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Actualisation of Space: The Case of Oda Projesi

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A long, high-ceilinged room with small trees in boxes in the middle. The walls are punctuated by doors and windows, on all three storeys of the building. Here and there shoes are outside the doors and you glimpse curtains through the windows. One or two pushchairs are parked beside the shoes. Daylight floods the space through a glass ceiling and also filters it through the glass on the short sides of the room. If it weren't for the shoes and the pushchairs you might think of a hospital, or even an American-style prison. In the middle of the room a group of men play Turkish music on instruments, others dance. A little girl, dressed in yellow, attracts attention to herself as she dances an elegant solo. Tinkles of laughter. Suddenly a roll of paper is dropped from a balcony, winding down like a great snake, and some children begin to draw on it.

The location is a passage and a gathering place in Galeriahaus, a block of flats in Messestadt Riem in the outskirts of Munich. The occasion is one of many modest events that Oda Projesi organised during their visit there in spring 2003. Just as the name indicates ('oda' means room/space and 'projesi' project in Turkish), the point of departure of Oda Projesi's work is space; how one can create and recreate different places and spatial situations through using them

in a number of different ways. For example, how, together with various groups of people, can you find new functions for a public space such as a square? Or an empty space in a flat? Or an architect-designed passage like the atrium in Galeriahaus, which was closed by the authorities to non-residents and forbidden as a play area?

The three artists, Özge Acikkol, Gunes Savas and Secil Yersel, have been working together since 1997. They began by taking advantage of the possibilities offered by the public spaces in their hometown, Istanbul, by doing workshops together with groups of children, where they drew, painted and then exhibited their works on site. [1] In 2000 they adopted the name Oda Projesi and rented a three-room flat in Galata, the same district where they started their workshops. At that time still an 'ungentrified' quarter of Istanbul, Galata lies near the famous pedestrian street, *Istiklal*, and an entertainment district where many immigrants from Turkey's eastern regions arrive when they first come to the city. The streets are narrow, courtyards small and street life lively and crowded.[2] However, none of the artists live in the flat, which functions as a meeting place for neighbours and simultaneously as a platform for the projects, inside and outside its walls, which are generated in cooperation with the people of the district and others.

The artists have become familiar with the surroundings in Galata and built up relationships with neighbours, especially with the children who, during my visits there in October 2001 and September 2003, obviously felt at home and at peace in the flat. Activities vary, but a common denominator is that they are not about showing or exhibiting a work of art but about using art as a means for creating and recreating new relations between people through diverse investigations and shaping of both private and public space. Oda Projesi have been inspired by the ways in which

Istanbul residents use their city without always respecting rules and regulations: for example, how shopkeepers find clever solutions for showing their wares outside the shop without extra cost, or how additions are made to residential buildings.

One of the rooms in the Galata flat is used as a meeting place and contains lots of drawing materials, art books and children's books. Another room is sometimes used for art projects and a third room functions as an archive, but the artists in question can also avail themselves of the rest of the flat and change the usages. The surroundings may also be utilised - for instance, when the artist Erik Göngrich, as part of his study of Istanbul as a 'picnic city', invited all the neighbours for a picnic in the little courtyard, which was covered with the sort of plastic mats used both for picnics and as prayer mats. Inside the flat, the local theatre group, Tem, hosted a workshop with children on different ways of acting. The Istanbul-based architect group, Heterotopya, recently held discussions with children about how the enclosed, stone-covered courtyard could be rebuilt. Proposals for a swimming pool have been developing, as have ideas for a garden with swings.

Oda Projesi is an ongoing project, initiated and financed by the artists themselves. It is not part of a programme or campaign; it has neither opening hours nor advertising. When artists are invited to participate, there are openings to which the local art crowd come, but otherwise it is possible to make arrangements to drop in by word of mouth. When the members of Oda Projesi are away, the key is kept by a neighbour who looks after the flat and lets in children and others who want to use it. In this way, the flat becomes a place with both private and public features. Oda Projesi's understanding and use of space lies close to Michel de Certeau's daily-life, use-oriented, pragmatic approach: space is an effect of the activities that influence - and even determine it, that place it in

a time frame and get it to function amongst incompatible uses and understandings. Thus space is about actualisation, about active utilisation, and about the ambivalences and internal dependencies that arise in the very use of it, just as when a word is articulated it acquires layers of meaning through its specific context.[3]

