**METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK: WHAT HAPPENED AND HOW DO WORK WITH THIS QUESTION?**

We wrote this methodology in hope to share the result of exploring in practice the question of how we work together within the Workers’ University. This document gives an overview of what we have systematized and learned thus far—but it is and it must always remain a work in progress. The work is the method.

Our work is primarily connected to the struggle to reorganise life—which is, in a sense, what the Dita workers’ struggle is all about. Our approach follows feminist research and methodologyas “connected in principle to feminist struggle” (Sprague & Zimmerman, 1993, p. 266) and just as it, by “unearthing women’s subjugated knowledge [,] … challenges the basic structures and ideologies that oppress women”. Our grouping and pulling together as the Workers' University (**RU**) grew out of this struggle: some of us consider workers’ occupation of Dita the act of founding the **RU**, some hold that this was the first plenum in Tuzla (February 2014). Our research is our political work and our theory spreads from our practice. To say ‘our’ means to envisage **RU** as an open structure with only one condition for joining: “commitment to the people” (Freira, 1994) as learning together politically.

Our methodology takes many cues from the radical pedagogy of Paulo Freira and all the others who followed, from feminist practices, Participatory Action Research (PAR) and workers' (self)education. Rethinking and refining our understanding of these methods—of the method itself—is both part of the process *and* the method. Methodology thus understood spreads beyond creating a functional and constructive set of tools and methods; it goes beyond recognising the necessity of constant critical reflection. It demands friendship through open questions, through courage to confront ambivalence, our own and anyone else's. This is the key to working together politically. How do we create a setting for understanding and countering this ambivalence? In this timbre, let us quote Freire, as he provides us with a key to trashing it:

*Those who authentically commit themselves to the people must re-examine themselves constantly.  This conversion is so radical as not to allow for ambivalent behaviour…  Conversion to the people requires a profound rebirth. Those who undergo it must take on a new form of existence; they can no longer remain as they were*. (*Pedagogy of Hope,* 1994)

Freire's methodology, in sync with feminist practices, frames the fundamentals of our approach to political work: "The objective of the learning process is to liberate the participants from their external and internal oppression; to facilitate learners becoming capable of changing their lives and the society they live in (Freire, 1971)."

Freire referred to his 'praxis' as consisting of three steps: identifying the problem, analysis, and action. We have rotated our approach around the question, ‘what happened?’ This question does not merely demand an account of the event history, of the privatisation and other plunders, but also of the losses and harms, of constructing continuities of working together and organising. This question underlies everything we do—it stalks our work in Dita. When we first met the Dita workers, during their sub-zero occupation of the factory, we had no questions, only solidarity. Our questions grew out of engagement, out of care. The more we learn with the workers, the more ways come up in which to ask ‘what happened?’ This is *praxis*. Symbolisations are made by the embodied. We learn this from the workers, for this is their approach. This is how we produce knowledge together.

As our political friendship with the Dita workers developed, we began seeing holes in the dominant narratives. What happened to work, to labour? Why has the term worker, denoting the central figure and the dominant identity in Yugoslavia, disappeared from public discourse? What are the harms of this erasure? The workers talk about this through erasure of their knowledge and experience, through de-industrialisation. The erasure is not merely symbolic; it has been performed in order to enact deeply material consequences. What the workers also understand and express very clearly, as something they have deep bodily experience of, is that one of the aims of the ‘transition’ has been to turn Yugoslav geographies into peripheral consumption economies, through deindustrialisation and transformation of property relations. As one of the Dita workers often puts it, “Where is the worker in all this?” The worker’s absence from all the places where they used to naturally belong—factories/workplaces, legislation, trade unions, culture and education, holiday spots, etc.—tells the story. From the ‘not there,’ by asking ‘what happened?’ we follow the empty chairs to a picture of disenfranchisement, repression, exploitation and sheer abandonment. The law now *de facto* excludes the worker from any decision making (despite appearances to the contrary.)

