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BIOPOLITICS, NECROPOLITICS AND DE-COLONIALITY

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Biopolitics, Necropolitics and De-Coloniality

by Marina Gržinić,
guest editor

COLUMN

The invitation by Răzvan Ion and Eugen Rădescu to edit the present issue of Pavilion magazine came as a gift in the literal meaning of the word. Šefik Šeki Tatlić and I have been working for a long time to prepare the manuscripts of a book we wish to publish together, and until now it has remained an open question as to whether we would find a publisher in the future. Therefore, their invitation came as a possibility to publish the manuscripts in Pavilion, a magazine with an excellent reputation, and to transform one part of the magazine into a book, which is in any case what Pavilion magazine already is when it comes down to it. Each issue is a book!

Being a guest editor, it is as well an opportunity to reinforce collaboration. With Ion and Rădescu I have for many years shared a deep networking and exchange, possibilities for a productive

and critical reflection of our work. Being a guest editor, it is as well an opportunity to invite writers who I see as the most internal collaborators of a project of intervention into theory, arts, the social and political that will allow for a position of class struggle within theory in order to build a different context for writing, understanding, intervening. With Sebastjan Leban, we are co-editors of the platform and journal Reartikulacija, Ljubljana, and along with Walter Mignolo and Madina Tlostanova, we share a common theoretical and political ground toward the de-coloniality of knowledge. I had the opportunity to read Nejra Nuna Čengić's brilliant text while acting as her supervisor for a research project she was completing as part of her MA studies at the ISH, Ljubljana, Slovenia. I asked her if she could provide the English translation of her text, which was originally written in the Bosnian language.

I would like to extend my note of thanks to those people and institutions without which this present issue would not have been possible to produce. First I would like to thank Răzvan Ion and Eugen Rădescu, co-directors of the Pavilion project, who conduct numerous activities in Romania and internationally. The Institute of Philosophy at The Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts, Ljubljana, where I work as researcher, and which has provided the context for my writings. The Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, where, as a professor, I am given the constant opportunity to exchange with brilliant students and colleagues. The Reartikulacija co-founders Tanja Passoni and Staš Kleindienst, with whom

Sebastjan Leban and I founded the platform Reartikulacija. The writers in the present Pavilion issue, Nejra Nuna Čengić, Madina Tlostanova, Sebastjan Leban, Walter Mignolo and Šefik Šeki Tatlić.

Last but not least, Eric Dean Scott, the English language editor, extremely passionate professional in the field and friend, who put the texts by Gržinić, Tatlić and Leban "into shape" accessible for readers.

Ljubljana, December 2009

From Biopolitics to Necropolitics and the Institution of Contemporary Art

by Marina Gržinić

BIOPOLITICS, NECROPOLITICS AND DE-COLONIALITY PART I

Introduction ¹

I am interested in rethinking conceptually, politically and ideologically the conditions of the re/production of life, art and culture in the social and political space in the present moment of neoliberal global capitalism. Capitalism is not just a framework “out there somewhere.” It is the condition sine qua non of the way we live and of how life is conceptualized today. It is also the basic condition of the way in which the social and political layers of society function. Last but not least, it is at the basis of the way in which each and every institution of contemporary capitalist society is organized and functions today. When I say “institution,” I mean both its material foundation and its “non-material” discourses. Institutions today comprise innumerable social practices, their theoretical con-

ceptualization and practical organizations. I want to point out, and hope it will be clear soon, that I am not talking about the relation of a reflection (mirroring) of the economic basis on the infrastructure levels of society. Today, it is not about the reflection of the level of production on its upper structures, rituals and discourses of reproduction; it is about an entanglement of these two up until now “separate” layers that calls for a new conceptualization.² The feature of capitalist re/production has changed as well, and today, production is happening on the level of re/production, etc. This is not to say however that production came to its end. It is about understanding what such a change brings about for our analysis and what this entanglement means when it comes to the question of power vs. resistance to capitalism, when it is obvious that we can no longer speak in terms of a simple resistance taking a side on the “other” bank against capitalists.

If we talk about entanglement as the new condition, how capital and power relate and how production and reproduction stand vis-à-vis each other, then perhaps it is necessary to develop new formats of dissent. One such format is de-linking,³ with which to attack the condition of entanglement of the economic capitalist basis and its superstructures. In all of these processes, life is directly at stake. In this rethinking of the conditions of the reproduction of life, I will connect analysis of global capitalism with the disintegration of the social state and the privatization of the public sphere; these processes are seen as “naturally” happening, along with an

intensive process of the normalization of fascist, chauvinist, racist and anti-Semitic tendencies within Slovenia, Europe and the World. All around us - not only in Slovenia - the possibility of realizing substantial artistic and cultural projects, which are not made for the benefit of capitalist official institutions of art, is becoming vitally, and therefore terminally, dependent on funding (money!) from multinational bank conglomerates and insurance companies, multinational market businesses, oil and construction companies, etc. These multinationals support, to an increasing extent, the official institutions of art and culture (which were abundantly supported by their respective national states in the past), and currently this even includes the institutions of education. This process of linking the whole program and vision of the social and political space today (with a meaningful life that has a minimum level of dignity, rights and perspective) with capital's profit is becoming, on one side, disturbingly obvious and restrictive up to the last drop of blood, and on the other side, a completely normalized situation.

The state and its apparatuses, ministries of science, education, culture, etc., have abandoned the function they had in the past as founders not only of public educational institutions, but also of public non-commercial art and cultural institutions as well. Social and health rights have been diminished drastically, and life has become almost completely privatized by multinationals through capitalist Post-Fordist labor processes. Other public institutions of society, which are necessary in order to fight discrimi-

natory populist policies and to open the social and political space for equal opportunities for sexual, racial, migrant differences, etc., on the national as well as EU and global levels, are gone. The neoliberal capitalist state and its apparatuses put constant pressure not only on independent art, cultural and educational institutions, but on state public ones as well, to rely more and more on private funding, enforcing a terrain of dependency that is similar to drug addiction. This is a two-fold mechanism that imposes hierarchies, extending control over public content on the one side, while implementing neoliberal-managerial patterns of a mere empty expediency in relation to public and social programs on the other.

It is necessary to state that contemporary neoliberal capitalism functions on two levels. On one is the domination of territories and the accumulation of goods and services, and on the other we see an intensified process of governmentality, exercised through subjectivization that is splited along two paths (one is inert interpassivity and the other is global mobilization), both being part of a process that produces ideological subjects that are completely depoliticized. The process of subjectivization in both cases has the feature of a state of exception; it is presented as an extreme process of subjectivization that corresponds to the delineation of today's changing of contemporary society as a whole into a normalized state of exception.

In their essay, “Past Futures: Extreme Subjectification. The Engineering of the

Future and the Instrumentalization of Life,”⁴ Rozalinda Borcilă & Cristian Nae show that the globalization of capitalism is not only about conquering new markets, but that it is a configuration that constitutes the very medium for the production of human relations. The outcome is that the alienation of human relations, which was a situation that motivated generations of critical thinking (for example, The Frankfurt School), is just part of the conditions of spectacle within neoliberal global capitalism today that presents alienation as a sensualized, fancy, luxurious, “sexy” form of subjectivity in the Western realm (that is backed up by the technologization of communication and the aestheticization of radical individualization).

Sensualized alienation is the trademark of neoliberal global capitalism. Rozalinda Borcilă & Cristian Nae explain that the “self is a definition of an agency of free will in the frame of a teleological project and it is the figure through which subjectivity emerges in Western philosophy, locating, in the modern age, the concept of freedom within the control of a governing instance. Responsible for the rational determination of mankind, this instance functions both as an agent and as a form by means of which one could frame, understand and dominate human existence outside the purely biological regime.”⁵ The questionable part is that this humanity is reconfigured daily, and that only some are seen as humans, while others will never be able to “emancipate” themselves enough to be viewed as sufficiently human by the neoliberal capitalist machine.

[10]

[11]

The self, according to Borcilă & Nae, simply crosses the private/public duality, and clearly cements the production of subjectivity into the network of human relations and social practices that uses normalized neoliberal procedures of subject production. The self is problematic, and it has to be seen in its co-dependence with the long history of capitalism. “The subject is just the modern name for the human being... Defining the subject as self reflexivity, modernity creates the notion of Subject as a substantialization of human being, conceived in close connection to the concept of property. Even the manners of reclaiming subjectivity are conceived by such thinking as appropriation.”⁶

Saying this means that we are confronted with a form of extreme reification in which the social space (along with art, culture, education and politics) and life are regulated not as bios (life), but as death (necro), that is, as a necropolitical measure of the regulation of our lives from the perspective of death within the global capitalist world. Up till now we have been talking about biopolitics, biopower and biocapitalism, but due to this extreme situation of the processes of subjectivization, exploitation and expropriation, we propose instead to talk about necropolitics, necropower and necrocapitalism. The proposed shift from biopolitics to necropolitics is a measure of repoliticization of the biopolitical in light of its production of apolitical ideological subjects, or simply stylish biopolitical ones, predominantly in the First Capitalist World. At the present moment, necropolitics still is not something that is accepted in the First

Capitalist World that constantly emphasizes a process of positivization (that is subsumed under the biopolitical); even discrimination and subjugation are presented in the First Capitalist World as positive processes to acquire, for example, a higher level of security, emancipation, etc.

Within such a context, it is therefore necessary to ask what the concept of the political is, in light of the neoliberal processes of governmentality within capitalism (that are today a state of exception imposed on subjectivities) that regulate, subjugate and systematically control us.

PART ONE: FROM BIOPOLITICS TO NECROPOLITICS and ...

A.) Financialization of capital and financialization of (cultural) institutions

1.

Biopolitics, which was elaborated by Michel Foucault and redeveloped by Giorgio Agamben,⁷ is not only about how life is administered (Foucault), but is about life's differentiation, about its fragmentation. It presents a new division, life is now divided within itself; life that was in the past seen as the antagonism of death has been divided into two. Agamben conceptualizes that, today, biopolitics differentiates between life with forms-of-life (life as style) and life without a form or style, that is, bare or naked life. Or to say it differently, this

process of differentiation is, in fact, the procedure by which life is administered, managed, how it is controlled on the supposition of its improvement. It is a process that only allows life as a form-of-life, life as a style (only allowing for new forms, new styles of life). It is a process of a pure formalization of life. The result is that the only thing that matters in the First Capitalist World are forms-of-life, life as style.

All that is at stake today in the First Capitalist World, with its biopolitical procedures, are forms-of-life seen in their smallest angle of torsion. These (infinite) torsions are just a process of individualization where the only subject is an individual, a more or less successful brand. The situation is a complete interiorization and this is what capitalism does: it changes every social or political dimension, or every common interest, so to speak, into an individual matter through a process of individualization. Therefore, it's not surprising, the claim that there is no “outside” to the biopolitical of the First Capitalist World. Everything that has its source on the “outside” (misery, death, illegality, etc.) has to disappear. Therefore, it is not possible to understand biopolitics without a process of its repoliticization through necropolitics and necropower. That means to frame biopolitics from the perspective of all those who do not count for biopower, but who are fiercely over-exploited (migrants sans papers, third world populations, etc.). Biopolitics is reserved only for the fictitious battle of forms-of life, although death is all around the biopolitical. In the First Capitalist World, death is produced and

reproduced constantly, but it is just as constantly hidden as well. As argued by Rubia Salgado of maiz - Autonomous Center by & for Immigrants, based in Linz, Austria, the interest in the lives of migrants may well be a hot topic today, but in reality it is nothing but an instrumentalized topic. The biopolitical in the First Capitalist World includes life as a political concern, but only through its exclusion from the political sphere.

The consequence is that there are practically no longer any political subjects in the First Capitalist World. Or better, we need to start thinking how to define political subjectivity differently. It is not that it has vanished; it just needs to be reframed and posited differently. Therefore, it is necessary to expose other agencies that are acting in the social and political space (communities, activists, etc.) and that are not political brands competing for more or less stylish forms-of-life.

The contemporary practices of art and culture are part of a very powerful institution of art where a new generation of artists, curators, cultural workers, theoreticians, etc., depends terminally on old power structures. Be it through multinationals, banks, insurance companies and/or powerful family business connections or even only through friendships and business alliances based on sharing a “common” point of view, they decide who will be part of the core and, from time to time, who among the younger generation will be chosen to refresh the art scene. These decisions depends on money, power (“translated” into affectivity, sexuality) and, also, for

those coming from other spaces that are not in the First Capitalist World, “emancipatory” capabilities (to be at the level of the task, to refrain from radical criticality, to understand what the border of intervention is without it being said, to be respectful and to allow patronizing, etc.; in a word, to use the language properly and to have behavior, language and bodily manners that will be gently included within the institution which has already reached an “emancipated” way of working, behaving and living). The reasons are very simple: the contemporary institution of art depends on money, the market and collectors and will not jeopardize this power; what all of them, that is to say “us” (who want to enter the institution of contemporary art), have in common, is the ideology of neoliberal capitalism, what is termed the good life. As Suely Rolnik stated, they are (or we all are) caught up in the vicious circle of “luxury subjectivity production,” of being part of the middle-class elite, traveling around to art festivals, eating and drinking well, and, of course, occasionally having sex and a lot of fun.⁸ This is common to all of these structures, be it a private, state, semi-private or semi-state structure. All of them have only one agenda, power and more power based on a different channeling of the neoliberal ideology that translates this striving for the good life into the vocabulary of a fancy theory, using words such as democratization, efficiency, development, emancipation.

Biopolitics is a horizon of articulating society from the so-called politics of life, where life (it does not matter anymore, following Agamben, if it's bare/naked life

or life-with-forms) is seen as the zero degree of intervention of each and every politics into contemporary societies. But today, the capital surplus value is based on the capitalization of death (Latin, *necro*) worlds. In the seminal text “Necropolitics” (2003),⁹ Achille Mbembe discusses this new capital logic and its processes of geopolitical demarcation of world zones that are based on the mobilization of the war machine. Mbembe claims that the concept of biopolitics, due to the war machine and the state of exception being one of the major logics of contemporary capitalist societies, should be replaced with necropolitics. Necropolitics is connected to the concept of necrocapitalism, i.e., contemporary capitalism, which organizes its forms of capital accumulation that involves dispossession and the subjugation of life according to the power of death.¹⁰ The necrocapitalist capturing of the social space implies new modes of governmentality that are informed by the norms of corporate rationality and deployed in managing violence, social conflicts, fear and the Multitude. No conflict is tolerable that challenges the supreme requirements of capitalist rationalization - economic growth, profit maximization, productivity, efficiency and the like.

Necropolitics is not reserved only for the Second and Third Worlds (though it was elaborated by Mbembe in the African context), but is operative also in First World Capitalism.¹¹ Today, in the European Union, the U.S., Japan, etc., the logic of the organization of life and the division of labor is not (and I will show that it never was) to achieve a

maximum for life, but in reality is to pledge only the bare minimum for living and sometimes (today, too often) not even this. It is such necropolitical logic that organizes the contemporary neoliberal global capitalist social body. The minimum that is being imposed can be clearly seen through an analysis of all the battles that are going on around Europe at the moment to preserve the once social state, the once guaranteed (and achieved only through workers class struggles) social and health security, etc. An excellent example is the complete dissolution of the social, medical and pension rights that were once part of the former socialist European countries. Wild neoliberal global capitalization has transformed these countries into a pot of misery, nationalism, racism, etc. The necropolitical can also be clearly seen in the measures of control (seclusion, deportation and the ferocious anti-immigrant EU law policy) within and outside the borders of the Schengen zone of Europe.

2.

We should also add to necropolitics two other major processes fundamental to the way neoliberalism functions today: the privatization and deregulation of each and every stratum of society, of its institutions and its social, political, economic, cultural and artistic practices.

The most important point is to understand that neoliberal necrocapitalism thrives on the intensification of its two primal conditions of reproduction: deregulation and privatization. In what follows, in talking about and explaining the logic

of these two conditions and other characteristics to be put forward as being internal to neoliberalism, I will make a reference to two texts and a small vocabulary published in the magazine AREA Chicago (no. 6, 2008).¹²

To refer to these two conditions means to refer to a state of psychosis, or rather, to a state of (at first) exceptionality that is soon seen as completely normalized and accepted. Privatization means that the state withdraws step by step from social, cultural and public life, and leaves these public sectors to struggle for private money. But privatization also implies a format of private property, or of a private instrumentalization of a public institution by those who run it. To precisely understand these processes and neoliberalism, let me refer to the short, but extremely precise vocabulary of terms published in AREA Chicago, no. 6. I quote: “Neoliberalism is a project of radical institutional transformation. This term refers to a unique period in Capitalism in which some economic elite of some countries have encouraged a free-market fundamentalism that is unprecedented since before the Great Depression. This fundamentalist ideology has promoted a reversal of much of the regulation that has protected local and national economies from foreign competition, in addition to much of the social and political gains of social movements (including organized labor). Much of this transformation occurs through the privatization of industries and services previously monopolized by the State, and many of the social programs associated with Welfare. This period is also marked by the opening up of new mar-

kets in sectors of life previously untapped for profit-making potential - including those basic services provided by the state, as well as the growing importance of industries like culture, health, environmentalism, and education (to name a few). Neoliberalism is considered to have grown out of the University of Chicago Economics Department, promoted by its ideologues such as Friedrich von Hayek and Milton Friedman. The concepts grow out of a 'liberal' tradition, dating back to the theorists of early capitalism in the late 1800s, who were compelled by pure concepts of freedom. For the liberal, 'freedom' was the ideal. For the neoliberal, the 'free market' undisturbed by any State intervention is ideal. What must be constantly kept in mind is that the ideal is far from the truth, and current so-called neoliberal policies require massive State intervention - only this time around it is exclusively on behalf of economic elite with no attempt to promote policies of economic redistribution, equal opportunity or civic participation."¹³

3.

In neoliberal necrocapitalism, the whole of society has been transformed into merely one BIG INVESTMENT sector that provides new opportunities for the incessant capitalization of capital in order to make profit. I want to emphasize that the time of the particularization of levels of society (let's think about culture and art, being "outside," so to speak, of the processes that are going on in the wider economic, social and political contexts) are over. There has always been a firm relationship of inter-

dependency between the superstructure (art, culture, the social field, etc.) and the economic base. The difference is that, in the past, this logic was hidden, but in neoliberalism, these connections are clearly visible.

What we see is that these artistic, cultural, social, health, public, etc. sectors, which before were primarily used for the ideological reproduction of the mode of production and its labor force, are today vital for the direct capitalization of capital. Therefore, when we speak about the neoliberal necrocapitalist radical deregulation of each and every institution in society, be it the institution of art, culture, politics, health, social security, public, law, religion, etc., it means this affects not only its (de-)investment policy, but its histories, strategies of intervention, ideologies, rituals and forms of organization.

In neoliberalism, as the AREA Chicago team formulates, four processes apply: financialization of capital, speculative movements of financial capital, interspatial competition and place-marketing. My proposal is not only to term the processes that are going on in the field of art and culture as overtly restructured and deregulated, but to conceive in them a radical process not only of the financialization of capital, but of the financialization of (cultural) institutions as such, with highly visible characteristics of speculation, interspatial competition and place-marketing as well. In neoliberal necrocapitalism, a process of over-determination that is definitively financialization affects not only every level of society, but is also highly operative in contempo-

rary art and culture.

Financialization of capital means that surplus value, as the central drive of capital, is produced with a bubble mechanism of "virtual" money movements, investments, etc. This is not rooted in "production" anymore, so to speak, as was the case in the direct expropriation of people, regions and territories in the not so distant, clearly capitalist colonial past. Even though such a process is still active (if we think about oil), financialization makes money from money (virtually) without the so-called background of production. It does not come as a surprise that in the last week of September 2008, in the week of Wall Street's darkest scenario of collapse (since the 1929 Great Depression), billions of Euros simply disappeared overnight, so to speak. What we witness here is a performative aspect of the speculative power of the capitalization of money that has no base in anything but itself. The outcome of such a situation is at once an auto-cannibalistic as well as a super-vampiric, bloodthirsty condition.

What does this tell us? If the financialization of capital means the domination of financial markets (foreign exchange trading, futures, debt trading, U.S. government securities trading and other forms of speculative investment) over industrial economies in contemporary capitalism, as stated by the AREA Chicago team, I therefore put forward the financialization of institutions as a paradigm, to be parallel to the financialization of capital, meaning the over-empowerment of institutions, but only and solely through performative specu-

lative processes that have no base in anything other than the institutions themselves. These speculative processes are becoming more important than any art or cultural production, more important than any art work, more important than any artist or artistic group position, etc.

As it was formulated by the AREA Chicago group, speculation "could be understood as buying, holding and selling something (anything from real estate to fine art) in order to profit from the fluctuations in the market (something like 'buy low, sell high')." What is bought and sold here is information itself, as it were, devoid of any content. Moreover, a process of "a cleansing of the terrain" is to be added, as was learned from the Balkan Wars. Practices and theories that disturb the flow of incessant production of information should be erased, they have to vanish. Very similar processes were and still are - not only in relation to the brutality in the Balkan Wars in the 1990s and in Chechnya, etc. - implemented in relation to the Erased people in Slovenia. Therefore, to summarize, what is taking place is a two-fold process: on the one hand, speculations are the outcome of a hyper-activity, not of (art or cultural) production, but of a hyper-production of information itself; and on the other hand, institutions are activated as incubators for the constant production of information - about themselves. The result is, to put it simply, a daily bombardment of an unbelievable quantity of information about projects and activities that nobody can follow anymore. A boom is fabricated in the infinite speculative sending and distrib-

uting of whatever. On the other hand, we see a completely psychotic process of total evacuation.

4.

It seems that deregulation and privatization present themselves specifically, powerfully in the field of art and culture today, where they are ferociously safeguarded from critique and analysis. This is not a case exclusive to Slovenia, but something that is happening throughout the whole EU space and beyond. A clear example is the Moderna Galerija, Ljubljana, or as it is called internationally, the Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana, Slovenia. Though the situation of the Moderna Galerija is seen as a reaction to the four-year right-wing government that had been in power in Slovenia until only recently and had prevented this institution from fully and freely working, we can claim that the seeds of being taken over by the processes of financialization are possible to be traced back to the year 2000. In short, financialization does not only mean capitalizing out of “nothing,” through purely speculative strategies of information. In the case of talking about the financialization of the institution, it means transforming the entire art production as such into NOTHING.

In 2000, the Moderna Galerija, Ljubljana presented the exhibition “2000 + ARTEAST COLLECTION”, which was displayed parallel to Manifesta 2000 / Manifesta 3, that was also taking place in Ljubljana at the time. At the core of the “2000 + ARTEAST COLLECTION” exhibition, as was stated by the Gallery

itself as well as the curator (who was additionally the director of the institution), was the conceptual art movement in Eastern Europe. Yet what happened is that not a single Slovenian artist was included in the given exhibition, not even in the catalogue that was published and printed in color in hundreds of copies. The group OHO, who is perceived as the hardcore kernel of the conceptual activity of the 1970s in Slovenia, was included neither in the exhibition, nor in the catalogue. This was, as my analysis in the year 2000 has already pointed out, paradoxical enough, since the “2000 + ARTEAST COLLECTION” was not produced as a national display, but was a collection prepared precisely for the international audience - the exhibition “2000 + ARTEAST COLLECTION” was parallel to Manifesta 3, therefore sharing the same large public comprising all the international experts especially invited to Ljubljana for the occasion of Manifesta 3.

Therefore, what happened was that the “2000 + ARTEAST COLLECTION” disavowed all the Slovenian contemporary art that could have taken part in the exhibition entirely, de facto eliminating all art production from the 1960s on from Slovenia. On the other hand, and at the same time, those running the Moderna Galerija could empower and victoriously situate themselves in the international context, as the exhibition showed an important overview of artists from Eastern Europe.

We can say that the Moderna Galerija “protected us” with the complete and

total disavowal of contemporary art from Slovenia. As nobody was presented, it is possible to say that the exhibition had “no” consequences for the Slovenian space whatsoever. But the truly suffocating and psychotic experience is that this “protective care” of the Moderna Galerija (that erased all Slovenian artists and all Slovenian productions of art) was in the end protecting only the institution itself. It served to preserve and protect only its own institutional and instrumental power. With such a “cleansing of the terrain” in 2000, the institution excluded and evacuated itself from any responsibility for the possibility of defining, selecting and finally presenting contemporary Slovenian art in national and international contexts. The fact is that a theoretical analysis was also written about this “case” immediately in 2000, by the author of the current text, but at that time it was impossible to publish it in the national context; it was only done internationally.

5.

We can add to this genealogy of the way the Moderna Galerija has functioned (since 2000), the way the Moderna Galerija has dealt with the serious problem of being without its main exhibition space, due to its renovation, for the last two years. The Moderna Galerija found itself in an extremely disturbing situation, not only for itself, but for all of us in Slovenia were without a major institution of contemporary art. The Moderna Galerija “temporarily” (in 2008/2009) lost the space due to its (needed) renovation, but was not granted a temporary substitute exhibition space (which is a

normal practice in the contemporary world when a national institution of art and culture is at stake). The refusal by the state and the respective Ministry to provide a substitute space to the Moderna Galerija was a process of disciplining the institution by the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia who was elected by the right-wing party in power and other lobbies. Notwithstanding the pressure it was under from the right wing, the Moderna Galerija’s failed to initiate an international action of pressure on the Ministry through activating a national and an international petition force of support.

This “incapability” of the Moderna Galerija, by not “provoking” or initiating a call for an international action of solidarity that would force the right-wing party in power to offer a substitute space (and I can claim that such a call would have received important solidarity support from the national space), can also be seen as a process of withdrawing from its proper responsibility to do what is necessary to be done in a situation when it is important to “fight” for the institution of art as such. Instead, a process of mimicry was put forward; Moderna Galerija was invited to present its different exhibition projects (through the logic of “squatting”) in different cultural spaces in the city of Ljubljana. To operate on the basis of having no place where one keeps its roots might suggest a communal situation of living and working under the same conditions, but the problem is that by operating in such a way, the national institution normalizes wrong state decisions and procedures. It would be necessary to take complete-

ly different action (rather than behaving as an impoverished NGO). The national institution, as such, should use its power (and international recognition) to publicly call for the change of the situation, locally and internationally, to provoke a clamor that would force the state and its ministry to at least try to save face internationally and do something about the state of things.

On the contrary, once again the Moderna Galerija behaved completely speculatively - withdrawing, abstracting and evacuating itself from the situation precisely when it was necessary to draw a line, or better, when it was necessary to act in order to re-articulate its proper position in a broader sense. The Moderna Galerija has been functioning similar to the banks on Wall Street in the last week of September 2008. All of these institutions, and especially those who run them, are displaying their unbelievable capacity to survive at the expense of the whole artistic and cultural sector.

In this respect, it is important to state that the Moderna Galerija is working hand-in-hand with parallel institutions that are possible to call "shadow public structures." They are, so to speak, "non-institutions," as they are not really public institutions but private funds that function as ("public") NGOs and thus receiving public money. These non-institutions live in the shadow of the official and independent institutions and are more or less residues of the 1990s. What do they primarily do? Such institutions can be seen as over-accelerated "incubators" that produce generations of differ-

ent structures that are operative within art and culture: curators, organizers, even artists, etc. at an ever accelerating pace. Along with this process of over-accelerated production of new (human) structures, these non-institutions produce over-accelerated genealogies of art. It is important to understand that this over-acceleration process is taking place in contrast to the genealogies of the First Capitalist World (that are patiently, methodically and constantly being (re)constructed). The over-accelerated production of genealogies presents a process of "enterprised-up genealogies" - it is a form of deregulation, and it is the way to (at an over-accelerated pace) construct and conceptualize history.

These traits are not psychological descriptions; they are constitutive to the way neoliberal capitalism functions structurally today. They demonstrate how sped-up time processes are inherent to financialization and speculation. Achille Mbembe, in relation to Africa, where we see the intensification of many exploitation processes established and empowered through colonialism, talks about private indirect government.¹⁴ Maybe one can choose to imagine that this is something that is only going on "over there" in Africa; on the contrary, it is more and more becoming the reality in the EU and Global World, for example, of the way capital, power and institutions are working today - and not only on the level of "securing" money and distributing jobs, etc., as this private indirect government functions by way of organizing exhibitions or constituting histories or managing an institution of

art and culture.¹⁵

6.

Within this whole process, other less visible procedures are additionally taking place in order that the financialized institution can maintain its power at any cost. For example, one thinks of cases such as when the institution declares a "war," provoking a state of exception in order to hide its own irresponsibility. This means to portray the space of art and culture surrounding the official institution of art as being fragmented, problematic and corrupted. For contemporary deregulated and speculative state art institutions, is difficult to grasp the space as being a space of alliances. Through their optics, marginalized groups and practices are presented as those with the most power, which meanwhile puts marginalized alternative spaces and positions on the same level as state institutional power positions. It is a process of obfuscation that has as a result a situation where everybody is engaged, so to speak, in mutually destructive place-marketing strategies against others. At the same time, the official institution of art is cleared of any actual responsibility for the system, and presents itself as only being a victim of it.

What does it mean to provoke a state of exception as a strategy for obfuscating its own position in order to preserve power? In order to survive and reproduce its power in the national realm, the institution needs a total war. This is produced through a process that delegates its incitement through somebody else and in a format that hides the institu-

tion's responsibility. Here, to delegate means to find a completely unscrupulous individual on one side, or even an international institution, on the other, that is willing to accept to financially support the whole war "art (dirty) business" on the presupposition that it takes part in another cultural (national) space. Though in a proper national context, such an international institution is far from "implementing" the same "measures," as those measures are implemented only in countries that are seen from the international "supporting" institution as not being civilized enough. In reality, the international supporting institution turns the provoked state of disorder and power games, which are known as balkanization, to its advantage. It presents itself as being "subversive" and completely "autonomous" in the international context, while being completely submissive to the governmental structures at home.

As a result of these processes, the categories of public space, public money and the public as such have been totally instrumentalized and privatized.

7.

The capitalist Western institutions of art, culture, etc. (art markets, discourses, theories, exhibition spaces, etc.), that are of primal importance in establishing the described lines of hegemony and discrimination, are co-substantial in the developing of processes of evacuation, abstraction and a complete commercialization of contemporary art. However, if this is not working, then the last card is taken from up the sleeve, the card of the

so-called logic of the equal redistribution of “responsibility” and positions; of course, this is not a giving back of all of what was expropriated from the colonies, nor does this mean giving back the commons that have now been completely privatized. This obscene redistribution, or claiming of “equality,” is what has been going on in recent months in the field of contemporary arts and culture, on the level of art and research projects as well, and therefore on the level of rewriting and establishing genealogies. Never have we witnessed as extensively as in this last period exhibitions, projects, symposia, etc. that talk about “former” Western art (i.e., Former West: International Research, Publishing and Exhibition Project 2009-2012)¹⁶, specifically art from the “former” West Germany and so on. The latter is connected with the idea of presenting East Germany and West Germany as being equally outdated. All these projects imply that it is possible today, as we all are in the same “merde,” or simply to say crisis shit (though what is anyway forgotten is that this was produced by the First Capitalist World), to talk about “former” Western Europe the same as we talk about former Eastern Europe. Though, as Althusser would say, the former in front of Western Europe has to be put into quotation marks. Why?

In the case of Eastern Europe, the former means that the historical processes of evacuation, abstraction, expropriation are actually “over” (as it is proclaimed by Germany in 2009, celebrating its 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, “Come, come in the country without borders,” and I will say without memory as

well); but in the case of “former” Western Europe, it implies a purely performative, empty, speculative gesture. While the East is excluded more and more from history, knowledge, memory, etc., the West is just performing it. It plays with a speculative format of itself (it wants us to think that it is about fiction); the word “former” presents a speculative matrix that gives the West the possibility to be not conscience of its own historical and present hegemonic power - and therefore not responsible for it. This speculative character of the “former” Western Europe resembles with perfect accuracy the speculative character of financial capitalism at the present, and its crisis. Be sure that in the future we can expect projects, symposia and statements in which the imperial colonizing forces will try to prove how they were also colonized in the past, and that what is happening to them in the present is the result of some strange forces having nothing to do with the internal logic of capitalism itself that has two drives, making profit at any cost and privatization.

8.

Since institutions and non-institutions are functioning through a process of financialization, taking part in fully speculative scenarios similar to banks and “non-banks,” I can state that they have to be aware of their possible total collapse, which is precisely what was happening on Wall Street. Elements of this collapse can already be seen in the way the art institution functions publicly - going beyond every border of good taste.

Neoliberal necrocapitalism is continually being produced and reproduced, not only economically and politically, but obviously institutionally as well. All these processes have an effect that is totally and straightforwardly completely socially “dysfunctional.” It generates consequences that are very difficult to be fully understood. Nowadays it is necessary to de-link ourselves from this war of everybody against everybody, ex/changing everything with everything, everybody with everybody; it is necessary to be capable of drawing a line of differentiation in the space, while building local and international alliances. These are the only possible ways for changing the presently deregulated and privatized economic, social, and institutional spheres of our life and work.

It is important to add that the present situation will give free hands to capital's most urgent task, which is the intensification of collapse and/or of a complete de/re/structuring of the working class within the described line of the intensified precarization of life from the biopolitical into the necropolitical. This will be conducted through an intensification that is already taking place and can be named, according to Ignacio Ramonet,¹⁷ as four great rationalization principles:

- 1) Reducing the number of employees
- 2) Reducing wages
- 3) Introducing more and more work obligations
- 4) Restructuring companies and the redistribution of good and resources.

These processes will be performed by capital in many different situations: in executing control over life, in pushing the war on terrorism, and in civilizing those that are not yet civilized enough!

B.) Rarticulating of the State of Things or European-Slovenian Necrocapitalism

Capitalism today clearly presents a radical institutionalization, control and subjugation of life - a biopolitics, of course - but one that needs to be repoliticized, intensified, as it was not possible before the present economical crisis to grasp fully the changes in the management of life outside the First Capitalist World. Today, such an intensification of biopolitics is presently taking place inside the First Capitalist World. Biopolitics has to be replaced by necropolitics.

On the one hand, Achille Mbembe writes about terminal hierarchies established with pure force because of the presently naturalized and normalized brutal history of colonialism that, today, is not part of a “resolution of the First capitalist world on its colonial past and exploitation and expropriation”; on the contrary, this past colonialism is today exploited through what is named “ethno” marketing.¹⁸ On the other hand, in 2009, the EU adopted a resolution on European conscience and totalitarianism that will express respect for all victims of totalitarian and undemocratic regimes in Europe and will pay tribute to those who fought against tyranny and oppression. Of course, one of the processes of necrocapitalism is to “clean” the former Eastern European countries of their

communist pasts, while communism (evacuated from history and as a brand) is at the same time launched as the project for the future by Western intellectuals.

This will be a basis for us by which to analyze the state of the things in former Eastern European states, in their passage from transitional to fully developed neoliberal global capitalist countries. A case for this analysis will be the former-Yugoslav state, and even more specifically Slovenia. On June 25, 1991, the Republic of Slovenia declared its independence. A 10-day war with Yugoslavia followed (June 27, 1991 - July 6, 1991). The Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) forces withdrew from Slovenia and it joined the United Nations on May 22, 1992. Slovenia was a strong candidate for accession to the European Union. This occurred on May 1, 2004. The other Yugoslav Republics all had to remain outside the European Union. Just a few weeks earlier - in March 2004 - Slovenia had become a member of NATO. Slovenia joined the European Monetary Union and as the first of the new member countries adopted the Euro as its currency on 1 January 2007. Slovenia implemented the Schengen Agreement on December 21, 2007.

The passage from being a socialist republic within the former-Yugoslav state (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia or SFRY) into being an "independent" neoliberal capitalist society brought along with it all the "illness" of a contemporary capitalism. From its independence in 1991, Slovenia displays a history of exclusions and evacu-

ations that is directly linked, on the one hand, to processes of "kidnapped creativity" by various economic, political, ideological and institutional forces of power in Slovenia, and, on the other, to traumatic and obscene procedures that can be termed as vivid examples of violence against basic human rights in Slovenia and in Europe at large. It is necessary to rearticulate precisely these points, to politicize them in order to make visible anti-democratic and racist processes in Slovenia and, through it, in the wider EU space as well. What is going on in Slovenia is not very different from similar processes of discrimination, deportation, etc. going on in EU politics. An example of such politics is a statement on new border security measures presented by the European Commission on 14 February 2008. Brussels has proposed fingerprinting all foreign visitors to Europe and electronically registering them at each entry and exit. Some of these control measures are already being used by major airports in Britain, France, Germany and the Netherlands. A European Border Surveillance System for external land and sea borders is another possibility for boosting internal security, Brussels officials said. More joint operations of member states would also see the expansion of the role of the EU's border control agency FRONTEX.

My thesis is therefore two-fold: the case of Slovenia is not possible to be properly understood unless it is enlarged, on the one hand, as being the symptom and the rearticulation of the process of necropolitics (Achille Mbembe) in the European Union today, and on the other, as being the symptom and the rearticu-

lation of the turbo fascistic processes in the 1990s in the post-Yugoslav territory, as mainly analyzed by Žarana Papić in Serbia.¹⁹ I am making a reference to both the symptom and the rearticulation of it according to Santiago López Petit, who in his essay "A civic democracy: a new form of control,"²⁰ employs the word "articulation" as a process as well as its result. Although it seems that these two processes are very different and that it is not possible to establish a platform of a common, though hidden, genealogy, my thesis is that these processes are connected and therefore even more effective, as they are part of the politics of the wider European Union space. This space can be described, if I make a reference to Nataša Govedić's analysis of the Dogma 95 film movement, as "wonderful fascism and ugly freedom."²¹ The post-Yugoslav situation is not a condition per se, i.e., a condition separated from the current situation in neoliberal global capitalism. On the contrary, rather than "outside" of this framework, I can fully argue, it is most internal to it.

Necropolitics must be implied in all the politics that lay down the originary condition of the social and political space of the post-Yugoslav reality. In Slovenia, necropolitics has been put into motion in at least two very precise situations. One such case - which has to be "internationalized" and politicized further - is that of the so-called "Erased people" or, in the Slovene language, "izbrisani."

On February 26, 1992, eight months after declaring independence from Yugoslavia, the new Republic of Slovenia deleted some 30,000 residents

from its civil registries. This happened long after hostilities between Slovenia and Yugoslavia had ended, so war cannot be used as an excuse for the mass cancellation of these residents' legal status. These people, who came to be known as izbrisani, or the "Erased," are Serbs, Croats, Bosnian Muslims, Albanian Kosovars, Roma and other non-ethnic Slovenians originally from other parts of the former Yugoslavia who had lived and worked in Slovenia for many years, some of them for decades. They were suddenly deprived of all official status in Slovenia. Their permanent residence papers were confiscated, destroyed or invalidated, which meant that their other official documents were also made invalid. As a result, they found themselves deprived of the right to work, to social insurance, indeed the right to live a normal life. There are many names for this massive violation of human rights by the Slovenian state: soft genocide, administrative genocide, administrative ethnic cleansing, civil death, mass denationalization and so on. These are all names for social and political elimination in the de- and re-territorialization of bodies and lives in a textbook case not of contemporary biopolitics, but of necropolitics. As a result of this policy, some 12,000 members of the targeted groups (out of approximately 30,000) left Slovenia. The 18,305 "Erased" that remain in Slovenia exist between two deaths: the physical - since without papers they cannot function - and the symbolic, resulting from the horrific psychological pressure of being expelled from the social context, cut off from their own families and from all manifestations of public life.

In 2003, the Slovenian Constitutional Court (with its decision No. U-I-246/02) proclaimed itself in favor of the Erased people, asking to retroactively recognize the Erased people and to give them retroactive status going back to the date of the erasure on February 26, 1992. The right-wing nationalistic coalition in power in Slovenia (from 2004 until 2008) opposed the Constitutional Court Decision. At the end of October 2007, the right wing Slovenian Government (led by Janez Janša) presented a Draft Constitutional Law for the Implementation of the Fundamental Constitutional Charter on the independence of the Republic of Slovenia, concerning the Erased people. With this Draft, it aimed to create different categories of Erased people; it was fully discriminatory towards the Erased. Instead of finally giving stolen lives back to the Erased people, the government was trying to implement further unconstitutional, unlawful and discriminatory procedures. If approved new withdrawals of statuses would be enabled, responsibility of the state bodies for the erasure would be denied and the right of the Erased people to compensation would be annulled.

