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Cinematic Affects in War: The Visual Anthropology of Mantas Kvedaravičius

Carlo Cubero

Tallinn University

In Memoriam Mantas Kvedaravičius (1976–2022)

This paper offers a reading of Mantas Kvedaravičius' research findings from the perspective of visual anthropology. The paper describes the continuities between Kvedaravičius' theoretical concerns on the anthropology of war and his filmmaking approach. These continuities imply an epistemological position that approaches research cinematically and proceeds to write from that position. Kvedaravičius' work is illustrative of research that takes audio-visual ethnography seriously and works through the possibilities and limitations of different media to produce new stories on the human experience.

Key words: *visual anthropology, anthropological filmmaking, ethnography, anthropology of war, fieldwork.*

Šiame straipsnyje siūloma į Manto Kvedaravičiaus tyrimus pažvelgti iš vizualinės antropologijos perspektyvos. Straipsnyje išryškinamos sąsajos tarp Kvedaravičiaus teorinių svarstymų apie karo antropologiją ir jo filmų kūrimo metodo. Tokios sąsajos numato epistemologinę poziciją, pagal kurią į tyrimus žvelgiama kinematografiškai. Kvedaravičiaus darbas iliustruoja tokius tyrimus, kuriuose pasitelkiama audiovizualinė etnografija, kur dirbama su skirtingų medijų galimybėmis ir jų apribojimais siekiant sukurti naujus pasakojimus apie žmogiškąją patirtį.

Raktiniai žodžiai: *vizualinė antropologija, antropologinis kinas, etnografija, karo antropologija, lauko tyrimas.*

Preamble

Two weeks into the siege of Mariupol, Diana Berg, a well-known cultural personality in the city, posted two addresses in a chat-room used by refugees to organise evacuations and supply runs. One address she gave was her apartment.

She wanted someone to check if any of her friends had shown up at the flat and needed to get out of the city. 'If not get them out [they could] at least check on them and find out if they were alive,' Berg told Proekt Media (Dumev, Balakhonova, Maglov 2022). The second address she gave was her mother-in-law's, Lina.

When Mantas Kvedaravičius showed up at Lina's apartment a few days later, she had been without communication for weeks and was not expecting anyone.

My neighbour had borrowed a screwdriver from me, and when there was a knock on the door, I thought it was him. I opened it and there was Mantas: 'Hello, are you so-and-so? You have three minutes: get your bag and your passport!' I stared at him, I was seeing him for the first time in my life, and I said, 'I have cats! I have six cats! I can't!' (Dumev, Balakhonova, Maglov 2022).

Kvedaravičius was part of a team that was escorting people out of Mariupol. The city had been encircled but there were some roads that were still open, though very dangerous. Lina was one of six people that the team collected that morning. The plan was to walk to a minibus, parked three kilometres away from Lina's flat, join with other minibuses to form a convoy, and drive northwest towards Zaporizhzhya.

The group stumbled upon a Russian position before they reached the minibus. Kvedaravičius and Sasha, the driver of the minibus, were detained and taken indoors while the rest of the group waited outside. When Sasha was released, he described both himself and Kvedaravičius being stripped and searched for wounds, tattoos, or distinctive marks. Sasha was let go, but Kvedaravičius was detained pending further examination of a bruise.

The group waited until sunrise, hiding from street gunfights, before making the painful decision to proceed to the minibus without Kvedaravičius. Their minibus joined with three other minibuses that proceeded to drive out of the city. After bypassing a Russian checkpoint, Sasha retrieved his mobile phone from its hiding place in the minibus and threw it out the window. Phones are a valuable resource for interrogators, and a person's fate can very well depend on their phone's content. Like Sasha, Kvedaravičius had hidden his phone in the minibus the day before. The phone was smuggled across the frontline and the video files in the phone were incorporated into *Mariupolis 2* (2022), winner of the Jury's Special Award at the 75th Cannes Film Festival and winner of the Best Documentary Award by the 2022 European Film Academy.

Introduction: life in the midst of war

In *Mariupolis 2*, a few dozen people have sought refuge in the basement of the Christian Baptist Evangelical Church, a red brick building that is one of the few standing structures in the vicinity. The church is located a few kilometres

from the Azovstal Iron and Steel Works and the neighbourhood represents the frontline. The people in the church cook, discuss, go on supply patrols, clean, and wait in the midst of an active combat zone. Occasionally, the camera gazes at the landscape through a window, or shows the immediate surroundings of the building, as if going for a walk in the yard.