Oda Projesi's work is part of the varied contemporary art that operates interactively and utilises public - or 'semi-public' space. They set up situations for various types of exchange in which intimacy and personal contact are stressed. Their work has even been described as a reflection of what public art is - and what it can be - and how it functions within contemporary art.[4] As the field is so varied it seems even more important to try and pin down some specifics in relation to each practice. At first glance, Suzanne Lacy's definition of the 'new genre public art' might be applied to Oda Projesi's work: 'New genre public art calls for an integrative critical language through which values, ethics and social responsibility can be discussed in terms of art'.[5]

It is a working model based on relations between people and on social creativity rather than on self-expression, and it is characterised by co-operation. It is community-based, often relating to marginalised groups; it is socially-engaged, interactive and aimed at another, less anonymous public than that of art institutions. 'New genre public art' is about creative participation in a process. Activities are primarily pursued far from the established art institutions, in other social contexts such as housing areas or schools. In this way, a kind of reverse exclusiveness arises: those who are attracted to and captured by the project have more access to this art than the usual art public.

An important difference in relation to most of the 'new genre public art' is, however, that Oda Projesi is not reactive; that is, they do not respond in the first instance to a social or cultural problem. Neither are those they work with - the target group - treated or described as 'the other'; it is rather the traditional art public that is placed in the position of 'the other'. In short, there is a lack of 'reform' or 'do-gooder' rhetoric in relation to 'the other'. Oda Projesi are not out to campaign in order to improve the world - therefore, activism à la *Park Fiktion* is also lacking.[6] Neither do they have any connection to spiritual and 'healing' traditions in art, which Suzanne Lacy discerns in the 'new genre public art'. Even if Oda Projesi often allow their projects to take place in public or semi-public space, it is not 'public art' in any real sense since they lack public commissioners and do not distinctly thematise public space. Despite their occasionally polite and sweet image, their work is not didactic by being aimed at formulated target groups of underprivileged citizens for example. Nevertheless, like the grand old man of social and somewhat behaviourist neighbourhood projects, Stephen Willats, Oda Projesi want to contribute to a change in how society functions, if in a micro perspective. This often happens through trying to change our consciousness of the life codes that surround us. For Willats, the relationship between the work and the public is the work itself, but this is difficult to apply to Oda Projesi since their understanding of what constitutes the public is more differentiated and their concept of the art work more open and less object-based than his.[7]

Except for their documentation, Oda Projesi take great care not to leave behind objects that can be interpreted as art aimed at being exhibited. Documentation becomes, however, a kind of diary, where activities are personally registered and commented on after they happen. Even so, paradoxically enough, Oda Projesi have

discussed their work in terms of building a monument. They say they want to create 'a monument composed of gestures from everyday life and layers of memories of the community', and they point out that this always occurs together with, and not for, the participants.[8] What they have in mind is an abstract monument, fluid in form but concrete in memory, dedicated to the participants' efforts to investigate space and formulate suggestions for alternative uses, which in turn, can contribute to recoding and restructuring human relations.

Here Oda Projesi's understanding departs radically from one of the recently most debated and therefore 'iconic' monument-related works, which moreover, took place in a residential neighbourhood and involved the residents, namely Thomas Hirschhorn's *Bataille Monument* in Friedrich-Wöhler-Siedlung, a part of Documenta 11 in Kassel, in the summer 2002 (see Hirschhorn in this publication for further details). Both Oda Projesi and Hirschhorn refer to and question ideas about classic monuments. Thomas Hirschhorn's strategy includes using 'low' and perishable materials when he builds his monuments in out-of-the-way places, which, classically, are dedicated to 'great' men like Spinoza and Deleuze. His aim is to create art and for the *Bataille Monument* he had an already prepared, and in part also executed, plan which he needed help to carry out. For example some of the younger unemployed residents of the district produced the work in the library and a TV studio and were paid for it. Their role was that of the 'executor' and not 'co-creator'.

The residents in the working class neighbourhood appeared as a different and colourful element in a project that was primarily a criticism of an art genre and not of social structures. Hirschhorn's work has therefore understandably been criticised for 'exhibiting' and making exotic marginalised groups and thereby contributing to

a form of a social pornography. Thomas Hirschhorn himself wanted to test what is possible within the framework of the world's most prestigious contemporary art exhibition.[9] Whereas Thomas Hirschhorn makes a distinction between social projects and art projects - his own work clearly belonging to the second category - such a distinction is more difficult to make for Oda Projesi. They have loose connections with the art world and are less occupied with discussing what is and is not art; it seems to suffice that art offers a method and a zone for certain types of activities. At the same time, they work with groups of people in their immediate environments and allow them to wield great influence on the project. Therefore, Oda Projesi's work is both social and artistic, but without an official commissioner - for instance, a local authority - that expects social reform or measurable improvements.

