

Public Sphere in Post-Socialist Culture (Yerevan 20-24 Oct 05)

Prof.

Call For Paper

"Public Sphere" in Post-Socialist Cultural Discourse

October 20-24th 2005

The Armenian Association of Art Critics (AAAC) invites you to a 4-day symposium in Yerevan, Armenia.

One can regard the notion of "public sphere" as missing in official politics of former Soviet Union. Given the Soviet past of Armenia (and the mnemonic present of USSR's specter) the issues concerning "public sphere" in post-socialist Armenia are not yet elucidated. The symposium would be the first public activity to theoretically address the issue in post-Soviet Armenia. Anyhow the outline of the main questions regarding "public sphere" in post-Soviet Armenia can be defined as follows:

1. How is it possible to speak of public sphere in post-socialist context?
2. How "public sphere" differs from the "collective life" propagated in the former USSR?
3. What role does "public sphere" play in formation of subjectivities and identities?
4. What role do technologies play in these processes?
5. What are the focal points or "tangible" embodiments of "public sphere"?
6. Can contemporary art be regarded as "public sphere"?

These and such issues will put our discussion right between "the technological present" and "the ideological past" of Armenian cultural discourse. Recalling the socialist past and re-constructing the post socialist present involve a process of de-construction and re-evaluation of past as well as that of present. However, this is done with the recognition that both remembering and forgetting, and the process of institutionalization of memory are highly selective processes affected by social conditions and power relations. The symposium will give a possibility

for both sides to verify (or falsify) one's own idea of "public sphere" in direct communication with the other side. If this be successful, we may hope to make the symposium itself some "public sphere" where different discourses can reevaluate and redefine themselves through the Other.

The symposium "'Public Sphere" in Post-Socialist Cultural Discourse" invites art historians and theorists and representatives of other relevant disciplines to meditate upon the mentioned topics and the issues rising from them.

The symposium will take place from October 20-24th. Those who are interested in taking part in the symposium as a speaker or suggesting a panel, can submit a proposal and a short CV.

The deadline for submissions is August 30th.

If you have any questions, regarding the symposium, please, do not hesitate to contact us:

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