

# Ideas in the making: art as public space and the poetics of the formulae

---

## Essay

Auhor Bogdan Ghiu

November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010

Constrained by positive circumstances, that is the 2010 edition of The Gaudeamus Book Fair which took place last week, I have read, in a fast pace (in order to participate, together with the author, to the round table) a special book, which I insistently recommend: Marie Darrieussecq, *Rapport de police: Accusations de plagiat et autres modes de surveillance de la fiction*, (P.O.L., 2010; Pandora M, 2010, translated by Doru Mareş).

I enjoyed very much its title -*Police Report*; the author does not take advantage of its literalness, but it reminds me the fact that most of the relationships between us are, in fact, police reports. Each time we pose the metaphysical ontology's underlying question: "What it is? ", "Who what is?" we spontaneously act like policemen. The essential question as well as the question on essence, on being, *is police*. Our ways of referring to alterity- that is to art; to the alterity as the supreme art, are police reports, because we want to connect with each other to some safe identities, to burry ourselves in some certain identities: "No one moves!"

*Police Report* is a manifest for literary inaccuracy, which is important for creating a not yet developed transcontinental bond between the thinking of the great deconstructivist generation or "the other metaphysics" (Derrida, Deleuze, Foucault) and the gulag literature of the Eastern Europe: the two are more than identical, in fact you cannot understand one without the other, they support and *consolidate* each other.



EDITURA PENTRU LITERATURĂ CONTEMPORANĂ

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE PRESS

That is why, in a way meant clearly to horrify, to scandalize, Marie Darrieussecq prefers Varlam Şalamov instead of Alexandr Soljeniţin: the first really honours, in a literary way, the horror of the gulag, as where the second only re-tells it in a conservative, unshaken way, as if nothing happened. The whole Romanian anticommunism, but not only, praise Soljeniţin, where as Şalamov is barely mentioned.

Do you sense the smell of scandal? Do you feel the “inaccuracy”, that is *justice*?

If you don't, you don't.

Marie Darrieussecq's insistence on fiction has the same usefulness, in a moment when, in literature and about literature, reigns the confusion - especially maintained -of the ideology of the *story*. Important, meaning dangerous, in and from literature, for the society, is not the story, but the fiction. Between the two is not only a difference in accent. I would dare say that the story is meant to control, to surround, to contain what Marie Darrieussecq's calls *the powers of fiction*.

Another idea about the book: the book not as a *unitary story*, but as a *toolbox*. And the act of Reading is not seen as a passive and esthetic act, but rather as instrument, as collaboration, cooperation, as something produced together with somebody, it is mainly seen as a *socius*.

At a certain time (p. 262, ed. fr.), the author speaks about “the public space of the novel”, helping me to advance in solving a problem which I have been trying to solve for a long time: art is not in the public space, but art itself is the public space. The public space is not pre-existent, it is creating itself. Defying the artists themselves- who no matter how contemporary they are- they continue to think and express themselves in the most dualist-traditional way, in many cases their art succeeds against them, betraying them- the already abused issue of the public space and of the interference in the public space is poorly argued and falsely conceived. *Art alone is (the) public space*. And *society* can be made (controlled, produced) with art, as art. Art is society itself, in the most immanent way, against any transcendence as power source.



And I return to the so “inaccurate” operatory difference Şalamov / Soljeniţin.

I feel I need a new way of reading, a new *literary criticism* and new *literary critics*. Not the one that studies styles and techniques, but one that highlights the invention of *formulas*

By *formulae* I mean not only or not exactly at how Deleuze used it related to Bartleby's famous line "*I would prefer not to*", but rather to *technethic* inventions, meaning it signals, in literary order, through new techniques, solutions or formulas of existence, of referring, of conceiving relationships and reality, of the ego's evolution.

To sum up: art is public space (or, more accurately and more finely, the public space creates itself between art and man, through a semiotic call of usage, of cooperation, of realising efficient collectives), books are toolboxes meant not for a passive-aestheticized reading, which neutralizes art, treating it as *decorum*, as a bourgeois ornament, but as an ethic way of producing subjectivity, that is “re- singularizing” as Guattari said it.

The immediate future literary and art criticism will have to highlight formulas, that is *aesthetic* and *existential* isomorphous *technethic* inventions (technic, that is, ethic)

But the work with “The New Organon” has just started. *Rapport du Police* written by Darrieussecq is a good resource, which I wanted to make reference to.

We work with art. Thus we work artfully.

**Translated by** *Cristina Mihaela Sandu*

**Proofreading :** *Monica Cristina Ţone*

**MTTLC, Bucharest University**



**EDITURA PENTRU LITERATURĂ CONTEMPORANĂ**

**CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE PRESS**