This double-sided nature of their work was expressed and thematised in their project in Messestadt Riem, following an invitation from Kunstprojekte_Riem and made in collaboration with Kunstverein München.[10] Although the flat in Galata is the hub of Oda Projesi's activities, it is not its entirety. During recent years, at the invitation of art institutions and organisations, the artists have carried out projects that have been briefer than the one in Galata, and have often taken place in other cultural and socio-political contexts.[11] All the inhabitants of Messestadt Riem were informed ahead of time by letter that Oda Projesi would be available for contacts three hours a day for one month in the project room that Kunstprojekte_Riem had at its disposal.[12] The space, which lies next to the official - and often deserted *Bewohnertreff* (citizens' meeting point) and the adjacent kitchen, which faces the street and is therefore less private, was used frequently. Together with the participants, the artists tried to find

a use for the space, which they are not responsible for but which, in their capacity as residents of the area, they have access to, by, for instance, arranging hairdressing, Tupperware parties and making food. The Turkish women especially showed their appreciation of the kitchen as a meeting place. The furnishings of the project space were altered, partly in conjunction with each individual event, and consequently the place had a different appearance at the end than in the beginning.

Most of the social contacts, however, were made thanks to the Turkish couple who run a little grocery across the street from Bewohnertreff. For language reasons - none of the members of Oda Projesi speak German - most of the participants were Turkish-speaking. Over and above the activities in the project space and kitchen, videos were made of the quarter, which were shown in the grocery. There were guided tours led by the residents and a tea party with music and dance in Galeriahaus. A long roll of paper functioned as a social instrument on several of these occasions: people were encouraged to use the paper to write and draw on, and this stimulated more conversations. As is so often the case with Oda Projesi, the 'audience' on these occasions was basically the participants, who had all met the artists. This minimises the degree of theatricality - there is seldom an outside, purely observing, audience. Those present participate and the artists' own personal presence is central, which creates an unusually intimate relationship that is sometimes difficult to grasp by 'outsiders'.

Oda Projesi shares the emphasis on human relations with a very diverse group of artists covered by what Nicolas Bourriaud has termed 'relational aesthetics'. According to him the basic material of these artists are human relations, and they stress social exchange, thematise communication processes and interact with the

spectator.[13] As with Oda Projesi's activities, Dan Peterman and his project, *The Shop*, in Chicago, is oriented towards a specific community and is based on shared activities that are not 'exhibited' - in Peterman's case, a bicycle workshop in a run-down area of the city, I would rather link Oda Projesi to another artist connected to relational aesthetics. Like Oda Projesi, this artist's work involves a great amount of openness in the sense that a social situation is created, shaped very much by the participants, and focused on new uses of space and restructuring of everyday actions.

Both Oda Projesi and Rirkrit Tiravanija deliberately mix the private and the public, with all that means in terms of informality and intimacy. They involve people who do something, often together. The initiative lies with the public, quite often children or young people, a group that more easily avoid anticipated behaviour and predetermined ways of using things.[14] Collaboration and participation are at the core of their activities. Although both Oda Projesi and Rirkrit Tiravanija lack grand political pretensions, they do not lose sight of the idea of change. As always where human relations are pivotal, it is difficult if not impossible to describe exactly what happens and to judge whether it is successful or not. It is nevertheless clear that this method is decisive: with Oda Projesi, the method in combination with focusing on concrete space is itself the essence of their work.

In this context, the Vienna-based critic Christian Kravagna's distinction between four different working methods in contemporary art concerned with human interaction may be useful - 'working with others', interactive activities, collective action, and participatory practice. Written in 1998 the text, entitled *Modelle partizipatorischer Praxis* (Models of participatory practice), sketches a picture of a society where a feeling of political powerlessness reigns, and where real or imagined unemployment lurks around the

corner.[15] He lingers on the sociologist Ulrich Beck's notion of 'Bürgerarbeit' (citizen's work), which implies activating unused potential for political engagement in order to create an engaged civil society. 'Bürgerarbeit' would involve people on state subsidies engaging in community work, everything from helping the dying to working with the homeless and becoming involved in art and culture. For Christian Kravagna this is nothing less than a trick: where the reduced possibilities for political participation is compensated for by 'social activity', work which citizens do for free. In effect under Ulrich Beck's model people have something meaningful to do, they are rewarded, and therefore they keep quiet. And the state saves money.