The 2008 general elections in Slovenia brought a relative victory to the Social Democrats (former communist). A new government was sworn in on 21 November 2008. In December 2009, however, the 2003 Constitutional Court decision is still not implemented, which raises serious concerns regarding the respect for the rule of law in Slovenia. The present Minister of Interior, Katarina Kresal, explained that these decisions

will be issued only to those erased - nationals of former Yugoslav republics who were deleted from the permanent residence registry in 1992 - who "had managed in the meantime to settle their status in Slovenia." With the document the people concerned will be granted residency status for the period between the erasure and when they managed to regain their residency. However, this still leaves several thousand people who have no status. The Minister, Kresal, explained that the government will begin drafting a law "to regulate the conditions for granting the status to all those erased who do not live in Slovenia or who still live in Slovenia without formal status." The move to reinstate the status of the Erased comes as part of the commitment voiced by the new government to finally resolve the issue of the Erased and fulfil the Constitutional Court ruling from 2003, which says that the status of the Erased must be remedied with retroactive effect. Kresal highlighted that the decisions retroactively restoring permanent residence do not mean that the Erased will be automatically entitled to compensation. The question of compensation (meaning that Slovenia would be "forced" to recompensate the Erased) is aggressively emphasized in public by the right-wing opposition when it tries to obstruct again and again that justice is done in the case of the Erased people, after more than 17 years!

The second such case that needs to be "internationalized" and politicized further is that of the so-called Strojans, an extended family of 31 Roma, 14 of them children, who were forced to abandon their land on 28 October 2007 when a

mob from Ambrus, Slovenia, and other nearby villages surrounded their homes, threatening to kill them and demanding their eviction. While the police kept the crowd back, Slovenian government officials negotiated the family's blitzkrieg removal from their land. Because of the government's role in the forced removal of the Strojans family, the incident ranks as one of the most serious attacks on a Roma community in Europe in a decade, according to human rights groups.

Moreover, these "local" processes are enforced and institutionalized at different levels from outside the post-Yugoslav condition, and are reinforced by the neoliberal global system in Europe. In his above-mentioned essay, Santiago López Petit writes that the discourse on civic behavior implies and requires two elements: the first is the war-State, and the second is postmodern fascism. Civic behavior, argues Petit, is today a spurious way of determining the intervention by the largest population in the social and political sphere, while contemporary neoliberal global capitalist states try to depoliticize such interventions by transforming the "citizen that urinates on the street" and the "protesters that try to improve social conditions" into equal groups of citizens - the state qualifies them as merely two types of criminals.

What we have in the case of the Erased people, and in the case of the Strojans, is precisely these two conditions coming together. They present a never-ending state of exception as well. The war-State, as defined by Petit, is a capitalist

mechanism that produces order based on a war that needs a permanent individuation of the enemy. In practice, this is a war that, in Slovenia for example, ranges from war against poverty to the war against the journalists who in 2007 sent a petition to the EU institution describing the situation of the media in Slovenia as totalitarian, to the present moment, where the Slovenian government is in a war against the so-called tycoons or ultra-capitalists. Petit says that postmodern fascism acknowledges differences so that they can be used to unify order. In this context, the defense of personal autonomy is actually a form of control; freedom of choice means that nothing really changes. According to Petit, democracy today is practically the re-articulation of the war-State and postmodern fascism. These are not only the two major features of the post-Yugoslav condition, but of the EU as well, if we just think of the above-mentioned changes in border security measures/control policy. However, each democracy is implementing a specific articulation of these two features.

Today, the state in neoliberal global capitalism is pushing, realizing and articulating a strong policy of de-governmentalizing sectors of what was seen in the past as public life: social and health agendas of common interest that were after decades of class struggles (nothing is given in capitalism) achieved for the majority of citizens - that is, the idea of the European social state, which was also active in the Yugoslav context in the time of Socialism. Today, this de-governmentalizing process is occurring along with the total and complete privatization

of all these public fields. In order to cover this complete privatization and the role of the state in neoliberal global capitalism, which is simply the agent of capital and multinational interests in processing necropolitics (the minimum that is below the bare minimum), a whole set of ideological practices are being re-implemented throughout the entire territory of the European Union. The state and its apparatuses, respectively, in specific conditions and through specific languages – mostly through Blut und Boden (blood and soil) ideology – are hammering on the 19th century national pride and rights of Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, as well French and Germans, etc.

We have to delve further into this post-modern fascism and reflect on the post-Yugoslav condition through Serbia and Kosovo. Why? Because the post-Yugoslav condition of Slovenia is not possible to be analyzed if we do not connect it, on the one side, with the larger EU space, and on the other side, with the Milošević nationalistic and fascistic politics, not forgetting the holocaust carried out by the paramilitary and regular Serbian forces in the 1990s in Srebrenica and BiH (and safeguarded by the UN peacekeeping forces).

As reported by Amnesty International in 1998 in the article “A Human Rights Crisis in Kosovo Province. Background: A crisis waiting to happen,”²² after the Second World War and the creation of the second Yugoslav state, Kosovo was given increasing degrees of autonomy. This culminated in the 1974 Constitution of the former Socialist Federal Republic

of Yugoslavia (SFRY), when, as a Socialist Autonomous Province, it had almost the same degree of autonomy as the constituent republics of the SFRY, albeit lacking the constitutional right to secede from the SFRY. In March and April 1981, ethnic Albanian demonstrators voiced calls for Kosovo to be made a full republic. The demonstrations were broken up violently and Amnesty International later learned that the Central Committee of the League of Communists was informed that over 300 people were killed in the process, although published reports claimed no more than 11 dead. A state of emergency followed for a period and, to a greater or lesser extent, there has been increased policing in the province ever since. In the late 1980s, Slobodan Milošević came to power, first as President of the ruling League of Communists of Serbia and then as President of Serbia, with a heavily Serbian nationalist program that focused on Kosovo. In 1989, he succeeded in abolishing the province’s autonomy and soon reduced it to a mere administrative region of Serbia. The ethnic Albanians’ new political leaders boycotted the Serbian and Yugoslav political systems altogether, declaring instead an independent “Republic of Kosovo,” and established a parallel parliament, presidency and government. In addition, parallel or private health, educational and other institutions were created. Their creation had a political aspect, but also stemmed from necessity, as many Albanian workers were dismissed en masse from employment (sometimes after refusing to sign declarations of loyalty to the Serbian authori-

ties), and teaching in the Albanian language was effectively suspended in the state-run system. The treatment of Albanians from Kosovo as second-class citizens throughout all of former Yugoslavia and especially in Serbia was a product, as noted by Žarana Papić in 1994, of the hegemonic nationalisms. National separatisms, chauvinist and racist exclusion or marginalization of (old and new) minority groups are, as a rule, closely connected with patriarchal, discriminatory and violent politics against women and their civil and social rights. Such situation culminated in the 1990s with the war in Yugoslavia.

Later, Žarana Papić described this process in the 1990s and the beginning of 2000 in Serbia, saying, “I am freely labeling this as Turbo-Fascism.” She continued, “It is, of course, known that Fascism is a historical term; that the history of Nazi Germany is not the same as that of Milošević’s Serbia. However, in post-modernist and feminist theory we speak of ‘shifting concepts,’ when a new epoch inherits with some additions concepts belonging to an earlier one, like, for instance the feminist notion of shifting patriarchy. In my view, we should not fear the use of ‘big terms’ if they accurately describe certain political realities. Serbian Fascism had its own concentration camps, its own systematic representation of violence against Others, its own cult of the family and cult of the leader, an explicitly patriarchal structure, a culture of indifference towards the exclusion of the Other, a closure of society upon itself and upon its own past; it had a taboo on empathy and a taboo on multiculturalism; it had powerful media

acting as proponents of genocide; it had a nationalist ideology; it had an epic mentality of listening to the word and obeying authority. The prefix ‘turbo’ refers to the specific mixture of politics, culture, ‘mental powers’ and the pauperization of life in Serbia: the mixture of rural and urban, pre-modern and post-modern, pop culture and heroines, real and virtual, mystical and ‘normal,’ etc. In this term, despite its naive or innocent appearances, there is still fascism in its proper sense. Like all fascisms, Turbo-Fascism includes and celebrates a pejorative renaming, alienation, and finally removal, of the Other: Croats, Bosnians, and Albanians. Turbo-fascism in fact demands and basically relies on this culture of the normality of fascism that had been structurally constituted well before all the killings in the wars started”.²³

In order to come to a conclusion about the post-Yugoslav condition as a condition of specificity, but as well a unifying moment that over-determines, as Louis Althusser would say, the whole post-Yugoslav space and connects it directly to the EU, I will call the economical, social and political situation in Slovenia “turbo neoliberalism.” By presenting an ideology of neoliberalism, with clear turbo and clerical-fascistic patterns, it disrupts straightforwardly, and at all levels, any kind of a possible social state.

C.) On nationalism and transition: Turbo neoliberalism and Global capitalism

Nationalism has surfaced as the prevalent mode in which social and political life is organized in countries of the for-

mer Eastern Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall, countries that are today named transitional. It is said that the appearance of nationalism only presents what was already there for decades, but was suppressed successfully during the past socialist and communist period, and came overtly out with the “liberation” of these countries from under the totalitarian communist system. Our thesis is that nationalism is, contrary to such a claim, the mode in which the present transitional elites (from the East, helped by those from the West) buffer, or better to say, hide their direct submission to neoliberal global capitalism, meaning it is the way in which they hide their readiness to open their countries to the worse possible exploitation and expropriation by capital.

This nationalism is supported by the EU as well, even more so by the old EU core, as they need the disorder and pathology of nationalistic social and political space in order for them to execute the allocation of capital. What does the implementation of neoliberal global capitalism mean? In the former Eastern European context, it means a process of intensification of expropriation and exploitation that is connected with losing historically gained social rights (rights to health insurance, to social benefits, to work, etc.); the paradox is that losing social rights is presented as gaining neoliberal “capitalist freedom and democracy” (i.e., being forced into a condition of wild precariousness, instability, without jobs or rights). To be socially de-privileged, without social, health and labor rights, today means to be “emancipated” within neoliberal glob-

al capitalism. This is presented through a system of intensified rationalizations (shortages, etc.) that are imposed with radicalized management control as well as privatization of the social, political and economic space.

In Western European context, it means the total embracing of the biopolitical machine as a force regulating every level of the capitalist system. The past capitalist “social” state, the so-called 1970s’ capitalist welfare state (a product of capitalist social democratic vision) is dismantled today as well, though the reasons behind this are presented differently and different histories are constructed and different vocabularies are implemented.

In Eastern and the Western Europe, the vision of public interest does not exist anymore; public health insurance, public social insurance, public education and other public interests are slowly and steadily being privatized. In both contexts what is at stake is depoliticization, eschewing the social contradiction (the class antagonism) from the social and political space.

Depoliticization in the East and West of Europe is the core element of functioning, but it is presented differently. To “smoothly” handle these over-intensified privatizations, two different processes are implied. In the “former” West, a process of radical individualization as biopolitical subjectivity is pushed forward, where the individual is presented as a manager of her/himself, and as such is seen as the most effective element of neoliberal global capitalism.

Oppositely, due to the not fully completed process of capitalization, which prevents the smooth implementation of the complete fragmentation of the social and political space through radical individualization (as excellently effectuated through the implementation of the Bologna Higher Education system through Europe and the Global Capitalist World, where each student is presented as a proper investment), for the former East is proposed a process of national “unification.” Its result is a much-needed process of nationalism, a pathological model that provokes social disorder and allows capital allocation to bring order.

Now to be clear, in the West and East, nationalism also works hand in hand with the suppression of the two great emancipative projects of modernity: the Enlightenment and Communism. They are both applied as well (if it is possible to say) on their respective territories (the Enlightenment in the West and Communism in the East). The historical failures of the Enlightenment are Nazism and Fascism, and the failure of Communism is Stalinism. But instead, and because of the imposed depoliticization by neoliberal global capitalism, we see today an intensified process of their transformation. The Enlightenment is only possible to be thought of in the form of a management (and instrumentalization) of life. Law is at the core of this process that secures free and unrestrained processes of exploitation and expropriation by capital. Such a management (of gender as well) today presents a format of governmentality that is nearing a self-governmentality. In the

final analysis, the goal is self-management on every level of life of the individual. Radical individualism is the final form of this process of “enlightenment” in the West and today is reaching its most obscene form of self-governmentality, meaning that it asks from each of us a certain enlightened attitude of behaving in order that democracy works, and in the final analysis, we have to be ready to annihilate ourselves. This self-annihilation (that is, for example, the best way to name the intensified precariousness and over-worked conditions, or the silent approval, in the name of the future, of the extension of working hours for each and every one of us, etc.) can be seen in a certain way as the “civilized” form of what is going on in the “barbaric” far East through terrorist suicide actions. Both are systems of internalizing/externalizing methods of striking terror imposed onto one’s own life. “Civilized” self-annihilation that is self-governmentality has to be carried out preferably in silence, in accordance with the Christian pastoral attitude. When we by ourselves democratically decide to sign a precarious working agreement, it is said that this is for the benefits of a new form of democracy, where more freedom and less attachment to a fixed job unite - this cynic’s interpretation hits the cynical attitude that is at the basis of radical individualization.

Accordingly, nationalism is in fact a model of depoliticization that is simultaneously embraced differently by both the right and left political elites. While the right political parties in the transitional countries rely on nationalism and feed themselves with it (and also use it in

such a way as to capitalize upon their own position), what is called the left political forces have to make a double turn, they have to de-link themselves, at least on the surface, from the right-wing nationalistic forces, but on the other hand, they have to de-link themselves from the leftover-from-the-past working class that still pushes forward political demands. This latter de-linking is necessary to prove their proper position as apolitical neoliberal managerial depoliticized capitalist forces. In order to enter the big family of the depoliticized EU (which is, on the other side, harshly organized, framed and made a Fortress Europe through measures of intensified administrative, bureaucratic and law acts), the left transitional political forces have to prove their capability to de-link from past communism. Communism is today equalized and placed on the same level as Nazism. Therefore, the demand by EU that urges former Eastern European communist countries to modify their textbooks and to build monuments for victims of the totalitarian communist regimes is getting a paradoxical form of an obscene “de-Nazification.”²⁴

Now, one of the consequences of such a (only on the surface) paradoxical demand that is consistent with the process of total depoliticization is to take gender as the marker with which to testify, to “check,” the process of emancipation of a certain territory, etc. Instead of talking about politics, about the changes brought about by neoliberal global capitalism, we are forced to talk about a certain situation, for example, of “emancipation” through gender zoning, of a certain territory.²⁵ This act is then presented

as a new way of politics.

I stated that the left transitional political elites have to prove clearly that they are capable of performing and embracing depoliticization in a proper state in order to be embraced by their Western comrades. The problem is specifically acute in the present moment when the crisis pushes onto the street workers who, with their demands, pointing the finger to the social (class) antagonism, ask for political solutions as well as answers. In the 1990s, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, we saw the process that is today at the core of capitalist society, with its tendency to install brutal precarization, exploitation (coming near to enslavement) and bureaucratic violent formalization (of responsibilities, etc.) into every level of society. The once left, and now transitional neoliberal managers, despise the workers and their demands that ask for political answers. On the leftist side, it is the working class that should be the political force and subjectivity that is now pauperized to such an extent that it is making the leftist intellectuals ashamed to be connected with it; on the right wing, a whole strata of society (sexual minorities, migrant minorities, etc) is seen as disturbing for the clean national unity.²⁶ On this side, the process is going on by way of forming a fake unity with the (decent) people of the nation through a mechanism of clear chauvinistic and racist processes.

Alternately, the only possible unity that is proposed and tolerated is the organic national body that is actually based on the old ideology of blood and soil that therefore has to expulse from national (as meaning “natural”) unity all those

who threaten it (from im/migrants to ethnic (Roma) to non-heterosexual groups). The result of such nationalistic operations in Slovenia is the Erased people, in Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, etc., it is the Roma people, in France it is the second and third generations of French citizens from the colonies, in Austria it is asylants, migrants, etc. Intellectuals, artists, cultural workers, theoreticians, etc. are also taking distance from these “lower class elements,” as they are named and conceptualized in the public space.

Though it can happen, as in Slovenia, in 2009, which is governed by a left center coalition, that it presents a family law bill to the public that is aimed at equalizing same-sex unions with other family unions. The draft allows gay couples to adopt children and proposes marriage as a union of two persons of the same or different sex. Therefore, the bill maintains the principle of equality of spouses. What is important to state is that for the Slovenian neoliberal left that proposes such a law, it is to prove its capability of installing a purely universal standard of human rights that is at the moment more or less a certain standard in the EU. This law guarantees not a political, but rather to say, a technical universal standard of liberal emancipation that says that the left (that is the neoliberal managerial class) is capable of a normal apolitical emancipation. How is it possible to state something like this? The answer is the Erased people, which are still an open, therefore, unsolved situation from both the human rights and law standpoints.

However, these processes can be even more intensified. The European Union continuously speaks of how everything is now becoming increasingly democratic as well as more liberal and open to democratic possibilities and potentialities, while in reality we witness fascist tendencies, racist public speeches, and a torrent of attitudes of hate that have become normalized and cohabit easily with the neoliberal capitalist machine, which is disgustingly tolerant of the social and political processes of discrimination. In order to further understand the situation, it is necessary to always take a two-fold path: one is historical, and the other lies in the possibility of analyzing contemporary forms of racism within Europe and the rest of the world that are hidden behind different rhetorics. The Italian contemporary philosopher Domenico Losurdo stated that in order to understand historical and contemporary imperialism, it is necessary to endorse the analysis of liberalism (today, neoliberalism is the major ideology of global capitalism) and the analysis of colonialism, which forms the foundation for Western imperial wealth.²⁷

Following Losurdo, we can trace a direct link - which has been forgotten in the present day - between the roots of U.S. colonialism and Nazi Germany's Third Reich. This link presented itself in the mutual exchange and collaboration in the 1920s between the Ku Klux Klan and German organizations of the far right that was based on anti-black and anti-Jewish racism. The Ku Klux Klan's and the historical and present-day (neo)Nazis' most effective strategy is the use of the coined term “white

supremacy.” It unites racist movements all over the world and justifies economic, social and political expropriation effectuated by capital, giving a “rational” foundation to its most brutal aggressions, including colonialism and war. Betty Gilmore²⁸ argues that in celebrating the “white race,” a particular attitude of hatred has developed against “Blacks” and “Jews”; “not being white” often means “not being human.” Gilmore, reworking Losurdo’s thoughts, clearly states that no human beings are white! All these definitions are used to hide and erase the historical facts connected to colonialism and slavery on the one hand, and brutal killings, imprisonment and imposed war, on the other.

Contemporary racism still relies on theories of race that were developed at the beginning of the 19th century by French diplomat Joseph Arthur Gobineau, the founder of comparative anatomy and the earliest proponent of “Nordic supremacy.” Gobineau supplied several groups to choose from as representing “evil”: “Arabs,” “Jews,” “Blacks,” “Roma,” and others. In reality, racism is not the consequent product of ignorance, it is a brutal ideology, promoted and studied over the centuries by intellectuals, heads of state, religious leaders, political writers, historians, economists, anthropologists, novelists, movie directors, journalists and businessmen - the well-educated bourgeois classes (as reported by Gilmore in reference to Losurdo). On the subject of American democracy, Losurdo states: “... democracy in the white community developed contemporaneously with the enslavement of blacks and the killings of

Indians. For 32 of the first 36 years of the United States’ existence, the presidents holding office were slave owners, as were the writers of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Without slavery (and subsequent racial segregation), nothing about ‘American freedom’ can be understood: they grew up side by side, one supporting the other.”²⁹ Losurdo further writes about European colonialism: “... between the end of 1800 and the beginnings of 1900, the extension of suffrage, the right to vote, in Europe goes side by side with colonization and with the imposition of servile or semi-servile work upon the subjugated populations; the government of law in the metropolis (moreover, easily suspended in case of ‘emergency,’ that is, when the proletariat acts as a subject of history) is closely intertwined with the violence and police-bureaucratic authority and the state of siege in the colonies.” Colonialism, fascism and Nazism take racism as a principal strategy, and they have to be connected to both the logic of capital for continuously producing surplus value, as well as the ongoing need to conquer new territories for the purpose of expropriation.

It is precisely on that point that we can continue to think about racism and new forms of colonialism within the European Union or within the “new Europe” that foster processes of connection and hybridization between old and new European “post” nationalistic states. The European Union process presents the production of a higher breed of men, but one which is against those who perform manual labor, work in catastrophically precarious conditions, are underpaid

below the existential limit and poverty line, and are without legal documents or rights to recognition. Therefore, it is important to understand the new form of racism, coined as “Class Racism” or “Racialization Without Race,” which is present and active throughout Europe.³⁰

It is a division between the workers and those who are capable of true leisure - or, more strongly expressed, the caste of those who are forced to work and the caste of those who are free to work. Therefore, we face the unification of EU “leisure bureaucrats” who, of course, present their hard work for the benefit of the new EU at the expense of, or rather based on, the new precarious division of labor.³¹

Through this division we witness the development of a new class of sub-proletariat (in the form of illegal workers, migrant workers, underpaid EU workers, unemployed people, and the frightening precariat) whose rights are abused daily. A new division in the EU is based on this, so that on one side we have the managerial elite and on the other, the misery and poverty of the precarious proletariat and the ever more expropriated middle-class. This new EU class of political managers and bureaucrats develops their unification into a class division that has now become racialized; this caste of managerial, political and administrative bureaucracy - active not only at the supranational level of the EU, but within each and every “national” EU state - becomes more and more detached from the conditions under which workers, migrants and people without legal documents work and live.

The process of European unification and democratization is based on new hierarchies and stratification.

D.) Contemporary Art as a Genuine Biopolitical Machine

At this point it is necessary to ask in which way what I have been elaborated until now have to do with contemporary art and culture. More poignantly, how are we to connect the political and social, life in the last instance, of global capitalism and turbo neoliberalism with the autonomy (i.e. “freedom”) of conceiving a contemporary art project? What I want to say is that, in contemporary art and theory, not only is life being used at their core, as their *materia prima*, as their raw material, but that originary biopolitical characteristics of contemporary art (seen as an Institution) are effectuated in the way these projects are realized, in the way they deal with life, formally, aesthetically and contextually.

We can speak today of an originary biopolitical character of the paradigm of contemporary art; and when I say contemporary art, I mean not only contemporary art projects from theater to performance or visual art, but also theory, criticism, etc. The consequences are terrifying - as art, similarly to law, is co-opted within the machinery of the state of exception. Saying this, I want to emphasize that art is reinforcing the state of exception and is also functioning in such a way so as not to disclose the state of exception, but is blurring it, hiding it.

What I want to emphasize is that contemporary art normalizes the state of exception. The same is true with the law. It is said and quoted by Agamben in relation to Savigny that "Law is nothing but life considered from a particular point of view." But such a coincidence is precisely blurring, hiding the state of exception that is at the basis of contemporary society. We can say the same about art; that it deals today with life. Biopolitics is at the core of all major theoretical works.

A good example for such a statement and for its further rearticulation is again coming from Slovenia. In 2007/2008 three visual-performative and media artists from Ljubljana, Slovenia (Davide Grassi, Emil Hrvatin and Žiga Kariž) changed their names to "Janez Janša" - not only symbolically, but materially and administratively as well (by changing all of their identity documents, from identity cards to passports, to say "Janez Janša"). Janša, Janša, Janša (JJJ) is not just centered on a live person, - as material for working on it - , but is being it!

In order to understand what JJJ is "doing," it is necessary to connect it with another event in 2008 in Slovenia, with the publishing of the thematic issue of the Journal for Critique of Science, Imagination and New Anthropology (Časopis za kritiko znanosti, domišljijo in novo antropologijo - ČKZ, Ljubljana) entitled The Story of an Erasure that presents an extensive chronology of the Erased citizens of Slovenia. I propose a thesis that the two art/cultural and performative projects - the Janšas perfor-

mative body (JJJ) and The Story of an Erasure - present diametrically opposed performative-theoretical and politico-aesthetical interventions within the art and cultural space of Slovenia. The Story of an Erasure intervenes politically directly, the other, the ventriloquist three-headed "Janez Janša" simulates not only the proper position, but also obfuscates through cloning the right-wing politics of/in Slovenia and aestheticizes the right-wing ideological and administrative state apparatus.

To understand my thesis, it is necessary to answer to two points: who is Janez Janša and who the Erased People are. Both projects refer to them directly.

Who is Janez Janša?

Janez Janša is a right-wing Slovenian politician who was running the Slovenian government from 2004 to 2008; he and his party lost the new elections in 2008! The genealogy of his formation is double and not historically fully evaluated. In the 1980s, he was the political figure that provoked through a discovery of secret military documents the declaration of the independency of Slovenia in 1991; today, he is the clearest representative of a new turbo neoliberal entanglement with clerical power in Slovenia that precisely synthesizes the genealogy of the Slovenian reality from socialist into neoliberal capitalist. Janez Janša - nomen est omen ("the name is a sign") - the Prime Minister of Slovenia in the period from 2004 to 2008, was also one of the most ferocious political forces preventing the possible process of putting an end to the necro reality of the

Erased people. In essence, Janez Janša's political methods can be described as necrocapitalist and dysfunctional. On one hand, he is implementing totalitarian Communist methods of absolute power (total party discipline and control of mass media), and on the other hand, he is exposing the clerical-fascistic connection with the present turbo-capitalist Slovenian reality. For example, he pushes forward a European policy of privatization of education, and demands for equalization of Partisans and the Slovenian Nazi collaborators (the Domobranci) and so forth.

Therefore, if we make a relation between the "ventriloquist three-headed 'Janez Janša' monster figure" and the real Janez Janša, it is necessary to emphasize that what is at prima vista seen as two different contexts of these two "projects," one being art and the other being politics, must be seen together. We should not de-link the ventriloquist three-headed "Janez Janša" and the real Janša, as they did not stay on opposite sides: the "performance" Janša is not merely symbolical, while the other is simply "real." Both of them are real, having their documents fully registered by the state.

Further, it is necessary, before providing the answer to the question - Who are the Erased people? - to expose on what possible historical reference the constitution of the "ventriloquist three-headed "Janez Janša" monster figure" is based. Or to formulate this differently, on what relies this total identification with the right-wing populist political leader by the

three-headed "Janez Janša" body? The idea of the three-headed "Janša" can be conceptually defined as a reenactment of what was strategically invented by the music group Laibach in the 1980s; Laibach, a music group from Ljubljana (still active) re-appropriated the German name of Ljubljana (the name became especially controversial during the time of the German occupation of Slovenia in WWII when the Nazis exercised aggressive Germanization of Slovenes) and performed in a style that was a mixture between a party rally and a Mussolini speech; they performed in the 1980s without offering any further explanation of their action. Laibach's gesture, which is also known as "over-identification" in psychoanalytical terms, or a total, complete identification with a body (Mussolini), name (Ljubljana), etc. succeeded as well to subvert at that time the exhausted strategies of parody and irony performed by the Western contemporary field of art in the 1980s. Therefore, the over-identification (as a total simulation strategy) on which Laibach insisted presented a complete destitution of their individual positions. Laibach's "real" member's names were totally disclosed in the 1980s; their public appearances, be it in music concerts or in interviews, did not produce a relief, or catharsis, in terms that we knew that in the end it was a mockery, or a parody of the political body or of a certain social ritual, etc.

Almost three decades later, in 2007/2008, the three-headed "Janša" began, through referring to Laibach, to exploit them, but in the "reverse." The three-headed "Janša" inaugurated in a

spectacular way their name-changing; they sent hundreds of e-mails. The act was announced spectacularly by each “newborn baby Janša,” through e-mails and other formats of communicating with the general public. Every time they proudly announced their act, I will state, it was not as subversion, but as spectacular power demonstration - having the pleasure, time and money to change their names. Therefore, I will name this act as pure parody exhibitionism. Ultimately, they sent the emails just to make sure that we, the public, wouldn't miss who had actually changed their names. I will call this a gesture of securing a terrain for future branding and money. In fact, the three-headed “Janša” artifact was abundantly supported by the government in power! The Ministry of Culture abundantly supported almost all the projects in which at least one of, if not all three, “Janez Janšas” took part, while many other artists applying for co-financing from the Ministry of Culture in 2007/2008 were rejected and pushed into the grip of the fatal process of neoliberal pauperization.

Now let's expose who the Erased people are (analyzed in previous chapters as well) and how is it possible to state that the “truth” of the three-headed “Janša” and its relation to the real Janez Janša can be understood only through the Erased people.

The Erased people are the only possible context in which to read the act of the performing of the three-headed “Janša,” as the Erased people, as it will be presented, are an outcome of the necropol-

itics that was being implemented by the Slovenian state through confiscating and destroying their residency papers and documents. Through this act of “re/naming” as nullifying their identities, the Erased people were deprived of the social and economic status that is granted to individuals through such papers and documents; in the final analysis, they were deprived of life. Therefore, as the three-headed “Janša” developed their project precisely on the same “act,” it is possible to state that the truth (in Badiou's term) of their performance, of their act of changing all their documents and taking, spectacularly - as was described - their new identity, can be conceptualized and politicized only in relation to the Erased people.

Who are the Erased people?

In February 1992, at the time when Slovenia was still in its infancy, the Slovenian government, which was headed by then-Prime Minister Lojze Peterle and the Minister for Internal Affairs, Igor Bavčar, (and with the support of the State Secretary of the Ministry for Internal Affairs, Slavko Debelak), adopted a macabre necropolitical measure of erasure, transforming 30,000 people into people without residency permits and depriving them of any rights. These 30,000 people were mostly workers and internal migrants that were working and living in Slovenia who were of non-Slovenian ethnic roots, Bosniaks, Croats, Serbs, Roma people, Kosovars, Macedonians, etc. What happened on February 26, 1992 was the total confiscation of their status of permanent residence, and this confiscation

was triggered by a simple bureaucratic telegram sent by Slavko Debelak on that same date, February 26, 1992. The number of the telegram is 0016/4-14968. Slavko Debelak was at the time subordinate to Igor Bavčar. Janez Drnovšek was elected president of the Slovenian government in April 1992. Matevž Krivic refers to the recorded transcription of the first meeting of Drnovšek's cabinet in June 1992, when Bavčar, being the Minister of Internal Affairs in Drnovšek's government as well, informed him about the “problem regarding the violation of human rights in Slovenia.”

Today, Bavčar, due to his political connections, is one of the most influential capitalists in Slovenia and is in charge of the multinational corporation Istrabenz, which he recently “succeeded” through privatization processes to completely ruin (Istrabenz was one of the most prosperous corporations of Slovenia). Though Bavčar transformed the corporation into a “death world,” which will leave its workers without jobs or futures, he is not facing any legal charges at the moment.

To put an even more clear light on the 1992 event in the darkness of the present reality, let's read carefully how the 1992 case is explained by the Erased people themselves: “It is important to state that the status of permanent residence, at least in a state of law, that respects human rights, can be obtained or confiscated only on the basis of law, administrative acts, or court decisions. The status of permanent residence is provided by birth or through other legal

means. This status provides duties and rights. Slovenia was in 1992 the legal successor of the former common federative state of Yugoslavia, together with permanent residents appurtenant to it, regardless of the nationality, sex, race, or religion of respective individuals. The basic existential status of the Erased has been taken from them without any law, legal act, or notification, only by a simple telegram!”

Therefore, the truth of the three “Janšas” is to be found in their over-cynical gesture par excellence through an “aesthetical-artistic” level of “fun” that allowed them to change all their documents, while not taking into consideration what this means within the present Slovenian reality that has “still” 18,000 people from the Erased contingent, without papers, whose status has not been solved at all, even after 17 years! (The other 12,000 witnessed different macabre consequences, some described in the mentioned thematic issue *The Story of an Erasure*.)

The “Janšas,” in turn, when they were asked in 2008 to write some kind of circular letters to each other, which were then published in the weekly supplement of the daily Ljubljana newspaper *Dnevnik*, used this very important public space for weeks to amuse the readers. The “Janšas” did not give any criticism of the cultural politics of the right-wing government, they just wrote speculations on their traveling and sentimental reminiscences about their different places of birth and origins. This is interesting enough as they said they use the name as a “criticism” of Janša politics.

I called the act of the Janšas' "three-headed body" a parody exhibitionism that did not provide a critique, but additionally reinforced the blurring of the political/artistic situation. The right-wing political space on the other hand needed and still needs such multiplication, such a spectacular cloning and branding of nothing, of the same nothing produced by the government and parties in power - "nothing" as an act of the total nullification of 30,000 people. However, this nothing had and has social and political effects, for it reproduces something. That is, first, it aestheticizes a necro social and political space of misery and control, and second, it transforms administrative state procedures into a playful game. On the other side, now, since Janša lost the elections in September 2008, the whole project of the Janšas' "three-headed body" has begun, even by itself, to expose that all that was actually taking place was only and solely a playful act of renaming, saying that it does not matter what its name is, as it is just about to change it! At least one of them is using his real name again: Žiga Kariž.

The project is not reevaluating the work of Janez Janša, as in the old times; it is not only about the name, it is the name! It is not about the two bodies and practices, the real and the symbolical, working through each other, but they are one, the distinction is blurred.

Therefore, instead of developing a criticism, the "Janšas" obfuscated the real Janša even more, duplicating him ad nauseam and providing an artistic flavor

to necropolitics. I can further insist that it is not so much about testing our capacity of producing all sorts of supplementary meanings; rather, we have to rearticulate the relation of meanings to hegemony! We have to overcome the fascination with new meanings (the fun, indeed, for example, produced through the triplication of the name, etc., used by mass media abundantly) and analyze the hegemonization that is produced in such a situation and to also see the role such a renaming plays within the biopolitical and necropolitical logics of the contemporary (Slovenian) neoliberal capitalist space.

In order now to connect the two projects, the special issue entitled *The Story of an Erasure* and the "Janšas", it is also necessary to make a direct and precise relation to the past, as both of these cultural events are relating to the past. *The Story of an Erasure* relates to a 17-year-old necropolitical event of the erasure of 30,000 people, the "Janšas" are relating to Laibach and its almost 30-year-old art strategy.

In a talk with Alexander Skidan and Dmitry Vilensky in the newspaper *What is to be Done?*, published in St. Petersburg, Artiom Magun presents a very simple but crucially important difference in understanding the past in relation to two remarkable theoretical cases. One case is Walter Benjamin and the other is Alain Badiou. Following Magun,³² this difference can be presented in the following way: "Badiou proposes that we find our support in something necessary and important that happened in the past and move on from there.

Benjamin, on the contrary, searches for something that was suppressed in the past, something that did not happen, that perished and is reawakening only now. The event that, for Badiou, happens in the past, is taking place right now for Benjamin. That is, they both look back to the past, but from opposite points of view. This is important as we try to understand potentiality: either potential is the impulse generated by a positive past or present event, or it is something that has not happened yet, that was interrupted in mid-sentence."

The "Janšas" also obfuscate and foreclose the cultural and political space in Slovenia because of their incapability of making a connection to past events; notably to Laibach, to which they conceptually refer, not to mention the reference to the Erased people! If this were not indeed the case, they would be capable of opening the present space of art and culture as a space of potentiality. If the "Janšas" based their concept on fidelity to Laibach, or to the Erased people, then they could connect and re-perform differently the art, social and political space, while opening the space of criticism and emancipation today. They could have transformed "the three-head monster Janša" into a real political subject able to subvert the real Janša and the right-wing necropolitics. They could make a reference as well to events of the 1980s and the 1990s: to a) the underground (subcultural movement) of the 1980s, and b) to the powerful awakening of the independent cultural and social structures situated in a squatted and empty military barracks complex in 1992 in the center of Ljubljana known as

Metelkova City. If they made a connection in terms of understanding what were the political implications of these events, they could produce a political subject capable of emancipating the social and political space of Slovenia today. But JJJ failed. On the contrary, *The Story of an Erasure* presents a gesture of a radical fidelity to the case of the Erased people.

JJJ in 2009

However, this was the interpretation of the project JJJ and the politician Janez Janša when he was in power, being the Slovenian prime minister. In 2008, he and his party lost the election. The JJJ artists did not change their names back to their original names. As previously stated, presently, only one of them is using his real name: Žiga Kariž, being appointed professor at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana.

Insisting on the name after the politician lost his "real" political power can indeed be viewed as an indisputable fidelity to the critical potential of such a project on one side, as well as it presents the direct critique of all those who were "hostile" to the project JJJ. The argument could go as follows: Now that Janša the politician is not in power anymore, the fidelity to the name is an exemplary fidelity. The artists insist on the name of the person even though the politician is not in power anymore and therefore this is also a clear sign that the projects by JJJ were based on a non-utilitarian logic, that their aim was in the final analysis purely artistically, aesthetically motivated. It was really about the autonomy of

the art expression in these times so imbued by politics.

I would like now to extend the critique of the Janšas project further and to show the opposite, that insisting today, in 2009 and onward, on the name (on its total appropriation), is precisely the true signifier of a complete postmodern fascistic nature of this and similar projects.

I will base this part of the interpretation on Agamben's book *State of Exception*.³³ Agamben refers in his *State of Exception* to that which he defines the modern confusion of *auctoritas* and *potestas*. These are two concepts that Agamben, quoting Pueyo, names as "two concepts that express the originary sense through which the Roman people conceived their communal life" (p. 75). The *auctoritas* is, according to Agamben, to be read differently within public and private law. In the field of private law, *auctoritas* (authority) is the *pater familias*, the father that confers legal validity on the act of the subject who cannot independently bring a legally valid act into being. This simply means, and in a less complicated parlance, that the *auctoritas* of the father (which is the *pater familias*) authorizes the marriage of the son who, in *potestas* has the ability to do so. Therefore, *auctoritas* and *potestas*, in cases of both private and public law, are not in opposition so to speak, but one (*auctoritas*) authorizes the other that is *potestas*. Additionally, in the public, *auctoritas* denotes not the increase in something which already exists as such, but presents the act of producing from one's own

breast: a creative act. Authority is not sufficient in itself, whether it authorizes or ratifies, it always implies an extraneous activity that it validates, though without this validation the structural power of *potestas* is not enough either!

The question posed by Agamben is from where does the force of authority come? For us, and for the past and present interpretation of the project "Janšas," this same question matters enormously. As we saw, that if by chance we were "wrongly," that simply means historically and politically, thinking that the Janšas art projects are bound to a certain "real political power" of the politician Janša, this proved not to be the case. In 2009, after Janša the politician lost the election, Janša the artists insisted on the fidelity to the name.

Even more, the convergence into one body (of the political and the artistic bodies of "Janša") is in relation to the concept of sovereignty (as well of an art project), and is not just an academic "confusion" (between artistic "autonomy" and political complicity); it is connected (as stated by Agamben referring to Pueyo) to the process that is linked to the order of modernity.

As Agamben stated, the act of *auctoritas* did not present an increase in something which already existed as such, but presented the act of producing from one's own breast: a creative act. The JJJ project is today, in 2009, seen precisely as such, as a pure creative act, as a pure act of the autonomy of art freedom. It was especially those many theoreticians, critics, journalists, and follow-

ers who stood in support and protection of JJJ who stated that the "artists have the right to be autonomous and not to think about what it is that is going on in the reality of the social and political." The most important point is that the auctor (authority), according to Agamben, is not founded upon some sort of legal power vested in him to act as a representative: it springs directly from his condition as *pater familias*, as father. It means an actualization of an impersonal power (*potestas*) in the very person of the auctor, authority. This is for us the point why JJJ (if it is possible to state "unconsciously") insists on being Janša the politician, after he lost the elections in 2008, and was forced to form an opposition in the Slovenian parliament.

Just to repeat, the interest in the project for us is because it was said that the artistic JJJ is a critique of the right-wing, neoliberal fascistic power of the politician Janez Janša. In 2009, he lost his power, but the political oppositional coalition Janša formed is not an emancipative coalition, but a right-wing oppositional political program. Therefore, Janša is not interesting for us as a politician and even less deserving to write about, as he is merely a template of similar positions throughout the present European Union and global capitalist world reality. Our interest is only in the artistic project JJJ that claims to be a critique of Janša the politician by literally repeating his name, and in 2009 insisting perversely on the fidelity to the name.