**What happened?**

We came up with this question following the resistances we encountered in the reconstruction of the story of privatisation. The more we worked with the workers, the more we posed the questions of how they came about setting up the encampment in front of the factory and the more they were telling their story in different ways, always with new details emerging, the more we realised we constantly needed to pose this question precisely to enable the reconstruction of the narrative to emerge. When we tell the story to ourselves as a community we partake in this knowledge—the story becomes an open script, with new knowledge and new insights, enabling all of us to position ourselves politically in relation to the story.

Our joint construction of the story of what happened is our action.

*Praxis* consistsinaction/reflection, as "It is not enough for people to come together in dialogue in order to gain knowledge of their social reality.  They must act together upon their environment in order critically to reflect upon their reality and so transform it through further action and critical reflection" (Freire, 1971). Our first year as Workers' University is bloated with frustration: after the struggles, the blockade and occupation, some of us believe that Dita's workers' struggle is in the past and that the problems we see now have no solutions. We are torn between ambivalence, hope and frustration. Because the dominant ideology is so strong as to push you to accept that there is no alternative. This very important observation feeds a crucial line of reflection: to what extent are we absorbing the frustration, the passivity and the ambivalence of the phases of the struggle that we become a part of? As we progress through this handbook, the pitfalls of neglecting this type of reflection will become even more apparent.

We recently talked about what we have learned in the factory. “For me, it was a turning point. It was enlightening. I saw, for the first time, what hard work really is, what it really means to be working class,” said one of our group who spends much of their time on the factory floor. Immediately, we could turn to ‘what happened?’ again. Where does this disconnect come from? What *does* it mean to be working class? Did we ever know it any better than today? *Can we* know what it means? What happened to continuities of Yugoslav workers’ self-governance?

As the **RU** we have, at first, neglected the question of class. It did not occur to ask ourselves what conscious or unconscious class perceptions and self-perceptions we hold. Perhaps this testifies to our sense of privilege, as only two of us have any real experience of being working class. It is the more privileged, after all, who are more inclined to being class-blind. We must also account for an important automatism inherited from the Yugoslav socialist project, an illusion of a contently classless society, later transported into the ‘transition’ ideology via the so-called homogeneity paradigm, produced through totalitarian analyses of socialism. The paradigm imposes an understanding of the socialist societies (focus is on Europe) as having been “composed of an amorphous and largely undifferentiated mass, a sociologically lifeless abstraction,” (“aside from a minuscule political elite who thoroughly monopolize all forms of power”) (Fuller, 585). Both perceptions persist to this day, in different guises, the first on the so-called left and/or the civil society, the latter rather well spread. The more authentic view of the real puts the class division in socialist societies “to run between workers and intellectuals” (Fuller, 585). The “intellectual class” includes managers and other senior positions in all the structures. One of Dita’s former managers, explained very succinctly to us that “not everyone is equal,” and that to climb the hierarchy one must get education. From the “unqualified” (unskilled) workers, to “qualified” and “highly qualified workers and, finally, to university education (presumably, a BA sits lower than and MA, conversely the PhD). This hidden class division seems to have framed various Yugoslav-era approaches to workers’ education and self-education that seem to have been primarily aimed at perfecting workers' labouring skills (including work organisation and certain levels of management). This is not to generalize, as many very interesting educational moments took place,[[1]](#footnote-1) but to reiterate the importance of reflection and self-reflection, in this case on class perceptions and positions.

In working with these reflections, we must avoid the all too common mistake of inscribing the homogeneity paradigm onto our notions of class. A neglected area of research, at least in the region, falls under what Paul Willis terms tension between self-production and reproduction of the 'working class' (*Learning To Labor, How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs,* Columbia: 1977), a tension that must also be explored through the notion of intellectual class, as well as applied to a more thorough class analyses of the structures that have emerged through the transition. It is the matter of production of class-division that interests us the most as the mechanism that continues to damage the potentials of the infra-political. Its affective registers are so well established that it is often the most difficult blockage to spot. It breeds hierarchisation, traumatic lack of confidence, silencing, ambivalence, abdication/transfer of responsibility, bitterness, resentment and a refusal to learn, among many things.