Although Christian Kravagna's picture might be both too black and white in depicting what is 'political' and too tinted by conspiracy theory, and even if his text does not lack contradictions it could help us clarify the position of Oda Projesi among the different participatory approaches that are most commonly used now. To begin with: as he rightly remarks 'participation' as a method takes on a significance within 20th century art whenever art is engaged in self-critique. When the position of the author is being questioned or when the relationship between art and 'life' is being disputed. His first category - 'working together' - is exemplified with artists like Rirkrit Tiravanija, Irene and Christine Hohenbüchler and Jens Haaning. In his opinion this practice is merely fashionably 'socio-chic' and should be excluded from the discussion altogether. He quotes the artists Alice Creischer and Andreas Siekkmann who write that this practice has a 'pronounced exploitation character' as these artists outsource the production of the work but still get the surplus value themselves.

The second category - interactive art - permits one or more reactions that can influence the appearance of the work without deeply affecting its structure. Christian Kravagna does not give any examples here but we can imagine that he has 'push-the button' works in so-called 'new media' in mind, as well as works where you accept an offer to consume something. The idea behind the third category - collective action - is that a group of people formulate an idea and then carry it out together. Again he skips examples but Park Fiktion could be one. His fourth category - participatory practice - presumes that there is a difference between the producer and receiver but the focus is on the latter, to which a significant part of the development of the work is transferred. Participatory practice is his main interest and he discusses works such as Adrian Piper's *Funk Lessons* 1982-84, Clegg & Guttman's *Offene Bibliothek* (Open library) 1991 and 1993, Stephen Willat's *Vertical Living* 1978 as well as the so-called 'new genre public art', as it has been formulated by Susanne Lacy.[16] Whereas the first three works are considered successful, 'new genre public art' is being dismissed as traditional, essentialist, moralising, mystifying and pastoral.

Both in terms of art production and of curating Christian Kravagna's very first category - 'working together' - can function as an umbrella for the following three categories. It can encompass all of them or some; it can do it within an artist's practice in general or in one specific project. Yet it retains some specificities lacking in the others, among which 'openness' seems to be the most disputed one but also the most relevant in relation to Oda Projesi's activities. The issue of exploitation is complicated but if Rirkrit Tiravanija, Irene and Christine Hohenbüchler and Jens Haaning can be said to keep the surplus value then the same should undoubtedly go for the quoted works by Adrian Piper, Clegg & Guttman and Stephen Willats. Oda Projesi's work may be said to

represent a hybrid form: it encompasses all four methods, but with a more open concept of a work of art, sometimes in separate projects, sometimes in one and the same project. And perhaps it is here that the strength as well as the weakness of their work lies: that from the everyday - often spatial - points of departure, to work in different ways with people in their immediate environs in order to create not so small shifts in how we think about and relate to each other. However, the nature of the political discourse around this activity requires further development.

Oda Projesi's approach offers more than one stumbling block. For institutionally-based curating it brings out the dilemma of how to work with the kind of contemporary art which originates in and functions outside institutions, as part of public, or semi-public space, and with intense connections to everyday life. Since Oda Projesi's involvement with the art system is distant, and since they don't produce objects or images aimed at being exhibited in institutions they have a vague relationship to the exhibition as a medium and partly also to the institution as a coded place. This came to the fore when as a continuation and discussion of the project in Messestadt Riem, the documentation of the project was shown under the title *The Room Revisited* at Kunstverein München.[17] The situation was thereby radically altered and Oda Projesi were for instance confronted with outside spectators without any direct contact with the project. The presentation was adjusted to this situation; beside various forms of documentation they designed the space to resemble the project space in Messestadt Riem - a usage of space which does not correspond to the 'white cube'.