Agamben states that *auctoritas* and *potestas* are clearly distinct, and yet

together they form a binary system. On what relies the overlapping that forms a binary? *Potestas* (power) are the magistrates, as it is explained by Agamben, who have power because of the place they occupy (that is, a structural place of power, without being rooted in any extra capability or aura of the magistrates), while *auctoritas*, authority's power is generated by a power that is not coming from a structural place but emanates from the person itself. Even more, as Agamben writes, under extreme conditions (as in a state of exception or war), *auctoritas* seems to act as a force that suspends *potestas* and reactivates it where it is no longer in force. *Auctoritas*, authority, is a power that suspends or reactivates law, but is not formally in force as law. This relation is, as argued by Agamben, at once one of exclusion and supplementation between *auctoritas* and *potestas* that is possible to be found as well in the period of interregnum meaning in the period of a change of power or when a parliament is not yet constituted and the senior member is to initiate its work (p. 79). It is in the interregnum that the *patres auctoritas* proposes an *interrex* (somebody to take the power in the in-between time). The formula used, as stated by Agamben, is that the republic returns to the fathers (*patres*).

Practically, what is important for us is that *auctoritas* (authority) shows its connection with the suspension of *potestas* and, at the same time, it shows its capacity to ensure the functioning of the republic under exceptional circumstances. Although Janša the politician lost the election, his authority

“emanates” and this is why JJJ keeps the name and insists upon it, presenting a macabre fidelity that is the point through which we can make a precise analysis of the relation of the social and political and artistically autonomous space today.

The difference is possible to be defined as follows: whereas the magistrate, as a potestas in the Roman principate, is a pre-established form (something structural without a personal body) that the individual enters into and which constitutes the source of his power when “sitting” in such a place, the auctoritas, on the other hand, springs from the person as something that is constituted through him (p. 82). Agamben points out clearly that to understand modern phenomena such as the Fascist Duce and the Nazi Fuhrer, it is important not to forget their continuity with the principle of the auctoritas principia (p. 83). As Agamben points out, even though Mussolini held the offices of heads of the government and Hitler that of chancellor of the Reich, neither represented a constitutionally defined public office or magistracy (p. 83). The qualities of Duce or Fuhrer were immediately bound to the physical person and belonged to the biopolitical tradition of auctoritas and not to the legal tradition of potestas.

JJJ (the three-headed monster Janša), in the past, claimed that its gesture was a gesture of criticism, which was indeed possible at the time when Janša the politician was in power, as it could be maybe seen as the analysis of his potestas. However, in 2009, it is obvious that it was not about this at all, but was

about the total identification with the authority of Janša the politician.

If it was about the criticism of Janša the politician by JJJ, as it was stated, when Janša was the Slovenian prime minister (in the period 2004 – 2008), then why to keep the name after the politician lost the election in the period 2008/2009? Why to show a fidelity to the name after Janša's political fall?

If we think about the differentiation between auctoritas (authority that emanates from the person as such) and potestas (power that is structurally given by being in a certain moment in a certain position, let's say by being a prime minister), there is no longer a reason for JJJ to keep the name in 2009. Or? Does JJJ “really” in the final analysis trust, believe in Janša's emanating authority? Is their fidelity today a proof that they are relating to Janez Janša not as potestas (as a structural place for the analysis of power in the system of contemporary Slovenian society), but to Janez Janša as auctoritas? As presented by Agamben, the power of Duce and Hitler was lawless, it was beyond the structural position that they had, it was based in auctoritas, authority, and is today alive precisely because of this, after it has been clearly exposed that they were just bare criminals!

The three-headed artistic monster Janša project is ultimately attached to the father figure, the authority of Janša, which displays how the contemporary Slovenian society functions. JJJ repeats the patriarchal, chauvinistic, white, male, heterosexual matrix of the

Slovenian state that is at the core of the EU as well. Therefore, the stubborn insistence on the body of the fallen politician in order to prove that the JJJ art project was (is) not a mistake or a fashionable gesture today testifies to its even more reactionary horizon and to the neoliberal capitalist society in which it takes place.

As Agamben states, “Kantorowicz's theory of the king's two bodies should be re-read” (p. 83). Kantorowicz, as stated by Agamben, generally undervalues the importance of the Roman precedent to the theory that he seeks to reconstruct for the English and French monarchies, and he does not relate to the distinction between auctoritas and potestas when he talks about the king's two bodies and about the principle that dignities do not die with the death of the king (p. 83). And yet, as continued by Agamben, “it is precisely because the sovereign was first and foremost the embodiment of the auctoritas and not only of a potestas, that auctoritas was so closely bound to his physical person, thus requiring the complicated ritual of constructing a wax double of the sovereign in the *funus imaginarium*” (p. 83) - something that happened recently when one of the art projects by the three-headed artistic monster Janša presented a monumental sculpture (a double) of their projects.

Agamben therefore insists that, already by the Roman times, precisely because of this indistinction between authority and power, where the private and public life have entered into a zone of absolute indistinction, does it become necessary to distinguish between the two bodies.

Or to put this differently, it matters profoundly which body in what circumstances we will repeat, with which body we will become one, to which body we will express our utmost fidelity.

This was already our thesis before the political fall of Janez Janša; but what is clear now, after further analysis is that, paradoxically, today after he has lost his power, this is becoming even more urgent. Agamben argues that the modern scholars, as our modern artists, have been only too ready to uphold the claim that auctoritas inheres immediately in the living person of the *pater familias*, so to speak, in the immanent power, outside its structural position. Agamben states that this was “clearly an ideology or a fiction intended to ground the pre-eminence or, in any case, it meant that the specific rank of auctoritas in relation to potestas became a figure of law's immanence to life.”

It is not by chance, Agamben continues, “that this should happen precisely in the years when the authoritarian principle saw an unexpected rebirth in Europe through fascism and National Socialism.” Our three-headed monster Janša is taking part precisely in such a procedure, reinforcing it and making a profit from it, almost counting on a similar position in the future of art history, civil society, etc, of their figures that could display a figure of art's immanence to the life of the State. That this is the case is also proved by a series of some other projects by the artist Janša to repeat as faithful reconstructions some theater performances that are seen as indisputable avant-garde per-

formances from the not-so-distant modernist socialist Slovenian (or it would be better to say former-Yugoslav) past.

In this case, Janša the artist tries to acquire his eternity by linking himself directly to a past high modernist socialist theater director who is still alive today, but who was for a while (also due to the post-socialist transitional changes) without a theater, artistic power, though he still bears the informal power of a certain un-discussed *pater familias* of the Slovenian high modernist theater family. These reenactments also allow getting rid of the political, post-socialist-radical postmodernist times of the 1980s that brought to the surface the alternative (subcultural) movement in Ljubljana and the coming out of the homosexual and lesbian scenes in Slovenia and former Eastern Europe.

Slovenian socialist (high) modernism (bypassing the radical political times of the alternative movement of the 1980s) is now being continued (tout court, without a break) and reconnected with the independent Slovenian state. This also means to bypass any interpretational contemporary discourse that should question precisely the different times of the execution of the same performance (socialism and capitalism) and, therefore, the three Janšas are cherished as those that could connect to the present time the undisputed authority of the modernist (!) past.

The three-headed Janša seems, as in the case of those that are criticized by Agamben, "to take for granted that authoritarian-charismatic power springs

almost magically from the very person of the Fuhrer." This, in the final analysis, comes near to the traditional juridical thought that saw law as ultimately identical with or immediately articulated to life. Therefore, we can speak of an eminent biopolitical character of the paradigm of *auctoritas*, authority. Such a norm can be applied to the normal situation and can be suspended without totally annulling the juridical order because in the form of *auctoritas* or sovereign decision, it refers immediately to life, it springs from life (p. 85).

As Agamben develops, the authority of Duce or Fuhrer can never be derivative but is always originary and springs from his person; furthermore, in its essence, it is not coercive, but is rather founded on consent and the free acknowledgment of a superiority of value, as we tried to present up to now. This consent is a rather broader one, including not only the artists but also the whole of the Institution of Contemporary Art that consists of institutions, writers, journalists, ministerial bodies, etc.

With Janez Janša the politician, (similar to the old theater figure from modernist socialist time), this charisma (on which the Janšas count in order to get some of it for their present position) supposedly stays on even after the politician has lost the election; this coincides with what Agamben writes, that this charisma is in the final analysis a measure for the neutralization of law, even more than just reproducing, repeating the originary figure of power. So, finally, the body of the politician and the artist as one (Janša), and the body of the past modernist the-

ater director becoming one with the body of the JJJ, is not just about the repetition of these two bodies (Janša the politician, the socialist, modernist avant-gardist), but is about neutralizing the capability of the institution of art, theory and critique to develop an analysis of the art institution as a biopolitical machine. What we have is a situation of a state of exception within contemporary art taken for granted, in the broadest sense, from institutions to discourses, from ministerial bodies that give public funds to "free" (as they are called) democratic mass media.

Behind the Janšas, big machinery is put to work that almost blindly supports the theater, the art autonomy's immanence to life. In the case of the project Janša, Janša, Janša, the theoreticians and critics write in superlatives about the project, and since by "chance" they also happen to be journalists of major daily newspapers, they can then report about what they wrote in their published books, etc. What an incestuous situation. So then not only is the institution of contemporary art giving its blessing to this project, but the state is supporting it in financial abundance. The outcome is a pure state of exception that I can name as well, in relation to Santiago López Petit, as postmodern fascism. Postmodern fascism (differently from the classical fascism), and not in any connection with a standard conspiracy theory, presents and displays these enthusiastic writers, theoreticians, journalist, critics, curators, directors, ministry administrators, professors, etc. as serving the "project" JJJ, FREELY, autonomously; they are convinced that

these JJJ works are a gesture of a pure freedom.

The state of exception is a device, as formulated by Agamben, or something we call a *dispositif* (and not "a process") with which is ultimately imposed an articulation that holds together two different aspects, as said in our case, art and life; this articulation is instituting a certain normative aspect that is possible to be defined as a state of their undecidability. What is at the center of this relation is the state of exception, but, and I quote Agamben, "this is essentially an empty space in which human action with no relation to law stands before a norm with no relation to life." This does not mean that the machine, with its empty center, is not effective; on the contrary, it has been working since WWI to the present day. It means that life is seen as the raw material of art, though it must be clear that bare life (the life that is WITHOUT A FORM) is a product of this same machine and not something that is there as a preexisted reality! It is not that we have bare life on one side, and then modal life on the other, no; they are both an outcome of a process of the articulation of neoliberal global capitalism and life.

Law and life, art and life result from the fracture of something to which we have no other access than through their articulation. The political will be to separate them, art and life and law and life, but not as two pure entities, but to show that they are both already an outcome of a process of articulation. That is simply to say that the political will consist in showing this fiction of art and life being one

not as a simple fiction but as a reality, on the one side, and on the other side, to disclose this process of fictionalization as being the process of articulation of art and life. Therefore, first it is possible to state in this relation that not only is contemporary art a biopolitical paradigm, but that an art work can be a state of exception. Art works as the state of exception simply double and normalize the situation; coinciding totally with the situation. Such is the case of the art work *Janša, Janša, Janša*.

What has been written up to now also demonstrates a shift away from Žarana Papić's turbo fascism (as part of the transitional spaces of the former Eastern Europe states) into what Petit calls postmodern fascism, as the new characteristic of neoliberalism's complete blurring of the public and private, etc. To which we could as well add the feature (also recognized in the way of functioning of the Moderna Galerija/Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana) named by Achille Mbembe as "private informal power."

JJJ presents a clear necropolitics amidst the "normalized" neoliberal capitalist biopolitics.

PART TWO: GLOBAL CAPITALISM and THE INSTI- TUTION OF CONTEMPORARY ART

E.) Rearticulation of global capitalism, reality and democracy

It is obvious that I am attempting to construct a vocabulary with which to grasp

the changes brought on by capital throughout the whole of the social and political space, and more specifically, to see how contemporary capitalist practices as art, culture and theory are co-substantial to processes of capital dispossession, marginalization, exploitation and expropriation. In the final analysis, the interest is in developing different possible counter positions and ways to struggle against capitalism.

I. Capital

Today, capitalism is clearly biopolitics, a radical institutionalization, control and subjugation of life, that needs, I argue, to be re-politicized - intensified by changes brought with modes of management of life outside the First Capitalist World - with necropolitics.

Biopolitics is a horizon of articulating contemporary capitalist societies from the so-called politics of life, where life (it does not matter anymore, following Giorgio Agamben,³⁴ if it's bare/naked life or life-with-forms) is seen as the zero degree of intervention of each and every politics into contemporary societies. However, today capital's surplus value is based on the capitalization of death (Latin, necro) worlds. In the text "Necropolitics"(2003),³⁵ Achille Mbembe discusses this new logic of capital and its processes of geopolitical demarcation of world zones that are based on the mobilization of the war machine. Mbembe claims that the concept of biopolitics, due to the war machine and the state of exception being one of the major logics of contemporary societies, should be replaced with necropolitics.

Necropolitics is connected to the concept of necrocapitalism, i.e., contemporary capitalism, which organizes its forms of capital accumulation that involve dispossession and the subjugation of life according to the power of death. No conflict that challenges the supreme requirements of capitalist rationalization - economic growth, profit maximization, productivity, efficiency and the like - is tolerable. I have argued that with this move, Mbembe gave us the possibility by which to re-politicize biopolitics. It is now the time to call for the "necropolitical" intensification of biopolitics, and for its historization as well. If biopower, according to Foucault, is the exercise of the power "to make live and let die," then necropower is the exercise of the power, I state, "to let live and make die." To make live (to provide conditions for a better life) and/or to let live (being abandon to a life without means) present two different biopolitics; the latter is, in fact, pure necropolitics.

I want to continue with an in-depth analysis of global capitalism. In order to do this, I will make reference to Santiago López Petit's book *Global Mobilization: A Brief Treatise for Attacking Reality*.³⁶ Petit's book is a militant demand for further politicization of life. But contrary to numerous analyses of globalization seen as a process, Petit claims (through Badiou or, even more so, through Deleuze) that contemporary global capitalism is an event. Petit states that if we think of globalization as the result of a process, we imply a development and a progression (also, temporarily, a regression, a crisis), and therefore, we are not capable of understanding the way capi-

talism functions. If we think about neoliberal globalization, global capitalism, as a process, we therefore even imply capital emancipation (as it had been stated as throughout the previous decade in numerous exhibitions, symposia, books throughout Europe and the U.S., that capital is social, etc.). In such a situation, we are ready to accept, almost naturally, I would say, fake discourses of morality with which capitalism tries to cover up the outcome of the crisis these days (financialization of capital) by stating that it was all just some sort of a mistake, as capital is noble and that financialization, making money from money without investing into production, is just a single perversion, a mistake. No!

Capitalism, as elaborated by Petit, is not an irreversible process but a reversible and conflictual event. The core of this reversibility is presented by Petit in the following way. He states that in the world today all is brought back to one single event, and I will add that this is not the crisis, nor even Obama, but what he calls the unrestraintment of capital (in Spanish *desbocamiento*), that can be more colloquially grasped as "unrestraining" or "unleashing" of capital. Neoliberal globalization, as stated by Petit, is nothing more than the repetition of this single event, that is, the unrestraintment of capital (Petit, p. 24). Marxism, says Petit, has traditionally connected the critique of capitalism with the defense of the idea of a limit that is accessed by capitalist development and proper to it. To access the limit means to reach the point of its imminent collapse. The hypothesis of the imminent collapse

of capitalism is based on this idea. The collapse takes its point of departure from the crisis that is the crisis, on one hand, of over-supply and, on the other, of under-consumption. However, as Petit argues, the over-production of the means of production and over-abundance of market commodities that prevent the realization of profit are nothing more than an excess of the means of production that are in a particular present and already-historical moment not suitable to function as capital. Nothing new, in fact. For what is happening today is the logic that stands at the core of capital: production solely for the benefit of capital in order to generate profit, surplus value, and not for the benefit of social life. Such a situation, that is an antinomy at the core of capital, does produce a living contradiction, but it is not bringing capitalism to an end. On the contrary, as stated by Marx and quoted by Petit. "The true limit of the capitalist production is capital itself" (From Capital, volume III in Petit, p. 24). Please keep this in mind, I will return to this point later.

The unrestraintment of capital creates a paradoxical spatialization that requires two repetitions: on the one hand, according to Petit, a founding repetition with which a system of hierarchy is reestablished, leading to the constant reconstruction of a center and a periphery; and, on the other hand, a so-called de-foundational repetition that presents itself as the erosion of hierarchies, producing dispersion, multiplicity and multi-reality. The unrestraintment of capital, as argued by Petit, implicates both repetitions at once. Thus, not only does repe-

tion produce the "jouissance" of minimal difference, but repetition is also a mechanism of control, subjugation and repression. Repetition of the unrestraintment of capital, repeated vertically and horizontally, rearticulates a global space-time that repeatedly effectuates the co-propriety of capital and power. The unrestraintment of capital is, as argued by Petit, the only event that - being repeated at any moment and in any place - unifies the world and connects everything that is going on within it. Repetition is also de-foundational to the degree with which, according to Petit, capital repeats indifference for equality.

I can propose, therefore, three major fields with which Petit tackles global capitalism. These are: reality, capital/power, and democracy. These segments are linked together through two almost old-fashioned mechanisms that are evidently still operative today: circularity in the way of self-referentiality and empty formalism, on the one side, and tautology that produces obviousness, on the other. Tautology means obviousness. This tautology, as argued by Petit, presents itself today as the complete and total coincidence of capitalism and reality. To say that capitalism and reality totally coincide means that today reality is reality. The date of the event that made that reality and capitalism coincide totally is, as argued by Petit, September 11th, 2001. Petit states that the outcome of September 11th, 2001 was the excess of reality, it was the moment when reality exploded (Petit, p. 80). Petit warns us that in the global era, the debate between moder-

nity and postmodernity has become obsolete. The global era is a break with modernity and with the postmodern radicalizations of modernity that were developed by Giddens, Beck and Lash. Petit states that the classical concept of modernity is about modernization (Petit, p. 18). It is presented as an endogenous process that is caused by factors within the system. Modernity is presented as the work of reason itself. Likewise, modernity constructs a rationalist image of the world that implicates the duality subject/object, and the distance is, says Petit, that of man and the world. Postmodernism abolishes the distance and situates man inside the world that is made of signs and ahistorical languages. The global era oscillates this distance between zero and infinity. That is why there is the feeling of the absence of the world and at the same time we witness its over-abundance. So it comes as no surprise that most of the theoretical books that have been published recently deal with this oscillation between zero and infinity. The limit of the postmodern discourse resides, therefore, in the contemplation of reality as neutral, that it has arrived today at political neutrality. But what it is necessary to do today is to call for the repoliticization of reality, and to de-link ourselves from its political neutrality.

I will claim again, on the contrary, that modernity is important, as it allows the rethinking of two emancipative projects that failed historically: the Enlightenment and communism. The failures are historically clear; on one side we have the brutal history of colonialism, in the recent past we have the Holocaust and

in the last decade, so to speak, we have Srebrenica in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Though we could go on and make a list of repetitions: Rwanda, Darfur, Chechnya, Gaza, etc. To be sure, colonialism led directly to Nazism and fascism. The other great project of modernism is communism, which has not been reflected well enough either, due to its past failure of Stalinism. The future of communism is paradoxical though, as it is emptied of its historical context today, in order to be presented as an infinite playground model of jouissance for emancipated Western intellectuals. I suggest, in relation to Alain Badiou, a political act of "FORCING," implying a force that is the result of an approach that insists on a continued analysis of knowledge/coloniality/modernity. This forcing is especially based on the demand to de-link contemporary art and theory from contemporary forms of epistemological coloniality (as defined by Walter Mignolo³⁷ and Madina Tlostanova³⁸). Contemporary epistemological coloniality presents only the Western matrix of the Enlightenment and does not take into consideration the epistemological breaks and shifts taking place in the so-called "exterior," or rather at the "edges" of Western European scientific thought.

Marina Garcés, in her book *In the Prisons of the Possible*,³⁹ states that contemporary capitalism is not circumscribed within the articulation of a determined economic system and its production, but subsumes all spheres of life, thus coinciding with reality itself in the final analysis. The outcome is a political consensus, called democracy, whose

institutions do not carry any political status anymore, but are seen as an “environment” that can only be adjusted and improved but not subverted and ousted in any case. Garcés talks about the democracy-market in which anything can pass, or be taken for granted, and where the world is presented in its naked truth. Meaning: this is what it is! It is a terminal obviousness that presents a world not as open, but as closed and without a future, despite seeing such an intensified theoretical reworking of infinity. In the background of the unrestraintment of capital, it is nevertheless necessary to think about the limits of capital. But to say that the unrestraintment of capital means going over the limit is, as Petit stated, not at all what this event is about. Because the only limit of capital is capital itself, so the unrestraintment of capital is not about something outside of it (as is said about the crisis, being something “abnormal” and also something that will bring capitalism to its end); the unrestraintment of capital just means something more than capital.

Petit links capital and power in the following ways: 1. Capital is more (than) capital 2. Capital that is more than capital is power. Such a relation presents a new situation between capital and power, which is named by Petit as the co-propriety capital/power (Petit, p. 30). This co-propriety capital/power needs a medium in order to take place. We have three fundamental media today where capital and power own each other: innovation, public space, and war (Petit, p. 38).

Innovation: new information and com-

munication technologies, biotechnologies, the pharmaceutical industry and science are proposed as fields of innovation with which we will supposedly overcome the present crisis. Public space is increasingly privatized and depoliticized; instead of politics, we talk about catastrophes (ecological, educational). War allows for the management of life through the capitalization of death (Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan).

Petit states that such a situation of the changed relation between capital and power, which is the relation of the co-propriety today, asks for a different relation between globalization and the nation-State. The nation-State is not a victim of globalization, as is constantly argued, rather the nation-State successfully adapts itself to globalization. We see this in the intensified measures that are implemented by the nation-States in terms of the privatization of all public sectors, from education to health and culture, and also in the way that class division and racism are managed in our capitalist contemporaneity. Intensified racism, if we just think about EU legislative policy, presents processes of class and institutional racializations that are supported by new, constantly reinvented neo-colonial structures. For the unrestraintment of capital to handle conflicts, it needs a formal frame, and this is neoliberal capitalist democracy. Democracy articulates two modes of power. As argued by Petit, one is the war-State (governance and violence with brutal exploitation, expropriation, discrimination, repression), and the other is postmodern fascism (Petit, p. 84). They work as a grid of vertical and

horizontal forces, and in order to escape Frederic Jameson’s old cognitive mapping, we can think, I propose, of their working together as in the case of computed tomography. This also means, as I have already stated in the past, that it is not possible to understand global capitalism if we do not include new media technology, the digitalized mode of programming in its logic of functioning. Computed tomography (CT) is a specialized X-ray imaging technique. It may be performed, as it is stated in medical technical language, as “plain” or with the injection of a “Contrast Agent.” This makes a perfect metaphor for analysis, as we can say that it is used as “plain” in Africa, Kosovo, Chechnya, as well on the workers (without any rights and over-exploited) from the former ex-Yugoslav republics in Slovenia, or when “just fixing” the situation with migrants (making them illegal) in the EU through seclusion and deportation. “Plain” means with pure, naked, bare force.

Or it can be used with the “Contrast Agent,” as in Iraq or Afghanistan or Pakistan. In these regions, major economic interests are at stake, such as petrol and heroin, vital for the U.S., EU, etc., and therefore, to cover this up, it is necessary to have agents. CT creates an image by using an array of small individual X-Ray sensors and a computer. By spinning the X-Ray source, data is collected from multiple angles. A computer then processes information to create an image on the screen. The war-State is one face of democracy and serves for dominance. The other is postmodern fascism. It serves as the dissolution of the democratic state in a multi-

reality of social technologies. Postmodern fascism, as stated by Petit, is constructed on the autonomy of each individual. As such, it is a self-governmentality that is based on the self-management of a proper autonomy. The war-State produces coherency. It homogenizes. Its action is propaganda. Think of the mobilization of the masses against terrorism, for example. Postmodern fascism, on the other hand, is informal, non-coherent, as it is based on the autonomy of differences. It produces differences. Its action is communication. These differences are brilliantly described in the book by Petit (pp. 87-88).

I claim that the war-State, in its verticality - functioning by way of force, violence, fear - is but a pure fascist state. However, it would be too simple if we would use historical fascism for its naming, because we would fail to emphasize what the major logic of dominance in the world today is, and this logic is the logic of war. The war-State definitely has elements of classical fascism: a sovereign leader, people, death as the management of life. While, on the other hand, there is also the neoliberal context of the autonomy of individuals, which is the neoliberal freedom of having rights to just be an individual brand. It is rightly so, as proposed by Petit, to name it postmodern fascism. As Petit says, postmodern fascism sterilizes the “Other,” evacuates the conflict from public space and neutralizes the political. It is not strange that we continuously repeat that global capitalism is about depoliticization. Postmodern fascism works through a constant self-mobiliza-

tion, just think about the last U2 world tour, etc.

Making a reference to the already mentioned founding repetition of global capitalism with which a system of hierarchy is reestablished, leading to the constant repetition of a center and a periphery, it is necessary to emphasize that the former Eastern European states, notably former Yugoslavia and especially Serbia, had to pass through Turbo-Fascism before embracing postmodern fascism. Turbo-Fascism was proposed by Žarana Papić⁴⁰ in order to conceptualize in the 1990s in the Balkans, specifically in Serbia, hegemonistic nationalisms, i.e., national separatisms, chauvinist and racist exclusion or marginalization of (old and new) minority groups that were and are closely connected with patriarchal, discriminatory and violent politics against women and their civil and social rights. Today, in order to understand the entanglement of capital/power in global capitalism, it is not enough to talk about turbo fascism, but it is necessary to apply the co-propriety of capital/power relations in the form of the neoliberal democratic state that presents itself, as already conceptualized in relation to Petit, as a war-State (governance and violence with brutal exploitation, expropriation, discrimination, repression), and postmodern fascism (that presents a state of pure autonomy of the subject that in the last analysis accepts freely not to do anything, meaning to be satisfied with nothing). I would like to reintroduce, therefore, two concepts in order to attack this situation: de-linking⁴¹ and de-coloniality⁴² (which I have already elaborated), impli-

cating a certain dissection within contemporary processes of capitalist institutionalization, control and subjugation. De-linking means to de-link ourselves from the unrestraintment of capital that does not allow for just a simple opposition, as it does not function as it did in the 1970s as unity capital/power, but as I developed in reference to Petit, as co-propriety capital/power. This new format of capitalism presents an entanglement of capital and power. Therefore, what is necessary is not just to oppose, but to draw a line of division, in order to de-link ourselves from capital and power. De-coloniality on the other hand presents a new position that draws a line inside contemporary processes of coloniality and is not post-colonialism.

I can state that although capitalism has brought the world to its end, it is not the end yet!

II. Repetition

Up to now, I have presented the system of functioning of global capitalism and its reality, exposing a logic of repetition that has as its outcome circularity, obviousness and formalization. These points are at the core of the Institution of Contemporary Art today. I name such a mechanism that simultaneously produces and eschews content, leaving us with an empty form - a performative repetitive mechanism. This mechanism will help us to understand what it is that makes more or less all large contemporary exhibitions and projects obsolete in terms of resistance and critique (though they are not obsolete from the side of those who organize and curate them

(and maybe take part in them), as it is possible to make some money and get power. To explain this differently: What we have today as part of exhibitions, especially big powerful exhibition projects (Biennials, Documentas, Manifestas, etc.) is a myriad of art works that present as content unbelievable features of contemporary capitalist exploitation, expropriations; these “features” are more and more visible, they show it all, so to speak, tout court, without any mediation. These art exhibitions are more and more intensified, they present art works that show capitalist corruption, police repression, massacres of people and animals, all is made visible with more and more drastically elaborated dimensions, reasons, connections of exploitation, expropriation, executions, etc., though all stay, so to speak, impotent.

The content is, at the same time of its presentation, made obsolete through a mechanism that I termed performative repetition and that functions as a process of voiding, emptying, extracting the meaning from these contents. What is left out of the discussion is precisely the ideological form with which the mentioned art works and projects are presented. I claim that this form presents, encapsulates so to speak, a process of emptying (not only of diminishing, but in many cases completely nullifying, etc.) what at the level of content was made visible. In the past, the social reality was presented as “normal;” that means on the level of content, it was displayed precisely differently from what was occurring in everyday life, therefore on the level of its reflection, on the level of

the (art) form, it was necessary to produce something “abnormal;” something as a formal invention or as an excess, as an excessive surplus (in accordance with the social and political system in which they appeared, be it socialism or capitalism), in order to say that what was in reality on the level of content a normality was, in fact, a lie. But what we have today is precisely the obverse; on the level of the “content,” so to speak, in reality the world is captured as it is, in its full extension of abnormality, monstrosity, exploitation, expropriation, while on the level of the form, this abnormality is normalized, is presented in such a way that the meaning of powerful content becomes empty, obsolete.

Content is abnormal and the form is normal; and moreover, form misrecognition is today presented consciously, snobbishly stylized, so to speak, out of all proportion. In such a situation, the knowledge that is “captured” through a scientific or art work is transformed through a performative politics of repetition into a pure ideological knowledge, but with a proviso saying that therefore we should not be preoccupied as it’s all anyway just a pure process of performativity. Therefore, what we get is not just an upside (turned) down, but ideology today again made “unconscious” so to speak and presented in the form of a game or a joke that is given a life of its own.

Therefore, if we agree with what Althusser writes in the 1970s regarding the difference between art and science, saying that this difference lies in the specific form, as reported by Agon

Hamza,⁴³ “in which the same object is given in quite a different way: art in the form of ‘seeing’ and ‘perceiving’ or ‘feeling,’ science in the form of knowledge (in the strict sense, by concepts),” then at that time all that was needed was to take a step on the other side in order to understand what was going on. But what in Althusser’s time presented a revolution is today a point of accepted knowledge and not any longer a point of an ideological dispute, and (this is an important difference) therefore, contemporary ideology no longer resides on the level of content but is already subsumed on the formal level of our knowledge.

What’s additionally important is that today we witness the change between transparency and opacity. The “opacity” of the 1970s, which Althusser made clear by exposing the situation of ideological mystification between science and ideology, is today completely transparent. The specter of transparency is, in fact, as stated by Petit, haunting us. The only abnormal field is the social reality, which is excessive and opaque, while the mechanism of its presentation is totally transparent, framed within processes of total obviousness. This obviousness that presents itself as a performative repetitive mechanism makes ridiculous the abnormal social content.

If we follow Althusser’s definition of ideology as an imaginary deformed representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence (by which he meant the relations of production), we should say that what ideology misrepresents today is

not the reality, but itself. In a way, it behaves today as a cognizant post-Fordist mechanism that takes the presented mechanism of ideology’s materiality (that was presented in the 1970s, in the Fordist era, so to speak, if we make a reference to Paolo Virno) as its raw material, as its content. But what does this mean precisely? It makes imaginary today what was already identified as material, it transforms (again) through the repetitive performative ideological mechanism the materiality of ideology, the materiality of its apparatuses onto imaginary levels. The materiality of ideology is made today redundant, nullified and emptied through repetitive (ideological) performative mechanisms. To put it differently, what is clear on the level of content, so to speak, is on the level of form now made to be simply obsolete, ridiculous, not sexy or obvious enough, to the extent of not being attractive enough. What we have today at work is another misrecognition that is not a misrecognition at all, but a reflected cognition that takes as its basis the ideological misrecognition of the 1970s, and repeats it in such a way as to make it ridiculous, or maybe better to say, an old knowledge; the materiality of ideology is now taken as raw material to be integrated in performative representations where this materiality is consciously set back to the level of the imaginary.

A perfect example of what has been said up to now is the 11th International Istanbul Biennial in 2009 curated by What, How & for Whom (WHW), a non-profit organization / visual culture and curators’ collective formed in 1999 and based in Zagreb, Croatia. The 11th

International Istanbul Biennial had as its title “What Keeps Mankind Alive?,” as proposed by WHW, which is the title of the song that closes the second act of the play *The Threepenny Opera*, written by Bertolt Brecht in collaboration with Elisabeth Hauptmann and Kurt Weill in 1928. As the online text of the 11th International Istanbul Biennial (written by WHW) states, Brecht proposed with *The Threepenny Opera* a transformation of the “theatre apparatus” through an alteration of the existing notions of theatre “genres” and the play’s relationship with the audience. This transformation was based on Brecht’s assertion that “A CRIMINAL IS A BOURGEOIS AND A BOURGEOIS IS A CRIMINAL.” This assertion of Brecht’s, obviously at the core of WHW’s concept, is the main refrain that is at the core of the biennial as well. WHW not only affirms that it is “working for the criminals” (their wording), as stated online, but is also constructing such a framework around the biennial that is taking away the very possibility to intervene critically - transforming the critical discourse “working for the criminals” into a normalized fact, into a constative, making what we know obvious and, even more, taking this obviousness as a side fact (a criminal is a bourgeois and a bourgeois is a criminal).

In short, we can say that today the level of dealing with ideology is a level of transforming it into a commodity, that means into a source of normalization, through processes of performativity and repetition; the ruling ideology is not seen as preoccupying when being perceived as a process of misrecognition (as it was preoccupying for Althusser), but this

misrecognition is today taken as the raw material for a stylish play. It is not a ghostly figure anymore, but a terrain for experimentation, invention and infinite imagination.

Making reference to Petit, we can state that the repetitive performative mechanism functions as indetermination, indecision, irresolution or what he calls gelatinization (Petit, p. 48). What was before a solid ground, a materiality of intervention is today a process of multiplication that removes, empties the ground from its materiality. The repetitive performative mechanism functions as gelatinization, becoming opaque precisely through a process of transparency that is performed today as repetition. Gelatinization corresponds, as argued by Petit, today to global capitalism as reification corresponded to modernity. If reification was in relation to the distinction between the living and the dead, gelatinization requires a triadic model, according to Petit, the living, the dead and the inert. Who is the possible example of the inert? *Bartleby the Scrivener*, of course.⁴⁴

Gelatinization means giving an account of reality that presents itself as being occulted, abstract, and transparent. Reality is at the same time alive and dead and, therefore, as stated by Petit, it is multi-reality. Gelatinization is the solid surrounded by the liquid that is, I will claim, the repetitive performative mechanism. It is a double process, as stated by Petit, of opening and closing. What is even more horrifying, according to Petit, is that closing effectuates obviousness. Gelatinization means reality is

covered with obviousness. Politically it presents a catastrophe. Multi-reality is open but has no outside! Gelatinization makes vague the political subject. And especially, multi-reality vaguely presents the enemy. It oscillates from a maximum abstraction to an absolute concreteness.

Therefore, in a difference from Marx's analysis of commodity fetishism, today we do not have something normal on the level of society from which the analysis of the form of its presentation in art, for example, or in theory, will show us that actually what is a normal content situation is in reality the opposite, something strange and different from what is said, etc. Today, in a difference from Marx, that was the point of reference for Althusser, we live in a time in which the social reality is abnormal and the form of its articulation is here not to normalize this abnormality but to intensify it through voiding this abnormality of any content, meaning, etc. This emptying is going on as obviousness. So first the thing is being turned upside down, and then the form is just taking us somewhere else. This somewhere else is part of an obscene performative logic that is not even saying that what we are witnessing in reality is abnormal, but is simply emptying the content through indeterminateness, indecision, irresolution. Obfuscation is on the level of form practiced precisely with a double obfuscation, and as Marx would say, is also speculative, or as said by Petit, it is the former solid surrounded by the liquid that is the repetitive performative mechanism. The form is not hiding the content anymore, but the way in which it is

presented through its formalization makes the content obsolete.

Šefik Šeki Tatlić, in his essay "Communication and Mass Intellect,"⁴⁵ states that one of the major problems of global capitalism today is precisely this process of not only an upside-down, but a complete distortion, of a short-circuit between What, How & for Whom things are done and declared. For this distortion to be kept alive and undisturbed, what matters is not only the structures of events, the spheres of exhibitions that are privatized (this is so normalized today that a critique on this point is almost becoming obsolete), what is a problem is not that various places and infrastructures are monopolized (and that this monopolization is based on almost extreme intimate relations between money and affects, offering the possibility for unknown actors in the field of arts to be awarded with curating international exhibitions as payment for services done in the past), but what is at stake here and now is the very substance of the performative language used for the interaction, presentation and discursive rationalization of the project itself. Global capitalism colonizes life by appropriating language in itself, and not only its colloquial level, but its discursive formulations as well, upon which society and its different institutions stand. Through these appropriations, and being even clearer, with the kidnapping of languages and discourses, structures and activations, we see a system of transformation of these machineries, as pointed out by Tatlić, into mechanisms of normalization of the system. Even more, such a truth is not

hidden behind any global conspiracy or some "strange" ideology; this truth is brutal in its banal simplicity, as it was said: "A CRIMINAL IS A BOURGEOIS AND A BOURGEOIS IS A CRIMINAL." So what? But with reference to Brecht, I can argue, the profit is less banal, and more divinized.

We get necropolitics at its purest. Culture that is being communicated within the necropolitical, is not, as stated by Tatlić (who still refers to the biopolitical), any kind of imitation or fakeness; it is authentic and differential - authentic within the epistemic frame of references provided by the regime. Though through the performative repetitive mechanism it is presented as a kind of playful fake in order to hide its entanglement (the co-proprietary capital/power) with the system. Thus, the ideas, theories and discourses born under such circumstances are not any longer schematized cultural production, but consist exactly of "free" subjectivities that are critical of the system that produced them in the first place. As it was stated by Petit, in order to function, a contemporary postmodern fascism needs a proliferation of unbelievable "freedom" of particularities.

III. Repetition, case study: "Gender Check - Femininity and Masculinity in the Art of Eastern Europe," Museum of Modern Art (MUMOK), Vienna, Austria⁴⁶

The interest in making an analysis of the exhibition is three-fold. The exhibition provides us with a platform for making the analysis of the new Europe, the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall

in Europe and for developing new ways of thinking about the relation between capital and power. The show was curated by Bojana Pejić, an art historian who has lived in Berlin for approximately the two last decades, and who was an important figure in the 1970s and 1980s in Belgrade, being active in the Student Cultural Center in Belgrade, working with prominent figures of the neo-avant-garde art movements in Serbia connected to body art, alternative culture and feminism (such as Dunja Blažević, Biljana Tomić, Marina Abramović, Ješa Denegri, etc.).

The exhibition in MUMOK was produced, that means initiated and, what is even more important, financially made possible by ERSTE Foundation. ERSTE Foundation is a foundation that manages, - as it was exposed a few times in the opening speeches of the exhibition, and in its post-opening symposium event as well - the ERSTE Bank. And not vice versa, as we had believed until then. This makes an important difference, because until now, the analysis of projects produced by the ERSTE Foundation, and they are numerous (bearing the brand of ERSTE), were always, at least defined by us theoreticians as "art and cultural interventions," made by the multinational bank corporation ERSTE, based in Vienna, to save the face, so to speak, for a proper invasive allocation of capital mostly throughout the former Eastern European territory.

But this time we received a different lesson. It was explained, and I want to emphasize, that political power (with ini-

tial capital) established the ERSTE Foundation, which, besides producing cultural policies, also does banking business. But this “new situation” only reconfirms what was stated by Santiago López Petit in his book, *Global Mobilization: A Brief Treatise for Attacking Reality*,⁴⁷ and elaborated until now in the present manuscript, that global capitalism shows two major characteristics today. One is that capitalism is not an irreversible process but, as stated by Petit, a reversible and conflictual event that is nothing more than the repetition of the unrestraintment of capital. The other is the co-propriety capital/power.

The co-propriety capital/power that was unconsciously presented by the ERSTE Foundation means owning (it does not matter if only temporarily) all other possible institutions: from art, culture, health, education, etc. MUMOK is part of this relation, “freely” endowing (so to speak) all its proper capacities to the project in order to get money in return.⁴⁸

Before proceeding into the analysis, it is mandatory to explain my own, as Goldie Osuri asks in her essay “Identity and Complicity in Necropolitical Engagements: The Case of Iraq,”⁴⁹ double complicity in the project “Gender Check” (by taking part in the exhibition as an artist with Aina Šmid, and in the Gender check post opening symposium “READING GENDER: Art, Power and Politics of Representation in Eastern Europe” as a panelist).