To contrast this disaffected, ambivalent state we find all too easy to visit, even when fully aware, let us invoke an image, that of a woman “throwing herself in front of the car.” The location is Dita, the main factory yard, the car is a company car, the driver is a corrupt director attempting to steal the car, the woman is becoming one of the leaders of the worker struggle. “As they [the male workers] saw me, a woman, to be more courageous than they are, they thought, ‘we can do this too’ and they became resolved. … Women were the avant-garde of the protests.” Another worker agrees, “Yes, we went right up to the police, daring them to touch us. It is different when a woman protests and demands.” This contrast image (with all its surreal overtones) is an invocation itself, a type of a “sacred ritual” as claiming justice and affirming the right of ultimate say in reorganizing one’s life. It invokes the powers and tools of affective labour, of care as the fundamental impetus, the fundamental affective threshold. Care is the first line of engagement, the deepest trench. As we are still living the days of social constructions in which care and affection belong to the subjugated, feminized registers, the tools, issues, the approaches, the methods, the questions and the conversations we have been describing in this handbook all also rely on what is usually referred to as feminist research practice. In their *Primer* on the topic, authors Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Bieber and Patricia Leavy (Sage, 2007) describe is as contingent on the deep “awareness of the relations of power and authority in research relations” as its complexity is on the “intimate intertwining of theory, epistemology and method”. In intertwining all of these approaches, we have begun approaching workers’ self-education as a means of and towards a notion of self-management or self-governance as a practice of liberation. In this process, we are also workers studying at the Workers University (**RU**). This principle extends to all those wishing to collaborate with the **RU**—a requirement that we make based on the experience of attempts at collaboration.

Uniting all these approaches and methods is a strong emphasis on *praxis*, precisely the approach under which the workers are knowing subjects, rather than objects of research, as conversants or collaborators, or co-researchersparticipating in directing and developing our common work, are referred to in Participatory Action Research (PAR). A crucial question, of course is, to what extent do the workers themselves feel as co-researchers? We know that they already perceive themselves as knowing subjects—their struggle was also a manifesto for recuperation of their status as such—but the work on developing the method to the stage at which class division mechanisms (intellectual vs. worker) and disaffection caused by the structural violence of governance through poverty are no longer inhibiting their impetus to motivation for emancipation that has only just began.

At this stage, it seems most fitting to elaborate our thinking through the prism of one of the approaches[[2]](#footnote-2) to constructing a PAR methodology (or methodological strategy). This approach runs through some key features of PAR methodology. We will list those that appear especially applicable to the above.

**Material prerequisites**

Setting up the material prerequisites is understood as the initial levelling of the playing field: the document refers very specifically to remuneration for co-researchers. "What is decisive is that remuneration signalizes social recognition of the value of the individual's contribution to research. If participatory research genuinely aims to put the relationship with research partners on an equal footing, then the socially dominant form of recognition must be used."[[3]](#footnote-3) In short: how to not take anyone for granted or exploit their time? How to rescind inequality in status (or perceptions thereof) between professional ‘researchers’ and ‘knowing subjects’ or ‘co-researchers’?

Any attempt must begin with an openness about our own material conditions. We are not talking about waving payslips about (though we can envisage a need for such a situation). Rather, we must make it clear under what conditions we are entering into collaborative work (and continue self-reflexively).When we began expecting our first little injection of financial support, we came at the question from several angles. The air of mistrust and deep caution that has enveloped the whole region infected our approach at first: we recall some episodes of brief (and not so brief) agonising over how to tell the workers we are going to receive some project funding.[[4]](#footnote-4) The solution turned up very simply: some of the workers were curious about how we live. They asked us about our (individual) material conditions. When they heard how little remuneration (those of us lucky enough to be remunerated ) we get for the time we spend working for the Workers University, they were surprised that we are even working. Incredulous, they kept asking: but what about pension contributions, health insurance, transport costs? Their emphasis on infrastructure, on logistics—on organisation of life, and therefore the struggle—merely confirmed the materiality of the symbolisations involved. The conversation underlined some lingering questions. That of affective infiltration and contagion manifesting as gentle paralysis and self-silencing through false assumptions or the question of mistrust as surrender to a lesser degree paranoia.The question of how the workers perceive valorisation of their work, experience and their timeand, conversely, of our own perceptions. How do we perceive our self-exploitation?