It is a haunting film. The scenes elicit a series of paradoxical sensations that are captured in excruciating detail. The sound design, for instance, consists of birds chirping to an a-rhythmic thudding of bombs and random clapping of rifle fire. The randomness of the thudding, that the next bomb can land on your house, that these bombs are being sent by people, that we know how it ends, makes for some difficult moments in the film. A lady cooks outdoors, over an open fire, with a focus that is unfazed by the bombs falling a few hundred metres away. Men scavenge for resources amongst corpses and ruined homes. A man sweeps the sidewalk in a street that is piled with rubble.

The film depicts a world with no rhythm, where institutions have collapsed, where people do not have recourse to the law or have access to anything else but their immediate physical surroundings. For Hanna Bilobrova, the person who smuggled the footage across the front lines, what is at stake in a situation like this is life itself; not love of country, not even food.¹ But life itself, to physically exist. The people in the film do not leave the church because to leave is to die, whereas to stay together is to survive. For Bilobrova, whatever sense of community developed in the church's basement revolved around a sense of gratitude for being alive.

Kvedaravičius' anthropological research focused on understanding the experience of life in the midst of war, where war is not the exception but the context in which people develop their lives. His peer-reviewed publications concern themselves with identifying a vocabulary to capture the pace and tone of the experience of civilians living in war zones (see Kvedaravicius 2013; Kvedaravicius 2018; Kvedaravicius, Bilobrova 2019). Kvedaravičius' previous two films also address the civilian experience of war. His first film *Barzakh* (2011), filmed in Chechnya during the final years of the Second Chechen War, shows different ways in which people seek justice in the aftermath of military operations. His second documentary *Mariupolis* (2016), filmed in 2014 during the start of the Russo-Ukrainian War, captures a sense of the city's atmosphere through a montage of various narrative threads.

In what follows, I offer a reading of Kvedaravičius' research findings from the perspective of visual anthropology, specifically from a concern about the

¹ Discussion with Hanna Bilobrova, New York Baltic Film Festival, 9 November 2022, *Scandinavia House*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEUGNwD_bNA&t=431s&ab_channel=ScandinaviaHouse [accessed on 10 02 2023].

roles that films and texts play in the production of anthropological knowledge. I would like to suggest continuities between Kvedaravičius' theoretical concerns on the anthropology of war and his filmmaking approach. These continuities imply an epistemological position that approaches research cinematically and proceeds to write from that position. In this formulation, 'cinema' is a technology that directs the researcher's attention to fields of human experience that would not have been afforded with other technologies. It opposes the view that understands filmmaking as a data-gathering event, or as an instance to record social theory in action. It rather looks for ways in which the experience of filmmaking generates new insights and encourages the researcher to develop their own anthropological approach. In this relation, 'anthropology' functions more as a theoretical frame of reference, an approach, rather than an institution that produces propositional concepts to prescribe the world.

Thinking with a camera

Kvedaravičius' films are made predominantly of long static shots, all hand-held. The camera position is such that it follows the action, rather than leads it, the scenes are improvised, and the action develops spontaneously. The people in the film are aware they are being filmed, and engage the filmmaker directly. In some instances, we hear the filmmaker's voice and trembling breath from behind the camera. It is an approach that recalls what David MacDougall called an 'unprivileged camera style', where the appearance of a film stands 'as an artefact of the social and physical encounter between the filmmaker and the subject' (MacDougall 1998: 203–204).

In this register, the filmmaker relinquishes the privileges of an omniscient narrator and assumes a position of discovery, doing research with a camera. Filmmaking, in this instance, is not about documenting historical events. Rather, the process of making a film is an exercise in understanding the world. It is a research project where the fieldwork experience is mediated through the filmmaking process, where making the film and researching it occur at the same time. For Jean Rouch:

It is this aspect of fieldwork that marks the uniqueness of the ethnographic filmmaker: instead of elaborating and editing his notes after returning from the field, he must, under penalty of failure, make his synthesis at the exact moment of observation. In other words, he must create his cinematic report, bending it or stopping it, at the time of the event itself. There is no such thing here as writing cuts in advance, or fixing the order of sequences. Rather, it is a risky game where each shot is determined by the one preceding, and determines the one to follow (Rouch 1974: 41).