I can state that the analysis of past exhibition projects curated by Bojana Pejić

clearly revealed that serious problems are to be expected. The most important reference for such a statement was one of the first international exhibitions on the state of the arts in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall, organized by a Western institution of contemporary art. The show was “After the Wall: Art and culture in post-Communist Europe,” (1999/2000), being held at the Moderna Museet /Museum of Modern art in Stockholm, Sweden, co-curated by Bojana Pejić and the British curator and art historian David Elliot (in collaboration with Iris Müller-Westermann, as project-leader); Elliot was the director of the Museum at the time of the exhibition. The exhibition in Stockholm, which was the first in a series of exhibitions concerning the Balkan or Eastern European arts that would be organized in Germany, Austria, France, etc. in the 1990s and 2000s, proved to be a disaster. We were, as many of the artists coming to participate in the exhibition in Stockholm, invited, but had no place within the exhibition to display our work. Some did not even have a place to sleep and spent the night in the nearby park. But what became a symptom (for we can leave aside these stories, as they are so ordinary for Eastern European artists that they are not even worth mentioning anymore) that brutally repeats itself when Pejić curates different projects is that, as in the case with “Gender Check,” the published catalogues or readers present a brutal evacuation and filtering of relevant critical, theoretical and activist positions from the former ex-Yugoslav space and from all the other spaces of Eastern Europe.

Therefore, learning from the “After the Wall” exhibition with Aina Šmid, we originally decided not to take part in the “Gender Check” exhibition, although we were highly pressured by Pejić and others to do so. The decision to finally take part was made when I was confronted with the proposal to participate as a panelist in the symposium. In order to be at the panel it was necessary to take part in the show! Not being a snob, who can reject a possibility to speak in public? Specifically: feminism is politics that can be exercised today first and foremost as a political queer position in a public space. So what was said there (at the panel) in nuce is presented here as the core of two theses with which I put forward the analysis of the show that fits perfectly in the change situation of global capitalism and the disappearance of the Berlin Wall and East and West Europe.

First Thesis: The invitation to the exhibition did not mention one single name of the included artists. This is something that would not be possible if it were the case that Western artists were taking part in the show. One of the reasons for this omission stated by ERSTE, MUMOK and the curator (each passing the “problem” on to the other) was that more than 200 artists were invited. As the producer of the show is the ERSTE Foundation, it is impossible to imagine that an extra sheet of paper could not be provided in the invitation on which to set the names down! Money was never a question in this exhibition, except when it came to thinking about the artists who took part in the show and were not paid, and obviously when it came to publish-

ing the names of the artists on the invitation card. But what was even more disturbing was the fact that the press material did list a selection of names in a way. As noted by Austrian artist Ralo Mayer, the names that were selected from the circa 200 artists taking part in the “Gender Check” exhibition were presented (or listed) as being part of the CVs of the respective institutions (ERSTE, MUMOK and the curator). What I want to say is that the Eastern European artists, whose names were chosen from the total of some 200, were, only presented or listed in the public (press) materials, as a selection. The procedure is similar to the way that CVs have been written by artists themselves until now. Therefore, for ERSTE, MUMOK and the curator, the selected artists’ names from the former Eastern European space were (are to be in the future) taken/included/excluded as depending of the contexts for which the different institutions need their CV’s.

What is described here is not a joke; it is banal evidence of the status of Eastern European artists (unfortunately, it is not about the eternity of work as it is the case with Western European artists), though this banality has its theoretical framework. One of the most challenging, maybe the only challenging, presentation at the symposium, organized immediately after the opening of the “Gender Check” exhibition, was the lecture by Vjollca Krasniqi (a theoretician from Prishtina, Kosovo). In her talk, entitled “Returning the Gaze: Gender and Power in Kosovo,” she presented a reading of the neocolonial capture of Kosovo by the European Union. Her

analysis showed that the processes of discrimination, we could almost say racialization, etc., that are presently implemented by the EU onto Kosovo, are all presented as needed for the “emancipation” of Kosovars. Vjollca Krasniqi made a clear statement that the discrimination imposed onto Kosovo/Kosovars by the EU are necessary (in the view of EU) in order for Kosovars to become, as she stated, “mature political subjects” ready to enter the future EU. She clearly presented that “becoming mature” is only possible through changing Kosovo into a neoliberal capitalist protectorate, where maturity is practiced as the infantilization of the citizens of Kosovo and their constant discrimination. Similarly, I can state that those few mentioned names of Eastern European artists that were selected as taking part in the “Gender Check” exhibition were done so on the presupposition that they were MATURE enough to be listed as part of the various CVs of different institutions (ERSTE, MUMOK, the curator), depending on the different purposes of those CVs.

More poignantly, I can state, quoting Goldie Osuri, and she refers to Arjun Appadurai’s text “Number in the Colonial Imagination” (1993),⁵⁰ that the “Gender Check” exhibition can be conceptualized as a juncture of a certain epistemology of constructing a certain space of visibility for the unnamed lets say 180 artists (20 was named depending of the context) in the show (let’s be sympathetic to the show, at least for a moment) and of a colonial governmentality (if we think about the mathematics with which the exhibition was constructed). Appadurai

talks of a specific way of constituting the colony (in contemporary times, such logic can be applied to Iraq, etc., which is the case in Osuri’s brilliant analysis of Iraq necropolitics) with what he calls the concept of “enumerative community.” What do I want to say with this? As it was repeated over and over, from the opening speeches on, it is true that “Gender Check” is not about Eastern and Western Europe (and therefore the word “East” is actually a mistake in the title of the exhibition), but is about establishing a colonial logic of producing “the former Eastern Europe” as an enumerative community of some 200 artists presenting more than some 400 works, and the curator argued it could be even more, but MUMOK is too small! The division between East and West is not at stake here, but what is at stake here is to make the neoliberal capitalist logic of governmentality workable. Necropolitics is always established in the postcolony through a specific method of counting that allows for eternity as an infinity of statistics that evacuates the social, political and conceptual space.

In “Gender Check,” some bodies, and let’s be precise, nameless bodies (the invitation that was sent to “everybody,” so to speak, did not list one single artist’s name, except perhaps the artist from the invitation’s cover image) are taken to stand for other bodies, because of the “enumerative principle of metonymy.” Even more, metaphor and metonymy were used as the logic by which to produce meaning throughout the exhibition, bypassing the social and political,⁵¹ where we do not have, as in ordinary exhibitions nowadays in muse-

ums of contemporary arts, contexts about different positions in the exhibition, but just some narratives that function in a metonymic way in order to present a certain old-fashioned metaphor (Ernesto Laclau is right, at least for once, as metonymy is at the base of the metaphor) of the East caught in binaries of private and public, and etc.

Just to make a clear comment, as we are constructed as a “bag” of comments, the leaflet for the invitation to the symposium, which was constituted by positions coming from the East and the West, did contain names; and they were listed fully and accurately. It would not be possible to invite speakers from Austria or “Former Western Europe” (as they like to call themselves these days) and not have them listed! The enumerative logic implemented in the construction of the exhibition also comes close to a logic of constituting protectorates and zones of control through “genderization.” I develop it in relation to Suvendrini Perera,⁵² that is a neo-liberal capitalist procedure of governmentality, applied through gender onto the whole territory of the East of Europe, after being successfully used on the much more mature terrain of the West of Europe.

The term “genderization,” that at once resembles precarization and proletarianization, presents not a gentle “gendering” process (similar to “becoming”), but a brutal colonial logic of forced subjugation of the whole territory of former Eastern Europe to Western practices of gender that are transformed into a mechanism of control and normaliza-

tion. “Gender Check” is a repetition of the gender mainstreaming from Western Europe onto a territory that needs less subtle mechanisms of checking.

Second Thesis: It was repeated over and over again that the exhibition is not about Eastern and Western Europe, as they do not exist anymore. Although it must be clear that this is a paradoxical statement coming from the curator and those who provided the money, as well as many speakers on the panel, as the title of the show was “Gender Check - Femininity and Masculinity in the Art of Eastern Europe.” But still, it is true! I posed a question though: What is the logic that organizes a possibility to declare that the borders are gone?

I propose a thesis that the so-called imbalance between Eastern and Western Europe today is no longer a question of opposition as it was in the past, but that the Eastern and Western parts of Europe are today in a relation of repetition. It is the same repetition I put forward when speaking of global capitalism, when I stated that today global capitalism is nothing more than the repetition of one event alone (according to Petit), this being the unrestraintment of capital.

However, this repetition does not go on as a process of mirroring, as we would then talk about repetition bringing the enjoyment of minimal difference. The repetition that is repeated presents a repetition of one part within the other. Today, there is a lot of talk between the nationalistic East of Europe and the neoliberal West of Europe. But as we

see, I can state that we are witness to a repetition of the neoliberal capitalist West amidst the nationalistic East, and they do not disturb, so to speak, each other, but reinforce each other.

Or another excellent example of such a repetition is the “Former West” project. Up until now, the talk has been about the Former East (that really was the East, and is today given its former feature, and therefore cannot be presented with quotation marks). Now we have the repetition of this former East within the West in the format of the “Former West.” The “International Research, Publishing and Exhibition Project 2009-2012,” curated by Charles Esche, Maria Hlavajova and Kathrin Rhomberg (<http://www.formerwest.org>), started in the Netherlands. This, again, is not a joke at all (although it could be seen as such), rather, it is the perfect logic of repetition as the key logic of global capitalism today. Moreover, in contrast to the former East project, the repetition of meager funding has not been repeated this time; “Former West” has been, I guess, funded abundantly!

Based on Ugo Vlaisavljević’s insights in his text entitled “From Berlin to Sarajevo,”⁵³ I can claim that the proclamation of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and therefore of the border dividing the East and West being gone, which can be so cheerfully celebrated, has to do with the wrong conceptualization of the border itself. Maybe it is necessary to rethink the concept of the border and to ask: What does this present celebration of the fall of the Berlin Wall really mean? Ugo Vlaisavljević, referring to Étienne

Balibar, points the finger to a process in Europe that states that the way we perceive borders changes, and with this change, we can conceptualize Europe differently as well.

Vlaisavljević states that the best way to understand the position within the EU is to actually look towards the borders that are established by the EU within those states that are not (yet?) integrated into it. Balibar, reactualized by Vlaisavljević in his text, is presented as the theoretician who had already begun to identify a process of changes in the definition of borders in his major works about Europe in the 1990s. Balibar envisioned that we have a process of simultaneous fragmentation of borders resulting in their multiplication on the one hand, and the disappearance of certain borders on the other. In 1997, he wrote - and I will paraphrase - that the borders are shivering, though he warned that this does not mean that they are disappearing. On the contrary, they are multiplied and diminished in their localization, in their function, stretched or doubled, becoming zones, regions, border-territories. Precisely what is at stake here is that the relation between “borders” and “territories” is reversed; that borders, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, started to be transformed into zones.⁵⁴

The consequences of this are more than just a game of monopoly; this means that with this act of establishing zones or territories instead of fixed borders, the question of borders disappears in order that the physiognomy of the border is able to change radically. We do not talk about Eastern and Western Europe any-

more, but about the transformation of an entire territory into a zone which functions in such a way that it becomes a (new) border. Vlaisavljević clearly points out that this is the function of a new territory called the “Western Balkans,” which has the function of just such a border-zone.

If we take this point, that was almost prematurely developed in the 1990s, as coming into its full power now, then it is not only “insulting” to talk about Eastern and Western Europe (especially about former Eastern Europe, as it has been distorted through its repetition in the format of a “former Western Europe”), but it is also necessary to implicate “Gender Check” as presenting a process of genderization as border-zoning. It constitutes former Eastern Europe as a border-zone, transforming it into a field for testing the level of genderization of the whole territory. We can especially state that this is what is at stake here, as we know that gender got its perverse condition of possibility over the last few years when it was appropriated by Western neoliberal global capitalism in the form of gender mainstreaming and was subsequently implemented throughout all of “former Western Europe.” Therefore, the 20th anniversary commemorating the fall of the Wall is commemorating the fall of a wall of paper, as other walls are in the meantime still built of concrete and present the border as a zone. This border-zone is not at all at the border, but it is inside the very territory, or rather, it could be said that the whole territory itself is the border now.

When it was rhetorically asked “Can

Gender Speak East?” as the title of one of the panels of the “Gender Check” symposium (“READING GENDER: Art, Power and Politics of Representation in Eastern Europe”), those who responded affirmatively are those who do not understand the changes that affected former Eastern Europe or Europe as such. As the shifting of the border into a zone implies that the border is not a line, or not even a wall (and therefore the fall of the Berlin Wall can be cherished so enthusiastically), as the border presents a whole zone today, and gender is such a bordered zone! “Gender Check” therefore perfectly clearly presents this new condition.

This is why the other panel at the same symposium, organized by the Western participants, used the title “Fuck Your Gender,” since for radicalized (Western) queer positions, gender mainstreaming means the complicity of gender with neoliberal global capitalist governmentality. But for the Former Eastern Europe, it seemed as though gender was still good enough, as queer was reserved for the West. The Western participants took queer and left gender for the East. Queer is to be seen in a certain dialectical genealogy that starts from feminism, passing through gender and presents today a radicalization of feminism as a queer position. Gender because of gender mainstreaming (malestreaming) presents its failed, negative side.

Biljana Kašić, in her text “Where Is the Feminist Critical Subject?”⁵⁵ states, translating from her own “political, transitional, post-Yugoslav, ‘European-

promising, 'gender mainstreaming, vulgar capitalist-oriented' context, that it is necessary to emphasize "three ordering systems that are at play in feminism and Europe today: gender mainstreaming, the capitalist order and the market-consumer dictate that includes control over representation." I presented them already, showing that the "Gender Check" exhibition tries to blur them, making none of them possible to be identified. I presented that "Gender Check" is gender mainstreaming, that the capitalist order is the shift from borders to zones and the co-propriety capital/power (ERSTE/MUMOK/the institution of the curator) and that the control over representation is done through an enumerative logic, which is the new juncture between colonial epistemology and necropolitical capitalist governmentality.

Or to paraphrase Angela Mitropoulos from her text "Legal, Tender,"⁵⁶ what "Gender Check" does is to normativize an economy of sex, gender and sexuality, blurring the line that binds the zone to the border, as well as connecting sex and desire to race and (re-) production in a hegemonic way.

Therefore, precisely through this process of the reversal of borders into territories or zones, we can claim that the borders are disappearing for the need of the imperialism of circulation, and therefore, we can cheerfully greet the fall of the Berlin Wall, as it is a paper wall, transformed into a zone that will be repeated as a border elsewhere. Balibar stated that the Berlin Wall is gone, while we got a bureaucratic process of visa

acquiring instead, and that the border police are not at the borders anymore, but in the hearts of the cities that are not yet part of the EU, where within fortified embassy offices, as reported by Vlasisavljević, policemen rather than what we knew in the past as embassy and consular bureaucrats, keep the walls firmly standing. Today, as noted by Vlasisavljević, the "former Western European" states' embassy personnel are more and more professionalized bureaucratic police. Vlasisavljević stated that the integration into the EU starts before the future EU Member State is integrated. In short, as lucidly pointed out by Vlasisavljević, Europe does not need the Berlin Wall anymore, as it has established invisible internal judicial police and managerial borders that function as outside walls.

Therefore, yes, as it is proclaimed by the slogan of the unified Germany in 2009: "Come, come to the country without borders" - the only problem is if you (we) happen to be, by "chance," in any one of the many detention camps or prisons in Germany or in similar facilities elsewhere in the EU, the land without borders, or if you (we) are waiting in a line somewhere to get visa or asylum papers.

IV. From unity capital/power to co-propriety capital/power (or from Fordism to post-Fordism)

According to Marx, capital has historically increased the production of surplus value by further developing the technological processes in the working produc-

tion and society - making it as technological possible and thus exploiting it endlessly.⁵⁷ Thus it is not surprising that the solution for the current crisis by those in power is supposedly in massive investments in technological development. By the end the 1970s, as stated by Adolfo Gilly and Rhina Roux,⁵⁸ Christopher Lasch had already argued that the notion of technological determinism is at the base of all popular comprehensions of industrial and technological revolutions. Lasch stated that it is taken for granted that changes in technology have been the main cause of industrialization, and that technological development is therefore seen as a pure revolution. Nevertheless, he argued, we have to be aware that new inventions, new processes and new applications of scientific discoveries do not put forward these same changes in order to ameliorate production. Therefore, according to Lasch, far from revolutionizing society, technological inventions primarily reinforce the existing privileges and the appropriation of surplus value by capitalism only.

We can understand in a certain way the vulnerability inherent to capitalist development, as capital, on the one hand, has to resist the pressure by labor and, on the other, it needs this pressure in order to advance. This double character of the proletariat, today the precariat, is what gives a different explication of the displacement of the limit of capital. Therefore, the present crisis in 2009 is not a mistake, but an internal part of the logic of capital. In the 1970s, which is the beginning of what is theoretically called the Great Transformation, mean-

ing the beginning of the transformation of the working class by way of its total decomposition, Sandro Mezzadra and Agostino Petrillo stated, quoted in Petit,⁵⁹ that capital had then freed itself from the antagonistic force that had historically constituted it, and that had also limited and conditioned it (Petit, p. 26). The Great Transformation announced the change from Fordism into post-Fordism. It also announced, in the 1970s, other changes (all listed by Petit): free circulation of capital, the fall of the Berlin Wall (and with it the collapse of communism) and the advancement of new media and digital and technologies.

The effect of this process is the present decomposition of society, the changed status of the nation-State (and, as we have presented, not its disappearance) and an explosion of inequalities; just think about the migrants in Europe today as an underclass, or about the Roma being ferociously attacked. Therefore, the downfall of the Berlin Wall was not, as it is presented today, the act of liberation of former Eastern Europe from communist totalitarianism that smart political leaders, driven by their humanist sensibility, strove for (as it was similarly presented in the case of Iraq, that the war was started to free the Iraqi people; or even before, when a similar scenario was put into motion in Afghanistan, i.e., to help the liberation of Afghan women from the burka), but was the outcome of the logic of repetition of the unrestraintment of capital. Therefore, nationalisms, chauvinisms, etc., as well as racism and anti-Semitism, are processes that are used precisely to

canalize the intensified effects of the Great Transformation - and, of course, it's no surprise that they are most visible in the former Eastern European context, where they function as a genuine buffer to hide the "truth" that the fall of the Berlin Wall was necessary not to bring freedom, etc., but to adjust the limit (and not at all to go beyond the limit) and, of course, to provide new possibilities for capital accumulation.

Carlo Galli reported in his book *Espacios políticos. La edad moderna y la edad global* (2002, quoted by Petit, p. 28), that the modern space was a space that was constituted by a plurality of interests and ideologies, but neoliberal globalization is something else. It presents an inextricable complexity, which means it is not a pluralistic space but a space in which complexity does not permit extrication, and therefore presents a space that is not at all plural, but one that cannot be disentangled or untied. Achille Mbembe, in his analysis of Africa as the "postcolony," envisioned precisely such a process, which he calls "entanglement."

If we try to delineate a genealogy of a short but a dramatic restructuring of the composition of capital and its consequences for the historicization of capitalism, then we have to present its transformation that started in the 1970s and that today, as stated by Petit, has come to its end. This is why we talk about global capitalism and its logic of financialization. The transformation that is named the Great Transformation and that started in the 1970s presents the disarticulation of politics, of the econo-

my, and of the social life of the working class that was the main protagonist of capitalism and its cycle of struggles in the 1970s. This period is best illustrated by Margaret Thatcher and the class struggle at the time by the miners in Great Britain, or in Poland by Solidarnost. The outcome was a rearticulation, or, a re-exploitation of the working class through its disarticulation that transformed it into a new motor for capital. The working class, through processes of precarization, was transformed "from an obstacle to capital into its new motor." It is also necessary to take into consideration the new media technology and scientific developments that came to be of enormous importance ("the banal" event of MTV, or about the Internet). Therefore, globalization cannot be explained in terms of one single displacement of the limit because it stays within the limit of capital that is its very motor of unrestraintment and that functions with the logic of repetition. As stated by Petit, it is about thinking of the event of the unrestraintment of capital as its new way of accumulation.

The Great Transformation, initiated at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, defines precisely the change from Fordism to post-Fordism as the change of the mode of labor in capitalism that allowed for the new accumulation of capital. This change was induced in order to start a new cycle of capitalist accumulation. Therefore, the global era made as obsolete the debate between modernity and post-modernity, but this was the way in which the Great Transformation was articulated. The consequences of the Great

Transformation that brought the complete decomposition of society in the sole interest of capital were extracted from the terrain of politics and shifted into the space of culture. It was also the beginning of the advancement of theories about the cultural turn (with Fredric Jameson) that allowed for the unbelievable expansion of cultural studies in the realm of theory, for a process of "culturization" of culture instead of "re-politicization" of political economy.

The Great Transformation presents a shift in the relation between capital and power. Before the disarticulation of the working class we could talk about the unity capital/power; in the course of the Great Transformation we see the dismantlement of this unity and its transformation into the co-propriety capital/power. Therefore, this relation can be historicized, and it changes with the historical/present mode of capitalism. The changes are not a question of a nice established narrative, but they do show a process of intensification of the processes of expropriation and exploitation carried out in accordance with each specific historical moment of capitalism. The discussion pushed forward by Paolo Virno regarding the important shift from the Fordist to the post-Fordist mode of labor in capitalism can also be reworked, as proposed by Petit (pp. 35-36), as a shift from unity to co-propriety.

This unity capital/power presented a social pact between the workers and capitalists (i.e., the bourgeoisie) and the outcome was the capitalist social democracy that brought - not as a generous gift but as a process of a struggle

- social, health and pension benefits for the workers (the welfare state was the most advanced form of this unity). The syndicates had an extremely important role in this process. Petit argues that the class struggle was functioning so to speak within the plan of capital. Capitalism needed a pact in order to make a profit; moreover, the way labor functioned within the composition of capital production presented the only way for capital to survive. The socialist planning State that was/is rarely part of the discussion in the West (and if it was, then it was only as a totalitarian restriction of working rights) was the best example of this unity. Therefore, it is possible to say that the imposed vision of socialism as only and solely totalitarian was necessary in order to hide the best example (the realized nightmarish form) of the West's Fordism, which was the socialist planning state (ex-Yugoslavia was almost a role model at the time, but was hidden; while today, being a true historical model, it is being presented in numerous panels in the East and West). The Socialist planned economy was the perfect display of what was in Fordist capitalism, so to speak, hidden.

When the unity capital/power was threatened, the response (better to say, the punishment) by capitalists, as explained by Petit, was exemplary. Petit talks of a true social engineering method of punishment (and not of the "control" that is connected with post-Fordism) that was presented in a vertiginous format of inflation, open-ended crisis, etc. This is why the penalization of the miners by Margaret Thatcher in Great

Britain in the 1980s, when post-Fordism was already in the house so to speak, was so exemplarily tough (and what we witnessed was “class struggle” at its purest).

In Socialism, the State responded to this threat not only with inflation (which was used as a repressive apparatus in capitalism anyway), but also with true food shortages (that proliferated, in the last decades of the 1970s and 1980s, in humorous narratives of how to get a cup of coffee). It is clear that such narratives are today needed (especially for former East Germany) in order to prevent the study of the period and especially to prevent the study of what it is that we can conceptualize regarding this relation today.

In the background of the unrestraintment of capital is the absence of the limit of capital, but not by going beyond the limit. Therefore, the crash of the neo-cons and neoliberals will not be the end of globalization, but its continuation - though maybe (I repeat, maybe) without neoliberal ideology (or, to state this differently, with a neoliberal ideology that is modified). Because the neoliberal globalization, or global capitalism, is, as stated by Petit, a historical form of capitalism.

Therefore, to recapitulate what we have so far, it is possible to say that there exist two modes of the relation between capital and power. One is the unity capital/power and the other is co-propriety capital/power. The co-propriety capital/power signifies a mutual drive, force, push of capital and power.

Capital is going further over its limit thanks to power, and, as stated by Petit, at the same time, power expands thanks to capital. We saw this with the proposal not only to rescue Wall Street and U.S. banks from collapsing in November 2008 by the U.S. Senate, but to also shift capital's voracity onto the level of morality. When capital pushes power beyond it (further away from it), and inversely, when power pushes capital, then we effectively start to explicate the unrestraintment of capital. The co-propriety means that there exists interchangeability in between them, allowing for mutual substitution, but under a condition, with a proviso, so to say, that they maintain their specific identity; or, to them is given a status of equivalence, but under the condition, with a proviso of maintaining the difference.

F.) Co-propriety capital/power, sustainability and the digital mode of production

Before 2009, before the crisis came visible, “sustainability” was the buzzword. It was a reference to “corporate social responsibility” to which was added, because of calls for saving the planet in recent years, the dimension of a capitalist business having to be sustainable in order to help to forestall imminent environmental catastrophe. It is possible to say that a capitalistic exploitation on one side was covered up on the other side with slogans of the “corporate social responsibility” type. Cynicism aside, in 2009, in the middle of the crisis that has exploded in front of our very noses, it seems that when sustainability is asked

for, that this can be read with a new meaning. It was commented recently that today, in the middle of the crisis, it reads as “staying in business” - and I will add “at any cost.” And if companies are not seen to be taking their social responsibility seriously, governments will intervene to change the rules by which they operate. Some will force companies to sell greener products (for example, by banning the sale of incandescent light bulbs). Others will legislate on executives' salaries, or oblige banks to lend money in ways the state deems desirable. After rescuing the financial system, many Western governments will imagine that they are the best judges of how to run businesses responsibly. In December 2009, in Copenhagen, there will be another test on “sustainability.”

In 2012, the Kyoto Protocol to prevent climate change and global warming expires. To keep the process on line, there is an urgent need for a new climate protocol. At the conference in Copenhagen 2009, the parties meet for the last time on the government level before the climate agreement needs to be renewed. A summit in Copenhagen at the end of the year is supposed to hammer out a post-Kyoto agreement to cut greenhouse gases. Failure to reach a deal will mean turning to ways the world might adapt to climate change rather than prevent it.

Sustainability, in a broad sense, is the ability to maintain a certain process or state. Today, it is applied to every level of life, mostly biological/environmental, and is now more and more presented in organizational/infrastructural frame-

works, and therefore is taking an active role in the redesigning of cities, culture and even architecture (sustainable cities, etc.). This ability to maintain a certain stability is actually connected with the Western idea of modernity that maintains that modernization is an endogenous process, which means that it is produced from within and is growing from within, without obvious external cause. But is this true? At the “outside” of modernity are the colonies, there where the materiality, resources, people, lands, etc. are exploited mercilessly in order that the inside is presented as stable and sustainable. But as we made the analysis of financial capitalism, it became clear it does not allow any possible thesis of equilibrium. Capitalism, in order to make profit (surplus value) from capital, needs instability.

Today, we are witness to a reversible process where sustainability, as an endogenous concept of rationalization, has at the moment not so much difficulties in hiding its internal dysfunctional logic, but rather, it turns its deregulation, dysfunctionality and instability to its own advantage. In this way, parallel to its unrestraining logic, it is also theoretically and philosophically developing discourses that supply the repetition of the event of the unrestraintment of capital by demanding an infinity of thought, perception and jouissance.

Santiago López Petit⁶⁰ pointed out that modernity builds a rational image of the world implying a duality subject/object, and therefore a distance (D) of man with respect to the world. We know who this man is: a white colonialist, who has to

imply a distance in order not to bring the horrors of exploitation into his home. The postmodern discourse, on the other hand, suppresses this distance (D) by situating the man entirely in the interior of the world and bombarding him or her with signs and ahistorical languages. It's a time when exploitation becomes visible, but is immediately obfuscated through a process of multiculturalism. In the global age, the distance (D) oscillates between zero and infinity. Petit states there is an absence of the world and at the same time an over-abundance of it (Petit, p. 18). An almost perfect unit exists, since every process is, now yes, truly endogenous, without obvious external cause.

The logic of financial capital produces and reproduces itself through economic, social and political disruptions, with the help of science and new media technology. Science and technology are implemented for the figuration, representation and mediation of the environmental crisis, and also for its continuous exploitation that is being masked through catastrophic scenarios. But we have to be clear that imagination and figuration are mostly expanding the horizons of those who can base their horizons on the expansion of horizons. What is needed is an almost material incorporation of very real histories and elaborations of the changed conditions of life, reality and capital in the time of globalization.

What new media technologies put forward is in fact, as claimed by Sarah Kember,⁶¹ "anti-politics"! Such technologies are seen as a "consensual hallucination," the new "final frontier" of an out-

of-control realm in which only "post-humans" can live. But what are the real humans doing in the meantime, those who sometimes are not even considered to be fully human? They are looking for discarded food in the immense garbage dumps on the outskirts of the big cities of Asia, Latin America, Africa, and Eastern Europe. This will become more and more visible, especially with the present crisis of financial capitalism, across Europe and the U.S.

The environmental crisis, the tsunami of nature, and the present tsunami of the economy as well, are produced and reproduced through scientific, technological and epistemological interventions. Andrew Ross⁶² pointed out that the turn towards showing an interest in the environment was an outcome of the turn in global capitalist business. With the disappearance of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and with the supposed disappearance of the conflict between the democratic and the totalitarian world (the Cold War being over?), capitalist business reoriented its interests towards environmental threats, shortages of natural resources, water and oil, cross border pollution, radioactivity, acid rain, the environmental underbelly of North/South trade, degradation of resources and the new migrant economy that was the outcome of the new capitalist labor division. All this listed by Ross is not a simple transformation, nor is it a mere shifting of "interests," but an intensification of class relations under the new structure of capitalism, and this is definitively globalization.

As Ross argued, secret services no

longer highlight military installations and intercontinental ballistic missiles, but demographic maps, migration routes, sites of hunger and potential oncoming war (and these, I have to add, are the result of capital-provoked environmental crises which then do become the sites of conflicts and wars). Today, specially configured military defense complex structures compile environmental maps showing sites of nuclear power plants, geopolitical maps showing spaces of intensified smuggling of natural resources and places of potential "natural" wars and states of exception, etc. NASA sends space shuttles on environmental missions and satellites are used to detect changes in vegetation, land movement and water flow that could cause earthquakes and other catastrophes.

In order to understand the situation, we should NOT ignore the class dimension of all of the environmental catastrophes, and even more, we should be aware that for capital, environmental stability is not the condition for economic growth, but on the contrary, the instability of the environment is the condition for capital profit. This can actually be seen visibly in the First Capitalist World, where deflation and inflation are artificially produced and maintained, proving that these are real parameters for generating profit. In order to hide such processes while making profit, we have on one side environmental destruction that is not only produced by capital (although this tends to evaporate from our histories and current evaluations), but is today shifted, made invisible through discursive, representational (Hollywood films) and epistemo-

logical bubbles in which the environment itself is transformed into the enemy, and on the other side we have the "happy ending," seen as reconstruction. Therefore, capital continuously hides the fact that it is the cause of the environmental catastrophes and of different sorts of tsunamis (natural, economic, welfare turned into warfare, etc.), presenting the destruction of nature and the environmental crisis as endogenous processes; that means as processes that generate by themselves into environmental catastrophes (so in the end it is stated that "Nature is the enemy!").

I would like to focus on this simultaneous work of environmental destruction and its reconstruction that is conducted by capital. What does this mean? After long decades of exploitation and expropriation of natural resources and insufficient, non-functioning mechanisms for the protection of the environment, people, structures, etc., the disaster that happens is massive, visible and almost, as it is regularly reported afterwards, painfully inevitable. But this is just the beginning. What follows is that the scene of the crime (massive destruction and massive human loss) committed by capital (motivated solely by its drive for profit) is suddenly hijacked by the familiar actors: the international money foundations, the multinational reconstruction companies, etc. In the meantime, don't forget, the global mobilization of humanitarian organizations enters the scene, which is intensively exploited by the mass media. The result of this reconstruction will be a never-ending process of debt and dependence upon big multinational corporations, banks loans, etc.

In the end, when the mass media is gone and the stricken territories are out of the media focus focus (oftentimes with the mass media silent approval as the media are financially supported through complex channels by these same multinationals), the result is a total privatization of what is left, after the catastrophes of nature, of the environment, of the infrastructure and, last but not least, of the people living there. This is not only the case in the Third and Second Worlds but, as we know and as it is even reported in some art magazines (Art Forum, January 2009), it is also the case in regions of the First Capitalist World. In relation to this, we have to point out Hurricane Katrina's devastation of the U.S. city of New Orleans as being one of the most obvious cases.

Neil Smith⁶³ stated in an interview (published in *Subtopia*), conducted by Bryan Finoki,⁶⁴ that the destruction of New Orleans was initiated (but not caused) by a hurricane and the subsequent events. Smith argues that had the levees never been built and the wetlands destroyed, the level of physical and economic destruction would have been far less. To this it is necessary to add the evacuation strategy that was based on the ownership of private property (car ownership) and, first and foremost, on the protection of land property. Reconstruction (private) companies Blackwater and Halliburton were established in New Orleans almost immediately and worked hand in hand with the National Guard, simply confirming the connection between militarization and economic opportunity that is becoming

more and more a "natural" connection. Smith concludes that the reconstruction of New Orleans is in fact being used as an opportunity to reconstruct a new social geography throughout the city in the areas of the working class, poor, mostly black, ethnic population, that includes, I would like to propose, a strategy of cleansing such as was used for ethnic cleansing in the Balkan war in the 1990s. "Gentrification, militarization and capital accumulation come together in near-perfect unison, and nature gets the blame." (Smith)

Bryan Finoki, while interviewing Neil Smith stated that today there exists a new form of urbanism that uses the context of post-conflict reconstruction to lend money and to put into operation murderous conditions of economic capitalist neoliberalism in nations desperate to rebuild. But in order to conceptualize the dimensions of globalization, it is necessary to argue that this is not only a procedure, a dysfunctional plan of new urban regulation that is conducted via post-conflict reconstructions, but was also (and still is) activated as part of the process of post-socialist reconstruction in all of the former Eastern European countries, some of which are already a part of the European Union (we should not forget about former East Germany), and others of which are today waiting to enter it. Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, and Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, are caught in such processes of urban devastation, which is resulting in the privatization of public land and the privatization of public services and utilities, along with the acceptance of a new murderous division of labor. Somebody

has to do the work in order for the reconstruction to be done! These workers in Slovenia, and all over the EU, are a new caste of over-exploited migrant workers. In Slovenia, these workers are coming from the other former Yugoslav states that are not yet in the EU, and though they have legal papers, they are forced to live and work in the most dehumanizing conditions, being completely ignored by the syndicates and overlooked by the legal acts for the protection of workers provided by the state.

Neoliberalism is the technology of optimization, from economics to politics, from nature to environment, and it can be used (and is used, as argued by Aihwa Ong,⁶⁵ by management and administration to run our social lives) through a system of calculations. Exception functions as a mechanism of differential inclusion and can be implemented by any political regime whatsoever, be it China or the U.S. (where no changes to the system whatsoever are any longer necessary when it comes to improving the conditions of life), in order to effectuate only one single calculation, and this is the calculation for profit. Biopolitics exerts control and it is all based on calculation, counting and multiplication. Profit, as we can learn from financial capital, is not made only and solely through investments in the stock markets, but is supported by a series of interventions and logics of exploitation that are produced through a process of continuous massive impoverishment and massive digitalized ideological subdivisions and subjugations that change the "Western" concept of governance over lives in the First World (known as

biopolitics, still playing the card of modes of life) into necropolitics in the Second and Third Worlds. It changes biopolitics into necro(DEATH)politics. This means making profit from a double death: death from real massive impoverishment, and a symbolical death from the social and political interventions that instrumentalize digitalization and creativity.

Achille Mbembe in his book *On the Postcolony: On Private Indirect Government* (2001) stated, regarding the put forward accomplishment of the co-proprietorship between capital and power in the time of global capitalism, and taking into account specific conditions of environmental exploitation and warfare in Africa, that while war tactics in Africa are quite rudimentary, they still result in human catastrophes. This is because military pressure sometimes targets the straightforward destruction of, if not the civilian population, at least of the very means of its survival, such as food reserves, cattle, and agricultural implements. In some cases, these wars have enabled warlords to exercise more or less continuous control over territory. Such control gives them access not only to those living in the territories, but also to the natural resources and the goods produced there - for instance, the extraction of precious stones, exploitation of timber or rubber, or ivory poaching. The financing of these wars is very complex. In addition to the financial contribution provided by diasporas and the assignment of men and women into forced labor, there is the resorting to loans, appeals to private financiers, and special forms of taxation.

Mbembe⁶⁶ argues that these new forms of more or less total control not only blur the supposed relationship between citizenship and democracy, they in fact incapacitate whole sections of the population politically. Therefore, it is possible to state that what is becoming evident (with a reference to Mbembe) is that in relation to Africa we see the emergence of a new form of relation between capital and power named “private indirect government,” which presents a new configuration of power: the privatization of violence (the myriad of militias and private armies) that works hand in hand with the economy, which is also put through the process of privatization, and therefore is completely informalized. In the interview given by Mbembe on the occasion of the publication of his aforementioned book, he stated firmly that democracy as a form of government and as a culture of public life does not have a future in Africa - or, for that matter, elsewhere in the world - if it is not rethought precisely from the crucible of “necropower.”

By “necropower,” Mbembe refers to a sovereign power that is set up for the maximum destruction of persons and the creation of deathscapes, unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of the living dead. Today, if we only think about what happened in Gaza in December 2008/January 2009, these deathscapes (as is pointed out by Mbembe) are not “a peculiar African reality,” but something that is becoming more and more of a normal “landscape”

in all of the territories outside of the First Capitalist World (Palestine, Chechnya, etc.), and are present more and more in the First Capitalist World.

From cinematic mode of production to the digital mode of production

In contrast to the society of discipline, the society of control extends its control outside the structured sites of social institutions through “flexible and fluctuating networks.” One such example, the case of Google’s intervention into mobile phones by offering an open-source operating system for VoIP phones that includes a GPS function alerting friends or signaling contacts that are in the immediate vicinity of the user, is a form of such “playful” control. In the U.S., Google has already managed to internalize entire cityscapes by photographing them systematically and pasting the results into three-dimensionally rendered and geo-coordinated representations used for environmental analysis and simulation, allowing business profit to radically change (read: fully privatize) the urban environment. It is claimed that digital technologies are allowing for processes of networking and exchange that are being performed in the “immaterial” space of information and are virtually “free.” But if we think of ICT and their owners as monopolizing “the free world” of communication and making profits as owners of these protocols and networks, then we see that private property and profit are their major regulators.

Financial capital is working hand in hand

with, as stated by Jonathan Beller,⁶⁷ “computer-generated imagery that depends upon the mathematical computational power, if not cognition, of a machine. The attack by capital is launched in a space entirely shot through mathematicized vectors of not just computer graphics (as in the end of 1990s), but through an industry that supports silicon mathematics with its logics of genre, celebrity, distribution and the world market.” So on the one hand we have, as argued by Beller, the “hypersensitivity” of the mind-body and on the other hand we have the off-screen universe of computerization, globalization and financialization scoring the action.

Making a reference to Jonathan Beller, who proposed a cinematic mode of production, I would like to propose a digital mode of production that codes, reproduces and forms the grammar and logic of exploitation and expropriation of the present financial capitalism, that is not limited to the realms of art and culture. The digital mode of production is analogous to the cinematic mode of production, but also different from it, for it takes as its primal logic the calculation of the computer that is a form of social programming, a mode of constructing society and a mode of making profit that cannot be separated from the logic of financial capital. How does it function? As a new formation of the techno-capitalist-labor condition, it is performed through the overlapping of exploitation, digitalization, and financialization. What do I want to say? It works through a hybridization, a hiding of the global post-Fordist division of labor which can best

be described as an international division of labor between the First, Second and Third Worlds. This division is effective yet hidden under the veil of globalization. This is one side of this process that is in itself already divided. The other side of this process is going on at the local level, where labor is captured in a matrix of capitalized vectors. Or to put it differently, affective and cognitive-linguistic activities are little by little converted into worksites for not only capitalist surplus value - i.e., profit - but also for what is termed simply as, according to Beller, capitalist use value.

The digital mode of production consists of the computerization or digitalization of representational and interventional forms in culture and arts working in relation to TV, cinema and computer screens, but also of forms in the imagination, the immaterial, the cognitive, the libidinal and the unconscious that are produced and reproduced by and through these formats. The digital mode I state is not a symptom but is co-substantive, which means that it works hand in hand with the process of calculation that is at the base of financial capital as well. Therefore, the whole cultural industry today is not only about creation of products, markets, and consumers, but is about “revolutionizing,” as stated by Beller, the theater of capitalist production and reproduction. Science and technology are being implemented for the figuration, representation, mediation and rationalization of the crisis, new forms of coloniality, deep processes of racism, discrimination and exploitation. Making reference to Beller who argues: “A typical laptop computer running the

calculations necessary to generate three minutes of industry standard CGI would have to run for 9 hours. If one thinks not just of the immense number of calculations that inform such cinematic images (with/of exaggeration, human lifetimes worth of math), not to mention the entire history of mathematics and computing that lead up to our current abilities” - we begin to get a real sense of what we are looking at in the digital mode of production. We can attest that these calculations are predominantly financial.