In the 'cabinet', an intimate room in the middle of the staircase in the otherwise purpose-built grand gallery space from the late 18th

century, which was furnished with a carpet, cloth and pillows on the floor, the 14-minute long video *Riem Rooms* was shown on a monitor. There were also small snapshots on the floor which the visitors were encouraged to take with them, well produced official information material from the district and a *Notebook of Space*, a photocopied documentation and notebook, designed by the artists, which visitors could take away with them. Large colour photographs of some of the rooms that Oda Projesi have used in their work over the past few years were mounted on a wall outside the 'cabinet'. *The Room Revisited* was neither an exhibition, nor a strict documentation based on Oda Projesi's experience in Messestadt Riem. In a way it was a bit 'out of place', to which a number of reactions from both the general audience and some critics testified.

Especially since the 1990s there have been various attempts to transform art exhibition spaces, to challenge the white cube, into something other than rigid and sometimes authoritarian show places, something beyond a 'showroom'. Inspired by club culture and bar atmospheres, these spaces have been turned into, among other things, places for 'hanging out' - undramatic, relaxing milieus - but also they have become sewing workshops, tattooing studios, dating agencies, etc. Exhibition spaces have also been used as offices and meeting places for activists, thereby taking on some responsibilities normally assigned to community centres or Kulturläden (cultural shops). Often thanks to the work of artists. Mostly neglected but equally important for altering the notion of institutions for contemporary art are the initiatives of institutions of contemporary art to fund and produce projects which have very little or nothing to do with the physical institutional space. In an indirect but nevertheless palpable way they contribute to the erosion of the conventional understanding of the institution as a

place for the display of art objects, by underlining the institution as a structure for support, for production and distribution through alternative channels and in places outside the institutional building itself. In short, they help 'de-Duchampify' the institution.

One year after working with Oda Projesi and doing *The Room Revisited* at Kunstverein München, I am still busy wondering how we can involve the type of - very important - work which Oda Projesi do in institutional programming. It is the kind of work which is carried out within the field of art but which resembles or is even the same as activities happening within other areas of society. Typically Oda Projesi would not spend a lot of time discussing what is and isn't art. Instead they take advantage of being able to operate within its specific field of action. Their work is based on regular, long-term and personal engagement and presence. While invited by institutions they spend a short time in a place they mostly know little of in advance, which creates a danger for superficiality and tokenism. In light of all these dilemmas should we leave this kind of work to itself, and to the few organisations supporting it? Or should we insist on engaging with it and thereby run the risk of compromising the work, as well as annoying both the general audience and colleagues?

Institutional politics should not be overlooked in a situation like this one. The biography of Oda Projesi's project started with Kunstprojekte_Riem contacting us at Kunstverein München and asking if we could collaborate on one of their many projects. At the time they were under political pressure to be more visible within the city centre of Munich. We mentioned Oda Projesi as an interesting possibility, particularly as we had not succeeded in raising enough funds for them to do something in Munich in conjunction with their participation in the group exhibition *Exchange & Transform (Arbeitstitel)* in 2002.[18] Eventually

Kunstprojekte_Riem decided to invite Oda Projesi and we told them and Oda Projesi that something could be done within the spaces of Kunstverein München. This process raised questions about to what extent inviting artists like this mainly fulfils the institution's desire to justify its support of community-related work. My initial reply would be to support it in its 'natural' habitat, i.e. the places from where it springs. This is usually not popular with boards and funders, who expect things to appear in the exhibition spaces rather than in distant suburbs. However, at the end of the day I'd like to see *The Room Revisited* as yet another example of how Oda Projesi in a 'de Certeauan' way continuously question the conventional uses of space. How they actualise even institutional space by staging activities which engage with the ambiguous and sometimes incompatible uses and understandings of it.

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[1] At that time in Turkey neither art museums nor any other kinds of museums had workshops for children or other people.

[2] Galata has been documented in the film, *Windows*, by the film maker, Belmin Soylemez. Oda Projesi has used the film in exhibitions as part of the presentation of their activities, for instance in the exhibition*, Exchange & Transform (Arbeitstitel)* at Kunstverein München in the summer of 2002.

[3] See Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1988

[4] Ana Paula Cohen, 'Dispositiv Workshop – Part 1: Oda Projesi', *Drucksache Spring 03*, Kunstverein München, 2003

[5] Suzanne Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, Seattle, Washington: Bay Press, 1995, p.43. Lacy uses the term to

discuss a number of very different projects in the U.S. from the 1970s to the 90s, everything from Adrian Piper to Mujeres muralistas.