For Jean Rouch, ethnographic filmmaking entails developing a cinematic awareness during fieldwork, to think with the possibilities and limitations of the filmmaking technology and its effect on the fieldwork experience. Rouch described this state of awareness as a 'cine-trance', an embodied filmic consciousness where the filmmaker's perception is filtered through the viewfinder and headphones (Rouch 1974: 41). It describes the state of mind filmmakers find themselves in when collecting footage: i.e. approach an event as if it were a scene, attuned to the social aesthetics, to the materialities, objects, body movements, the sound, the light source.

The Soviet filmmaker Dziga Vertov, an inspiration for Rouch, theorised this effect in the 1920s. Vertov's research concerned itself with understanding the 'language of cinema', to identify the peculiar faculties through which cinema communicates without reference to theatre or literature (Vertov 1984). Vertov argued that the language of cinema was predicated on cinema's unique capability of recording scenes that mimicked real-time movement, which could then be rearranged, speeded up, slowed down, double exposed, etc. The product of this exercise is a film that does not represent a copy of the world, but a renewed examination of it (Hicks 2007). The 'truth' that is expressed in this approach is not a pro-filmic reality, but the reality that is constituted through the medium itself, the truth of cinema (Vertov 1984).

In this formulation, the film's judgement is not provided to the audience by the filmmaker or the film subjects. It is implied in the camera style, in the film's tone, developed through the audience's connection to the piece. An unprivileged position acknowledges that any knowledge or certainty that is produced through cinema will always be provisional and situational, not conclusive or prescriptive (MacDougall 1998). In effect, the reality that is presented is not the reality of anthropological theory, as found in the academic record, but the reality that is generated in the course of making the film, the reality of fieldwork. The result is a film where people are not approached as providers of research material or illustrations of the filmmaker's categories, but as people that exist outside the film (MacDougall 1998: 204). The ethnographic work, in this instance, is about contextualising the research materials in a way that is observant of grassroots idioms.

The narrative of *Barzakh* (2011), for example, consists of various observational threads that inform the film's tone. The footage was collected in Grozny from 2006 to 2009, the final years of the Second Chechen War. The film shows the protocols that different people follow to seek redress for crimes committed during the war: e.g. submitting documents, following up leads with lawyers, consulting a diviner, etc. However, while people keep themselves busy seeking justice, their cases do not proceed, and the people get stuck in a procedural knot, a sort

of limbo (see Kvedaravicius 2013). Not all the characters in the film meet and interact, but their collective experience conveys a sense of imbalance between the experience of the justice seeker and the idea of justice as it is institutionalised through the legal system, NGOs, and humanitarian aid. The film's ending raises the question of the absurdity of seeking justice from a legal system that is controlled by the accused (see Kvedaravicius 2018).

The film presents its case without extraneous material like voice-over narration, interviews, or a map. The emphasis is more on the interaction between objects, bodies, time, space, and power in the context of war. It is an approach that lends itself to focus on, for example, the material objects (e.g. the paperwork, the diviner's tools, the kinetics of immobility) as they express themselves cinematically, rather than discursively. The film's style speaks to an approach that emphasises the experience of the fieldwork itself and not so much the theoretical contradictions of the anthropological record.

The affect of war

'War', akin to Old High German *werran* 'to confuse'

In a 2019 peer-reviewed article, Kvedaravičius and Bilobrova describe their approach to researching the Russia-Ukraine War. They suggest that an analysis that is based on political strategies, national identities, and political economy generates inconsistent categories that confuse and, ultimately, substantiate the conflict (Kvedaravicius, Bilobrova 2019). Their approach to studying political discourse and violence in Mariupol is to look at the affects, aesthetics, and performances that generate the political discourse in the first place (Kvedaravicius, Bilobrova 2019). It is an approach based on participating in and observing people's daily lives, focusing on the grassroots level of experiences, and engaging on a *realpolitik* register (Kvedaravicius, Bilobrova 2019).

The paper describes a scene in *Mariupolis* (2016), where a group of people argue in public over what seems to be history politics. A middle-aged man, wearing a formal Soviet military uniform, his chest full of medals, seems to be the centre of attention.

'I am from Mariupol. I fought for Mariupol,' he says to a person off-camera. We hear him continue a few moments later: 'Your city? ... My family have lived in this city for over 300 years. We are Pavlovs. And you have only been here for forty years. What does it mean, forty years? We Pavlovs have lived here in Mariupol since 1854' (Kvedaravicius, Bilobrova 2019: 99).

The image is in focus, but the camera is wandering, floating through the crowd, not really staying on any one subject. The camera is too close to the crowd to get a sense of perspective. Most of the time, we do not get to see who

is speaking. The voices of the people arguing come and go and we only catch a phrase here or there. We hear accusations of treason, of fascism, of not supporting Mariupol, threats, who is the liberator, from what, and calls for tolerance.