An exemplary case will make the present capitalist division (and at the same time hybridization, and their working together) of labor and digitalization even clearer. Just think of the film *Slumdog Millionaire* by the British director Danny Boyle that received the Oscar in 2009; it is a story of a young man from the slums of Mumbai who appears in the Indian version of the show “Who Wants to be a Millionaire?” and exceeds all expectations. What calls our attention is precisely this double process of coloniality, exploitation and digitalization. For what lies in the background? The film is a hallmark example of global fetishism in search of the spectacle of Third World poverty. Or rather it is a process of capitalization of the structure of desire (and disavowal) that is activated by First World capital for Third World labor. The coded images of the Third and Second Worlds by First World capital become an essential mechanism in the continued occupation and exploitation of the Third and Second Worlds; in addition to the creation of surplus value, there is the creation of surplus pleasure, or surplus

desire, or again, in such products we see, as stated by Beller, the ostensible extra-economic effects subsumed and operative as ideological digital modes. This process is also effective in the First Capitalist World; just think of the erosion of the whole sector of critical thinking and the complete transformation of every critical image and resistance network into a brand.

Or as it was posted on *Nettime* by jaromil: “Creativity must be rendered comprehensible, transparent and rational: there can be none of the destructive excesses evident in the lives of many of the greatest artists of European history. Creativity must circulate cleanly and quickly, and it should leave no dirty remainder. For what interests Hollywood and the market in general, is not creativity as a complex human process, but creativity as an abstraction, free of irrationality and pain, and light enough to hover like a great logo above the continents.”

Johannes Grenzfurthner/Frank Apunkt Schneider (monochrom), in their recently published manifesto with the title *HACKING THE SPACES*, on the list being, being, claim that it is necessary to engage and enlarge the hacker community with those left outside of it by the white middle class nerds that lead and dominate it. It is true, and we see clearly that this community is *HOSTAGE TODAY MORE THAN EVER* of white middle class nerds; but to change this situation and to develop a different politics for the future in the digitalized realm, it is necessary to develop first and foremost an analysis of how the digital mode

of production works hand in hand with the logic of calculation inherent to financial capitalism. And secondly, it is necessary to include the new division of labor and processes of migration in this process. Just to propose the inclusion of the so-called outside into the inside is only and solely a bad mathematics!

In such a situation the class division is not expired. It is actually intensified and, as said by Beller, blurred in the meanders of new language inventions and modernized grammars - of digital exploitation, capital and profit relations as well. My thesis is that the digital as the dominant mode of representation of financial capital is not simply a mode of representation but is also the dominant mode of reproduction of capital that is today its primary form of production. Digitalization has a double function: on one level, due to its hardware, it functions as a privileged place for open strategies of communication, predominately in the First World - to paraphrase Althusser - and on the other, exerts biopolitics, according to which what matters are forms-of-life, good life, and subjects that are only and solely conscious brands. New media technology is the condition for contemporary art to be an important part of the functioning of capitalist society. Three strategies are at work here: the production of shock through the aid of cloning, the strategy of creating simulacra that work outside the human perspective (say, “para-space”), and the strategy of mutation (theories of the “post-human”). These three strategies are a form of concealing, abstracting and evacuating from the economic, social, political and artistic

space the conditions of social antagonism, the class war, transforming the biopolitical into a necropolitics.

A good example of making profit for the Institution of Contemporary Art from deathscapes, racism and exploitation is the case when, in April 2009, the Swedish court sentenced the four co-founders of the notorious download site *The Pirate Bay* to a year in jail and charged them with a fine of \$3.6 million; of course, this is a beginning of a long judicial process. It does not come as surprise, at least not for me that the activist Diana McCarty from Berlin says that it is very important to also understand the historical connection of that ultra-right wing partner at Pirate Bay, who spent his free time in the 1980s beating up migrants. She refers to Carl Lundström as one of the four co-partners of Pirate Bay! Meanwhile, the Swedish National Museum of Science and Technology announced that it had bought a server owned by *The Pirate Bay* that was confiscated by the police last year. The museum paid SKr 2,000 for the server and will display it in its archive of illegally copied material. A complete deregulation of the private/collective and institutional is at work here.

G.) Branding, subjectivization and formalization

We are in the middle of a voracious, unrestrained capitalism (that is again called “late capitalism,” as it was in 1984 when F. Jameson started his discussion about postmodernism and multinational capitalism) - a financial capitalism that is

more than just a cultural condition, it is our reality. To state that in the global age capitalism and reality coincide means in the final analysis to say that the World is a Closed World. The impossibility of having another world makes difficult the radical criticism of this world, and this does not mean that the critical thought is obliged to offer “alternatives,” but, as argued by Santiago López Petit,⁸⁸ that the statement about a world that is a closed one makes it impossible to perform a modern politics.

The identification of distinction between contemporary capitalism and reality indicates on the one hand that there exists a series of historical forms of capitalism, and on the other hand, the coincidence of capitalism and reality proves that capitalism has entered its “last” historical formation - the global age. This transformation that has happened to the working class, i.e., its precarization and being forced into “mobility” (as how is today described postcolonial migrational processes in order to cover seclusion, deportation and discrimination with which the First Capitalist World handle/control/govern migration) has also had an impact on how we understand modernity, postmodernity and today’s global capitalism. Therefore, if we take into consideration this trait, we can say that the neoliberal government is less an economic government, as it is primarily about governance or governmentality, a control and redirection of actions; fundamentally it is conceived as a social plot, as argued by Petit, whose units are businesses. Therefore, it is too simplistic, if not altogether misleading, to reduce neoliberal capitalist society only

and solely to a “homo economicus” equation; it is necessary to take into consideration governance or governmentality.

To come to a further point, Petit states that it is necessary to refresh our memory and bring to the forefront Ludwig von Mises (being, along with Friedrich August von Hayek, the two most prominent economists and ideologists of liberalism). In his book *Human Action*, which he wrote in 1949, Mises introduced praxeology as a framework for modeling human action. From praxeology, Mises derived the idea that every conscious action is intended to improve a person’s satisfaction. These utilitarian and behaviorist views would be generalized by Mises into an economic doctrine and from there it would be extended to the whole of society. Mises prepared, in fact, the terrain by which to translate the coinage known as “the life of the market” (developed by “pre-liberal” economists) into “the life as market.” From here it was only a step away from today’s usage and conceptualization of humanity - in Santiago López Petit’s words - as human capital. It is necessary to connect this book with another. In 1948, Lawrence Wiener wrote *Cybernetics, or Control and Communication in the Animal and Machine*. Wiener’s cybernetics was coined to denote the study of the structure, as formulated on Wikipedia, of regulatory systems and is closely related to control theory and systems theory. In my simple parlance, it is about control, governance and governmentality.

It is no surprise that presently on the

Internet a debate is taking place over a possibly more “emancipative” view on the so-called second order/generation of cybernetics. It is possible to connect this debate on the Internet with what Christian Marazzi defines as the “the crisis of the governance of the US as a monetary authority in the World” that is the cause of the present financial bankruptcy (read: the biggest bank robbery ever, performed by the bankers and managers themselves) in the First Capitalist World, and with it, everywhere in the global world. Nevertheless, the debate on the second order cybernetics is another cry in the desert, I would say, as it is an attempt to get rid of the historical “bad” cybernetics logic (that through recording, analyzing, simulating and transforming, controlled the environment). This bad logic is the so-called U.S. military hubris that has been made visible today, for example, through new analysis reports on the Vietnam War. Though the question remains as to whether we can think of second order cybernetics as something less dangerous and ideological (especially as some of the postings on the *Nettime* list suggest), claiming that it will be possible to connect second order cybernetics with some kind of purifying, new therapeutic ideas.

The contemporary theory of human capital perceives humanity as a constant product of investments (biopolitics) in the First Capitalist World, or, I would claim, dis-investments (necropolitics) in order to make profits in the Third and other (Second, underdeveloped, emerging, etc.) worlds. The theory of human capital presents human action as a max-

imized way of acting and envisions one’s behavior as having the final objective of achieving more utility or greater welfare. The consequences of such a view are, among other things, a complete financialization, so to speak; a speculative dysfunctional logic that sees and interprets every expense of individuals for education, health, social or leisure activities not as consumption but as investment. The logic goes even further, as Petit argues, and today there is almost nobody who talks about a wage labor force being exploited in capitalism, but rather the story more or less goes around about the beneficiary “capital” that belongs indissolubly to anyone who is merely ready to put it into play (read: business). According to this new grammar, the wage is not more than the “profit” of a determined human capital. This new grammar and its implications urgently need a radical analysis of what Carlo Vercellone terms “becoming rent of profit,” for example, and/or Christian Marazzi’s concept “becoming rent of wage.” It is very important to understand here that I am not proposing the usual psychoanalytical repertoire of jokes (we are not clowns, though this is how theorists from other parts of the world can enter the Empire industry of theory - only by being constantly “out of joint”), but I would like to draw attention to a complete evacuation and subtraction from the social, political, economic (etc.) space of relations of expropriation and the class division in the time of financial capitalism. To push it further, I would like to point out that this total dis-functionality and speculative grammar is of no surprise; neoliberal global capitalism’s most internal logic is precisely the deregula-

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tion that tends towards a complete reversal and shattering of every relation that was once seen as logical into the normalization and rationalization of the most illogical processes. Saying this is to understand that capital profit and private property are at the core of capitalism, and these two axioms of capital are not illogical at all.

In 1974, Robert Nozick in his book *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* stated: "The people cooperate to do things, but work separately; every person is a business in miniature." Each individual, as argued by Petit, is a businessman of her/himself, being his or her own capital. This is why it is then attested that every action is an investment! Life becomes the true market. For American neoliberalism, as pointed out by Petit, the market is confused with life, and life with the market. Democracy is subsumed in the market, and the market, finally, in life. Therefore, American neoliberalism formulates an optimal approach to the global reality, because American neoliberalism understands itself not so much as an exclusively economic phenomenon but as a total capitalist phenomenon. Liberalism in the neoliberal axiom manages to put life in the place of the market, but capitalism, as argued by Petit, is obviously not only the market.

In order to grasp the logic of present capitalism - Petit insists - it is important to include capitalist exploitation inside what he names "global mobilization," that is to say, inside the mobilization of our lives that (re)produces this obvious reality which crushes us and which is confused with our existence. Global

mobilization coincides with total production. It is that which (re)produces this obvious reality in which we live. We alone inscribe ourselves within the global mobilization only as individuals. The individual is the unit of mobilization. Petit emphasizes that in order to be able to advance in the study of the politicization of the social uneasiness, we have to formulate it more precisely: the unit of mobilization is the individual perceived as "conscience." The theory of private property that is at the core of capitalism becomes inseparable from the affirmation of the individual and his or her rights to property. One of the consequences is that in neoliberal capitalism, fundamentally the individual is an owner of himself, or more precisely of his or her conscience. Petit, with employing the notion from the book *The Proprietary Individualism [L'individualismo proprietario]* (1987) by P. Barcellona, states that conscience is the I built in a reflexive process of decisions that are taken one after the other. Therefore, the I is multiple, broken and flexible, and lives life as the accumulation of vital events whose balance determines the success or failure of the I. This genesis of the I that is going on within the capitalist market, or more exactly, as part of the global mobilization, makes a commercial brand of conscience. I build (and I possess) my conscience in the same way I build (and I possess) a brand. In this sense, "I am my brand."

Petit reworks this point steadily. My conscience is constituted as a brand, and the brands - that are not so much material as immaterial and subjective - compete among themselves. The con-

science as a commercial brand produces a universe of meanings and is obliged to signify and to reaffirm its existence; otherwise it disappears. Therefore, the conscience as a brand has to be externalized. Petit states that the I is not in relation to itself, because there exists no interiority. The interiority is exteriority: it is my brand. Global mobilization presents competitiveness without any piety among brands, mediated by money. This process of externalization, which is at the core of the fact that individuals and their consciences are only able to act as part of the global mobilization, is actually accurately capturing another process of externalization that is the core feature of the process of financialization of capital. In financial capitalism, profit can only be produced if the production process is externalized and turned towards other areas. "Nothing new," is possible to state, though the difference is crucial, as it is not an extension of production toward consumption, but consumption as the place of production as well. The financial capitalist mode of production implies an extension of production toward the reproductive spheres: towards education, health, arts, culture, and leisure. Therefore, of course, as stated by Petit, all is bought and all is sold today, but the global mobilization presents a step beyond. The global mobilization is a war, the war for its brands, that is to say, to signify something for the other, and to be able to accumulate meaning in the shape of money. Petit therefore makes a detailed analysis of the way in which biopolitics capitalizes and governs over conscience.

Each brand mobilizes its resources (credibility, legitimacy, etc) in order to obtain its own public. Therefore, the border between the private and public space is erased, intimacy is aired and becomes a pure Big Brother show, and the only private matter tolerated, states Petit, is the religious one. The externalization of the conscience extends its transparency to all of reality. The reality is obvious because it is transparent. The brand is the only value, and to increase it is the objective. But Petit is precise; here it is not about a commodification, as this would be too simple and the analysis would be a sociologist's preoccupation with consumerist culture. If it were about commodification, then this would be a form of economic alienation - and since goods can, in the final analysis, still be values for non-capitalist use as well, the matter would not be so pre-occupying. A possible solution would be, according to Petit, to oppose the brand(s) of the global mobilization against each other. But this would be too cosy as well; what we would get in the end is a situation of polarity, a live brand against the dead, or as in communism and/or consumer capitalism, the so-called third way, "a living zombie." But conscience that is externalized is not at all a dead person. On the contrary, it functions perfectly as part of the global mobilization. The brands are true semiotic motors, states Petit, whose fuels are colours, sensations, feelings, etc. In short, and maybe from my side too quickly coming to a point, to summarize Petit's brilliant points: today life itself is the field of battle! Therefore, a proposal put forward to dismantle the total subsumption of reality by capitalism is a

proposal to make of our life an act of sabotage. In what way? His proposal is for hatred. Petit states that those that hate their lives deeply can come to the point of changing them.

That our lives have gone totally capitalist also has numerous consequences for contemporary art, culture, theory, and for any radical political act. I would like to summarize some of the consequences presently. With regard to the relationship between globalization, capitalism and aesthetics, we should establish a critique of the formation of a so-called “universal culture and art” that takes place at three co-dependent and decisive levels (the economic, political and institutional) and that establishes culture as a hegemonic and ideological apparatus. Today’s frenetic global economy demands the production of more and more new commodities at increasingly larger profit rates and ascribes the essential role (position and function) to innovations and experimentation in the field of art. On the other side, while demanding for the de-linking of art and capital, we have to ask for a linking of contemporary theory and practices of intervention in the social and political space. For it is precisely within this horizon (theory and political intervention) that a different type of “de-linking” is nowadays being promoted. This de-linking claims that it is sufficient to think about the critique of the world, to contemplate it within one’s mind and support it within oneself by reading and writing what is termed “real” theory, while what happens to the World “out there” is not important. Such a de-linking is very much desired and promoted in the name

of active passivity, because activity is seen as an exercise in thought. There is a process of subjectivization (individualization) at work today in the field of contemporary artistic and cultural production, which does not take place through work, but through artistic creativity; the latter redefines precisely, or, if you want, colonizes the very understanding, what work is today. The process of subjectivization does not mean only a production and reproduction of subjects, but, above all, the regulation and understanding of what the process of subjectivization means in itself. At the core is the question of governance and governmentality. Therefore the whole dismantling and rearranging of the institution of contemporary higher education by the Bologna agreement (the changes of Higher Education) throughout Europe, is not about simple economization of the university or academy, making money through a system of equalization and nivelization of the university system around the world, it is in fact about governance! The economy that is invested in the whole plot of reorganization is not the primal task of the Bologna agreement. Actually, such a reduction (as the university is forced only to make more money) prevents an understanding that the change brought by the Bologna Higher Education agreement is about a neoliberal politics of violent governance of education in contemporary capitalist societies.

Therefore, in rearticulating a certain history of global capitalism and borders, I can state that the so-called 1990s multicultural ideology of global neoliberal capitalism was the declaration of the

existence of other worlds, but only and solely for the installment of a second step, which is the iron logic of the imperialism of circulation. In order to do this, an accelerated process of dispossession was put to work, which cleaned away and evacuated each and every difference through formalization. These two stages are excellently captured in the field of contemporary art by an art project I have already mentioned several times and have undertaken an analysis of it in the past. In the 1990s, Mladen Stilić declared that “An artist who cannot speak English is NO artist.” This sentence, as an art work, excellently depicted the initial multicultural logic of the neoliberal global capitalism of the 1990s. It was an interest in a specificity that had to use the “common language” of translation regardless of, and at that time it seemed not to matter, how well it was used. A decade afterwards, in 2007, I proposed a correction of this art work: “An artist who cannot speak English WELL is NO artist.” This is the new process of dispossession through formalization.

Santiago López Petit ⁸⁹ states that “difference” that was in the not so distant past the social antagonism (class struggle), has been divided today within itself into order and disorder. In such a way the unity of levels are maintained and reality is made multiple. The diagram of functioning that involved the (unity of) class struggle was IDENTITY is equal to IDENTITY plus DIFFERENCE. In the time of the unrestraintment of capital this changed into DIFFERENCE is equal to DIFFERENCE plus IDENTITY (Petit, p. 38). In such a way

we can also read the primacy of difference; but, as stated by Petit, this difference is now pushed forward, pointing to the sameness that is the appendix of the rearticulation of difference. This identity, or sameness, is today the established co-propriety capital/power that can take on very different names, depending on the specific social and political space.

In art, the work by Mladen Stilić is the best example to understand this shift from IDENTITY TO DIFFERENCE (and back) that occurred in the passage from 1990s to 2000s. In the world of capitalism, in the 1990s, immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall, those coming from the former Eastern Europe, were seen as an added value of “difference.” This added value of difference was tolerated as it was only added on the top of the already established capitalist (neo)liberal identity. On the premises that the difference was still only an appendix, it was tolerated, but an effort was imposed on us to use a common language that was, historically because of capital, English. At the height of global capitalism, following the new proposed equation by Petit that states: DIFFERENCE is equal to DIFFERENCE plus IDENTITY, it is necessary to utter: “An artist who cannot speak English WELL is NO artist!” The differences have to be hegemonized and formalized in order to be properly repeated.

H.) To act politically

A sentence, coined by the artist Šejla Kamerić from Bosnia and Herzegovina: “There is no border, there is no border,

there is no border, no border, no border, no border, I wish," as an art work (quoted in the magazine Kontakt, of the Erste Bank Group, as part of an interview with Kamerić under the title "Freedom Comes") posits the "border" as a disruptive and imposed regulative force within the different social, territorial, and artistic conditions of contemporary global capitalism. Therefore, the disappearance of borders, as it is also precisely captured by the title "Freedom Comes" of this recent interview with Kamerić in Kontakt, is to be seen as a wish that would ultimately bring freedom.

The disappearance of borders seems to be the last point in the success story of the constitution of the present world. This is the point at which its whole history, in relation to the WALL that once divided East and West (Berlin) Europe, is constructed as well. But the wish put forward by Šejla Kamerić is already operative as the logic of the historization of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Am I right? In the August 2008 issue of the Lufthansa onboard magazine, a full-page ad (page 6) by the German National Tourist Board announced the year 2009. It was presented as the forthcoming 20th jubilee celebrating the 20 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, with the following slogan: "Welcome to the land without borders." The announcement went on to say that the Berlin Wall symbolized the Cold War and the division of Germany and Europe into East and West (until 1989) for 28 years. But in the year 2009, representing 20 years since the reunification of Germany, it will be possible to visit in Germany the few remainders of that

time in Europe (and I would add, before they vanish completely). In this announcement, it is stated that the revolution for a better world in East Germany started in Leipzig at the St. Nicholas Church, etc. There is a very clear parallel process going on in Europe with regard to the overcoming of the communist revolutionary past of the "East" of Europe by Christianity. It will be necessary to undertake a very precise analysis in order to identify the circulation of capital and the hegemonization of Europe by Christianity as two parallel and interrelated processes that go hand in hand both historically and currently!

I will take the border as a point of departure in order to propose the following thesis. I can claim that although we have the feeling that invisible borders prevent the space of the world, to be precise, that of the First Capitalist Neoliberal Global World, from being open and mobile, we nevertheless have to think differently. On one hand, we see the process of the unbelievable circulation of positions that prevents us from fully accepting thinking of the space of contemporary art and culture, the social and economic, as being foreclosed by borders, and on the other, we also see the disappearance of the borders that firmly installed a clear division of the world in the past, as was the case in the time of imperialist capitalism. Actually what we see is a process of the disintegration of borders, at least as part of an ideological, discursive process of the reorganization of the new Europe and the world. What is presented by Kamerić as a wish is already operative so to speak, it is already working throughout the new

Europe. This is the slogan of Germany today with which it will celebrate 20 years of its reunification (which took place in 1989 with the fall of the Berlin Wall). Therefore, there is an obvious logic organizing the whole space of the new Europe, and this means it is necessary to push a very precise analysis. Even more so, it is precisely necessary in relation to such a background, which is so cheerful in celebrating a world without borders, to push forward another thesis or logic: we need borders more than ever. How is this possible? The answer is very simple: to establish a border - to draw a line of division that would re-articulate this new world that seems to be without borders and where the only thing that seems impossible is impossibility as such - means to present and to take a clear political stance, to ask for a political act. This political act means pointing a finger against the situation that claims that today the only thing that is impossible is impossibility as such. Whose im/possibility?

But let's proceed step by step. What is the phenomenon that can be seen if one looks attentively at the different logics of functioning within the space of politics, and even more so, within the space of art and culture of the new Europe nowadays? We see a disinterest in the art, culture, etc., coming from the region of former Eastern Europe. This is not about being romantic or sad; this disinterest must clearly be connected with the escalation of all major exhibitions and biennials that show a special appetite for the positions of Third World artists, mostly Asian and Latin American. The past divisions and ideologies of differ-

ence within Europe are seen as an obstacle to the process of capital circulation. This means, to the circulation of financial capital as the major form of global capital today, or, to say it simply, these divisions are seen as an obstacle to the circulation of money. Behaving as though this is already one space (Europe), it is not necessary to push any inclusion through exclusion, it is enough to behave as if no differences any longer exist (China proved this with the Olympic Games as well!). We are all identical through a process of "evacuation" that David Harvey in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (2005)⁷⁰ defines as "accumulation by dispossession." Accumulation by dispossession is a process of expulsion from the possession of any possible difference; when it is necessary, either a law is used (just think of the unbelievable legislative policy of the EU, which only specialists can follow nowadays) or there is a whole set of institutional, legislative, bureaucratic, infrastructural, theoretical and cultural processes that are abruptly or "gently" installed. The process of "accumulation by dispossession" is perhaps no longer effective in Europe, as it is supposedly completed here (with the German slogan for 2009, it is cemented as a process that is finally realized, so to speak), but think of its repetition elsewhere, in the Third World, for example.

The process of the disappearance of borders is in fact connected to the processes of the accumulation of capital. One process is surely accumulation by dispossession, meaning getting rid of, or being robbed of, any difference. The second process is what we are fac-

ing today and it's called the imperialism of circulation. Michael Hudson in his *Super Imperialism*, from 1972 (recently republished),⁷¹ says that instead of there being a crisis as regards gaps in distribution, today we are witnessing a process contrary to it, which is "the imperialism of circulation." But to come to the imperialism of circulation today, you have to be dispossessed. In 1972, Hudson already announced that the borders, which were preventing distribution, forming gaps in distribution, would be removed by the imperialism of circulation. I can state that both processes - accumulation by dispossession and the imperialism of circulation - have to be seen not as a simple dissection between the modes of the accumulation of capital (sending the accumulation by dispossession to retirement), but that one constituted the parameters (through dispossession) for the other in order to dominate at the present moment.

The borders are "gone," and the price to be paid is the total dispossession of all our ideas, stances, and specificities. Capital has only one agenda though - surplus value - and this is more than a program or a Hollywood film conspiracy. It is a drive; human desire against this mad drive is not an equal opponent. The imperialism of circulation without differences, as the primal logic of the condition of the production of global financial capitalism implies that what is produced is money. Last, but not least, the recent capitalist economic crisis, which can be described as a process of stagflation, i.e., of differential inflation amid stagnation, is not only a sign, but also the realization of new processes of the capital-

ization of financial capital in connection with new modes of capital accumulation.

But what is important for us now is the subsequent or parallel process that is equivalent to Hudson's "imperialism of endless circulation" and which I can simply describe, making reference to Jelica Šumič-Riha's article "Prisoners of the Inexistent Other,"⁷² by stating that what is impossible in the world of capitalism today is impossibility as such. They work together: on one side, the imperialism of circulation, and on the other, the impossibility of something being impossible. The imperialism of circulation, in its frenetic processes, prevents the subversion or the attack of any master entity. Everything circulates, is exchanged, clearly dispossessed of any difference, and no obstacles are to be seen in the network that structures reality for us. Those once perceived as enemies, from individuals to institutions, behave as if we were all in the same "merde" (to use this juicy French word for "shit"), as if we were all together, and as if we all had to find the remedy to our problems and needs, obstacles, etc. (while those who generate expropriation and dispossession have to be forgotten about immediately). It is almost impossible to say that something is impossible today.

Or to put this differently, in the past a subversive act was possible as it was subversion against the clear foreclosure and division in society. We had the borders. The big Other, the virtual symbolic order, the network that structures/d reality for us, was the thing giving "consistency," so to speak. It was almost a guarantee of an intervention against it.

The world today presents itself in an endless, repeated, circulation (imperialism is an excellent concept capturing this drive) that is seen as a "friendly" and endless exchange, and therefore, in order to solve expropriation, enslavement and neocolonial interventions by capital, only one measure is proposed, and this is called coordination. I recently found a completely serious political proposal that stated that the only thing to be done to solve our problems is an effective "coordination." My question is, can we really be dumb enough to stick to such theories? Of course, they all have an ace hidden in their pocket or up their sleeve in order for things to circulate smoothly. It is necessary to successfully coordinate the process of getting rid of a small number of those who still bother us with social antagonisms and class struggle. I am not saying, though, that there is not a need, as in the case of accumulation, for a new conceptualization and historization of the class struggle!

Perhaps on my way to Damascus with this text, I can give an answer to what was seen as a purely rhetorical question when formulated by Jon McKenzie in 2001. His book is entitled *Perform or Else: From Discipline to Performance*, where this else is floated in the air, unanswered. Or else what? I will propose the following answer or command: *Circulate (but just without differences)!*

Therefore we have to draw a line in space, a border. To show a border within the inconsistency of the big Other, means to act. To act politically. The act

changes the very coordinates of this impossibility. It is only through an act that I effectively assume the big Other's nonexistence. This implies not only that s/he has to take the politics of representation into her/his own hands, and set the border within the cynical situation that the only thing which is impossible is impossibility as such, but, as is argued by Šumič-Riha, it is necessary to build the framework as well, the foreclosure that would set the new parameters, giving the new coordinates to the political act. Within such a context, I can claim that what is necessary, in fact, is a precise, new conceptual and paradigmatic political act, which implies the setting of a new framework.

The political act is a division, the setting of a border within a space. It reconfigures, closes, or stops, the imperialism of the circulation without differences by establishing new parameters within the space. It establishes a new structure to which to relate (de-coloniality of knowledge, de-coloniality of power, etc). An act is always performed through enunciation and it not only sets the parameters that initiate the act itself, but the parameters in relation to the Other to whom it is addressed as well. What is important is the establishment of the structure to which this line(s) of division will relate. In the case of Germany and in the case of the story of a non-existent past division in Europe, it is necessary to state that the biggest profit from the disappearance of borders in Europe is to be gained by financial capital. The point is that in order to push such logic, it was necessary to imply a ferocious process of equalization and leveling of all of the

strata of the different European and World societies, from the social to the educational and cultural. It was necessary to install one of the most ferocious politics of repetition of the unrestraintment of capital (as well through the politics of dispossession); to put it differently, local specificities were changed into ethnic/ethnographical ones, and one general path of history and genealogy from art to culture and science is repeated and established as the only valid one: the First Capitalist World history that completely (de)regulates the history, the present and the future of the world.

The question is always to which histories we attach our representational politics and how we resituate our position within a certain social, economic and political territory. The declaration of existence is therefore the first step, as argued by Šumič-Riha, but what follows afterwards is the rigorous practices of consequences, the logics of consequences (of the declaration), where the impossibility of the foreclosure of the capitalist discourse turns into the condition of a new possibility. A political act is that which interrupts a situation where the only impossible thing in the world today is impossibility as such.

Notes

1. Marina Gržinić's FROM BIOPOLITICS TO NECROPOLITICS and THE INSTITUTION OF TEMPORARY ART published in Pavilion is a result of a three-year scientific research project entitled Anthropological Machines, Biopolitics, Production and the Genealogy of (Bare) Life, that came to its end in Fall 2009. The research project was developed by Gržinić within the Institute of Philosophy at the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ljubljana and was supported by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology of the Republic of Slovenia.
2. "In other words, the distinction between zones of peace and zones of war does not neatly match with the differentiations established by borders, even if this is what borders have, in theory, purported to realize. Moreover, this situation in which the legitimate and coercive - or peace and war - are, as Mbembe will put it, entangled is the condition across the African continent. One might add, however, that this entanglement is also the circumstance of the world - contrary to European normative views of the border that are, I would contend, increasingly as inapplicable to Europe as they are to elsewhere. (...)Perhaps the question of politics, today - given the entanglements, shifting borders and 'colonialisation' of metropolitan spaces alluded to above - can only be posed as a question of the postcolonial." From Angela Mitropoulos, "The Failure of Political Theology," in Mute, 2007, online at <http://www.metamute.org/en/The-failure-of-political-theology>
3. Cf. Marina Gržinić and Walter Mignolo, "De-linking epistemology from capital and pluri-versality," in Reartikulacija, no. 6, Ljubljana, 2009, (interview with W. Mignolo), http://www.reartikulacija.org/RE6/ENG/decoloniality6_ENG_mign.html
4. Cf. Rozalinda Borcilă & Cristian Nae, "Past Futures: Extreme Subjectification. The Engineering of the Future and the Instrumentalization of Life," in Vector, no. 1, Iași, Romania, 2005, pp. 144-153.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Cf. Giorgio Agamben, Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life, trans., Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford University, Stanford, California, 1998.
8. Cf. Suely Rolnik, "The Twilight of the Victim: Creation Quits Its Pimp, to Rejoin Resistance," in Zehar, no. 51, San Sebastian, 2003.
9. Cf. Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," in Public Culture, 15 (1), 2003, pp. 11-40.
10. Cf. Subhabrata Bobby Banerjee, "Live and Let Die: Colonial Sovereignities and the Death Worlds of Necrocapitalism," in borderlands eJournal, volume 5, no. 1, 2006.

11. Cf. Achille Mbembe, On the Postcolony, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2001.
12. Cf. Daniel Tucker, "Inheriting the Grid," and Nik Theodore, Jamie Peck and Neil Brenner, "The City as Policy Lab," both published in Area Chicago (ART/RESEARCH/EDUCATION/ACTIVISM), no. 6, from August 2008.
13. Ibid.
14. Cf. Achille Mbembe, On the Postcolony, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2001.
15. The situation today is that Moderna galerija reopened its door in December 2009, after 2 years of renovation, and its management survived with its silent mimicry another political option on power in Slovenia. Even more Moderna galerija similarly to "life" in the First Capitalist World (as conceptualized by Agamben) proposes to be split within itself (into the modern and contemporary sections being displayed into two separate buildings in Ljubljana) without its power being jeopardized. Better to say, the current director of Moderna galerija is one of the longest on power in the "new Europe," since 1993.
16. Cf. Former West. International Research, Publishing and Exhibition Project 2009-2012, curated by Charles Esche, Maria Hlavajova and Kathrin Rhomberg (<http://www.formerwest.org>). More about this in the second part of my manuscript published in the present issue of Pavilion.
17. Cf. https://www.adbusters.org/magazine/76/vulture_funds.html
18. This ethno marketing, which is becoming more and more present in the First Capitalist World and the EU, was recently a topic in a debate by students, professors and young scholars of a class on Post Conceptual Art Practices at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. The participants in the debate reported on one of the latest cases of ethno marketing, which is a cover for pure racism that became visible when on August 26, 2009 two screenshots of an ad from one of Microsoft's sites began circling internet forums and blogs. One depicted a conference table with a few happy employees: an Asian man, a black man, and a white woman. The other image was from the Polish version of the same site, identical to the first one, except the head of the black man was replaced with a head of a white man. <http://mashable.com/2009/08/26/microsoft-photoshop-trainwreck/>
19. Cf. Žarana Papić, "Europe after 1989: ethnic wars, the fascisation of social life and body politics in Serbia," in Filozofski vestnik, special number The Body, ed., Marina Gržinić Mauhler, Institute of Philosophy ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, 2002, pp. 191-205.
20. Cf. Santiago López Petit, "A civic democracy: a new form of control," in Panel de Control. Interruptores críticos para una sociedad vigilada, eds., Fundación Rodríguez + ZEMOS98, Sevilla, 2007, pp. 184-187.
21. Cf. Nataša Govedić, "What a Wonderful Fascism: Claiming the Real in Lars Von Trier and Dogma 95," in Filozofski vestnik, special number The Body, ed.,

- Marina Gržinić Mauhler, Institute of Philosophy ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, 2002, pp. 167-179.
22. Cf. Amnesty International, "A Human Rights Crisis in Kosovo Province. Background: A crisis waiting to happen" (June 30, 1998) at <http://asiapacific.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGEUR700321998?open&of=ENG-SRB>
23. Cf. Žarana Papić, "Europe after 1989: ethnic wars, the fasciation of social life and body politics in Serbia," in *Filozofski vestnik*, special number *The Body*, ed., Marina Gržinić Mauhler, Institute of Philosophy ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, 2002, pp. 191-205.
24. On January 27, 2006, The Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), which brings together parliamentarians from 46 European countries, passed a resolution that for the first time strongly condemns the crimes committed by totalitarian communist regimes. The resolution urges former Eastern European communist countries to modify their textbooks and to build monuments for victims of the totalitarian communist regimes. The complete resolution can be read at <http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta06/Eres1481.htm>.
- As it was argued by many writers it would be "easier" to take the condemnation of communist state crimes seriously if it had also seen the EU denouncing the far bloodier record of European colonialism that was a system of racist despotism, which dominated the World in Stalin's time and before.
25. Cf. the exhibition "Gender Check - Femininity and Masculinity in the Art of Eastern Europe," Museum of Modern Art (MUMOK), Vienna, Austria, 2009/2010. More about this in the second part of my manuscript published in the present issue of *Pavilion*.
26. Cf. Tatjana Greif, "Schengen in Practice," in *Reartikulacija* no. 3, Ljubljana, 2008. http://www.reartikulacija.org/queer/queer3_ENG.html
27. Cf. Domenico Losurdo, "The American Colonial Roots of the Third Reich," lecture in Milan on May 15, 2005.
28. Cf. Betty Gilmore, "Racism is the belief that there are races and that one is superior. Racism is an integral part of the European tradition," 2005.
29. Cf. Domenico Losurdo, *Racial States and Eugenics, the USA and the Third Reich*, Fondazione Nino Pasti, Rome, 2005.
30. Étienne Balibar, "Class Racism," in Étienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, Verso, London, 1992.
31. Cf. Savonarola, Nietzsche, "Class Racism and the Fantasies of Europe," in *The Institute for Conjunctural Research* (<http://conjunctural.blogspot.com>), 2007.
32. Cf. Artiom Magun, Alexander Skidan and Dmitry Vilensky, "Potentialities," in *What is to be Done?*, no. 16, Moscow, March 2007. http://www.chtodelat.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=327&Itemid=167
33. Cf. Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans., Kevin Attell, University Of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2005. All the pages listed as references in the brackets refer to this book.
34. Cf. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans., Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford University, Stanford, California, 1998.
35. Cf. Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," in *Public Culture*, 15 (1), 2003, pp. 11-40.
36. Cf. Santiago López Petit, *La movilización global. Breve tratado para atacar la realidad* [Global Mobilization: A Brief Treatise for Attacking Reality], published in Spanish by Editorial Traficantes de Sueños, Barcelona, 2009. All references, if not stated differently, when referring to Petit, are from this book. It proved to be an exceptionally powerful source for my work when trying to elaborate where we stand in relation to global neoliberal capitalism and what is to be expected in the near future.
37. Cf. Marina Gržinić and Walter Mignolo, "De-linking epistemology from capital and pluri-versality," in *Reartikulacija*, no. 6, Ljubljana, 2009, (interview with W. Mignolo), http://www.reartikulacija.org/RE6/ENG/decoloniality6_ENG_mign.html
38. Cf. Madina Tlostanova, "Re(dis)articulating the myth of modernity through the decolonial perspective," in *Reartikulacija*, no. 6, Ljubljana, 2009, http://www.reartikulacija.org/RE6/ENG/transmediala6_ENG_tlost.html
39. Marina Garcés, *En las prisiones de lo posible* [In the Prisons of the Possible], published in Spanish by Edicions Bellaterra, Barcelona, 2002.
40. Cf. Žarana Papić, "Europe after 1989: ethnic wars, the fasciation of social life and body politics in Serbia," in *Filozofski vestnik*, special number *The Body*, edited by Marina Gržinić Mauhler, Institute of Philosophy ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana 2002, pp. 191-205.
41. Cf. Marina Gržinić and Walter Mignolo, "De-linking epistemology from capital and pluri-versality," op. cit.
42. Cf. Madina Tlostanova, "Re(dis)articulating the myth of modernity through the decolonial perspective," op. cit.
43. Cf. Agon Hamza, "The specter of Ideological Apparatuses," in *Reartikulacija*, no. 8, Ljubljana, 2009.
44. Cf. Bartleby, the Scrivener: a Story of Wall Street is a novelette by the American novelist Herman Melville (1819-1891). The plot: The narrator, an elderly lawyer who has a very comfortable business helping wealthy men deal with mortgages, title deeds, and bonds, relates the story of the strangest man he has ever known. Bartleby arrives in answer to an ad for another scrivener in the office. Bartleby answers with what soon becomes his stock response: I would prefer not to. One weekend the narrator stops by the office unexpectedly and discovers that Bartleby has started living there. Bartleby remains willing to do his main work of scrivenering, but eventually he 'prefers not to' do this as well, so that finally he is doing nothing.
45. Cf. Šefik Šeki Tatić "Communication and Mass Intellect," in *Pavilion*, present issue, Bucharest 2010.
46. The exhibition opened on November 12, 2009 and will be on view until February 2010.
47. Cf. Santiago López Petit, *Global Mobilization: A Brief Treatise for Attacking Reality*, op. cit. All the pages listed as references in the brackets refer to this book.
48. Though the artists in the show were not paid. We, the panelists, were.
49. Cf. Goldie Osuri, "Identity and Complicity in Necropolitical Engagements: The Case of Iraq," *Reartikulacija*, no. 8, Ljubljana, 2009.
50. Cf. Arjun Appadurai, "Number in the Colonial Imagination," in *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament*, eds. C. A. Breckenridge and P. V. D. Veer, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1993, pp. 314-339. Quoted in Goldie Osuri.
51. Ibid.
52. Cf. Suvendrini Perera, "Race, Terror, Sydney, December 2005," in *borderlands ejournal*, volume 5, no. 1, 2006. Quoted in Goldie Osuri.
53. Cf. Ugo Vlaisavljević, "From Berlin to Sarajevo," in *Zarez*, year XI, number 267, Zagreb, 15.10. 2009, pp. 23-25.
54. Cf. E. Balibar, "La crainte des masses: politique et philosophie avant et après Marx," in *Collection La Philosophie en effet*, Gailée, Paris, 1997, pp. 386-387.
55. Cf. Biljana Kašić, "Where is the Feminist Critical Subject?," in *NEW FEMINISM: Worlds of Feminism, Queer and Networking Conditions*, eds., Marina Gržinić, Rosa Reitsamer, Löcker Verlag, Vienna, 2008, p. 457.
56. Cf. Angela Mitropoulos, "Legal, Tender," in *Reartikulacija*, no. 7, Ljubljana, 2009.
57. Cf. Marina Gržinić and Sebastjan Leban, "De-grad-ing capital(ism) and its production of fear," to be published as part of the *Sarai Reader 08: Fear*. Cf. <http://www.sarai.net/publications/readers/sarai-reader-08-fear>
58. Cf. Adolfo Gilly and Rhina Roux, "Capitales tecnologias y mundos de la vida. El despojo de los cuatro elementos" ["Technological capital and worlds of life. Dispossession of the four elements"], published in *Revista Herramienta* N° 40, Mexico, March 2009.
59. Cf. Santiago López Petit, *Global Mobilization: A Brief Treatise for Attacking Reality*, op. cit. All the pages listed as references in the brackets refer to this book.
60. Cf. Santiago López Petit, *Global Mobilization: A Brief Treatise for Attacking Reality*, op. cit. All the pages listed as references in the brackets refer to this book.
61. Cf. Sarah Kember, "Feminist Figuration and the Question of Origin," in *Future Natural*, eds., George Robertson, Melinda Mash, Lisa Tickner, Jon Bird, Barry Curtis and Tim Putnam, Routledge, London, 1996.
62. Andrew Ross, "The future is a risky business," in *Future Natural*, eds., George Robertson, Melinda Mash, Lisa Tickner, Jon Bird, Barry Curtis and Tim Putnam, Routledge, London, 1996.
63. Cf. Neil Smith, *The Endgame of Globalization*, Routledge, New York, 2005.
64. Cf. Neil Smith interviewed by Bryan Finoki, published at <http://subtopia.blogspot.com/2007/07/military-planks-of-capital-accumulation.html>
65. Cf. Aihwa Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2006.
66. Cf. Christian Hoeller, "On Private Indirect Government," interview with Achille Mbembe, published at <http://www.springerlin.at>
67. Cf. Jonathan Beller, "The Martial Art of 'Cinema': Modes of Virtuosity a la Hong Kong and the Philippines," manuscript of the lecture held in Ljubljana, 2009, at the graduate module "Intercultural study. Comparative study of ideas and cultures," University of Nova Gorica, Slovenia and The Scientific Research Center of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU), Ljubljana.
68. Cf. Santiago López Petit, *Global Mobilization: A Brief Treatise for Attacking Reality*, op. cit. All the pages listed as references in the brackets refer to this book.
69. Cf. Santiago López Petit, *Global Mobilization: A Brief Treatise for Attacking Reality*, op. cit. All the pages listed as references in the brackets refer to this book.
70. Cf. David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005.
71. Cf. Michael Hudson, *Super-Imperialism: The Economic Strategy of American Empire*, Holt Rinehart, Austin, Texas, 1972.
72. Cf. Jelica Šumič-Riha, "Jetniki Drugega, ki ne obstaja" [Prisoners of the Inexistent Other], in *Filozofski vestnik*, Institute of Philosophy ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, 2007.