[6] See, for example, Christoph Schäfer & Cathy Skene: 'Aufruhr auf Ebene p: St. Pauli Elbpark O-100%' in *Die Kunst des Öffentlichen*, edited by Marius Babias and Achim Könneke, Amsterdam & Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1998. *Park Fiktion* is an activist initiative, started by a group of artists and other local residents, to stop gentrification in Hamburg's St. Pauli district and specifically to preserve a green area as a park.

[7] See, for example, Stephen Willats, *Living Together*, exhibition catalogue, Tramway, Glasgow, 1995. Despite focusing on cooperation and process, Willats produced object-based art, which is regularly exhibited in 'white cube' spaces.

[8] Ana Paula Cohen, *Dispositiv Workshop – Part 1: Oda Projesi I Drucksache*, Spring 03, Kunstverein München, 2003

[9] See Michaela Pöschl, *Hirschhorn's Wurst* at www.igkultur.at 2002

[10] Oda Projesi's project was the first part in the series *Dispositiv Workshop*, initiated by Kunstverein München in 2003. Artists who work collaboratively in one way or another were invited to realise projects with groups of people in Munich, SELECTED BY THE ARTISTS IN QUESTION. The subsequent parts were: *Dispositiv Workshop Part 2* with Annika Eriksson Fall 2003, *Dispositiv Workshop Part 3* with Katya Sander Summer 2004, *Dispositiv Workshop Part* 4 was a colloquium on collaborative practice with artistic and curatorial initiatives from all over Europe at Kunstverein München Summer 2004, *Dispositiv Workshop Part 5*

with Ruth Kaasserer Summer 2004 and finally *Dispositiv Workshop Part 6* with Rirkrit Tiravanija: a retrospective project Fall 2004.

[11] Two of these invitations came from an institution in Istanbul: the new contemporary art museum Proje4L, located in Gultepe in between a financial district and a so-called '24-hour house district', where one can build additions to residential housing without building permits as long as it only takes 24 hours. The first invitation resulted in Oda Projesi renting a flat for six months in one of these '24-hour' buildings neighbouring the museum, where they had similar activities to those going on in Galata. The second led to co-operating with an adjacent school for two years. One of the projects carried out with the school and its pupils was entitled *Jump*, and consisted of a kind of investigation of and proposal for how museum space can be used. Trampolines were installed in the museum and placed at the disposal of children and other visitors who were free to hop up and down as they wished. A video documenting this was later shown in the school. A little later, in spring 2002, Oda Projesi participated in the Gwangju Biennale in South Korea, where they reconstructed the flat in Galata in its actual size in the exhibition space. Each room was used for different purposes: the middle room, for example, was the venue for a five-day workshop with pupils from an English-speaking school. After the workshop, visitors could use the rooms as they wished.

[12] Kunstprojekte_Riem was an ambitious project where the city of Munich, through the curator Claudia Büttner, commissioned art works in and for a newly developed housing area on the old airport ground.

[13] Nicolas Bourriaud: 'An Introduction to Relational Aesthetics', in *Traffic* (catalogue), Bordeaux: CAPC Musée d' Art

Contemporain, 1995. This broad designation encompasses artists such as Angela Bulloch, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Jorge Pardo, Dan Peterman, Henrik Plenge Jakobsen, Rirkrit Tiravanija and others of who most have an institutionally-based practice.

[14] See Nina Möntmann: *Kunst als sozialer Raum*, Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2002. Whereas Tiravanija stages a majority of his works, which often contain rooms or spaces, in art institutions that are used in ways unusual for them, Oda Projesi has worked less often in such contexts.

[15] See Christian Kravagna: *Modelle partizipatorischer Praxis In Die Kunst des Öffentlichen*, edited by Marius Babias & Achim Könneke, Amsterdam and Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1998.

[16] The question of context has come to the fore, also beyond the institution. To the point that there in the German-speaking area is a term 'Kontextkunst' (context art), coined by Peter Weibel for an exhibition with the same name in Graz in 1993, and highly contested by particularly the Cologne-based leftist art scene. Kontextkunst is, if you wish a German parallel to the so-called 'relational aesthetics' but more programmatically political and academic. Both imply a more dynamic notion of art, which actively takes the context into consideration and which often goes beyond the exhibition space. Some of the artists used as 'good' examples by Christian Kravagna have been associated with Kontextkunst. See Peter Weibel: *Kontextkunst – Kunst der 90er Jahre*, Cologne, DuMont Verlag 1994.

[17] *The Room Revisited* at Kunstverein München 5 June – 31 August 2003.

[18] See note 2.