Our initial quandary was easily resolved, its resolution strengthened by our solidarity with the workers. We used our solidarity fund to pay for their first group day away in years, to repair their fish pond, and we supported them in resolving some other problems. In a sense, to quote the said document again, "if participatory research genuinely aims to put the relationship with research partners on an equal footing, then the socially dominant form of recognition must be used." In our case that form of recognition is deep solidarity, material and symbolic. Our initial quandary also unveiled so many questions. Above all, however, it strengthened our recognition that the issue of material (/symbolic) prerequisites is the most structural issue there is. Setting up the Workers’ University, we knew that academia needs reforming. And yet, under the influence of academic automaton modes, we initially discussed the matter of project finance (as part of our material conditions) under the heading of research ethics, where ‘ethics’ is usually a stand-in for superficially moral considerations and, ultimately, an anti-litigation exercise. The proper meaning of ethics not only encompasses material/symbolic structures at play but insists on their foregrounding. This is not just a matter of our relations with the workers in Dita, but something that we have not worked on deeply enough within our own group. This insistence on deep structurality of material/symbolic prerequisites and conditions must remain one of the most fundamental planes of our methodology. In a relaxed openness, it must replace the infiltration of mistrust and paranoia. This is not to make light of difficult and bearing questions, but to pose them more often, more readily and with a fiercely humorous solidarity.

**The question of competences or** "Challenges and tasks facing all the research partners" (as per mentioned document)

Dita’s workers’ struggle has been a battle for recuperating the value of their knowledge and experience, utterly denied and degraded through privatisation. The culture of ‘transition’ everywhere insists on a value system designed to strengthen inequality and class division; workers’ refusal to surrender their livelihoods or become ‘flexi’ (move to precariat) is portrayed as ‘unpreparedness for market conditions,’ as they are ‘unskilled,’ their experience “worthless,” they are, themselves turned into rejects, human refuse destined for deep exploitation. This struggle is far from over and these cultural battles are merely masking the matter. There are positive steps such as participation in trade unions’ collective bargaining processes, but they are still shy of full re-articulations. Our work in Dita, as we said, is the work of learning politically together. We all enter the learning with different competences, facing various “challenges and tasks.” Our position of insertion whilst remaining apart allows for acute observing powers. The observations we can offer, based on our position, experiences and competences can be perceived as problematic: they could (and do) undermine the *status quo*. On the other hand, we could find ourselves over-intervening and assuming roles we are incapable of inhabiting properly; of making promises we cannot deliver. The tension between under- and over-engagement can only be productive if we question both notions. This is the work of political learning—where is and how wide is the threshold between the over- and under-intervening? Can we only ascertain this in hindsight, or are there ways of negotiating as we go along?

Dita workers have so far expressed a very clear need to learn; some have even requested sort of mentoring (in a very broad sense) in issues they do not know enough about. Our initial plan was to cover this need through the *Open Classrooms*, but we have since learned that this will not suffice. Some of the workers believe that they need to obtain a sort of “literacy” in the relevant legal, economic and political matters so as to be able to actively and productively participate in *Open Classrooms*’ talks, about the basic questions that concern them, such as the labour law (and accompanying acts); such as the matter of articulating demands; the issue of self-organisation or group work (with a very clearly expressed demand for help in constructive, non-confrontational or non-conflict communication); as well as education in trade union struggle and organising (they expressly asked for training by the UNITE).