The scene was recorded by Kvedaravičius on 9 May 2015 as part of his anthropological fieldwork in Mariupol. It can be read as an exercise in engaging with the complexities of the city's identity politics in the context of the war. The scene shows a cacophony of voices, discrepant signifiers, and icons that have been recontextualised beyond recognition. It expresses a sense of how the city's politics cannot be summarised into binary oppositions. Instead, the city is presented as a discursive palimpsest, a site made up of an extraordinary array of different encounters (i.e. Russian, Greek, Soviet, Ukrainian, European) whose tensions continue to linger across time.

It is this lingering that in the course of the article I conceptualised as the affective conditions of politics. I argued that the shift of the analysis from the processes of political strategies and shaping national identities towards the examination of such affective condition, allows the understanding of the politics as actively created by affective life, where political discourses and violence, and thus armed conflicts and their resolutions, are better understood through the careful analysis of performative and aesthetic underpinnings of their participants (Kvedaravicius, Bilobrova 2019: 99–100).

The paper develops its case for a discussion on the 'affective conditions of politics' through a discussion on the Russian concept of *peremirya*, which denotes 'a cease-fire' (Kvedaravicius, Bilobrova 2019). The idea is to take into account the metaphorical possibilities of *peremirya* to describe and offer an insight into the affective condition in which Mariupol politics are created.

The ceasefire, currently in its fifth year, is both fitful and permeant. Sartana and Mariupole have been bombed on several occasions since the Minsk protocols was announced. The battles in its vicinity are sometimes fierce, and the main concern of the residents is, whether or not the attacks will repeat during the [Victory Day] celebration this year. It's rather close to the connotations that the Russian term of the ceasefire, *peremirja*, suggests. While the root of the word *mir* denotes peace, the prefix *pere*, signifies particular temporality: a brief and random instant or action to be carried through outside homogenous time flow. If, to sample similar use of the prefixes, *peredishka* (Rus. respite, lit. time for breathing), both break the flow of inert time and condense the action into a singular moment even if that very action is or supposed to be the part of the time flow. Yet, the paradox of *peremirja*, is that it does not signify the temporal cessation of war, rather it indicates a sort of breathing, where *breathing* and *choking* are conterminous (Kvedaravicius, Bilobrova 2019: 80).

In this formulation, *peremirya* describes a life that is lived in between breaths, in a state of suffocation, gasping, akin to the paralysis that happens when one

receives too much information. *Peremirya* is not being used here in a legal sense, nor does it address a particular ideological contradiction of the conflict. *Peremirya* describes an atemporal condition where the mundane is experienced in a context of extreme violence. It speaks to an overwhelming experience that cannot be contained in a single representational form (Kvedaravicius, Bilobrova 2019: 95). For Kvedaravičius and Bilobrova, *peremirya* is an attempt to describe the tone of the civilian experience of war, the affects and performances that actively create politics on a grassroots level, and to produce concepts that challenge the continuation of the war (Kvedaravicius, Bilobrova 2019).

Kvedaravičius' research questions chart a different path from 20th-century approaches that emphasised the cause of violence with an eye to offering insights into human nature. Chagnon's classic argument on violence among the Yanomami, for instance, is a comment on the irrational and passionate origins of the human species (Chagnon 1968). Chagnon describes violence and killing as illustrative of human nature in the absence of civilization, society, the nation-state, and rational institutions (Chagnon 1968). The argument recalls the Hobbesian position that strikes a correlation between a strong sovereign and peace. In this position, the response to the Malthusian catastrophe lies in the further development of institutions, like the state, which would monopolise the use of force in the pursuit of impersonal rational policy and peace.

A response to this discussion can be found in Ferguson, who argues that war is not innate or inevitable (Ferguson 2008). From this perspective, war is not what happens in the absence of institutions or nation-states. Rather, these institutions transform practices of already-existing violence into war. War, for Ferguson, is not so much related to the question of human nature as to the development of inequality, the institutionalisation of power, and the creation of an enemy (Ferguson 2008). In this approach, the causes of conflict are sought out by profiling the specific historical conditions that drive war events. It is an approach that emphasises war's situational, rather than predetermined circumstances.

