or subconsciously). *Concealed life* is a zone unavailable to all. It is the sphere of emotions, dreams, and secrets. It is the world that we do not want to or cannot disclose. It concerns a certain type of privacy as your own manner of interpreting the reality and thinking. This transitional moment may be both motivating and it may constitute a barrier or resistance. Crucial here becomes the motif of a cocoon as a feeble protective layer constituting a connection or barrier between the two worlds. It is a type of filter or diaphragm.

Beginnings

The starting point for commencing work on the above topic was fear. To realise the great extent to which this feeling restricts and hinders us was a driving force that initiated an avalanche of events. Considering fear as a necessary alarm signal that naturally appears in the human psyche engendered the will to change and understand limit situations.

Change has become a crucial element of my work – in the perception of the world, way of living, fulfilment of plans, and in creating graphic art. Travelling and crossing my own limits has become the foundation of my actions. In implementing the project, important were all critical events and limit situations as moments of experiencing the self as well as of reflecting on the purposefulness of placing myself in such circumstances.

Also vital for my activities was the memory trace, the trace *in the head*. Memory. Oblivion. Repression from the mind. Recollection. Memory as an evolving form, an image that transforms and eventually fades away. It is also often a record of unwanted situations or events that have been rejected.

ARTISTIC WORK

The artistic part is the result of searching, travelling, wandering about, resuming attempts and returning in work and imagination to specific phenomena, reflections, worlds, and images. The human being is in the centre of attention, even though he or she is not present in most graphic works. I am particularly interested in the human being in moments of breaking down, waiting, being entrapped as well as the various ways in which this situation may be used to achieve self-development or to surrender.

My work evolved and changed from the very beginning. From the interpretation of the topic itself to the execution. In previous works, I relied mainly on images and stories heard of or known only from films or books. In the doctoral project, I decided for the first time that my actions would be based, above all, on my own experience. I attempted to expand the spectrum of my own experiences and place myself in unknown situations which often cause fear, and to go beyond the comfort zone. Some of my experiences became a starting point for expanding a given topic and searching for different variants, situations, and possibilities.

Description of work on the doctoral thesis

The topic of the doctoral thesis changed multiple times. It initially resulted from fascination with maps, charts, and images from Street View and Google Maps. Another step were references to childhood, and consequently, a juxtaposition of two completely opposite worlds. The world of botany and the closed, confined, and grey world of blocks of flats in Nowa Huta.

At this point, crucial began to be memory, oblivion as well as transitional and decisive situations. In such a way, the topic became more precise and that which is on the edge became the most important in my reflections – that which is uncertain and undecided. Suddenly, there emerged a fascination with the mountains, high-mountain sports, and travel.

The first trip was to Scotland to an artist residency. Then, an opportunity appeared to travel to Romania for a year-and-a-half scholarship. This is how I began to travel to Serbia, Italy, Norway, China, the Czech Republic, Iceland... The approach to work and the selected topic changed, and the very process of creating and travelling became more important than the final result.

Artistic work

A small fragment of reality becomes our world. Actually, it is just one point that we tame. This *minimal* area is everything for us and we demarcate comfort zones in it. We can explain many phenomena; we understand a lot and feel comfortable. We function within a given point most of our life, we pave ways, manners of thinking, and we get to know people. We move in a well-known area. It is familiar in terms of culture, conduct, stereotypes, nature, language, and climate. What will happen in the moment when all this disappears and when, of our own volition, we go beyond the comfort zone and the mental scheme?

I commenced work on the doctoral thesis not having the slightest idea what the final result would be. The process became the most important part of the project. The first principle was to abandon the well-known format and,

at the same time, my favourite ways of performing activities in graphic art. All that was known to me was the mere climate and intention. A kind of premonition.

I constructed images on an on-going basis, often changing that which emerged. I maintained approximately sixty graphic works at the same time. Some, halted and indecisive, acquired their final shape upon the lapse of several or even a dozen or so months after they had been initiated. Some of them were abandoned.

Of great importance to me during work was the change of myself, of my manner of seeing and perceiving the environment. It became important to understand my own behaviour and psyche. To some degree, I attempted to leave the familiar world. I often returned to activities on graphic works as a person thinking somewhat differently and perceiving a given situation in a completely different way.

The artistic work is composed of a cycle of graphic works made in intaglio printing techniques. It may be divided into four mutually complementary parts.

I.

The first part is composed of eight large-format graphic works. The prints, even though they refer to specific places, are not illustrations. They are only supposed to provide an impulse, direct the course of thought as well as conjure up images, moods, and construct visions.

1. *Greenhouse*, 100/140 cm, etching, aquatint, 2016
2. *Window*, 100/140 cm, aquatint, 2015
3. *Scotland*, 100/140 cm, etching, aquatint, 2016
4. *Norway*, 100/140 cm, etching, aquatint, 2016
5. *Marocco*, 100/140 cm, etching, aquatint, 2016
6. *Garden*, 100/140 cm, etching, aquatint, 2015
7. *Dolomites*, 140/100 cm, etching, aquatint, 2015
8. *Transition*, 140/300 cm, akwatinta, 2016

II.

The second part is much more synthetic, simple, and limited to the most important elements. The works are supposed to act as remembered scenes, yet not referring to a specific place; however, by being anchored in an event, they serve as the reason to create new structures.

1. *Sandstorm*, 60/72 cm, etching, aquatint, 2016
2. *Game*, 60/72 cm, aquatint, 2016
3. *Flashing lights*, 60/72 cm, aquatint, 2016
4. *Atlas mountains*, 60/72 cm, aquatint, soft varnish, 2016
5. *Impulse*, 60/72 cm, aquatint, 2016
6. *Second level*, 60/72 cm, akwatinta, 2016
7. *Disruption*, 60/72 cm, akwaforta, 2016

III.

The third part is a set of six colour prints that originated from two trips to Norway.

1. *Lake*, 54/70 cm, etching, aquatint, 2015
2. *Island Seiland*, 39/54 cm etching, aquatint, 2016
3. *Norwegian lake*, 19,5/27 cm, aquatint, 2016
4. *Empty lake*, 39/54 cm, etching, aquatint, 2016
5. *Black lake*, 39/54 cm aquatint, soft varnish, 2015
6. *White lake*, 39/54 cm, etching, 2016

IV.

A part of small graphic works created in the meantime. These *meantimes* constitute the most direct translation of thoughts, feelings and emotions that appeared during work. This is something emerging *in-between*, the most freely and naturally. They become a very crucial moment, a stimulus to undertake further projects or to record a given state of mind. Something that simply happens. The selected prints relate to concrete stories. They are a record of a state of consciousness, something that dwells and triggers associations. It is a fragment of a game or labyrinth. It is also a selection of places, people, events, and thoughts.

1. *Between*, 19,5/27 cm, etching, aquatint, 2016
2. *Black*, 19,5/27 cm, etching, aquatint, 2016
3. *Line*, 19,5/27 cm, aquatint, 2016
4. *Magma*, 19,5/27 cm, aquatint, 2016
5. *Labirynt*, 19,5/27 cm, etching, 2016
6. *Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes*, 19,5/27 cm, aquatint, 2016
7. *Tetris*, 19,5/27 cm, etching, aquatint, 2016
8. *Splash*, 19,5/27 cm, etching, aquatint, 2016
9. *Romania hitchhiking*, 19,5/27 cm, etching, aquatint 2016
10. *China*, 19,5/27 cm, aquatint, 2016
11. *Dance*, 19,5/27 cmaqatint, 2016
12. *Frozen Lake in Trondheim*, 19,5/27 cm, etching, aquatint, 2016