Metastasis of Democracy, Communication and Mass Intellect

by Šefik Šeki Tatlić

This first part analyzes the concept of inclusion as a practice that, through the use of communication obstructs any attempt to re-politicize culture. I analyze the way the neoliberal discourse, in the period of transition, uses a democratic demagoguery to make relative and aestheticize the effects of capital, itself part of an über-system that is tolerant of fascism, exploitation, and radical class-based repression. By putting this analysis into a kind of triangle of concepts – the body as a new territory for capitalist expansion, the modalities of the so-called public sphere's reaction to radical violence, and technologically determined space as the space of inclusion of the entire social field into communication – I go on to analyze how transitional societies, mimicking those of the First (capitalistic) World, reduce the political in order to objectivize the ongoing flexible accumulation of capital while transforming themselves into apolitical machines without any reference, culture, or critical articulation of the social reality.

PART ONE:
INCLUSION AS A PARADIGM OF THE
APOLITICAL WITHIN THE CAPITAL
MACHINE

A.) The Metamorphosis of Power
Distribution

One of the most important concepts that allowed the old colonial states to reach their peak over long centuries of exploitation and race-based genocide is the distribution of power from the One (the State) to the Many (local and colonial populations, the lower classes, and so on). This concept, while organizing the concentration of power and surveillance over subjects and materials, not only produced a long-lasting division of the world (into First, Second, and Third Worlds) but, most importantly, allowed the colonial powers to monopolize the definition of “civilization” and economic progress.

But just as political power no longer manifests itself in the relation from the One to the Many, so it has also developed, or more precisely, redefined the mechanisms for transforming the Many into (a)political power. The apparatus that made exclusion one of the conditions of modernist sovereignties across a divided geopolitical horizon, now, after the massive delegation of power from the nation-state to a supranational structure of governance, redefines concepts of cultural exclusion and material inclusion as a concept of the inclusion of both.

As Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have noted, racism never operates on the level of the exclusion or designation of somebody as Other, but by measuring degrees of deflection or tolerance in rela-

tion to the “white male face” that seeks to incorporate nonaligned tendencies in ever more eccentric waves.¹ Or, as Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt have said, when the big subjective powers got out of the colonization business and reached modernity, they realized that their primary aim was not to enter modernity but to escape it.² Defining the supranational horizon of governance further, Negri and Hardt describe it as an “Empire” that is the decentralized and deterritorializing apparatus of a dominion that is constantly expanding its open borders to include, eventually, the entire globe. This Empire coordinates “hybrid entities, elastic hierarchies, and multiple exchanges” across easily adaptable networks of command. As they put it, the different national colors of the world have become mixed into the imperial global rainbow.³

Paraphrasing a thought by Michel Foucault, we can say that the transition from a disciplinary (modernist, colonial) society into a surveillance-based (post-modern, global) society presents a new kind of power – biopower – which no longer needs any massive state apparatus of repression to monitor the population, since the people themselves now do this on their own. Biopower produces, and is produced by, the very life of a society, a population that represses itself. Whether this is a consumerist or archaic-nationalist society, it assumes the same role. Biopower is a power produced from within, from the population, and by transforming the population it transforms the very nature of this new voluntary repression. This mechanism of inclusion is not so much concerned with the political systems of those not yet included, but prima-

rily with the biopolitical tissue of those who are soon to be and, above all, already are, included.

In the context of politics and culture, Terry Eagleton, reshaping G. H. Hartman's difference between culture and certain culture, sees Culture (with a capital "C") as a way of blending particularization into a more powerful medium as "universal subjectivity," in which Culture-as-art distributes universal values into suitable forms that reduce social, sexual, and ethnic individual experience so as to allow the subject to become universal. But ever since the social movements of the 1960s, the word "culture" (small "c") has come to mean the very opposite, affirming, rather than transcending, particular, national, sexual, ethnic, and regional identities. As Eagleton says, in Belfast and Bosnia culture is not something you put into a CD player but something people get killed for, which means that the accusation that culture is somehow distant from day-to-day life cannot be more wrong.⁴

In this context, then, one culture (Western), by measuring the degree of the assimilation of other cultures, creates a platform on which not only it, but the other cultures as well, exist by measuring themselves according to their degree of assimilation into global capital. A particular culture thus realizes itself through a non-particular context. Here, the totality of certain contexts, by sucking out the authentic contextual reference of a particular social reality, redefines the concept of world zones (divisions) and inaugurates a decentralized distribution of power, establishing the totality of global capital rule and the ruling class system while converting diversity into a spectrum

of applicable versions, fixed differentials.

In the states of the former Yugoslavia, for example, all the previously challenged nationalist parties, as well as their social-democratic opponents, have been measured by the local population according to how quickly they assimilated themselves to the standards of the European Union (as an example of a supranational capitalistic power structure), while Western-sponsored organizations, by accelerating this assimilation, have been tolerant of the (recent) fascist past of many national leaders, who today are seen by the West as equally valid implementers of democratic conditions for the free-market establishment. In addition, there have appeared such slogans as "reconciliation," the subtext of which is "the need to look to the future," specifically, to a future made up of those who are "united in diversity." The production of differentials of inclusion of local culture into global culture manifests itself not only through nationalistic glorification (populist fundamentalism) or social neoliberal movements, but also through a combination of the two as the dominant social aesthetic for the implementation of the capitalistic conditions of production. Biologically determined racism has turned into evolutionary inertia, as Donna Haraway warns in her "Cyber Manifesto."⁵

As for nationalities, Étienne Balibar regards national form as a kind of "social formation," a way in which economic and ideological structures are created, a model for the mutually interlaced administrative and symbolic functions of the state in which the symbolic assumes a central role.⁶ By analogy, transitional societies entered the process of transforming

themselves from a socialist system to a capitalist one by rejecting socialism primarily through the reproduction of their own national forms, which, presumably, gave them status as European nations. In fact, such forms endow them with instant modernist status, one that includes the national, cleric, economic, and biological predispositions of a sovereign nation, the sovereignty of which will, paradoxically, be confirmed through its loss as it assimilates into global capital.

Despite the general opinion within transitional neoliberal structures, this assimilation will not reduce nationalist/fascist fragmentation, but will eventually re-actualize them as need be, if only to affirm the modernist predisposition of (deserved) sovereignty toward a social environment grounded in capitalism, which means that by accepting democracy they accept nothing less than the supremacy of capital itself.

Hence, in Europe's post-socialist countries, politics exists today only as a way to measure the fulfillment of a whole spectrum of regulations, standards, and conditions issuing from the various political and economic institutions of global capital (the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, NATO, etc.); political parties, therefore, differ only in their degree of acceleration toward integration into these same international institutions, becoming nothing but quantitative differentials on the scale of the implementation of capital.

In political terms, the transitional regime usually consists of a couple of populist parties, which are similarly undergoing a

process of democratic conversion, and a couple of (so-called leftist) democratic neoliberal parties, which accept without question the conditions of the free market; both kinds, in fact, adhere solely to the multicultural, neoliberal, hegemonic capitalist rhetoric. This dyad exists across an economically and morally devastated social fabric, which can choose only between slower (populist-fundamentalist) or faster (neoliberal-democratic) routes to total inclusion in global capital or some capitalist alliance such as the EU.

Clearly, this situation, by assimilating a particular state further into global capital (more precisely, by the mere existence of the capitalist state), will change, in the sense that a monopoly as such will not exist openly but will be carried out on more subtle levels, where capital (the valorization of value) alone holds the sole monopoly in a spectrum of diverse offerings. The re-actualization of new territories in a domain of regulation is one form of the territorial expansion of capital from the inside. Generally speaking, the entire spectrum of international institutions in fusion with local states constitutes a certain buffer zone. This socio-(a)political location analyzes, absorbs and converts reports (measures) in the implementation of democracy (state politics), a capitalist free-market and distribution standards (the economy), and the multicultural civil society (culture).

A buffer zone, or location of redirection, functioning through the use of a public-relations machine and the marketing industry and simultaneously securing jobs for the members of the newly formed ruling class of a mainly neoliberal provinance (in this sector), produces, in princi-

ple, alibis for any future mistakes in the process of implementing democracy. This zone not only propagates a consumerist culture, but also generates a platform for its reproduction. The process by which hyper-capital produces aesthetics of reality injects, propagates, and glorifies complete and utter civil passivity toward social injustice and class difference, but also creates a dynamic of sucking the political out of culture.

This refers not to those directly oppressed, but to a decadent, “zombified” structure of society that ensures a buffer around the very hollowness from which it is made; in addition, it refers to lower classes whose primary aim is not social justice, but inclusion in the ruling class. The wish of the lower classes to be aestheticized – another name for the interpassivity that derives from the expectation that some sort of resistance might be formed within the neoliberal and cleric-fascist capitalist constellation of conditions of production – defines one of the main features of the apolitical. This, in fact, is a form of directly applied biopolitics. The aestheticization of the social (hyper-capitalism), especially in post-socialist society, not only confirms Marx’s claim that the state is merely the executive office of capital, but it also inaugurates a postmodern dynamic of assimilating social flux into a machine that includes, sterilizes, and reproduces any social interaction. One of most blatant results of this machine’s operation is not so much the production of some other mechanism of subtle repression, dominance, or ideology, but, indeed, the production of exactly nothing!

Here we are getting closer to one of the

most successful constructs of this machine, the construct of communication.

B.) The Mechanism of Biopolitics

In order to understand the link between inclusion and measurement, it is necessary first to remind ourselves that one of the basic laws of capital is its constant expansion into new territories. The definition of technology as human capability, encapsulated human skill, or crystallized labor (in a Marxian framework) and, above all, as social relations made durable, packaged, and made a routine, a form of “social mapping,” provides us with the proper perspective from which to analyze the connection between inclusion, measurement, and power delegation.

Once capital reached its initial accumulation within the nation-state, it had to start reproducing constantly, and in the process of discovering new forms of production, distribution and exchange, it changed the very notion of a territory. As the Slovenian media theorist and philosopher Marina Gržinić has observed, deterritorialization is not the process of erasing territories, but the process of reterritorialization – the constant cannibalization of old territories and the constant reinvention of new ones. Here, Gržinić, citing David Harvey’s theory about the flexible accumulation of global capital, goes further and describes the Internet as the clearest sign of this process as a kind of mechanism for the redirection of wishes, facts, and bodies in a globalized world.⁷

This process manifests itself primarily in

radical situations, such as the torture of prisoners at the Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad, where redirection and reinvention not only took a brutal form but also provided a spectrum for such processes to take place in more sophisticated ways in the First World. But, bodies first!

The case of Abu Ghraib, as a situation where coalition forces conducted systematic physical and psychological torture on Iraqi “insurgents” and civilians under suspicion, is a flagrant example of the redirection of bodies in the Empire’s border territories, such as the Third World. Although torture and occupation are brutal manifestations of reterritorialization, what we are dealing with here are subtle forms of conversion that take place in the Empire (the First World) itself. Redirection works in the same way that exclusion turns itself into inclusion; in other words, it uses the dynamic of measurement.

Even after the torture at Abu Ghraib was condemned in the West, the circumstances under which it took place remained intact. The media, in its re-presentational coverage of the case, rather than directly implicating the institutions that created the context of the Iraqi War, focused only on particular fragments of the case (the breakdown in the chain of command, questionable rules of engagement) and turned the whole coverage into a perverse stimulus that proved only that the Western democratic mechanism of prosecuting the perpetrators is “functioning.”

This neoliberal mechanism, which measures on the body of the victim its own ability to solve a crisis, in fact links its own

social aesthetics (democracy) to that of other cultures, proving that the system (capitalism) that created the need to send troops to Iraq (profits from oil) is not purely bloodthirsty but also has a nice human face that implements inclusion. Here, the entire process of measurement, in all these cases, immediately redirects any reactions into a spectrum of the re-presentational fragments of Capital, where the whole international “industry of humanity” acts to “protect” the victims by converting the victims themselves into proof that capital, which inflicts the scars, must also heal them. What is more, the victims are supposed to accept and be grateful for this compassion, betting on the chance that their nation is entering the society of “free” nations. Here we have to remind ourselves of one of the rules of Empire, which, according to Negri and Hardt, operates on all registers of the social order extending down to the very depths of the social world and therefore, inasmuch as it aims to rule social life in its entirety, presents a paradigmatic form of biopower.⁸

The ultimate subtext of the media coverage of Abu Ghraib is the injection of the virtually modeled moral indifference already being experienced by Western culture, exposing the public sphere in the West as one that is in fact, in need of a perverse virtual stimulus as an alibi for the strategic political and economic monopoly the West is experiencing. The West’s distribution of democracy in others creates a situation that redefines (reinvents) not only the cultural environment of some distant social but primarily measures the inclusion of the cultural environment of the West. Already overloaded with information about new mod-

els of inclusion of other cultures, the Western democracies seem to be unable to see torture as anything other than a mere incident in the procurement of culture, not as a form of politics. The relocation of wishes here serves as a stimulus to the dead (apolitical) social body by reinventing new models of constitutive inclusion – in other words, pure reterritorialization! As Elaine Scarry explains it, a person in pain is ordinarily so bereft of the resource of speech that it is hardly surprising that the language of pain should sometimes be articulated not by those who are in pain, but by those who speak on behalf of the ones who suffer. In this way, Scarry observes, the most radically private experiences begin to enter the public discourse.⁹

It is precisely the perversion of this notion that makes democracy not dysfunctional, but functional in such a way that it cannibalizes a new somatic territory of capital, while at the same time cannibalizing its own postulates by converting new models of inclusion into new models of the grotesque on a scale that measures its role in the representation of global capital.

C.) The Hybrid Eye of the Social

When the German artist Oliver Ressler made the documentary video *This is What Democracy Looks Like*, which examined the police violence used against anti-globalization demonstrators in Salzburg, he did not merely make a statement about the way capitalist-determined sovereignty uses violent physical oppression against elements of diversity (leftist activists in Salzburg, Seattle,

Genoa, etc.) – those who don't want to be included – but he also showed clearly the use of barbed wire as a border within cities of the capitalistic First World in a situation of constant crisis, a situation that connects Salzburg and Genoa with Gaza and Fallujah.

As Marina Gržinić observes, “To structure the internal functional and outer aesthetic marks of the post-industrial world and the logic of its representation means to simultaneously structure and to make operational the modalities and parameters of new technologies and the position and ethics of science in our society.”¹⁰ In her view, Ressler's work offers an excellent example of an author positioning himself outside the notion of the “objective eye” that distinguishes the kind of constant capitalistic mimetic reproduction that reduces all choices to a single choice, namely, the choice of the capitalist ruling class, which imposes the logic of “strict” objectivity. As Balibar properly observes, “differential inclusion” in the process of globalization transfers the notion of the “outer” enemy to that of the “inner” enemy – an alien outsider that insinuates itself within us. Balibar goes on to note that centralized knowledge, while marking the economy of global violence, also glorifies imperialistic violence outside its borders so as to allow to itself to monopolize the legitimate violence “inside.”¹¹ The “objective eye,” then, is the constitutive media eye that redefines and monopolizes the definition under which a certain public sphere is asked, or compelled, to convert, repress, or destroy any fugitive (usually far-left, communist) subjective discourse.

This mechanism makes the public sphere

– already overloaded with irrelevant information (from the entertainment industry, fashion shows, reality shows, sitcoms, meaningless reactions of “experts” to so-called political events, garbage from the so-called life of celebrities, nonsense from sports, and the like) – not only indifferent toward relevant political questions (posed by those who present an anti-capitalist context) but also satisfied that democracy is functioning as an open system that allows any option to exist, if only as a model of response to an already-known question or a question that has already been answered.

The reterritorialization of bodies outside the Empire is not a process whose prime aim would be expansion into new territories, but the reconfirmation and redefinition of new virtual territories of reterritorialization within its own biopolitical body, within its own apolitical context, within the frame of possibilities for the further monopolization of the definition of, to put it simply, what is good and what is bad. The reterritorialization here inaugurates inclusion as a paradigm that deterritorializes social flux into a completely simulated world, into a spectrum of hybrid entities where wishes, expectations, and facts exist only in the form of mere social fragments of the machine of power negotiation. Here, power must be understood in the sense of the power not to act, but not to act means to remain an apolitical object of power to something else.

As Jean-Luc Nancy has observed, communication is not a “relationship.” In his view, the metaphor of the “social relationship” unsuitably imposes a kind of hypothetical reality (the reality of a relationship) on “subjects” (in fact, objects), to

which one tries to attach a suspicious “intersubjective” nature that would serve the function of connecting these objects. Or, as Nancy goes on to say, communication is not a fact that is imposed on human reality, but a fact that constitutes it.¹²

Nancy's analysis is very important here not just because of its reduction of the notion of relationship to communication but also because of its correlation of community, individuality, and singularity. Singularity, as Nancy uses the term, marks the property of something – some name, some body, some face – as fragment(s); singularities, not individualities, impose themselves as the conductors of communication and of community itself. But for Nancy, generally, community is the paradoxical absence of “communion”; community is, in fact, a matrix of fragmented identities in which each singularity merely points to another singularity. For Nancy, the concept that counters relationship is exposition, an exposition whose formula is the appearance of “IT” in between and as itself: You AND I (with the emphasis on “AND”) is a formula that has the value not of co-appearance but of the exposition (the standing-out) of that between-ness. For Nancy, singular beings are given in such communication.¹³

Therefore, in Nancy's view, communication is itself a constitutive fact of exposition TO that-which-is-outside and which defines singularity.¹⁴ It serves, then, as a deterritorialization matrix for delegating power to those who will reterritorialize, converting themselves into new territories for the expansion of capital. And “communication” will not merely re-direct, but also

auto-direct, the measurement of involvement of its own subjects by the level of inclusion of others into it.

D.) The Somatic Horizon of the Virtual

It is most important to analyze not only the way power has to be “negotiated,” but also how it is generated within a reality-simulation matrix. Simulation as the basic characteristic of digital media relies on the digital synthesis of virtual space on the technical level, so as not only to process data from visual realities in order to construct a virtual environment, but also to feed data back into visual reality, “demanding” a spectrum of answers. As Lev Manovich has stressed, “Rather than being a neutral medium of presenting information, the [computer] screen is aggressive. It functions to filter, to screen out, to take over, rendering non-existent whatever is outside its frame.”¹⁵

Let us look at couple of key concepts that constitute virtual media. As Mark Poster sees it, virtual reality suggests that reality can be multiple and can take many forms: “Virtual reality is a computer-generated ‘place’ which is ‘viewed’ by the participant through ‘goggles’ but which responds to stimuli from the participant or participants.” In Poster’s analysis, culture is becoming simulation in the sense that media usually alter the identity of the source and reference, while “reality” becomes multiplied. Or as Poster goes on to say: “If modernity or the mode of production signifies patterned practices that elicit identities as autonomous and (instrumentally) rational, postmodernist or the mode of information indicates communication practices that constitute sub-

jects as unstable, multiple, and diffuse.”¹⁶

When Scott Lash writes about technological forms of life, he describes them as interfaces between man and machine – bonds between organic and technological systems – rather than cyborgs, extensions of man into the machine. Elaborating further, he notes that technological life forms are nonlinear, containing compressions, accelerations, and discontinuities, resulting in the collective conjunction of them all as generic, virtual, “lifted-out” spaces that can exist anywhere. Such spaces may be branded, marked by a logo, which means that “Ralph Lauren,” “Hugo Boss,” and “CNN” are the same everywhere. The Internet and network-based systems are also generic spaces lifted out of physical spaces, thus creating prototype spaces out of communicational traffic.¹⁷

The interface of social and technical fluctuation is again closely related to the primal interface of the biopolitical society of surveillance. Again, on the trace of Foucault’s thinking, Negri and Hardt remind us that a surveillance society must be understood as a society in which the mechanism of control has become democratic, immanent to the social field itself, and dispersed through the bodies and minds of citizens, interiorized.¹⁸ Furthermore, as Arthur Kroker puts it: “Technology is both a space-faring means to the successful prosecution of artificial warfare and its sustaining ethical justification. The will to technology folds back on itself – a closed and self-validating universe of thinking, willing, judging, and destining – that brooks no earthly opposition because it is a will, and nothing else. As Nietzsche reflected in

advance: “it is a will to nothingness.”¹⁹

A parallel to Nietzsche deciphers Nothing as indifference or as an active counterpoint, an inclusion that makes the torture of Iraqis into an “event” that can be entirely negotiated by media and that through media is converted not only into a story but into a perverse virtual stimulus – a stimulus whose formal-legal termination (judicial processes) in the so-called public sphere constantly auto-processes by measuring its own degree of democracy (of singular inclusiveness) against the degree of inclusion of others. This sterile, sadistic cultural practice of Western public opinion is the pure reflection of the aforementioned auto-personalization of singular entities.

Now, to return to Eagleton’s conceptualization of culture, this kind of negotiation network, by sucking in the public sphere, turns particular culture (with a small “c”) back into Culture (capital “C”) as the negotiator of the meaning of the homeomorphic techno-social matrix, whose function reveals itself now not as some kind of universal subjectivity or particular culture, but as a primal function, which is the production of myriad functions, the functions of mapping, turning the universal into a totality of singularities. As the dictionary defines it, homeomorphism is “a function that is a one-to-one mapping between sets such that both the function and its inverse are continuous and that in topology exists for geometric figures which can be transformed one into the other by an elastic deformation.”²⁰

These elastic deformations are, on the one hand, social “events” – let’s call them the collision of singularities (scandals,

transitional societies, Eastern Europe, conflicts, human rights, and so on) in the social reality (in the reality of the aggregate of singularities) – while on the other hand, they are reinterpretations of that which is in artificial reality, but transformed one into another. Elastic deformations are, of course, Deleuze and Guattari’s eccentric lines of inclusion.

Scott Lash’s claim that technological forms of life represent “life at a distance” and Balibar’s understanding of meta-racism as “racism at a distance” not only function as the analytical results of the technological and social fields but unmask aspects of both fields as those of a homeomorphic system of (hyper-) capital, which in a particular place makes sure that singularities remain singularities so as to keep the depoliticized fragments of the cannibalistic machine just that – apolitical.

This place is, precisely, Nancy’s “AND,” a place not only where reterritorialization creates new territories for capital but also where the apolitical becomes a social point of view in totality because it is the dominant model of inclusion into capital.

E.) The Terror of Indifference

Transitional society is entirely Nancy’s “AND.” When the European Union proclaims “Unity in Diversity,” it is, in fact, proclaiming the conditions under which certain kinds of diversity will become a politically ambivalent, culturally eccentric, and morally indifferent constellation that can be measured by the “objective eye” of the capitalistic conditions of production and negotiated/included throughout the

homeomorphic structure.

When Balibar speaks about “differential inclusion,” he is not extending inclusion in the static sense of choosing who can and who cannot be included, but instead is talking about the intensities of inclusion, which vary from police oppression, immigrant camps, the emergence of the extreme right in Eastern Europe, and fences in the West Bank, to torture in Abu Ghraib. By marking the degree of inclusion (expanding borders), these intensities erase every border – not by reducing, but by increasing the level of violence (outside-inside) and increasing the level of content within the “communication” network.

As Heidegger stated, “Everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately at hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering. Whatever is ordered about in this way has its own standing. We call it the standing-reserve [Bestand]. The word expresses here something more, and something more essential, than mere ‘stock.’ The name “standing-reserve” assumes the rank of an inclusive rubric.”²¹

This “inclusive rubric” is the context in which transition, as a condition, will not succeed (by itself) in whatever it believes its aspiration to be (whether this is joining the European Union or something else); instead, it will be succeeded. Heidegger goes on to say that such a challenge is not something a priori technological; it is the way in which the real reveals itself: “Therefore we must take that challenging that sets upon man to order the real as standing-reserve in accordance with the way in which it shows itself. That chal-

lenging gathers man into ordering. This gathering concentrates man upon ordering the real as standing-reserve.”²² If, according to Marx, the essence of capital is the endless, limitless valorization of value, then if we draw a parallel to Heidegger, the “standing-reserve” expresses and reveals itself as the availability for valorization. This standing-reserve, also as a function of Nancy’s “AND,” is exactly the gathering of all the social fluxes on the First World’s border with other worlds. Therefore, inclusion reveals itself as the totality of challenges to organize the real as standing-reserve.

In this context, any so-called sovereignty is part of the matrix of inclusion in the new supranational capitalistic form of biopolitical governance, which does not have a mere single strategy (of differential inclusion) but, indeed, has a monopoly on the production of concepts and differentiations of inclusion in numerous versions. This means that capital not only includes those who are not fully included, but by negotiating the meaning of the inclusion of others, it re-includes itself over and over again in multiple versions. When inclusion as a subtle strategy of the global neoliberal capital order uses measurement as a tactic, then the confirmation of certain entities’ progress is recognized only as the object of the biopolitical accumulation of social singularities in place of Nancy’s “AND.” More than ever, we are talking not about the biopolitical intersection of everything into one, but about the self-coordinated relation of aseptic differences (singularities) toward their own political and ethical decay as institutionalized in the processes of globalization.

Here, social realities get “lifted out” (aestheticized) into communicational space, which, by monopolizing the definition of meaning of other singularities, in fact depoliticizes (aestheticizes) any relevant context, sucking out any relevance besides that which is imposed by the ruling capitalist class and injecting context-free and amoral indifference into even the most disturbing events, such as fascism, repression, and class inequality. Even slow death by torture is converted into a measure of the implementation of democracy, while every life form is converted or confirmed into a singular machine, the sole function of which is to measure itself by the reaction it gets from itself.

PART TWO: METASTASIS OF DEMOCRACY AND THE MATRIX OF FRAGMENTATION OF THE EAST

In order to establish a proper reference it is necessary to note a concept of what Paolo Virno’s saw as “Exorcized plurality.” As Virno says, “in liberal thought, the uneasiness provoked by the ‘many’ is toned down by means of having recourse to the pairing of the terms public-private. The multitude, which is the polar opposite of the people, takes on the slightly ghostly and mortifying features of the so-called private. Incidentally, even the public-private dyad itself, before becoming something indisputable, had been forged through tears and blood during a thousand theoretical and practical disputes; it is maintained, therefore, by a complex set of consequences. What could be more normal for us than to speak of pub-

lic experience and of private experience?”²³

Virno says, “The contemporary multitude is composed neither of ‘citizens’ nor of ‘producers;’ it occupies a middle region between ‘individual and collective;’ for the multitude, then, the distinction between ‘public’ and ‘private’ is in no way validated.”²⁴ And continues: “‘Private’ signifies not only something personal, not only something which concerns the inner life of this person or that; private signifies, above all, deprived of: deprived of a voice, deprived of a public presence. In liberal thought, the multitude survives as a private dimension.”²⁵

Thus, mutatis mutandis, “end user” as a term which is used to describe a position which is at the end of the consumer food chain and who is called upon to give a final “product quality” evaluation will here serve as an illustration of the One, not as a promise, but a premise. Where again the Many has to be contemplated through like individualization of universal, general, mutual. In this way, as Virno writes, “...it is necessary, however, to recognize that the multitude does not clash with the One; rather, it redefines it. Even the many need a form of unity, of being a One.”²⁶

F.) Collateral Liberation

As it is presumably already known, Empire, as defined in Negri and Hardt, as a new form of global sovereignty, consists of a chain of national and supranational organizations connected by a unique logic of rules. The first imperative of the Empire is the generous welcoming face where everybody, despite his/her

race, gender, faith, sex or sexual affiliation, is welcome to a new universal connection. The Bosnian analogy to this moment, its “first contact” with the Empire, is basically the moment of its own constitution as a state (at the Dayton Peace Accords that ended the ethnic conflict in 1995).

As Negri and Hardt explain, “The first moment is the magnanimous, liberal face of Empire. All are welcome within its boundaries, regardless of race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, and so forth. In its inclusionary moment Empire is blind to differences; it is absolutely indifferent in its acceptance. It achieves universal inclusion by setting aside differences that are inflexible or unmanageable and thus might give rise to social conflict.”²⁷ These things in the Bosnian context rely heavily, in the same way, on the manner in which the international community (UN, EU, etc.) played a racist role of quasi-anthropologist (“Balkans have always been barbaric, ethnic groups have always been in conflict” type of observations) during the 90s wars, standing aside and waiting for things to settle, acting only when these endangered their comfort. Is not the mere verbal shift in name, from the Balkans (until 1996) to Southeast Europe, more than just a gift for “stopping being barbaric,” but also a cleansing of conscience for the international communities that took shape as “successful-politics-which-ended-the-war.”

The first imperative at first constitutes a huge local state bureaucratic apparatus which creates preconditions for free-market conditions in cohesion with huge bureaucratic apparatuses of international

institutions (UN, UNDP, Osce, EU, Eufor, IMF, World Bank, etc.) which work on the standardization and regulation of the economy, the public sector, the police and the military. Both together comprise what Negri and Hardt call an Imperial machine for the universal mixture of every ex-confrontational nationality, ethnic group, suppressed masses and the like.

This is an inclusive imperative that sucks in any authentic differential into itself and which retroactively confronts the ghost of communist “totalitarianism.” This imperative functions in a way which leaves all individual or collective political differences, whatever their moral credo is, aside, and creates a universal neutrality under the veil of objectivity toward past quarrels in order to supposedly democratize the society. This is applied to all subjects whether they have a far-right or neoliberal prefix. These different social democratic parties and discourses are, of course, supported equally by international capitalist institutions as equal parts in emerging democracy. Neoliberal discourses here are not “left” in the sense of the class struggle, but “left” as a designation, just as a particular subjectivity, a mere counterpunch to the right wing. Therefore, both are conductors of capitalistic conditions of production, market logic and democratic rule, and here any particular subjectivity floats as nothing other than some kind of sum of negative meaning to all that has been “before” (communism).

Besides the Bosnian situation, this kind of activity has been implied in other Eastern European transitional societies where “successful-politics-which-ended-the-

communist-totalitarianism” has now brought the free-market economy and a liberal democratic society full of new problems, but unlike in socialism, these problems now have the shape of class antagonism, a servile almost non-existent foreign policy, the lack of any articulation of the rules imposed by the Empire (free market) and so on.

As Negri and Hardt say, “...the Empire is a kind of smooth space across which subjectivities glide without substantial resistance or conflict.”²⁸ This leads to the second imperative.

G.) Fragmentation of the Social

This momentum, according to Negri and Hardt, is the momentum of imperial surveillance that includes its differentials, approved through achieved objectivity of universal connection. While in the social-political field differences must be set aside, on the cultural level they are emphasized. Cultural differences are emphasized because local culture, like those already recognized in the first momentum, now becomes institutionalized as a “competent one” (loyal one) in order to conduct nothing else but the second imperative, to serve as a distributor of the Empire’s economic, political and (multi) cultural power.

It is advised here to comprehend competence also as a characteristic of a post-Fordist society where the whole life of subjectivity has been integrated into the work process. Meaning that subjectivities’ “hidden knowledge,” the art of utilization of a certain skill, or skills developed apart from institutional education, is now mobi-

lized into production. As Petar Milat and Tomislav Medak refer to it, hidden worker knowledge and cooperation, which is supposedly in the implicit shape of an obstacle against efficient techno-economic development, now needs to be brought to a level of explicit, scientific governance (=rule) over the process of production.²⁹

Multicultural societies as a connection of dialects, regional cultures and so on, mark the overlapping consensus, which makes for one of Empire’s main inclusive characteristics. Inclusion and exclusion, as one of the dominant paradigms of logic of global capital includes and marks authentic cultural diversities as fragments of, first, constitutive socio-political tissue which-is-going-through-democratization, and second, as a pre-condition which should boost the incoming free-market economy where archaic forms of national presentation becomes a spectacle of glorification of, as Nietzsche would say, a reactionary, slave mentality.

Therefore, as Negri and Hardt wrote, “The linguistic, cultural, and ethnic differences within each work force were stabilizing because they could be used as a weapon to combat worker organization.”³⁰ To claim that capital uses ethnical division as a tool of surveillance and governance would be a quite simple claim, but the mechanism of mobilization of the social into mutual affirmation of culture as a sector for auto-confirmation of depoliticized society deprived of its viability (in the authentic sense and in the sense of multitude) is indeed an inauguration of a very delicate context where dispersed power of capital, in fact, flourishes.

In the context of, let's say multiculturalism, of which people in Bosnia are very proud, this turns out to be something also known as "National key." This means that if somebody is looking for a job in a predominantly Bosnian society, they will have more advantage if they're not of Bosnian nationality/origin. This is because of the Western and local notion of applied multiculturalism, where, despite all the capabilities for a given job one might have, they will be judged through a spectrum of cultural and religious backgrounds. This kind of judgment IS official politics of internationally sponsored (EU, UN, etc.) and/or local state institutions, which is on the other hand, also widely accepted by the domestic population. Or, when, on a banal daily political level, one of the leading Bosnian (Muslim) "political" parties often accused by local so-called left parties for being too religious and conservative takes a front seat in indulging current U.S. policy by offering more and more soldiers for the Iraq and Afghanistan fronts inhabited by predominantly Muslim populations, we see a paradox, where the problem lies not in the fact that the mentioned party is religious and conservative, but in the fact that it is not.

Differential momentum of imperial surveillance, according to Negri and Hardt, must be followed by a hierarchy of created (state) structures for a general economy of control as their chain of command.

Here we have the example of the non-governmental organization (NGO) sector. This sector in the majority of cases exists as a compensational sector whose function is to make relative increasing class division and inequality, economic instabil-

ity and poverty by emphasizing and supporting the neoliberal pole of imperial governmental structure, and to serve as an educational tool for social structures which should occupy new, "non-totalitarian" institutions.

Numerous seminars, like "training for trainers" (in the administrative field), "exercising democracy" (in the academic field) and "public relations training" (in the media field), comprise all the formerly confrontational nationalities in the ex-Yugoslavian case.. Here, around the same table, fascists, social-democrats and frustrated young people exercise their ability to become ideological subjects, competent only in the sense to "democratically" convert their social surroundings, to create more objective (more effective) consumers by putting all "political differences" aside. Objectivity here has to be understood as a result of, paraphrasing Foucault, a system of relations of governance that is not above, but is in the tissue of the multitude itself, unseen and attached to other functions of multitude [not to be mixed with Negri/Hardt's notion of multitude]. Paraphrasing Foucault, "Disciplines have to bring into play the power relations, not above but inside the very texture of the multiplicity, as discreetly as possible, as well articulated on the other functions of these multiplicities and also in the least expensive way possible: to this corresponds anonymous instruments of power, coextensive with the multiplicity that they regiment, such as hierarchical surveillance, continuous registration, perpetual assessment and classification."³¹ Hence, ethnical differentiation (ethnic-based exclusion, racism, xenophobia, fascism) also accepted by the Empire in

the first imperative, in the second imperative reveals itself as nothing more than a product of the machine of differentiation functioning through ever growing development of information and communication technologies revealing again its contributors not as subjects in communication, but as Foucault would say, as objects of information.

The flexibility of the population which so easily accepts itself as the object of information is a reflection, as the inability to read, as Marina Gržinić noted, "fiction through reality," as well as a confirmation of the inclusion of a technologically undeveloped society into an "informational society" imposed by capital where being a subject in "communication" means nothing else but being an object of information.

The biopolitical nature of the population (where life is merchandise and the population is apolitical) therefore allows, on the one hand, "parliamentary" life, which exercises phantom sovereignty – and on the other hand, it allows other functions of governance to extract the political out of cultural life by being an active subject in communicating its own resentment as a contribution to the mechanism of governance over the biopolitical.

H.) Totality of Particularities

The third successive imperative is, as Negri and Hardt say: "Multitude of melting variables." Every political, economic or cultural differentiation, which is now included into the Empire, has to continue to function; but deprived of its primal function, it is now "functioning," or gliding,

not as some kind of homo politicus, but as a proclamation of its own social singularity. "Melting variables" is, in fact, the social life dynamics of any subjectivity that accepts its apolitical role, that usually works as meaningless utilization of civil rights, though not to question the system but to question its inconsistencies that make a barrier to any enjoyment of such a subjectivity.

Knowing that capital is a system of contingent, constantly expanding internal borders/lines, the only function of these subjectivities and cultural differentials is to move along these lines in eccentric manner. Eccentricity should be understood as social fluctuation whose dynamics, whether they take form in banal social interaction or in small-scale outbursts of violence, serve as a kind of linkage, a necrophilic corrective for the public sphere to justify the need for stronger imposition of the market fundamentalist order of global capital which created the crisis in the first place.

The "end user" as an object of resentment is a signifier of (linguistic) competence to rationalize every social antagonism created by capitalism, work competence to get integrated into the market and moral and spiritual competence to see the neoliberal capitalist regime as the only one possible. We don't see a certain individuality as being something separated from capitalism's truth; this is the individuality that would utilize its most intimate feelings and all of its ethical inclinations only to rationalize the regime that allows that same individual to be both unique and an ideological subject. Therefore, as Baudrillard would say, we are being controlled by a principle of sim-

ulation instead of the principle of reality. Purposes are gone and we are born by modeling.³² Further, according to Baudrillard, social relation is not of original and imitation, nor analogy, but of being the same, equivalent, where we see a process of “inducting” every original (source) being into a stream of equivalent beings, a production series.

Second order simulacrum is a stage of seriality and production according to market value designation. This stage is in correlation to the second imperial imperative, differential momentum, or in Marx's terms, context, which valorizes value in a totality of included particularities, not collectives.