Kvedaravičius' research did not engage with this level of theoretical abstraction. His approach to the participant observation process was more attuned to the corporeal experience of war, to 'the way space and politics interact with the human body',² rather than to the theoretical concerns of the anthropological community. His research approach suggests an interest in developing a sense of place and abstract from there, to produce theory from the experience of fieldwork. It is an empirical position that looks for meaning within the phenomenon itself.

² Boyce, Laurence; Kvedaravicius, Mantas. 2016. Director: 'I have faith in the residents of Mariupol,' 20 April 2016, *cineuropa*. <https://cineuropa.org/en/interview/307710/> [accessed on 10 02 2023].

Kvedaravičius' texts and documentaries represent a body of work that attempts to capture intangible dimensions of life in war through a description of the quotidian. The approach recalls aspects of the Malinowskian tradition where researchers immerse themselves in an unfamiliar environment and collect research materials through a systematic observation of daily life.

Here belong such things as the routine of a man's working day, the details of his care of the body, of the manner of taking food and preparing it; the tone of conversational and social life around the village fires, the existence of strong friendships or hostilities, and of passing sympathies and dislikes between people; the subtle yet unmistakable manner in which personal vanities and ambitions are reflected in the behaviour of the individual and in the emotional reactions of those who surround him (Malinowski 2013: 14).

Malinowski's ethnographic approach begins with an appreciation of the mundane features of daily life, and builds a narrative from these observations. The agenda is to develop an immersive account of a social phenomenon, to suggest a whole by taking stock of its constitutive parts. It would oppose, for example, approaches associated with the scientific method, where the purpose of the experimental phase of the research is to determine whether observations fit with the expectations that have been deduced from a hypothesis. In Malinowskian ethnography, the object of study would be features of life that cannot be estimated through language, the imponderables through which social structures are shaped and held together (Malinowski 2013).

Kvedaravičius' research displays an interest in conveying a first-person perspective of the atmosphere of a place through the careful observation of daily life. His films and texts do not offer clear resolutions, conclusions, or prescriptions to the world. He rather mirrored the anthropological tradition of recognising that knowledge is always situational, and that ethnography is about conversing with a specific perspective.

Conclusion

Mantas Kvedaravičius' research is illustrative of an approach to fieldwork where the emphasis is on generating, rather than collecting, research materials. The work is not about discovering a new insight into human nature or into the concept of war. It is more about thinking through the relationships that are enabled in the field: i.e. the relationships that are generated through the filmmaking process. Kvedaravičius' films and peer-reviewed publications are presented in the first-person singular, and they display an interest in the subject matter that goes beyond the research project's timetable. His approach to fieldwork would contrast with the practice that emphasises data collection and evidence gathering, and maintains a critical distance from the research subjects.

Kvedaravičius' filmmaking approach is informed by the possibilities of knowing the world through filmmaking: to conduct research with a camera. It is an approach where filmmakers immerse themselves in the world and film the process of discovery. It is based on developing trusting relationships with the research subjects and improvises the footage from that position. The films suggest an observant gaze towards the events filmed, where the camera follows the action. Cinema, in this approach, is not a tool that aids observation, but a technology that generates relationships and has an effect on the filmmaker's consciousness. The ethnographer's work, in this instance, is not about controlling the fieldwork evidence against an anthropological hypothesis, but is related more to working with cinema's capabilities to generate new anthropological approaches. From this angle, the truth that is sought in these works is not a pro-filmic reality (the reality of the world 'out there'), but the reality that is made possible by the specific inter-subjective relations that are constituted through the research process.

Kvedaravičius' peer-reviewed publications are written from the same fieldwork experience that produced the films. Like the films, the texts bring the reader's attention to the dynamics that inform a sense of place, its tone, and the affects of place, and contextualise them in relation to local idioms. It is a form of writing that focuses on the role that affects and senses of place play in producing political discourse. The effect is a research programme that takes seriously the sensuous, affective and corporeal experiences of participant observation, and generates insights that speak to the grassroots experience.

Kvedaravičius' work indicates ways in which the experience of conducting reflexive fieldwork generates relationships, enables new experiences, and is a transformative event to be taken seriously on its own terms. His work is illustrative of a project that takes audio-visual ethnography seriously and seeks to understand the possibilities, limitations and relationship between different mediums, e.g. text and cinema, to produce new stories on the human experience.

