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"How are your finances doing?"

This is the slogan of a new television commercial firing questions of fiscal policy straight into our lives. Considering the fact that the division of the money markets and its development has been the prime mover of human history for the past 2000 years, there is nothing new about these ideas. Money talks at the regional and state levels of power, thus shaping our identity historically and in the present. Our finances have long since had an organic body organizing our attention and laying down norms for it.

This is the thematic starting point of Anna Jermolaewa's work 3 min <berlebensversuche (3-minute Survival Attempt). Our only objective is to survive. It was in these terms that Vilém Flusser described our present way of life already in the early 1990s. Questions of life and death were resolved through medical progress, the technological reorganization of working life into a sector on a par with leisure, and global political interests. This also appears to be the policy of the state, which gives equal weight to decisions concerning the economy and domestic and foreign policy which are no longer dependent on the financing policies of the global markets in stocks and shares. The economy competency of the system chooses the forms of democracy in real political terms, organizing our world into the first and third worlds and regulating and restricting access to resources and production.

Accordingly, our opportunity to decide on *Überlebensversuche*, even at the highest level, has been taken away from us a long time ago. It is thus no wonder that, along with the products of welfare and affluence, advertising imagery addresses our finances to an increasing degree. They suggest in us a feeling of security achieved by correct consumer behaviour, even though the financial markets are undermining our security through the depletion of resources and the growing impoverishment of the third world countries.

We have descended into a state of sluggishness, and Flusser maintains that only the control of synergy effects from outside through individual crisis management is at issue any more. Anna Jermolaewa's pendular figures are an image of all this. Of uniform shape and imbued with rhythm, their movement is maintained by an external force. They first swing calmly in passive slow movement, until a growing dynamic expands the process of choice. Again and again, the figures swing beyond the frame to fall flat into nothingness. In speaking of the nature of crisis management, Flusser does not mean it could hold its own in the struggle of competition; it can only be present for a longer period. This strategy appears to be the only surviving opportunity also for the swinging figures.

Is it logical to personify a tool into a reference to complex conditions of life? A toy would rather bring back memories of childhood that raise discussion on a society of control and consumption. But a toy is not just an amusing childhood companion; it is also the first stage of our system of upbringing and education. Jermolaewa uses her figures to discuss the categories of role-related behaviour in our existing system. This makes it obvious that even the democratic model of educational policy directly influencing our behaviour and identity is ultimately contingent upon the restrictions posed by economic processes.

Even the best possible crisis management will not grant us autonomy within the system. We live according to the dynamics of the masses, which, according to Baudrillard, have long since lost their voice and are now living in a transitory stage of a society of discipline and control. This is not just about medico-technological or architectural relations of cause and effect which have been described by Foucault and which categorize our lives. They are rather, as claimed by

Deleuzes, economic networks marking our social status and even ruling on our international mobility at the global level.

The economy speculates with our identity. According to Baudrillard, the masses exist only as statistics for voter profiles and studies of consumer behaviour. Intelligence and self-image become commodities, and not only to define our behaviour in relation to consumption. In drastic terms, an example could be the selection of asytm seekers in terms of economic efficiency by employing the IQ test development by American immigration authorities in 1905-08.

The pendular figures of the exhibit represent the trauma of our society, a result of learning to circumvent these rules. The falling of the figures introduces the surprise of bodily damage from outside, which resolves the trauma and, in the manner of Sisyphus and as in a video loop, is repeated endlessly. We thereby give our survival a new goal - to localize traumatic experiences and to process them in a global economic context.

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