Following the workers’ cue, we began this work, and realised that it demands an approach more structured than merely printing out relevant legislation and handing them out. On the one hand, the workers asked for digest versions of the laws. On the other, they would like to be able to spend time (when it does not interfere with production or any other work) talking to us or other more expert conversants about points of interest. This demands a very flexible and yet structured engagement. It also demands of the team to learn and to engage more deeply, not merely with the material, but also with the consequences of this type of engagement. Our sessions with the workers began attracting attention of those in more senior positions. The same person would show up every time we prepared for group discussion and interrupt, derail and dominate the conversation. Of course, we could not tar this as obstruction without having observed the pattern and the ways in which it fits into other infra-political tensions among the workers. We could interpret these tensionsin many ways as do the workers themselves, and almost all would be reliably authentic interpretations. In order to move beyond and away from interpretations and towards a more constructive approach, we arranged to discuss the need for workers’ education more openly with the senior workers as well, arguing that it falls under the sort knowledge that the employer is obliged to provide[[5]](#footnote-5) and that, perhaps more appropriately in this case, the more ‘educated’ workers are in this sense, the fewer ‘unreasonable’ (expression used both by the workers and the senior workers) demands they will make.[[6]](#footnote-6)

***Finally, we pointed out, and it is crucial to continually keep making this much clear, that the workers wish to, may, and can learn.***

The workers have been mentoring us too. They are teaching us about their production process, their struggle. They have been smashing various prejudices that we have all had (aware or not) and those that we don’t even know we still have (as do the workers themselves, after all). The workers have taught us the truly affirming significance of knowledge and experience—of the very consciousness of that significance. They continue to teach us about the infinite ways in which the bodily and the symbolic are intertwined. By allowing us insight into their problems, the workers are reflecting to us our own problems in self-organising and working together. The relations between the roles we are stepping into whilst working as the Workers’ University are very dynamic. Let us quote the said PAR approach again, as a reminder of the fact that true solidarity and political friendship demand a readiness to confront, "The development of different roles is not without conflict. In the various phases, the relationships—and all other aspects of the research—must be continually reflected upon, and emerging conflicts must be dealt with jointly. As elaborated, for example, by MARSHALL & REASON (2007), continual self-reflection and reflective dialog become a necessity and a quality indicator for participatory research. [51]" The importance of this quote cannot be stated too strongly. Continual self-reflection and reflective dialogue are the most difficult part of team work to achieve. To be perfectly blunt: as a team, at this stage of our work (late 2016), we are still inconsistent in our engagement with such dialogue. Whatever the reasons for this, we have started learning that keeping silent and withdrawing engagement can have corrosive effect, not only for our work as a group, but also for our work in Dita.

**The importance of reflection**

"In participatory research, all participants are involved as knowing subjects who bring their perspectives into the knowledge-production process. The potential of the individual subjects to acquire knowledge is shaped by their biological makeup, their personal and social biography, and their social status.**[2)](http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1801/3334" \l "footnote_2" \o "Fußnote 2)**"

Out of this quote flows a need for many disclosures. How this happens could be as important for the process as that which is disclosed. We chose a slow burning process with the workers, allowing them to choose the time, the space and the company in which to reflect on their perspectives. We never explicitly asked for disclosure or proclaimed its importance. Rather, we shared, at appropriate moments, elements of our biographies, perspectives and experiences. We would refer to this process as “drinking coffee”: a safe chronotopic assemblage. This took a while to establish. There is a difference between drinking coffee and “drinking coffee” that, over time, assembles a safe space, what the PAR approach would refer to as “communicative space” in which first the need itself to communicate can germinate, and then also the occasion, the time and the context. This is more than building trust: by exchanging important but subjugated information we are redrawing both personal and epistemological boundaries—the work of feminist practice. We come to the matters of motivation, of dedication, perseverance and the emotional labour of support, to, in short, reproductive labour itself. The matter of labour then must also be examined as a matter of identification, with the problems, for example, as solidarity or empathy, or through far less conscious absorption.