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Kinematografiniai afektai kare: Manto Kvedaravičiaus vizualinė antropologija

Carlo Cubero

Summary

Šiame straipsnyje siūloma Manto Kvedaravičiaus tyrimus vertinti iš vizualinės antropologijos perspektyvos, tiksliau, kalbėti apie filmų ir tekstų vaidmenį kuriant antropologines žinias. Šiuo konkrečiu atveju aš vartoju sąsają, kurias išvelgiu tarp Kvedaravičiaus teorinių svarstymų, susijusių su karo antropologija, ir jo filmų kūrimo metodo, sąvoką. Tokios sąsajos implikuoja epistemologinę poziciją, pagal kurią į tyrimus žvelgiama kinematografiškai. Pagal šią formuluotę „kinas“ yra technologija, nukreipianti tyrėjo dėmesį į žmogaus patirties klodus, į kuriuos nebūtų galima patekti naudojant kitas technologijas. Ji prieštarauja požiūriui, kuris kino kūrimą supranta kaip duomenų rinkimą arba kaip pavyzdį, skirtą užfiksuoti socialinę teoriją veiksmo metu. Veikiau ieškoma būdų, kaip filmų kūrimo patirtis sukuria naujas išvalgas, skatina tyrėją plėtoti savo antropologinį požiūrį. Šiame santykiyje „antropologija“ veikia labiau kaip teorinė atskaitos sistema, kaip požiūris, o ne institucija, kurianti propozicines sąvokas, skirtas pasauliui nusakyti.

Kvedaravičiaus tyrimas iliustruoja tokį požiūrį į lauko tyrimą, kuris akcentuoja ne tyrimo medžiagos rinkimą, o jos generavimą. Jis daugiau skirtas apmąstyti santykius, kurie užmezgami filmo kūrimo metu. Kvedaravičiaus savo filmus ir kolegų recenzuotas publikacijas pateikia pirmuoju asmeniu. Jo darbai rodo domėjimąsi tema peržengiant mokslinių tyrimų projekto ribas. Kvedaravičiaus požiūris į lauko tyrimą kontrastuoja su praktika, kurioje pabrėžiamas duomenų rinkimas, įrodymų kaupimas, kur išlaikomas kritinis atstumas nuo tiriamųjų.

Kvedaravičiaus filmavimo metodas grindžiamas pasaulio pažinimo per filmą galimybe. Tai tyrimas pasitelkus kino kamerą, požiūris, kai režisierius pasineria į pasaulį ir filmuoja atradimo procesą. Jis remiasi pasitikėjimu grįstų santykių su tiriamaisiais užmezgimu ir nufilmuota medžiaga improvizuoja būtent iš šios pozicijos. Kamerai sekant veiksmą, filmas pasiūlo filmuojamus įvykius stebėti. Šiuo požiūriu kinas nėra įrankis, padedantis stebėti, bet technologija, kuri kuria santykius ir daro poveikį kūrėjo sąmonei. Šiuo atveju etnografo darbas yra susijęs ne su lauko tyrimų įrodymų kontroliavimu bandant įrodyti antropologinę hipotezę, o su kino teikiamomis galimybėmis, padedančiomis kurti naujus antropologinius požiūrius. Kvedaravičiaus darbuose tiesos ieškoma ne profilminėje tikrovėje (pasaulio „ten“ realybėje), bet tikrovėje, kurią įgalina specifiniai subjektyvūs santykiai, užsimezgantys tyrimo metu.

Kvedaravičiaus publikacijos parašytos remiantis ta pačia lauko tyrimų patirtimi, kuri buvo pasitelkta kuriant filmus. Kaip ir filmai, tekstai atkreipia skaitytojo dėmesį į dinamiką, kuri lemia vietos pojūtį, garsus ir afektus, kontekstualizuoja juos vietos idiomų atžvilgiu. Tai tokia rašymo forma, kai daugiausia dėmesio skiriama vaidmeniui, kurį afektai ir vietos pojūčiai atlieka kuriant politinį diskursą. Tokio požiūrio rezultatas – tyrimų programa, kurioje atsižvelgiama į juslinę, afektinę ir kūnišką dalyvio stebėjimo patirtį, kur generuojamos išvalgos, nusakančios eilinių žmonių patirtį.

Kvedaravičiaus darbas rodo, kaip refleksyvaus lauko tyrimo patirtis sukuria santykius, leidžia įgyti naujų patirčių ir yra transformuojantis įvykis. Jo darbas yra projekto, kuriame rimtai žiūrima į audiovizualiąją etnografiją, siekiama suprasti skirtingų medijų, tokių kaip tekstas ir kinas, galimybes, ribas ir santykį kuriant naujus pasakojimus apie žmogaus patirtį, pavyzdys.

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