Both Benjamin and later McLuhan, unlike Marx (when contemplating false expenses of capital) saw this technique not as “production power” but as a medium, as the form and principle of a completely new generation of meaning.³³ This medium corresponds to the meaning of a certain “competence,” which itself is a result of the acceptance of free-market ideology, given to a subject from the relation of power (as recognition of a will-to-be-included to hyper-capital). Hence, by reducing the political in culture, we get reduction of the social in favor of re-production of the social as both an institutionalized and non-institutionalized hijacking of the confrontational sense of culture, as a mere fluctuation within the matrix of power within capital.

The “end user” as a paradigm of the highest degree of a consumer, however, is exactly not the reflection of a delayed, but of a simulated social, or by making an analogy to Negri/Hardt, by upgrading the

third imperative to a level where no imperative is any longer needed, where Baudrillard's third stage simulacrum exists. Cybernetic surveillance, birth by modeling, differential modulation and feedback become new social dynamics.

As Marina Gržinić says, going back to radical politics means to insist on universal politics and not to allow anyone to guide and force us into the trap of a political strategy of endless reproduction of identities and needs. Here we see that the relation of a subject towards its own body, history, geography, space and so forth, in front of the computer screen transforms into a paradoxical communication, which is not direct but is a communication with a prosthesis behind the computer screen, communication which is directed by the gaze of a third eye, the gaze of the computer itself.³⁴

Therefore, the recently mentioned contribution to communication, if a look is taken at popular social networks (Facebook, Twitter), is not just a contribution to an endless stream of information, but a way of exposition of individual singularity, ideological subjectivities' way of exercising freedom. That freedom to get exposed in a mostly banal interchange of even more banal personal experiences gets declared as one of the important inherencies of freedom.

“End user” as de-personalized persona who, by exposing itself to the gaze of a third eye (the eye of the neoliberal ideological state apparatus, etc.), exposes itself as a subject of resentment whose origin is not in the same subjectivity as seen in capital, but in capital's inconsistency to provide more freedom for that

subjectivity to exercise utilization of meaningless need. This makes subjectivity a biological, axiomatic property of capital as a machine for production of nothing, as its spiritual forte.

I.) The Ultimate Imperative

Capital as machine that produces nothing should be comprehended as an epistemic dimension of a system that mobilizes every property of life, including life itself, into its production relations. What is being produced is not only the society as a category, but its ethical inclinations, deepest wishes and most intimate thoughts as reflections, particular rationalizations of the market being prioritized in spite of politics, and rationalization of meaningless products, bizarre life styles, grotesque vices and the like.

“End user” is therefore a kind of shape of the craving for encryption into a depoliticized cultural field, the one that exchanges the collective's political struggle for a particular struggle for more dimension in the utilization of myriad vices, for market fundamentalist allowance for subjectivity to fulfill its bizarre needs. When we see “content” in capital as a specific shape of a form, then we get the actual life of an “end user” as the ultimate consumer, not only as being a content-less carrier of a form of commodity, but we get life itself as a measure on the market that is measured by the market.

This measure, divinized into freedom, forces this kind of life to invest itself constantly into nothing else but into a shape of its form, with a constantly known feed-

back (more rationalizations of something meaningless), to resume the state of being reproduced. “Perhaps our word ‘man’ (manas) expresses something of this first sensation of self-confidence: man designated himself as the being who measures values, who values and measures, as the ‘calculating animal as such,’” as Nietzsche would say.³⁵

Dynamics of this nothing may be even seen as a constant struggle of a regime to construct some more meaningful ideology for the regime than the one that is based on constant rationalization of a freedom that is freedom only to integrate into the market.

Besides the general Eastern European transitional social perception of capitalism as an absence of communism, the stronger than ever ongoing class division inaugurates concepts that are in correlation with the newly formed neoliberal ruling class. “End user” serves as a link between the tertiary production sector and the reduction of political positioning of culture that is not supposed to be confrontational, but conformational to capitalistic exploitation of bodies, expectations and actions that are supposed to impose nothing else but the very neoliberal hegemony that conducts the whole process of assimilation into global capital. In banal terms, neoliberal hegemony (in Bosnia's case, these are all of the cultural institutions, museums, centers of contemporary arts, media centers, national art galleries, etc.) in transitional society IS a framework not of cultural confrontation, but of absorption. Cultural production in transition is a constantly moving obscurity that constitutively avoids political context as its modus operandi. Or, saying it another

way, cultural “production” is a generator of spectacle as a non-place of politics. Likewise, the dynamics of nothing is complementary to Baudrillard’s third successive phase of the image, where: “Sign masks the absence of a basic reality.”

The sign represents the abstract property, the faith in the neoliberal regime as the only one possible. So, we come to the encryption key of making the inconsistencies in democracy relative. Within the analogy to Negri/Hardt, it comes as a most connectable link for all imperatives; it is democracy as market protégé and/or ultimate “ideological” background for non-ideological practice. As Nietzsche noted, paraphrasing, democratic idiosyncrasy towards anything which it rules and wants to rule, contemporary misanthropy, has, bit by bit, to such a degree devoured the field of the spirit and covered itself with the most spiritual forms, that today it, step by step, already infiltrates, and can infiltrate into the most strict, and at first glance, the most objective sciences; and really, as it seems to me, it has already gained rule over all of physiology and biology, to their harm of course, since it very ably hijacked their basic notion – the notion of true activity.

Political “potential” of an “end user” is therefore a mere intention for figuration around nothing (the meaningless need as ideological property), as reduction of political positioning against capitalism in its totality. While putting together “left” and right political options as pure local antagonisms and emphasizing cultural diversities for (re)production of more antagonisms, democracy (as free market) functions as an only option, which you cannot not choose.

This is why the “end user” in a transitional society will fight for corporate copyright (“all rights reserved”), implementation of laws in a country where the average payment is much less than one of the cheaper software packages. From the same reasoning, the “end user” will not politically or individually support anything that is subversive to capital in transition, because capital (re)presents the operational face of a competent democracy; it is perceived as a political counterpoint to ideological communism. At the same time, democrats will vote for the right-wing political option, if the left-wing option starts to look “sloppy” in achieving democracy as political rationalization of free-market dominance.

Democracy as institutionalized reaction (in Nietzsche’s terms) to anomalies within the sick, hollow, depoliticized social body of transition is nothing else but a framework for the meaningless streaming of descriptions of sickness. Therefore, it has to be clear that standard transitional “problems” (like corruption and the like) are not anomalies within democracy, but the anomaly turns out to be such a democracy itself.

Hence, “end user” is just an illustration of acceptance of the endless reproduction of identities and needs (as Marina Gržinić has noted). On the individual level, subjectivity consists of the avoidance of any de-commodification of its lifestyle by rationalizing the constellations of particular meaningless needs fostered by the capitalist free market, by calling it freedom. On the macro level, however, democracy is seen by such subjectivity not as a tool for the potential for radical

political questioning and finally the overthrow of capitalism, but is seen as a tool for the political protection of such a freedom, such matrix of fragmentation, particularization of the social tissue is a matrix of production of such subjectivities and/or a matrix of the banishment of politics as articulations of the social space, where the same matrix is similar in the East and the West. Or, to say it in a more fancy manner, the worst thing that could happen to both worlds is that they succeed in what they are currently doing.

PART THREE: ALIEN IN TRANSITION AS A REFLECTION OF CAPITALIST TOTALITARIANISM

Some time ago, a few members of the Austrian transvestite band Menstruation Monsters were attacked in front of a Zagreb nightclub after holding a concert there. The attackers cursed them and shouted that they did not “need any fags/gays in their town,” along with other offensive statements related to the sexual identity of the band members. Although at first glance this situation might look like a “classical” homophobic attack, in fact, it reflects a much deeper problem that spreads far beyond the boundaries of sexually based violence. This incident reflects not only a social pattern in which post-socialist society, through xenophobia/homophobia, makes relative the effects of the newly imposed class order brought on by the transition to capitalism, but primarily reflects the very diabolical nature of perceptions of difference in neoliberal capitalism, where difference is allowed to exist as such only when it is, paradoxical-

ly, not a difference at all. In a situation where the once-existing Second World has vanished into a void somewhere amid the dominant capitalist First World, the West, and the Third World, a resource of rich battlefield territories, it is exactly the concept of difference that has become subversive for the very core of the Western neoliberal global capitalist system, which ultimately sees itself as a haven for differences. Hence, this void created between the worlds is not a mere gap, not a potentiality to be solved by economic means, as we are informed by mainstream media, but a potentiality that could unmask the very nature of democracy that is conditioned and framed by liberal capitalism and its demonic free market.

J.) The Void

Let’s take a brief look into a proper context in which the figure of an alien could be explained. When we look at the void, we are in fact watching a process, which is trying to cover the void, to monopolize it, to transcend it. Transcending this void in Eastern and Southeastern Europe is known as a process of transition, that is, a transition exclusively directed towards neoliberal capitalism, a process that asks for political and military integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions and, above all, the imposition of the free market as a default step for the transition to be finalized. However, as globalization as a process of a void transcendence on a global level is revealed primarily as a globalization of capital – of freedom of movement for capital, not for people – it easily turns itself upside down into a re-articulation of the notion of freedom with-

in democracy itself; it is important to say that the void stages itself as a traumatic point through which the articulation of Other (not First) world countries is already planned in the first place. Hence, this is the manner in which neoliberal capitalism makes us pay for its war for the imposition of post-ideological contexts into both worlds (First and not First); the consequence of this process is the production of a paradigmatic figure, which simultaneously lives in both worlds, the figure of a stranger, immigrant or alien. This figure is produced because of capital spreading to new physical territories; an immigrant, after multinational corporations take over her/his local economical environment, has to act, and starts to break out and ignite political conflict, precisely the opposite of what liberal capitalism desires. This figure creates a context in which forms of life themselves start to create political conflict.

To undertake a deeper look into this figure, we have to refer to Giorgio Agamben's forms of life. Bare life is life in itself, a pure medium of life that resembles today's immigrant or alien, also known in Greek as Zoe. Bare life is not an a priori racial category, although it is burdened with racist dogma. As an example, bare life is the life of an African or Asian immigrant, a Mexican worker in Arizona, all those killed in Iraq by the occupation forces, homosexuals in Poland, Frenchmen of African descent in France, Serbians or Bosnians in Croatia or both, Croats and Roma peoples in Slovenia or Slovenians, Croats, Bosnians and Albanians in Serbia, etc. However, it is also a white Western European during an anti-globalization riot, that is, anybody not fitting into a widely accepted form of sov-

ereignty. Bare life is to be understood under the name of Homo Sacer, a figure in the position of, as Agamben says, "the unpunishability of his killing and the ban on his sacrifice."³⁶

On the other hand, we have life with style, also known in Greek as Bios, that is life usually from the First World of capital; I might add, life produced by the sovereignty of capital; this is not a life with humanist or political backgrounds. Bios, life with style, is exactly that, life with a style, an a-racial and non-political category included in the process of production, not only in the meaning of a commodity, but as a result of the production of sovereignty of capital itself whether it rapes in Iraq, accepts parliamentary elections as ultimate democratic practice, or just ignorantly lives its life creating its own commodity. The alien occurs exactly between these two forms of life – bare life and life with style or modal life. As bare life can become the object of violence without sanction, it becomes a certain model of violence, which does not contribute to the sovereignty that generates the violence. Modal life (bios), on the other hand, is also an object of violence, but violence that does contribute to the sovereignty from which it emerged. A banal example is, ten dead immigrants do not mean anything, but 10 dead soldiers do. The alien, however, is on the crossroads, and he or she can choose only the modality of violence that will be brought upon him/her. To clarify this, let's take a look in context. In times when the idiotic "end of ideology" is heralded by mainstream media, and when all of society has become a factory (Antonio Negri), only a momentum of interaction between forms of life can be seen as relevant and

socially dynamic.

It is the friction, a constant interaction – but never a collision – among these paradigmatic forms of life along the sides of the void that represents today's social dynamics. This friction is a mere compensation for the social order which does not want to recognize that its decay is due to the lack of ethics of liberal capitalism, for in the final analysis it is the very neoliberal capitalist ethics that prevents social issues from becoming a political factor – while organizing it as a pathetic collective of subjectivities caught in a struggle for individual positioning within the mentioned friction. These same subjectivities, of course, desperately protect their positions by defending these same ethics from their exposition as ideology. Their trauma is that the same could be exposed as – trauma. As Lacan used to say, trauma does not cheat, but the problem is that trauma lacks. This trauma of the exposition of trauma, paraphrasing Agamben, "The sacredness of life, which is invoked today as an absolutely fundamental right in opposition to sovereign power, in fact originally expresses precisely both life's subjection to a power over death and life's irreparable exposure in the relation of abandonment."³⁷

It is exactly the relationship of stigmatization over bare life and modal life that is aggressively imposed today by neoliberal capitalist sovereign monopoly over the definition of life itself as the only political process or conflict. This process is a process that consists of paradigms, or practices, if you want, of exclusion and inclusion. Meaning, life with style is not by default included into the production matrix of capital, nor is bare life by default

excluded, but the positioning of both depends on acceptance of the same relationship to stigmatization by an object of exploitation itself. This means that neither bare life nor modal life, life with style, position themselves as political subjects, but as objects of stigmatization.

As an example, if we go back to the story from the beginning of this chapter, we see that the southeast European subject (in Croatia) as an object of capitalist exploitation, or as a subjectivity that wants to become the same object, reacts toward the foreign body of a transvestite. Transvestite is not a bare life, although it is not completely life with style either. Meaning, its political potential exists between these two biosocial extremes. This figure in the transitional state of Croatia is recognized by a homophobe as a threat not because it, as transvestite, does not represent some political option, but because it indirectly does. As Croatia is a country that desperately wants to represent itself as a country with Western values, it is at the same time a country whose dominant sentiment is burdened with very strong religious dogma, archaic social values and strong xenophobic sentiment, where being a Westerner, within such an arrangement, turns out to be quite painful. The gesture of the attackers is therefore an illustration of resentment as an ambivalent feeling where an object of adoration is simultaneously adored and hated; in the case of West, it is adored, but simultaneously hated as well, because of the archaic sentiments preventing the embrace of the heritage of the West in its totality. To be fully clear, the perception of the West by a dominant sentiment in the transitional state is also a perception of a West that supports the

homophobic, in general, discriminatory phantasm of the West. This attack occurs not only as a compensation for the trauma one experiences in a country that “freed” itself from under one master – state socialism – only to find itself in the jaws of another, but something much more dangerous – capitalism (in which the figure of the attacker fails to become bios), but also as a result of the refusal to acknowledge the meaninglessness of this “passage a l’act.”

On the one hand, the attackers’ subjectivity, as a proper illustration of the dominant social pattern in Croatia, still relies heavily on conservative religious dogma that desperately wants to perceive itself as a “nation of Western culture,” but still cannot accept what it sees too much of in the West, because Western decadence would presumably destroy the country’s tradition. On the other hand, the perceived West as the First World that will impose segregation and market-based discrimination is, however, warmly welcomed. As Nietzsche would say, this subjectivity does not act, it reacts as an object of resentment towards its phantasm of the First World, attacking the very figure which is in the West neither excluded bare life nor the fully integrated bios, but it is the relation subsumed under the object of stigmatization, that is itself an alien in the West. It reacts precisely the way the West would, but usually does not have to, as the West already has a surplus of the form of bare life that is the pathetic position of Eastern Europe’s societies that crave to become bios, to become fully integrated, as a matrix of exploitation by Western liberal capitalism. The role of the homophobic attacker from Zagreb is therefore similar to the role of

the Pakistani secret service, which Americans let “interrogate” (read: torture) captured Iraqi insurgents.

Another example of being the locus of fundamental contradictions (from which transitional societies suffer from) may be found in some reactions by Croat citizens to Steven Spielberg’s film *Schindler’s List*. When it was aired on Croatian national TV for the first time a couple of years ago, a number of citizens started to call the TV station complaining about the subtitles, which were in Serbian and not in the Croatian language. Although there are only minor differences between the two languages, it is bizarre that someone wants to see a movie about racial and ethnic extermination while simultaneously complaining about a couple of different words coming from the language of another ethnic group. It is the very present sentiment, which accepts a cultural product just because it comes from the First World, and at the same time, aggressively reacts to what is a *denkverbot* (forbidden thinking) for the First World.

Therefore, the attackers’ gesture is, *mutatis mutandis*, the very role of post-socialist Eastern European society, but is also the role of the First World itself, in the process of rationalization of a new master – signifier, the ethics of liberal capitalism. As Marina Gržinić noted, the role of this subject is dual; it is an ontological totality in the absolute narrowing of subjectivity and a break-up of the subject with reality.³⁸ Here we come across the analogy, also presented by Gržinić, in which, like in a Hollywood movie, a protagonist after an action scene that has made a mess on the worktable, instead of

precisely cleaning the table, erases and destroys everything in an act popularly known as “cleansing the terrain.”³⁹

Eastern European bare life, craving to become bios, to become the object of capitalist exploitation, therefore positions itself towards the very void that separates the two worlds and towards the very life that represents this same void, the life of an alien. In this manner, these not fully included subjectivities of Eastern Europeans relate to the non-proclaimed liberal capitalist ideology where, precisely because the same is not proclaimed as such, it reacts, “cleanses the terrain” against those who are perceived by the same ideology as a non-productive part of the First World matrix, as in this case, a transvestite. Bare life in transition to bios “cleanses the terrain” for its master so the master does not have to do it. In this process, southeast European bare life positions itself voluntary as Europe’s surplus after which it targets not only its presumed cause of being bare life, but also attacks the presumed lack of the First World it craves.

Speaking of a void, we now see that the relationship of the dominant First World ethics towards an alien – which is pathetically mimicked by southeast European satellite states – is in fact a First World relationship towards the void where it does not overcome the emptiness of a void, but makes it more bearable. The position of southeast European subjectivity towards the alien, as a figure of the void, does indeed resemble a role created by Tom Waits (acting as “Renfield”) in Coppola’s movie *Dracula* from 1992. Tom Waits as Renfield, the hapless slave of Dracula, who miserably sits in a dungeon

where he eats insects and bugs, eats life and everything in order to please his master, who has promised to make him immortal, a vampire. Interestingly enough, it should be pointed out that today’s southeast European nations refer to socialism as “the dungeon of nations,” the prison of nations. Southeast European subjectivity “eats” the dignity of a life (as an insect) and represents the void as a consequence of globalization of capital, so that its new master, capitalism – the vampire – accepts it as an equal, but in nothing else other than in devouring the life of those that do not fit into the liberal capitalist definition of life. This is an example of the southeast European perception of a stranger where the stranger is produced because of an inability to accept new class antagonism and market-based segregation. The sadistic relationship towards “aliens” (others) functions as a perverted dislocation of trauma from class to the register of cultural differences. Here is the point where in the Eastern European transition unmasks itself as only a transition toward the cannibalistic capitalist machine, and not toward any romanticized version of democracy.

K.) Democracy as Ideology

Democracy that is brought up in such a context by the same liberal capitalism is not its mask, but a diabolical shadow, a killer clown, that ultimately makes relative the effects of capital by precisely imposing the relationship of stigmatization as the relationship in which human rights violations, in order to protect democracy, becomes a norm. It does not matter if we are talking about communists, transves-

tites, gays or, as it always turns out, Jews. (As Croatian's first president Franjo Tudjman, in the process of establishing democracy in Croatia, once "proudly" stated, he is happy his wife is not a Serb or a Jew.) As Alain Badiou claims, democracy is a norm encrypted into the relationship of subjects towards the liberal state. In the context of Croatia, democracy is a norm encrypted into the freedom of a subject allowed to act against a presumed enemy of an object of its discriminatory phantasm. The object of this phantasm is, of course, freedom, but no other freedom than the one of sadistically acting against those who do not share the same phantasm. In the same way, bare life becomes life with style when it attacks the object that separates the bare from bios. However, the predicament of democracy as a system of equality and individual responsibility implies the inclusion of an alien into it, partially, though what has to be left out is the recognition of included difference as a difference. Even if the neoliberal regime officially insists that the "other" should stay different, it segregates it immediately if it sees it as authentically different, and encourages the difference only if it is already part of the segregated difference. This is excellently presented through the ideological bulletin board: the movie industry.

As Marina Gržinić noted regarding Ridley's Scott movie *Alien*, the human-beast relationship is allowed only when Ripley (Sigourney Weaver) is revealed as being half-human, a hybrid, not a human being.⁴⁰ Are we not witness to this kind of ideological background in today's democracies, which are only framed by the utilitarian context and objectified functioning

of the law? French government recently proposed that immigrant families with visa applications for entering France undergo DNA testing to prove that the application is genuine. Although the tests will not be compulsory, it is highly likely that immigrants who reject the DNA testing will be rejected as well.⁴¹

What can we learn from this practice besides that it is highly hypocritical? By indirectly forcing an alien (the figure that exposes the void) to undergo DNA tests, the regime firstly creates a biologically determined segregation and, secondly, it reminds the native alien of his Third World roots, by letting it know that it supports its "integration" in this relationship of stigmatization, but with the presupposition that the alien accepts fully this relation as well. This is not about the "clash of civilization," the "clash" functions only as a device for rationalizing the effects of globalization. This DNA example is very much in line with Etienne Balibar's notion of meta-racism, where meta-racism is acceptance of the "other," but with the presupposition that she or he stays far enough away so as not to endanger the commodity of a bios (of a white man, if you want). When we mention France, the problem with the French suburb riots is therefore the problem of an alien par excellence, because fundamentally, the clash was not generated by religious dogma, but was the result of market-based segregation of a certain population that failed to become included into the capitalist relationship of stigmatization. The fact that this population is excluded from French society made them a political factor, and this is what the regime finds disturbing. Neoliberal capitalist ideology therefore transcends the form of

old racist categorization with the recognition of bare life as difference only when it tries to become bios, if not, then it treats it as an alien toward which it will act in a totalitarian manner. As Alain Badiou said, "I will accept your difference only if you become me." Bare life therefore CAN become different, but an alien cannot.

As argued by Agamben, "The political sphere of sovereignty was thus constituted through a double exclusion, as an excrescence of the profane in the religious and of the religious in the profane, which takes the form of a zone of indistinction between sacrifice and homicide."⁴²

This claim does not primarily refer to institutionalized religion as such, but to a predicament of neoliberal culture where God is the commodity. In addition, Agamben adds that *Homo Sacer* is an object of intense violence that transcends the sphere of law and the sphere of sacrifice. As such, as an object of intense violence, *Homo Sacer* still does not reveal itself as an alien, as a stranger; it only does so when it refuses to accept the relationship of stigmatization, whatever religion it belongs to. If we look at the latest number of dead in Iraq, it is not an exaggeration to say that the whole nation could be named as *Homo Sacer*, though they are not aliens. They are not sacrificed to democracy in whose name they were killed, but on the contrary, those who killed them have been sacrificed to democracy in order that bare life being killed accepts this same democracy. In this context, we can state that the emancipation of African Americans started the moment they were co-opted for the American Civil War. To summarize, bare

life that can be killed but cannot be sacrificed is not precisely an alien. Bare life is not by default excluded from society in the form of racial/sexual/economic or cultural segregation and neither is bios by default, included. Even worse, bare life is gradually being included while bios remains included in the capitalist matrix, with both subjected to stigmatization and subjected to becoming an alien if they start to make their agenda political, i.e., if they claim political power, which is not within the ruling discourse of the liberal capitalist ideology. Hence, the alien in transition to bios OR to bare life – desiring to become bios, ceases to be an alien. The alien who wants to be included loses its political agenda and gets its inclusion, but only as an apolitical commodity, which bios already takes as its primal feature. Emancipation unfortunately turns out to be in such a case nothing else but a demand for inclusion into the same ideology. Therefore, the process of emancipation in the context of culture, that is the neoliberal capitalist ideology, makes this process visible.

L.) Emancipation is Discrimination

Neoliberal capitalism as a totalitarian system starts to unmask itself when it starts to represent bare life as a value, as a commodity, and confirms its inclusion (an alien is a life form that cannot be presented as commodity). It does so in the field that is currently its most potent territory of capitalist colonization, or the field of culture. We could say that the "alien" is a life form un-presentable as a value or a commodity. If we take a look at what happened to the perception of major emancipation movements, we see that instead of

political agendas, only life as form of life, as a cultural object, not as a political subject, has been emancipated. We do not witness a re-articulation of Martin Luther King's politics as a tool for emancipation, but, as is the case in the Kevin Hill TV show, a figure of an African-American who is a successful lawyer, has a gay friend, hosts cool parties in his fancy apartment and fights for corporate justice. That is a banal example of how bare life by itself accepts being turned into bios, under the parole of a successful emancipation, not to mention the decay of the hip-hop culture that from a politically motivated agenda in the late 1980s has turned itself into a preposterous celebration of the consumer life style. The First World's demand from all those who want to be included in it is to abort every political agenda that was not born within the ruling capitalist neoliberal discourse. Instant emancipation as another name for inclusion of bare life, and prosecuted aliens, does not however include authentic cultural difference(s) that could result in politically articulated demands, but includes only such differences that serve to present democracy as a tolerant social system.

Therefore, an alien as a bare life that has not been included, must be recoded, converted into a differential that should serve as a position through which not only the sovereignty of a state will reaffirm itself, but through which the sovereignty of capital will reconfirm itself as an incessantly hungry matrix in search of new boundaries to be conquered. An example of such a process is the British toy company that produces toys of bacteria of Ebola, HIV and similar microbes (that, of course, represent the perception of Africans,

Arabs, Orientals, Jews and others in Europe) and serves as a perfect illustration that capitalist totalitarianism must first redesign the "other" to make it acceptable and not threatening. It literally produces a foreign body as a toy, an object of pleasure, an object of enjoyment that is in stark contradiction to those already included.

In the void space in between worlds, political conflict has been abolished in the name of culture, in the name of a territory in which sterile practices of pursuing life styles and their exposition to others as an ideology becomes socialized at such a level that it becomes its only politics. In the context of pop culture, we could just look at popular TV shows like "Sex and the City." This series that "exploits the nature of relations" in spaces between parties, sex and buying Manolo Blahnik's shoes, rapes the notion of individuality by praising individual action as a nihilist reaction to un-formal demand. In other words, it monopolizes the definition of individuality, integrates it into the norm and then celebrates the norm as norm destruction. By doing so, the character of Carrie Bradshaw is far more dangerous than Bush, Angela Merkel, Sarkozy and Blair all put together. What does it have to do with the notion of a stranger? Well, it is an illustration or representation of a demand liberal capitalism makes on bare life: for it to be coded into the matrix as subjectivity and then to delegate the definition of that subjectivity to the objective matrix of the hyper-capitalist immaterial factory, a factory for the production of nothing.

As Hegel claimed, "...the universal will goes into itself and is a single, individual will to which universal law and work stand

opposed. But this individual consciousness is no less directly conscious of itself as universal will; it is aware that its object is a law given by that will and a work accomplished by it; therefore, in passing over into action and in creating objectivity, it is doing nothing individual, but carrying out the laws and functions of the state."⁴³

Therefore, bare life, while still excluded from the capitalist production matrix, is a zero phase of life with style; bare life can become bios, can be included only by rejecting its political agenda. If it does not want to, or does not recognize the choice – which-is-not-a-choice-at-all – then it becomes an alien, foreign body that by exposing the nature of the void between the two worlds exposes the very ethics of both worlds. It is the friction among these two (bios or bare life), under which bare life should become bios, that allows capitalism to impose the monopoly over the definition of life. Therefore, emancipation, as we can see, has become a discriminatory practice when it operates through total submission of bare life to bios, where subjectivity will be nothing else but a reflection of perversion of the system to which it has invested its subjectivity. An alien is an alien because it refuses to do so. Gayatri Spivak's notorious claim that the exclusion of the "other" from Europe is very important as production of the European epistemic regimes is based on the subaltern that cannot speak, should be upgraded with the claim that the "other" can speak, but all it can say is "yes." This is the spiritus movens of the First World as well as the core of democracy itself. What should be done? Bare life should not become bios, but instead it should become an alien, a creature of

conflict, by organizing its own political agenda, by not letting the liberal capitalist establishment act in its place.

PART FOUR: THE VICE OF A DEMOCRATIC MAN

The view of an average subjectivity in the First (Western) World towards neoliberal capitalism, besides all the lamentations about "stupid Western consumerism," is not as affirmative as it might seem. The concept of "the evil that threatens capitalism," as it can be perceived in popular culture, is usually completely different than the image of the politically correct perception of evil – represented by terrorists, communists, etc. Hence, in post-9/11 TV shows (such as "West Wing") the enemies are not the terrorists, but elements within the power structure that obstruct the "heroes" from engaging with the enemy.

As Paolo Virno remarks, "The informality of communicative behavior, the competitive interaction typical of a meeting, the abrupt diversion that can enliven a television program (in general, everything which it would have been dysfunctional to rigidify and regulate beyond a certain threshold), has become now, in the post-Fordist era, a typical trait of the entire realm of social production."⁴⁴

The emancipated subjectivity in capitalism is therefore not programmed/enslaved, but de-programmed, de-formalized in a dysfunctional way – not to endorse the minimum of the democratic norm, but to criticize precisely that norm. When the Constitution says "everybody is

equal,” capitalism does not have to change the Constitution; it just has to make sure that nobody believes in the Constitution – a minimum of meaning. And what better way is there to conceal a lack of meaning but to “kill” it, and present the act of killing as the meaning.

M.) The Killing of Meaning

In the cartoon show “South Park,” there is an episode in which a TV network announces the appearance of an animated prophet Mohammed on another cartoon show. As a result, Islamic extremists respond with the threat of a terror attack against Americans if the prophet appears on the show. Overall panic overwhelms the (American) town of South Park, and the citizens summon an analyst from Washington to teach them how to deal with the terrorist threat. At a meeting in city hall, the analyst tells the citizens that during the airing of the show they should bury their heads in the soil in order not to see the Mohammed – which should allegedly appease the terrorists so as not to harm them (!). But one of the citizens gets up and gives a dramatic speech about hard-gained freedoms (of speech) they fought for, saying that now is the time they should stand up for what they believe in! However, the majority of citizens gets disgusted with the idea of defending the freedom, and goes for the heads in the soil option.

The democratic norm or societal consensus on some value (freedom of speech) gets rejected/neglected by that same society if the same norm shows up as an obstacle to obscene enjoyment. What is being defended is not the higher purpose

of freedom, but rather it is the freedom to be obscene that is defended. Therefore, neoliberal capitalist ritual is a ritual of the destruction of a barrier to the “anything goes” mantra. It is the ritual that constructs the purpose behind the obscene banality of the needs of a “democratic man,” who gives purpose to neoliberal capitalism by turning the obscene banality into sacredness.

“Sacredness is in fact held to be enhanced in proportion as truth decreases and illusion increases, so that the highest degree of illusion comes to be the highest degree of sacredness.”⁴⁵

Jean Baudrillard, writing about the Beaubourg building (the popular name for the Pompidou Center in Paris which consists of a mass of pipes, metallic joints, and random structural connections) says, “Within a museal scenario that only serves to keep up the humanist fiction of culture, it is a veritable fashioning of the death of culture that takes place, and it is a veritable cultural mourning for which the masses are joyously gathered.”⁴⁶ Beaubourg, by representing the bowels of the system turned upside down, presents the very truth of social relations and social production in neoliberal capitalism; the embellishment of the essential nothingness. Culture in neoliberal capitalism therefore might be seen as a cadaver exposed as a work of art, a cultural object that stands as compensation for the lack of politics that should, after all, construct meaning. What else does the archetypical explosion of a police car in an action movie, a YouTube suicide or the morbid fascination with televised pictures of genocide represent, but enjoyment of the death of society as

the death of any barrier to any vice of democratic man.

As Baudrillard said, “The misunderstanding is therefore complete when one denounces Beaubourg as a cultural mystification of the masses. The masses, themselves, rush there to enjoy this execution, dismemberment, this operational prostitution of a culture finally truly liquidated, including all counterculture that is nothing but its apotheosis.”⁴⁷

That makes the meaning that supports capitalism nothing else but an illusion that is as omnipresent as the method of its fake discovering.

N.) Exclusion of the Norm

Giorgio Agamben says that sovereign power produces bare life (holy man, the one who can be killed and cannot be sacrificed) as a basic political element – but it also excludes this life from its norm. As he says, “What is excluded from the general rule is an individual case. But the most proper characteristic of the exception is that what is excluded in it is not, on account of being excluded, absolutely without relation to the rule. On the contrary, what is excluded in the exception maintains itself in relation to the rule in the form of the rule’s suspension. The rule applies to the exception in no longer applying, in withdrawing from it.”⁴⁸ When genocide happens, “victims are the members of another, possibly violent culture,” when Wall Street CEOs ignite a global crisis “everyone” has to start saving; the norm is being dislocated, not applied. Xenophobia here turns out to be not a phobia of its object, the stranger,

but rather it turns out that the system is phobic of itself – or more precisely, of confrontation with its own sadistic meaninglessness.

As Agamben said, “Confronted with an excess, the system interiorizes what exceeds it through an interdiction and in this way designates itself as exterior to itself.”⁴⁹

As an example, Barack Obama, after the election victory got interiorized by some positions in which we find out that Obama in fact is not a black man (!?!). As an example, the president of the Croatian Helsinki Committee Ivo Banac “enlightened” the public saying that Barack Obama is not really an African American. He said that (Obama’s) “father is African, but his mother is Caucasian, while Obama’s academic knowledge certainly tells that he had much more possibilities in life unlike the majority of African Americans in the US.”⁵⁰ This position says that Obama’s victory does not represent the application of the minimum of the democratic norm (racial equality), but upholds the obscenity that supports a non-application of the norm.

When bare life (black man, immigrant from the Third World, the poor, ghetto dweller, Palestinian) is being interiorized (emancipated in the First World), that means that this subjectivity is not being initiated to accept the minimum of the norm (equality, freedom, brotherhood), but is being initiated to criticize exactly that minimum of the norm, by accepting the monopoly over the concept of equality, in which it means to become, as Rancière would say, paraphrasing, equal only in front of the market.⁵¹ Hence, soli-

clarity is perceived as an obstacle to “private success in life” and freedom is perceived as the freedom to join the necrophilic enthusiasm in perverting every notion of meaning besides the one that says that there is no other meaning but the one dictated by the regime.

On the other side, the only choice emancipated subjectivity (bios) has is the right to choose among the representations of the oligarch who will continue to “grant freedoms.” But the monopoly over the definition of freedom, in that case, also remains in the hands of the oligarch that is represented through unrestrained power of the market. The “curser,” emancipated subjectivity, the one who has the freedom to reject a product, will see that choice as an ultimate confirmation of its freedom.

That is what lurks behind the deregulation – in the social and economic sense, as well in the sense that when subjectivity itself is being deregulated to such a measure, its only meaning becomes the drive to garble it. Sacredness of bare life (Homo Sacer/Holy Man) therefore comes from “being outside” of the necrophilic culture. It is sacred because it has not yet become a part of the utterly unsacred ritual of garbling of sense.

Marina Gržinić stated that neoliberal necrocapitalism is continually being produced and reproduced, not only economically and politically, but also obviously institutionally. All these processes have an effect that is totally and straightforwardly completely socially “dysfunctional.” Capitalism justifies its own systemic and political dysfunction, a state of exception, by producing a dysfunctional

society whose perception of the essential meaningfulness of such a system has been converted into the adoration of the very death of meaning at all. The same logic applies in the case of “Big Brother” or in the case of Guantanamo Bay.

Emancipated subjectivity is therefore programmed not to believe in any aspect of the norm that could endanger an institutional perversion of the norm; such subjectivity is deregulated from the society that should make sure that the norm regarding the issue of human dignity functions. Dominant sentiment of emancipated subjectivity, therefore, is not the complying one, but the critical one – but critical only of the potential of society to protect the sacredness of human dignity. That is the only purpose emancipated subjectivity has. The word “meaningless killing” comes out of this predisposition; it is not just “meaningless killing,” it is killing of meaning – by discrediting those who remind emancipated subjectivities of the possibility that the essence of the norm should actually be put into function. This is what happened in Nazi Europe, where the ultimate external element, the Jew, was completely externalized from being, and it happens today, when bare life is internalized into “culture” by being emancipated only in order to legitimize the obscenity of the neoliberal order.

As Rancière says, the right to associate, to gather and manifest, allows the organization of democratic life, political life to be separated from the sphere of the state. As he claims further, “to allow” is obviously a contradictory term; these freedoms are not the gift of the oligarch.⁵² But bare life that accepts that these freedoms ARE the gift of the oligarch, turns

into bios with a necro-culture life style. Bare life or bios that takes these freedoms for granted becomes an alien-up-to-obscenity; the one who takes or demands to be given to.

PART FIVE:
COMMUNICATION AND
MASS INTELLECT as a core of flexible
accumulation of capital

Globalization does not rely only on globalization of the free market – it relies on production of society deprived of political inclinations, privatization of the domain of the public sphere, installment of radical class antagonism, fostering of the market fundamentalism instead of social sensibility and so on. As a result, the minimum of a democratic norm in democracy (life, dignity, equality) gets obfuscated, dislocated, and the “crack down” of the democratic norm is declared as a democratic norm, turning neo-colonization and free-market cannibalism into a democratic norm. Neoliberal capitalism, in order to rationalize itself, not only colonizes the sphere of public communication (through imposing various hierarchies of communication’s channels), but the very substance of language interaction, both on colloquial and institutional levels, is taken by it, creating a machinery of its rationalization as its main production sector.

O.) Communication

Communication as explicit form of public interaction in the sense of mass communication (and colloquial communication) that consists of linguistic patterns, specific languages, jargons, truisms and the

like is the field in which the social becomes a non-specific production. To state that the culture industry made the transition from Fordist to post-Fordist work ethics (integration of whole life into a non-specific process) is nothing new. But the culture of communication does not only produce some general social inclinations, reflections of society as a group, but it also produces intimate, moral frames of references that continue to function as politics or more precisely as a lack of it. Saying it in a metaphorical way, the subject does not need the surveillance camera to watch over him, he has his own thoughts to do the job for him. In this way the intelligibility of the masses (understood as a diversified group of specific individuals with specific skills, multitude), functions as a rationalization of neoliberal market fundamentalism.

Paolo Virno argues, “We should consider the dimension where the general intellect, instead of being incarnated (or rather, cast in iron) into the system of machines, exists as an attribute of living labor.”⁵³ It is therefore, as Virno developed further, that “[t]he general intellect manifests itself today, above all, as the communication, abstraction, self-reflection of living subjects. It seems legitimate (therefore) to maintain that, according to the very logic of economic development, it is necessary that a part of the general intellect not congeal as fixed capital but unfold in communicative interaction, under the guise of epistemic paradigms, dialogical performances, linguistic games. In other words, public intellect is one and the same as cooperation, the acting in concert of human labor, the communicative competence of individu-

als.”⁵⁴

Apolitical subjectivity, given the state of things, is not a synthesis of its passive social functions but is the result of an active participation in the process of communication. Thus, mass culture born under such circumstances is not any longer a schematized cultural production, a factory for production of obedient subjectivities, but consists exactly of those subjectivities that are critical of the system that produced them in the first place. Their epistemic references now allow them to criticize the system, but to criticize only particular inconsistencies of the neoliberal capitalist regime! Those inconsistencies that create a barrier are grotesquely formed needs and wishes of such subjectivities. In that way, the universal truth of the neoliberal regime, its monopoly over definition of truth, results in a distorted ethics that functions as rationalization of that very need. Communicating means therefore communicating truth and/or culture as ideology.

It is not only the cultural mainstream that is making huge gaps between the rich and the poor, privatization of the public sector, and unrestrained usage of natural resources by the neoliberal order, that exchange politics for culture, but it is also a sub-culture (not all of them, of course) that is doing the same thing in not having a political position from which to attack the very truth of the regime. That truth is not hidden behind any global conspiracy or some ideology, that truth is brutal in its banal simplicity, it is about profit and it is about making profit sacred, less banal, and more divinized.

Adorno and Horkheimer argued that “the culture industry, the most inflexible style of all, thus proves to be the goal of the very liberalism which is criticized for the lack of style.”⁵⁵ They are right again when they say, “Entertainment is the prolongation of work under late capitalism. It is sought by those who want to escape the mechanized labor process so that they can cope with it again. At the same time, however, mechanization has such power over leisure and its happiness, determines so thoroughly the fabrication of entertainment commodities that the off-duty worker can experience nothing but after-images of the work process itself.”⁵⁶ Culture that is being communicated within the biopolitical is not any kind of imitation or fakeness; it is authentic and differential – authentic within the epistemic frame of references provided by the regime. It becomes socially important only within the frame of reference imposed by the market. And even more, it is not even necessary that those who perform it believe that this kind of job has some higher social value or application. But, of course, in most of the cases, it is the opposite; those who perform such a job also believe that this kind of job has some higher social value or application. As Paolo Virno ingeniously noticed, “From the point of view of ‘what’ is done and ‘how’ it is done, there is no substantial difference between employment and unemployment. It could be said that: unemployment is non-remunerated labor and labor, in turn, is remunerated unemployment.”⁵⁷

The subject’s specific need becomes part of non-specific production. Certain authenticity (the individual property of a social animal) is therefore ipso facto

based not in some authentic knowledge about the social antagonism, but in a specific way of integration into the matrix of exploitation. It is just a “special” way in which the subject loves its master.