Building upon this, and “following Pierre BOURDIEU's concept of sociological self-reflection (1993, 2002), the social determination of the participating knowing subjects, and of the participatory project, must also be reflected upon. The focus here is on the social conditions of possibility and the limits of the individual subjects and the participatory research project as a collective knowing subject. It is a question of reflecting on the political, economic, and social context conditions in which the research theme and the research project are embedded." (Ibid.) This question is only now beginning to form through conversations with the workers. It is only now that delimitations of this nature are becoming clearer in all of the relations at play: among the group, with the workers, and with other collaborators. The recommendation is not necessarily to rush for the outlines of such delimitations, but to be aware of their lurking from somewhere, from the very outset. To then, slowly keep addressing them within a framework of various questions and conversations on expectations and mutual understanding of those expectation. To reflect, alone and together, lets us perform qualitative checks, lets us think more deeply about how and why we are doing something right or wrong. ‘NO TIME FOR REFLECTION’ has become the default position. And whilst all of our material and symbolic working conditions are difficult and will continue to remain so, everywhere, reflection and reflective dialogue MUST become the norm. Otherwise, we are forever circling through unproductive conflicts with ourselves and others.

In reflecting on the lack of reflection, we have come up with a potential. One of our solutions is to turn reflection (in order to induce reflection) into a very explicit, almost performative method. Why? As our work is methodologically intersectional and transversal, one of the problems we have encountered was an over-reliance on classical research or scientific methods. Through our work on preliminary outlines for a methodology, we perceived tensions between the notions of ‘neutrality,’ ‘intervention’ and ‘political’ or ‘mobilising’ work. Following some discussion, we agreed that these divisions are artificial, that each research is immediately an intervention and that there hardly can be neutrality at all. But we have so far, neglected to address deeper articulation of our political work. This is not to say that we are not aware of working politically already. This is to say that we are not reflexive enough of how our understanding of working politically translates into our experience of working daily in Dita. Writing this handbook is one such attempt. As we keep progressing through it, the articulation will become clearer, the analysis deeper, and the approaches more lateral.

One such lateral approach, in this case planned, would be to understand ourselves as a sort of cognitive mirror for the workers. In their reflection, they would begin cognising and developing an approach to resolving their problems. This is, after all, to turn the mirror around: what we have seen of us in them has taught us many lessons.[[7]](#footnote-7) This mirror works in unexpected ways, for we have also seen in the workers that which we are not—let us circle back to the matter of class, for example.

**CURATING DATA/TRANSFERABILITY**

**Distinctive features of the production and analysis of the "data"**

In our way of working, determining a clear frame for curating data is an almost irresolvable problem. The inscription of impossibility is fortunate, however, as it is precisely through searching, through prolonged periods of uncertainty that, despite the pain and anxiety, we find new depths of understanding. We have also observed this in the factory, where the lack of resolution has lead to more productive searching. The following two quotes could serve as part of the introduction. We will address this problem further on in a rather more structural way.

"To a certain extent, research with partners to whom the rituals of academic research are alien and unfamiliar—which is frequently the case in participatory research—calls for new methods of data collection. The question of the "appropriateness of the method to the participants" is particularly relevant here." In our case—in the case of any organisation working towards transferable models and knowledge—we also need to point out the alien unfamiliarity of the rituals of multimedia production. "Methods of data collection should therefore build on the participants' everyday experiences. This makes it easier for them to understand the concrete procedures. However, it means that new methods of data collection must be developed that are appropriate to the concrete research situation and the research partners." A rather significant ‘however’ must be invoked here. We are not a typical academic outfit, although a level of scientific consistency is necessary for the inter-feeding that this project must attempt. We are not a multimedia production outfit either, though it falls to us to handle such tasks. This is both our advantage and a source of frustration.

If we were to do start from scratch, with the knowledge we have now, we would have gone through some conversations (and recording of outcomes) of what kind of data everyone expects and how they would like to see them used. Our production/CRC team has, from the outset operated within a field of data collection demarcated by two positions: project demands (a multimedia archive) and preferences and “everyday experiences” of the workers. This means that data collection took place in ways far less formal than expected of an academic research project, not to mention the understaffing when it comes to analysis and processing of “data.” At the same time, our plan has been from the outset to work on some of the segments of processing with the workers. PAR approach offers some reasoning:

"As far back as 1967, GLASER & STRAUSS (1967) stressed the desirability of conducting data analysis in groups that include lay people. This applies particularly to participatory research because it ensures that the various perspectives flow into the interpretation during the data analysis process and that the research partners gain an insight into the background to their own viewpoints and that of the other members."

