



Second-hand Dinners

2019
discussion gathering + collection & dispersion (food ingredients, notes, visual materials)
as a part of the project *After-Ripening & Corruption: Paraphrasing Manners* at Kunsthalle Exnergasse in Vienna

Paraphrasing Manners is a project in Vienna, dealing with social manners and gestures in search of behaviors that can serve as slow-acting antidote to lead society toward its ideal. As a way to research through discussion for the project, I conducted *Second-hand Dinners*, a series of dinner gathering. It became the experiments to experience the situations concerning social manners for all of us, as a host, a guest, and a member of society.

SET THE TABLE FOR MANNERS

I sent the invitation to the people I got connected originally via three of my old friends (respectively in UK, Norway and Sweden) and a Japanese in Vienna I got to know as 'first-hand'. I asked the invitees to bring along their friend - a 'second-hand' guest. I had five attendees for each session. To think collectively, I posed the questions on society inspired by my experiences in Vienna and elsewhere. I prepared a pot dish, reflecting the propagation of foreign food.

I struggled to invite people to compose a dynamics among them, prepare the food that fulfils the conditions, moderate the discussion, etc. While I came to look at the manners of the invitees in the way they react to my invitation, come and eat the dinner, and socialise with others, I learnt some attendees also observed the manners of others. I referred to the experiences from the previous session to experiment anew and improve in the following one.

TRANSLATIONS AS RECORD

In order to prioritise the qualities of discussion and social relation at table, instead of making audio-/video recording during the session, I asked the attendees to 'translate' what they had experienced into any forms, such as list, essay, or drawing, after the dinner.

Two attendees, who were present at all sessions, narrated the previous sessions to other attendees at the following sessions. The 'translations' of the attendees show different perspectives and interpretations, as well as misremembrances and creativity - diary narrating his psychological landscape at table, abstract drawing capturing the impression, video depicting the dynamic amongst us. The gathered as a whole appear to bear some 'generality' and 'objectivity', required qualities for documentation.

HAND DOWN TO RELEASE

At the Kunsthalle, I presented each sessions with the ingredients of the dish served, a post-it with the name of the dish, a few lines of its anecdote but its recipe, and a relationship chart of the attendees and me, together with the 'translations' from the participants on the table.

Afterwards, I handed each set of ingredients and translations to people not present at any of the *Second-hand Dinners*, telling it is up to them if to cook the same dish and discuss the same subjects, but ideally to use it for a social occasion.



Hi Mako, here is a list of the topics that I remembered from our discussion on Saturday:
Smartphones - indispensability and addiction
Live performances - cultural differences in the audiences' reaction
Talking to strangers - acceptance across cultures
National identity - e.g. Turkish, Norwegian, Austrian, how it changes according to where you are at.
These are some of the things we discussed while you were recording. Then we talked about other things such as hygiene, hygienic standards in public and private etc.
As for the translation, I may need some more time. I am pretty busy this week, and next Wednesday I'm going away for one week. Maybe I can do it when I get back?
Is that too late? Let me know. Best, Kosta

(left page) a snapshot taken during the discussion (right page, from top to bottom) a note with the name of the dish and its anecdote, together with the relation chart of the attendees and me, from the first *Second-hand Dinner*; still from the video by an attendee, as a translation of the first *Second-hand Dinner*; a translation of the third *Second-hand Dinner* sent from an attendee via an SNS; a set of the ingredients and 'translations' of the second *Second-hand Dinner*, which was handed to its next 'translator'