At issue is not just the interpretation of the meaning, but also of representation, of curating the data. At issue is, in fact, a lot more. To make a full circle back to the beginning, to material prerequisites and the need for an open, egalitarian field, whether in shaping the direction of conversation, or the representation of data. And where we cannot take anyone’s time of knowledge for granted, we also cannot take it for granted that this knowledge or interest in sharing time does not extend to thinking representation (or processing, or interpretation, or any other aspect of work). This is not to say that everything must be made open to everyone and everyone must try their hand: it is to say that there must always exist a possibility of proper inclusion."In participatory research, by contrast [to the academic invisibility of the author's voice], the various contributions to the results must be clearly visible. RIECKEN et al. (2004) call for an "Ethics of Voice" in participatory action research."

The ethics of voice, especially when taking voice to mean expression, includes also this proposal: "When discussing data collection (Subsection 4.4 above), mention was made of the use of visual and performative methods. The application of such procedures in the representation stage, too, can make the research findings easier to understand." In other words, it is the image, the sound, the movement, and all that is non-verbal and non-linguistic affective (and contemplative) labour that also falls under research data, thus entering the regime of representation of the research process. We are not looking only at the human: machines have spoken and ‘nature’ made itself known in the factory. The question, of course, is how to curate such research data? We are dealing with a solid "body of material” as well as with a mass of ‘informal,’ emotional and affective knowledge, notes, memories, etc. How do we wish to also account for this, to curate this type of data? These are important questions. The ethics of the voice must encompass this type of multivocality. Yet multivocality also means that our voices, in creating (even at the lowest register of visibility) the concept of the archive—as the representation of the process and the work—will be very present, almost dominant. What we are aiming for is a degree of liberation from the habitual paradigms of representation of labour. To try and step away from automatisms at first, but then to develop a disciplined multivocal approach to the concept of the archive and to curating the archive/methodology as a web page. Our office in Dita will become a library and workshop space housing the paper and longer electronic versions of the Workers’ University’s online presence.

The solution and advantage usually lie in crazy ‘ambition’ and courage. All of our labour is pretty much affective labour (no decision is ever rational, anyway, as cutting edge neuroscience tell us). In order to curate our work well and comprehensively, we ought to take a cue from Bertolt Brecht and first separate and liberate all the components of the medium. Then, liberated as they are, we allow them to group in a sort of a communist medium: that could mean writing laws as poetry or giving precedence to images of ambivalent symbolism.

**Our work continues..**

Workers’ University, September 2016

1. We are at the moment researching workers’ education, so these conclusions must be taken as provisional—though the critique certainly holds, the registers may end up altered. This is the work for the coming period, to be undertaken in combination with an appraisal of the institution of workers' universities in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, currently underway. This work must form part of our work on the continuities of workers' struggle. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. JargBergold& Stefan Thomas, "Participatory Research Methods: A Methodological Approach in Motion," Forum: Qualitative Social Research, Volume 13, No. 1, Art. 30 – January 2012; http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1801/3334#g4 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. We received some advice stating that “whatever the amount we tell the workers, it would triple down the grapevine,” corroding trust and solidarity. The option under which the only ‘clean’ way is to profess a ‘pure’ (read pious) altruistic (read martyring) engagement is as disingenuous as it is patronising. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. *FBiH Labour law, VI- ZASTITA ZAPOSLENIKA, Item 48.,* http://fbihvlada.gov.ba/bosanski/zakoni/1999/zakoni/zakoni%20x/zak%20o%20radu%20bos.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. On that score, we are considering (chiming with some other initiatives in the region) compiling a more comprehensive learning aid, couple with a campaign for this sort of education to become part of school curriculum and labour law. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The work described in this article could be an interesting departure point: <http://dematerijalizacijaumetnosti.com/mape-2005-2009-ii-deo-mapiranje-gradova-i-traceva/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)