The avoidance of addressing the very minimum of the truth of exploitation that stands behind neoliberal capitalism is another name for a culture as ideology explicated through mass communication. “Authenticity” and non-uniform aesthetics of such a culture is therefore not based in a critical position towards communication as the production level of capitalism – but is based in positions (motivations) that are critical towards failures of neoliberal strategy to construct some kind of ideology around its ephemeral core.

P.) When I hear there is no Communication, I reach for the Gun

By following the axiomatic of a horizontal (non-hierarchic) nature of power, where biopolitics is a compensation for politics, then communication between people and its representatives does not exist in any substantial, socially relevant way.

What is therefore being communicated? Instead of having the situation where oppressed parts of society (its oppressed classes) would communicate their needs and rights that are guaranteed by the minimum of the democratic norm, what gets communicated is, on the contrary, the mentioned “authenticity,” a life style as a specific way of integration into the market. What is communicated is the situation in which the oppressed does not want a minimum of the democratic norm to be applied, but instead wants to become the one who can avoid this same

norm.

In other words, the earlier slavery, the passive role of the factory workers has changed to an active role as the biopolitical subjectivity. This does not mean that therefore it is any less slavery, of course. This subjectivity (in the case of average subjectivity in the First World) is not (or does not have to be) deprived of education and information, but nevertheless it is interested only and solely in personal commodity and/or profit, and both are now represented as spiritualized specific enthusiasm for the master’s (capitalism’s) sake. It is no wonder that the First World gets really angry when word comes that some country has restricted access to some online-social networks, while millions of hungry people in these same countries are not at all an issue.

As an example, when the ideological subjectivity is faced with someone who has not heard of, let’s say, Walmart, or Facebook, that ideological subjectivity is honestly surprised, maybe even a little bit suspicious. It is, in fact, delighted because the mere knowledge about some banal particularity inside the First World society represents to him or her that level of integration within that society, as this is the way knowledge is represented.

Instead of having a society that fights for guaranteed rights and seeks a political subversion of capitalism’s architecture of control by politicizing its communication, making it subversive, what is being communicated is in fact the degree of emancipation (and not integration) within the system. Such an operation is now being formalized as freedom, or even more

ironically, as a politically gained freedom. Communication therefore formalizes nothing – as one’s need to communicate is not motivated by gaining some knowledge about the outer in order to re-question the inner (individual intellectual or moral) convictions, it is motivated only and solely by gaining some acknowledgment about the righteousness, the ethical validity of this corrupted inner. As Levinas would say, “Tyranny is not the pure and simple extension of technology to reified man. Its origin lies back in the pagan ‘moods,’ in the enrootedness in the earth, in the adoration that enslaved men can devote to their masters. Being before the existent, ontology before metaphysics is freedom before justice. It is a movement within the same before obligation to the other.”⁵⁸

In other words, emancipated subjectivities in their *laissez-faire* manner relate to the other primarily by not excluding it completely, but by twisting it, bending it, making it fit their own inner perception of that same other and the outer. As Levinas said, “Freedom is not maintained but reduced to being the reflection of a universal order which maintains itself and justifies itself all by itself, like the God of the ontological argument.”⁵⁹ What is being explicated in a non-specific communication is the measure of this bending, of this (extrinsic) relation to the other as being only the relation to one’s (intrinsic) property. That means as a sacrifice, as a confirmation that, instead of nothing, there is something intrinsic in the inner of capital. Heidegger argued “...that the nothing is the origin of negation rather than vice versa.”⁶⁰ And, he continues, “Openness [to be broadly understood as ‘existence’ – author’s comment] is thus

saturated with its relation to the nothing – evidence that the nothing is always, if obscurely, revealed even though dread is required to disclose it in an ordinary way. But this also implies that ordinary dread is mostly suppressed in our openness. Dread is there, but dormant.”⁶¹

In this way, nothingness of neoliberal capitalism is nothing as an absence of any substantial ideological core, it is the formalization of avoidance of socially sensible contexts as, for example, individual freedom. Hence, we are not talking about the social implications of nothing as some subversive, nihilist sentiment that would symbolize some subversion of the regime or of some social mainstream – it is a nothing in which “substance” is being made ideological in a form of some banal sense. What is important to understand is not that the problem lies in the fundamental need of giving sense to nothing, to rationalize it – the problem lies in how such nothing is being rationalized. It is not being rationalized as transcendence of some need, conviction or ethics; it is being rationalized in such a way that this rationalization points to it without having a motive to transcend the nature of such nothing. Which is logical from the point of view of the regime because the deconstruction of such nothing would automatically lead to the deconstruction of the actual system built around it. Thus, instead of re-questioning it, giving a perspective of let’s say some ethics that could question that nothing, emptiness, capitalist ethics is being filled with emptiness. Capitalist ideology does not have some grand vision of the future world; even more precisely, its ideology does not have any vision at all. Its ideology is a mere propaganda operation by which it is

proclaimed that nothing is, in fact, something.

Virno states that Hobbes recognized the principle of legitimization of absolute power in the transfer of natural rights of every individual to a sovereign. Today it would be better, according to Virno, to talk about the transfer of the general intellect or of its immediate and non-deductible publicity to a state administration. Therefore, we could say that the system is being intellectualized. Capitalism does not have some strictly defined ideology in any sense higher than a market need and/or rationalization of profit. So, in that sense, the intellectualized regime finds its purpose in a constant stream of attempts to construct one. Take democracy as an example. Democracy today mostly functions not as some social-political potential for organized resistance to capital, but as a political tool for confronting inconsistencies within capitalism, not against capitalism as such. Instead, democracy would need a conservative social dimension that could make a barrier to the operational face of capital, the free market.

The enthusiasm of subjectivity towards that system is the enthusiasm toward the system’s tenacity to continue to secure the environment in which subjectivities’ inner banality – emptiness – will continue to be the only one possible. It is a kind of emptiness that takes shape in the most grotesque individual needs now declared as freedom and that makes dominant the kind of communication that is trying to give sense to the regime that creates emptiness in the first place – emptiness that is now being declared as being politics.

R.) The Lost Antagonism

Paolo Virno, by referring to a definition of general intellect made by Marx (where general intellect is knowledge as production force), stated that, “The general intellect includes, thus, formal and informal knowledge, imagination, ethical propensities, mindsets, and ‘linguistic games.’ In contemporary labor processes, there are thoughts and discourses which function as productive ‘machines,’ without having to adopt the form of a mechanical body or of an electronic valve.”⁶²

In this context, we can take a look at the most recent spread of capital (War in Iraq) in the sense of (U.S.) citizen resistance toward it. In the case of Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay prison and similar cases in the latest effort to “spread democracy,” the critique in the majority of cases was turned against the Bush regime, generals on the field, failures in the chain of command and so on. But that kind of critique rarely touched the very nature of the “spread of democracy.”

The spread of democracy in fact means that democracy (in its distorted sense, as it is appropriated in the First World) is being imposed onto a society that allegedly is not capable to impose democracy by itself, though eager to have it. But we are not talking here about an attempt to help implement a minimum of the most basic democratic inherencies; on the contrary, what is being imposed is the garbled dimension of democracy, democracy as market fundamentalism and social insensibility, and not equality. In other words, instead of one dictatorial regime (as in the case of Iraq, we are not

talking about a current government, but about a fundamental system that is still alive there), we get another dictatorial regime, though the latter one is declared to be democratic. The proper democratic man knows what is going on, but does not care because he does not want to compromise his own integration into capital, his lifestyle. The post-Fordist mass intellect does not have an articulated stance toward the widening gap between classes, but does have an articulated stance when the system fails to create the gaps. As a result, the future gap between classes in Iraq, as it already happened in Eastern Europe, under the rule of the free market will be justified as a spread of democracy.

As it was stated by Heidegger, and I am paraphrasing for my usage, every production of a value, even when positive, is one of subjectivization.⁶³ Post-Fordist mass intellect therefore should be seen as a mass of personalized subjectivities whose intelligibility only makes relative the order that allows them to stay apolitical.

S.) Virtual Property of Social Reality

The domain of mass communication where this kind of intellect dwells is, among other spaces, a place of virtual society in the strict sense. But as Marina Gržinić suggests, fiction should be read through the real, and not vice versa. The space of communication has been privatized / personalized / made apolitical and made sensual as a space for evacuation of anxiety created by capital. If we read “fiction” through the real, we see that in the phantom war against terrorism (which does not mean its effects

are less real), the goals are fake and/or garbled. This can be then presented as the deregulation of cyberspace in the sense that capital regulates only the parts that bother it (through copyright issues and destruction of pirate markets), an increased degree of control over the population through biometric documents, the privatization of public health and education sectors, and (ending this short list) the concentration camps such as Guantanamo Bay, Bagram, Abu Ghraib and the like. We also see the reinvention of the definition of freedom, when freedom is only the freedom to gain profit, or as Rancière would say, freedom means being equal and free only in front of the market. The lack of freedom to search for alternatives in the space of social reality in this case gets compensated exactly through a surplus of freedom in cyberspace – freedom to celebrate that lack as freedom.

The more apolitical the space of communication gets, the more apolitical the social reality itself gets. This is “communication capitalism,” as Jodi Dean says. “Contributing to the infostream, we might say, has a subjective registration effect. One believes that it matters, that it contributes, that it means something.”⁶⁴ Dean states further that, “Precisely because of this registration effect, people believe that their contribution to circulating content is a kind of communicative action. They believe that they are active, maybe even that they are making a difference simply by clicking on a button, adding their name to a petition or commenting on a blog.”⁶⁵ As she claims further, “Weirdly, then, the circulation of communication is depoliticizing, not because people don’t care or don’t want to be involved, but because

we do!”⁶⁶ More precisely, as Dean says, “It is depoliticizing because the form of our involvement ultimately empowers those it is supposed to resist. Struggles on the Net reiterate struggles in real life, but insofar as they reiterate these struggles, they displace them. And this displacement, in turn, secures and protects the space of ‘official’ politics.”⁶⁷

The circulation of communication, particularly in cyberspace, tends to function like this. Instead of exposing the borders of capital spread, such a circulation just obfuscates it. This circulation of communication could be seen as a buffering, as a subjective homeostasis, as something Marina Gržinić would call the exposition to the eye of the screen. To say it in a banal manner, when interactive property of cyberspace is mentioned, that means that not only a subjectivity that is plugged in actively participates in the creation of the space of communication, but also the space of communication actively participates in the forming of that subjectivity. As an example, the mere speed used by the subject to answer a phone call is directly proportional to its status of being an ideological subject. As Deleuze and Guattari stated, “The person has become ‘private’ in reality, insofar as he derives from abstract quantities and becomes concrete in the becoming-concrete of these same quantities.”⁶⁸

As Badiou claims, if the speed is a mask of inconsistency, philosophy must propose a retardation process.⁶⁹ This does not mean that something of a banal nature should be used against the banality of capitalism, but it means that something that would expose the banality as ideology of capitalism must be contem-

plated. What would this exposition mean in this context, in the context where subjectivity is immersed into circulation of communication? In a context when subjectivity is being de-realized? Marina Gržinić stated that the effect of de-realization exposes an effect of direct confrontation of reality and its phantasmatic addendum in a way of a direct comparison of one and the other. In such a context, the “realization” would not mean much; what is virtual here is not a priori a cyberspace but the space of social reality – or a need to contribute to some virtual reality.

As an example, everybody has noticed that a lot of people during some rock concert or the like are keeping their cell phones in the air recording the concert. It is a kind of realization. It is not enough to be physically at the event, but it has to be transferred to virtual reality, to the Net, it has to circulate not as a token of some solidarity with those who did not attend the event, but as a token, a small contribution to the overall circulation of information, to the overall deprivation of meaning of the event that is some meaningless performance. “Realization” of subjectivity into social reality would maybe present a point, a short-circuit between media-represented reality and reality where subjectivity is being formed. It is a short-circuit that allows antagonism from social reality to be transferred to a media-represented reality, while the “representations” from media reality are being brought back to social reality as a tool for its rationalization. It is another dimension to the theory of the “state of exception” as a state where decomposition of the minimum of the democratic norm (life, dignity) is being devastated in

favor of the market and presented as a democratic norm.

One example is in the sci-fi movie *Independence Day*, in a scene in which protagonists are being taken to a secret U.S. Army base called Area 51. Area 51 has for many years, especially in conspiracy theory during the 1970s, been an epitome of the Establishment's malevolence toward the American people and the epitome of the Establishment's concern that is primarily the concern for the (capitalist) system. In the mentioned movie, Army personnel present an alien, an extraterrestrial (who expect all people to die) to the protagonists (who represent common people) and elaborate that they have been conducting secret experiments, but only to protect the people (!). It was like a preparation of mental terrain for the later public rationalization of concentration camps in Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay, Bagram and so on. When Badiou says that democracy is a norm inscribed into a relation of the subject toward a liberal state, we see in fact that democracy, in a constant "state of exception" (as a state where inclusion and exclusion cannot be determined, following Agamben), is in fact a relation of the subjectivity to the destruction of the minimum of the democratic norm, a relation to the death of society, not to its political potential.

Revolutionary contemplation should therefore be concentrated toward the epistemological core of that relation, towards the triviality of neoliberal capitalism as the dominant regime. Meaning – to show, to decode that circulation of wishes, bodies and facts that is being presented as freedom as nothing more

than a banal circulation of meaningless features. Not because they are intrinsically meaningless, but because such a circulation makes the intrinsic as such meaningless by giving it absolute priority in relation to the extrinsic. As Levinas said, it is not the man who owns freedom; it is freedom that owns the man.

So-called global society (comprised of a brutally rich minority and a brutally poor majority) is at the same time personalized society where the most intimate wishes, facts, privacy, life styles of its subjectivities are contributing to the death of meaning which is utilized by neoliberal capitalism in order to present its inconsistencies as relative (the market rule over law, radical class division, etc.) This death of meaning is some kind of widely known fetish; it is just a reason for celebration of the proclaimed end of a barrier to more and more enjoyment. Therefore, getting life style, as a compensation for not having a political stance against the "state of exception," is in fact a position of subjectivity in which it accepts to see its body as merchandise, a territory for capital spread, as a biological barrier to a horizon of possible, other meanings.

Notes

1. Deleuze and Guattari's ideas are presented in Antonio Negri / Michael Hardt, *Imperij*, Multimedijalni institut/Arkzin, Zagreb, 2003, p. 167. Originally published as Antonio Negri, Michael Hardt, *Empire*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2000.
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Life After Death

by Nejra Nuna Čengić

AROUND PART II

“I survived. My name could have been anything, Muhamed, Ibrahim, or Isak, it does not matter. I survived and many did not; I lived on in the same way that they died. There is no difference between their death and my survival, for I remained to live in a world that has been permanently and irreversibly marked by their death. I come from Srebrenica. As a matter of fact, I come from somewhere else, but I choose to be from Srebrenica. Srebrenica is the only place I dare to come from and it was only to Srebrenica that I dared to set off, at a time I dared to go nowhere else. That is the precise reason I believe that the place of birth is irrelevant compared to the place of death. The former does not say anything about us – it is a mere geographical fact; the place of death tells everything about our convictions, beliefs, the choices we made and stood by right until the end, until death caught up with us” (Suljagić, 2005, p. 11)

Radovan Karadžić, probably the most wanted person over the last 12 years, responsible for the death of tens of thousands of people from Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war (1992 – 1995), has finally been arrested. Without going into the possibility of this happening earlier, the scenario of his appearing is more than bizarre. Out of all the possible jobs he could have done, even though he did not have to work at all while living under the identities of persons for whose death he is personally responsible, he promoted healthy life! Reactions of politicians, world media, judiciary were euphoric, to say the least. For weeks, they bombarded us with special TV shows about the actions of Radovan Karadžić. It was the great day for Bosnia and Herzegovina, a great day for the state of Serbia, a great day for international justice. But what has it meant for a survivor, the one who (almost) touched the bottom, and returned among the living? I cannot respond from personal experience, since I do not have one. However, I do live in this environment, among those people who are my world. I want to understand them more, come closer to them, at least to the border of contemplation of such an experience, aware of epistemological gap and limits of vision (Maclear, 2003). They are silent, mentioning war only in terms of general points, in the context of some comic situations. Actually, humor can be an excellent tool for the articulation of the unspeakable. So, they are still silent, as if nothing had happened. I am not of the opinion that it does not mean anything to them, but it is traumatic and reminds of a life which is even below bare life. In any case, it is not worth the euphoria!

In this context, I am wondering how many times can we die; how many times can we live again? Is this death, is this life? If not, how can we name the possibility of living after Srebrenica, Sarajevo, Mostar, Foča etc.? How elastic concept of life is, not any life, but bare life? If Animal Laborans (Arendt, 1958) is the most basic form of human condition, which corresponds to activities needed for biological survival and life reproduction (Arendt, 1958), how then can we call life which is below that? If *zoe*, in Aristotle's terms, is the form of life which does not have any feature of humanity, how then should we name life we cannot classify either as human, or animal? And finally, why we idealize humanity when we label any deviations from the given ideal animal?

Death

State of war in BiH or that which we can call more than war (Kuzmanić, 2004) since it transcends all legal norms of warship, really goes below what is needed for self-preservation. Emir Suljagić, survivor from Srebrenica described it as follows:

“It was already the sixth month of the siege: we were at the edge of our endurance, pushing back limits that the day before we had considered as final. We woke up miserable, in cold rooms with window-panes made of plastic bags in windows covered by split logs protecting us against shell shrapnel. We woke up exhausted and lice-ridden, without the desire and most often without even the strength to move, without families, alone and abandoned, humiliated, our past violated and our future slaughtered, our

present defeated and defeating. And something snapped.” (Suljagić, 2005, p. 87)

The state of siege actually meant continuous concern to maintain bare life. However, permanently hungry and without the basic biological conditions for life-preservation, most of people in BiH did not die of famine, coldness, sickness. In the biological sense they did die from weapons, torture. Those who survived bear “death” in themselves that does not come solely from the inability to maintain biological life, but something additional. As Suljagić notes, besides biological conditions, or better put, lack of conditions, it is about abandonment, humiliation and lack of temporal sense (intemporality). Precisely this places life beyond the limits of human.

Within the context of that what was “more than war,” it is about the lack or the inability to struggle for one's own life. It is about the inability to act, or having a very limited ability to act, depending on the area. That particular inability to struggle and resist is what places the given situation even beyond the animal. Accordingly, hopelessness, loneliness, and abandonment prevail, or in other words the lack of plurality as the main condition of human action. (Arendt, 1958). Humiliation derives from the inability to resist, inability to realize life and the struggle for it, but also something else. That is exactly the most humane segment of personality, the killing of existence in time or, as Suljagić puts it, the annulment of the past, present and future. Thus, humiliation might not be the best word. Perhaps better expression would be an annulment of all that could have been described as part of human

and animal nature of human being (in Agamben terms). And this is the point where “death” comes on.

Giorgio Agamben describes this death as Muselmann, that which within state of exception (concentration camp) has only bare life, or to be more precise do not live either in mental or physical way; which is at the edge of final exhaustion. It is the one of whom other turned heads away (Agamben, 1999), probably recognizing themselves in him/her. Still, Agamben makes a distinction between Muselmann, the one who did not return and the survivor. He places this distinction through the position of a witness, the authentic witness of the event. Muselmann is the one who “reached the bottom,” who never returned what makes him/her the only authentic witness. However, these are not necessarily two separate physical persons. What Agamben tries to show us by this distinction is the depth of the abyss which a human being can touch and continue to live in the biological sense. Therefore, the concern is “reaching the bottom,” “death,” and continuation of life. It is about a Muselmann within each survivor manifested in the inability to reflect one's traumatic experience. With this, the basic distinction between Muselmann and the survivor does not disappear; it continues to exist as a division of life and death, those who died and survivors, as well as separation within the survivors themselves. Within survivor this relation is reflected through shame. It is the shame for surviving, or better said the coincidence of survival, partly directed towards those who died biologically, partly towards life that knows not death experience. It is also the shame before oneself, one's human part of personality in

relation to the inhuman death within each survivor (Agamben, 1999).

Life

If hunger, coldness, sickness, loneliness/ abandonment, humiliation, and intemporalities are, taken as a whole, that which determines death, the “end” of state of exception in contextual terms (end of war), brings new challenges. This “new condition” is traumatic for many reasons.

If the modern biopolitical project is something which holds the state of exception permanently (Agamben 1998), and what needs to be disclosed within modern “developed” societies, where capital takes over more and more power, making it impossible to follow the classical functioning of a modern state, then we can define the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a continuation of ethno-nationalistic politics in clash with the capital drive. Within the thought of Hannah Arendt, it is the most basic human condition of labor domination, or struggle for labor domination, whose main modus of living is maintenance of biological life (Arendt, 1958), but not individual life, the life of ethno-nation, taken as an individual. Precisely that ethno-national political project is that which within our context presents the continuity of state of exception in relation to war. Truth is, within ethno-nationalism, the pattern is more illustrative than it would have been in some of more developed democratic societies.

While on the one hand, the human condition is extremely naturalistic, not only in terms of the dominant pattern of human

activities, but according to the dominant pre-modernistic ethno-nationalistic project, where each individual is a part of the overall body of ethno-nation, on the other hand the power of capital, power of neoliberalism is increasing, where absolutely everything becomes a commodity.

Between pre-modernistic organization of society and post-modern neoliberal global flows a process of modernization or democratization is occurring (or an attempt of it). While the first two processes occur at the level of creation and disappearance of state in modern sense, only the third process (democratization) presupposes the existence of a modern state. Within this context particularly, democratization becomes the field of confrontation, conflict, new trauma, struggle between modal and bare life.

Transition from that what we have determined as below bare life to bare life itself is not easily ensured. To the contrary, what prevails is not the gap between modal and bare life but the struggle for bare life, which has the appearance of the former. Indeed, the efforts of the international community over almost two decades of war and post-war aid were mainly based on aid in food, material reconstruction, housing. Aids were temporary, unable to permanently solve mere existence, or the lowest human state. And while majority of citizens live at the edge of poverty, depending on the aid of numerous relatives, the needs of those who can afford more remain on the level of biological life maintenance and exaggeration thereon, following the dominant life patterns of modern developed countries. Life becomes the highest value,

similar as in the former system. And precisely that struggle for better life, which remains on the level of bare life, or surviving as a dominant modus of living is very individualistic, where not only the struggle for better ethno-nation life maintenance is led but also the belonging to the body of the nation is being used for better individual life maintenance; it is not felt chains of serving the nation, but to the contrary as a space of freedom that the belonging brings. However, it is not freedom, at least not in context of Hannah Arendt's thought (Arendt, 1958).

If the biological life maintenance, as a minimum, has become relatively accessible and possible, than precisely those additional elements (which some authors would determine as segments of the human part of person) which determined death: loneliness/ abandonment, humiliation and intemporality have become the challenges of the “new condition.” If loneliness and abandonment have been determined as the lack of interest of the remaining part of the world, or the world politics for life below bare life of co-members of the human species, how then can we regain faith in humankind and all that bears the features of human? How can we give significance to human rights, their universality, international community, humanization as modern ideology? How to make people political, or to give them faith in politics, primarily after war experience and also having in mind that they never had it? Individuality is strengthening with the aim to create self-reliant citizens, responsible for their acts, holders of their own life choices. However, can we ascribe the inability to recreate life after death to the declarative life choice? To what extent we actually

have the possibility to choose, or is this discourse a way to make us responsible for our own life, a way which gives us an illusion that we control our lives, a way that blurs the sovereign power and the continuous state of exception?

Searching for the place in time, or giving temporality to one's own life is becoming even a greater problem. How to give life continuity, when something that does not belong to this world has been experienced? It usually occurs as an idealization of pre-traumatic experience (pre-war life), repression of traumatic experience, or even complete or partial memory loss, as well as inability to look to the future, where present and future are almost united, irreversibly marked by the traumatic experience. This state of survival Suljagić describes in the following way: “There is no difference between their death and my survival, for I remained to live in a world that has been permanently and irreversibly marked by their death.” (Suljagić, 2005, p. 11). And not only that, one's own human condition is not only determined by death of those who did not survive, but also with own death in relation to the biological survival. The result is divided lives, life before and after death, often reflected as relation of good and evil. Death itself remains unreflected. The language definitely becomes not only a poor medium of articulation, but also that which re-traumatizes with its power relations. (Edkins, 2003). Within such a context silence is predominant.

Silence does not necessarily mean avoidance of referring to the context of traumatic experience. It does not mean refraining to talk about the war and everything associated with it. Finally, this would

be quite impossible when the war as such is the most frequent part of daily political discourse, and it strongly marks every segment of the present. However, predominance of war discourse is more of an archive than testimonial nature (Agamben, 1999). Silence is thus silence about one's own war experience, life below bare life. In this context we can make a distinction between the so called passive and active silence, the unconscious one, since experience is so suppressed that memory of the given event really does not exist, and the conscious one, where silence is a matter of individual choice, described by many as the only adequate way to respond to experience. In most situations they are combined.

Remaining within Agamben's interpretation model, to what extent is it possible to express in language that which does not belong to the living world, which is not worthy of human living, or human death? (Agamben, 1999). Would expressing "death experience" mean new death? Is silence actually an individual defense mechanism to prevent it from happening? Or, the real oblivion exists, the suppression of all unworthy of human, in order to give life a chance? In "Trauma and the Memory of Politics", analyzing these problems, Jenny Edkins refers to Žižek saying that trauma is the only real, and is as such unutterable, inencompassable. The only thing we can do is mark it and circle around it (Edkins, 2003).

Consequences of this state are belonging to living beings, in relation to those who are speaking beings, and which, according to Aristotle and many other philosophers, have the potential to be political

beings as well. The capability of speech does not necessarily mean the possibility of being a political being; it demands both speech and action.

With this we come to the third element of human death, what Suljagić in his description of life under the siege determined as humiliation. What are the meanings of humiliation under given conditions? It definitely includes the inability of provision of biological conditions of living, resulting in hunger, coldness etc., but something additional, possibly best expressed as the inability of struggle for one's own life, when, as Suljagić notes, nobody was sufficiently important, or the state in which in relation to the rest of humankind nobody is important at all. This particular lack (inability) of resistance is not satisfactory even for the aggressor, as it fails to produce recognition. Thus, both fight and victory need to be invented. When Srebrenica was occupied by Bosnian Serb forces, Ratko Mladić described the whole event as the victory of his army. That inability of resistance and action is what not only humiliates, but annuls human life. If the post-war context provided the possibility of fight and action, then this action is significantly made difficult for those who experienced death.

Within the BiH context, the above mentioned reasons are the ones that disable action and still make surviving the dominant modus of human life. Still, different levels of trauma, of dealing with individual experiences, different contexts of war and representation of particular experiences, both during the war and after it, bear exceptions. Thus, it would be wrong to say that no action and no resistances

occurred during the war in Sarajevo, or other places in BiH. They mainly happened (and still happen) in the field of arts which is becoming a much better medium of representation than language. And not only that, it means action that saved many from death, and which continues to be the medium of action through representation of limits between life and death, limits of the speakable and the unspeakable. It is the humanitarian beef can in front of the Historical Museum in Sarajevo, by which the grateful citizens of Sarajevo thank the international community for their aid (1992-1995). It is the exhibition of Šejla Kamerić, an artist, entitled *Now, I can die*, poetry, performances and many other forms of expression. It is what Agamben calls testimony (Agamben, 1999), which becomes the field which mirrors the segments of experience of those whose stories will never be reflected in whole.

Overvaluation of Humanity

The whole history of philosophy is based on efforts to determine what is the *differentia specifica* of human in relation to animal world. This concept is determined as an anthropological machine which persistently tries to give human dimension to the world (Agamben, 2004), glorifying humanity as such. However, have we forgotten that even if we determine that typical human, which is highly disputable, there is still that animal, which is also a constituent and important part of human life. Why make this distinction so sharp, giving it an ontological value and an ethical dimension, perceiving that human as good and that animal as evil?

Previous analysis showed us that pre-

dominant condition of human life of people living in Bosnia and Herzegovina today is still at the level of bare life, and in certain periods even below/out of that. Still, in the paradigmatic state of exception (war) we suffer due to the lack of realization of both animal and human parts of person. This leads us towards question why do we hold such a rigid (separate) perception of the animal and human world? What is the basis of such a superiority of human species in relation to the animal world, when we mostly cherish that particular dimension of living.

The reason for this elaboration, which was partly a subject of Agamben's elaboration in the book *The Open*. *Man and Animal* is precisely the fact that paradigmatic state of exception, as the war is, or something beyond war is so illustrative in giving examples that not only deviate from what has been determined as human, but also raise the question once again of the justification of such a rigid distinction of human and animal. The film on *Scorpions* presents "monstrous" behavior of a group of men over a group of helpless men. To say that they are mad would mean placing them out of human species, and on some level pardoning both them and the human species. Indeed, most often we do that! Still, here we deal with "normal" people and acknowledging their normality is difficult for any human. This difficulty originates in the fact that it denies the myth of human goodness and outlines the capability of human to commit such a thing. Finally, what does this particular case have in common with animals whose name we use to denote actions that are beyond human? Nothing at all! It is doubtful that we will find within the animal world a need

for humiliation and annulations of others in order to be recognized, without the possibility of the other to resist. What do we actually know about animals, and is not precisely this ignorance the space of conscious and unconscious manipulations? Have we finally overvaluated humanity, and is not this superiority functioning on the same basis as any other racist ideology? Has not humanity become the strongest ideology of nowadays?

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The Communal and the Decolonial

by Walter Mignolo

EXTENT PART III

THE COMMUNAL AND THE DECOLONIAL

I.

Imagine the world around 1500. It was a polycentric and non-capitalist world. There were many civilizations from China to Sub-Saharan Africa, but none of them dominated the other. There was a radical change in global history that we can summarize in two points: the emergence of the Atlantic commercial circuit and the fact that the West began to control the writing of global history. From 1500 to 2000, Western civilization was founded and formed. There was not Western civilization before 1500 and the European Renaissance. Greece and Rome became part of the narrative of Western civilization by 1500, not before. Around that time a double movement began: the colonization of time and the invention of the European Middle Age; and the colonization of space and the invention of the America and of the Old World. There was no Old World without a New one. And the Old World was later divided between the imperial Old World (Atlantic Europe) and the colonial Old World (Asia and Africa).

The first civilizations to suffer the consequences of the formation and expansion of Western civilization were the Incas, the Aztecs and the Mayas. One of the drastic

consequences was the dismantling of the communal system of social organization, that today indigenous nations in Bolivia and Ecuador are working to reconstruct and reconfigure. From the European perspective, the communal may sound like socialism or communism. But it is not: socialism and communism were born in Europe as a response to liberalism and capitalism. Not the communal system. The communal system in Tawantinsuyu and Anahuac, as I imagine social organizations in China before the Opium War and the arrival of Mao Zedong, were not created as responses to liberalism and capitalism. They had to adapt and still are adapting to capitalist and (neo) liberal intrusion.

A recent proposal to re-inscribe (not to recover or to go back to the past) the communal into contemporary debates on pluri-national states is “El sistema communal como alternativa al sistema liberal” by Aymara sociologist Félix Patzi Paco. But there are others as well. Evo Morales’s discourses are full of references to the communal. Nina Pacari, ex-chancellor of Ecuador and recently appointed to Evo Morales secretary of foreign relations is another example as well as the collective work of CONAMAQ (Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Colasuyu).¹ No need to explain this in the same way that there is no need, for

example, to explain a reference to the Jakobins or the French commune, in the re-orientation of the European left.

Therefore, the communal shall not be confused with “the common,” which is becoming the new keywords and the re-orientation of the European left.² Now the idea of the “common” is part of European history imaginary. It could be taken up of course by Marxist oriented left in non-European parts of the world who would prefer to be “modern” instead of taking the bull by the horn, and without fear, to think from their own histories instead of adapting and adopting solutions that emerged from other historical trajectories.

The communal, on the other hand, is indeed a form of social organization that was disrupted, as I said, by the European invasion of what became America. It subsisted for 500 years, and the Zapatistas are re-inscribing it in the form of The Caracoles. The reconfiguration of the Ayllu,³ as is being advanced in CONAMAQ in Bolivia, doesn't mean to go back to the past. The reorganization of the Ayllus and Markas⁴ means to re-inscribe the social organization of one of the four Suyus of Tawantinsuyu.⁵ In this case Qollasuyu is the Suyu “underneath” the soil of the Bolivian nation. When Alain Badiou talks about the common and refers to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the Jakobins and the Chinese Cultural Revolution – he refers only to the Marxist side of Mao Zedong. But there is another side of Mao Zedong, one cannot surmise that he is proposing to go back to the Enlightenment or to Mao.⁶ One may regret, in the second case that Badiou is only taking into account the genealogy of European thoughts and not asking what

Chinese are thinking today in terms of dealing with the invasion of the West. What is relevant for Badiou and the European left may not be relevant for Chinese thinkers, leaders and the civil and political society. Or if you wish, the European left can celebrate Mao and Evo Morales, although what Mao was trying to do and Evo Morales is doing, has not much to do with the European left, but with their own histories, memories, subjectivities.

The point being that an idea of the “common” that goes back to eighteenth century France and twentieth century China, is not necessarily “preferable” to the idea of the “communal” that goes back to the socio-economic organization of Indigenous civilization, in the Americas, disrupted by European civilizers who created the conditions for eighteenth century France to happen.

The idea of the communal is not grounded in the idea of the “comuna,” although in Bolivia the idea of the “comuna” was taken up, not by Aymara and Quechua intellectuals, but by members of the Creole and Mestizo/a population, which is an important aspect of the debate in Bolivia, between the colonial left (meaning, the left of Marxist bent that unfolded in European colonies) and the Indigenous projects of decoloniality. Not that one is good and other is bad, for we know that there is no safe place; but we should know that the left of European genealogy of thought (and the same genealogy in modern/colonial states) doesn't have the monopoly to imagine and dictate how a non-capitalist future shall be.⁷ The communal is an-other story which cannot be subsumed by the common, the commune

or communism. This is not of course my decision, but the way I understand the dignity of people who do not want to be civilized either by the right nor by the left.

II.

Aymara sociologist Félix Patzi Paco is a controversial figure in Bolivia and in the current process of thinking and working toward a pluri-national state. Creoles and Mestizo intellectuals suspect that Patzi Paco is working toward the hegemony of Aymara's people which means on the one hand a project that is not pluri-national because its aim is to reverse the white (Mestizo/Creole) hegemony and, on the other, it ignores the many nations that currently exist in the state of Bolivia, including other indigenous nations as well as peasant organized communities. Since the objection is coming from leftist voices (generally whites by South American standards) seriously engaged in building a pluri-national state – and not, for example, from the right wing of the low land – the tension between the left ingrained in European traditions and decolonial indigenous voices ingrained in a long history of confrontations with European traditions reveals a common threat: the dividing line between leftist and decolonial subjectivities and genealogies of thought; briefly the difference between the diversity of the population of European descent (spiritually white) and the diversity of the population of Indigenous descent. Mixed of course but always through power and the colonial difference.

Patzi Paco launched a proposal toward the re-conceptualization of a “communal system” as an alternative to the liberal

system.⁸ In the Indigenous intellectual tradition shall be distinguished from the common proposed by the European left. The genealogy of thoughts, history and sensibility are far apart in these two proposals. It shall be seen how and if they can work together in the future. The commons is being thought out as the pressure of the multitude to transform, through increasing and radical demands, the current complicities between the state and the market (capitalism). The communal comes from a non-western cosmology and sensibility, entrenched some how with western cosmology where the European left is inscribed, but endowed with particular visions of the organization of the economy and of governability. Notice that “sistema liberal” here means the advent of the modern/colonial state in Bolivia (and other regions of the non-western world), after independence from Spain, controlled by an elite of Creoles and Mestizos that lasted until the election of Evo Morales as president of Bolivia, in December of 2005.

Patzi Paco's proposal, published in 2004, did not loose its relevance and its insights. I will risk a summary, in a few pages, hoping to do justice to a proposal that deserves to be further debated. I will make some changes in the vocabulary. I will substitute “workers/trabajadores” by “persons.” In spite of the fact that Patzi Paco makes clear distinctions between “communism” (in the Marxist trajectory) and “communal” (in the indigenous experiences in the Andes), he remained attached to the word “workers” that detracts from his proposal. Indeed, what he is proposing demands a different characterization of social roles. For that reason, the communal system is open to

“persons” (Indians or not) as well as to different types of “works:” in a communal system the distinction between owner and waged worker as well as boss and employee in administrative organizations (banks, state organizations) vanished as well. To understand the scope of Patzi Paco’s proposal it is then necessary to clear our heads of the image of “Indians = peasants” that the coloniality of knowledge and of being imposed upon all of us, over five hundred years of control of knowledge and rhetoric of salvation.

One motivation of the proposal was to redress the image of Indian nations that prevail among social scientists, in Bolivia and from other countries and to provide a vision of Indian society and nation that is not shaped by disciplinary concerns but that comes from the history and memories of Indians themselves. As sociologist, he is not rejecting the disciplines, and particularly sociology, but he reverses his role. Instead of listening to the dictates of sociology, he uses sociology to communicate and organize his argument. The end result is a clear case of border epistemology.

Patzi Paco’s main objection to disciplinary studies of Indian nations is that they limit their investigations and report to:

- The common culture
- The language
- The territorial space

By so doing the “core” of communal organization that in the Andes is the Ayllu, is bypassed or ignored comes to the fore. The proposal is then basically a description of the system of economic management and the system of political management, that he considers as the “core” of

the communal system while the elements just mentioned constituted the “context” (e.g., entorno). So basically, most of what we know about Aymara and Quechuas in Bolivia is knowledge of the “context” but not of the “core” of their socio-economic organization.

There are several disclaimers that precede the presentation of his main thesis. One is the common myth among non-Indians that Indians are a homogenous community. Patzi Paco dispels the myth by drawing on class distinction. Among Indians there are professionals, retailers, manual workers, etc. On the other hand, there are Indians industry owners who exploit Indian labor. In a society where the communal system co-exists with the liberal one and market economy, industry owners have re-functionalized Andean reciprocity in order to obtain longer labor journeys (12 hours instead of 8) for low salaries. That this would happen is not surprising and it doesn’t offer a counterargument against the communal system but rather support arguments against the mythical view of Indian society by the Creole-Mestizo society.

Identity is another issue that requires clarification. Both “indigenistas” (non-Indians who are pro-Indians) and “indianistas” (Indians themselves who engage in identity politics like forms of identification with Indigeneity through clothes, long hair, rituals) operate at the level of the “entorno” (environment) rather than at the level of the two basic nodes of the system: economic and political organization.

Thus when Indianistas and Indigenistas refer to the ayllu, their reference is made to “territorial geographic organization” (which is a state conception) rather than

to the “core” of the ayllu which is the economic and political organization. Patzi Paco’s proposal will focus precisely on this. The question Patzi Paco asks: how to solve the paradox between, on the one hand, the denial of Indigenous identity and its reinforcement, on the other? He mentions some positions among Indianistas and Indigenistas who argued for the need of a mental revolution in order to solve the paradox. Patzi Paco’s opinion is that this position is utopian since it is impossible to revert the process when nations are traversed by global flows (music, television, cinema, videos, and internet).

Patzi Paco addresses all these issues through his theory of communal system. In personal conversation⁹ he mentioned that he has been observing for several years that there was an incongruence between the attention paid to surface symbols of Indians (whether they have cell phones and adapt symbols of not Indian culture) and to the fact (not really taken into consideration) that the ayllu remained, though changed, they remained as ayllu. The reason why they survived for three hundred years of Spanish colonialism and two hundred years of Bolivian republic, was not taken into consideration.

The question was how to structure the argument to make it effective. One night the light came in the name of Niklas Luhmann, Social Systems.¹⁰ Patzi Paco draw on two concepts, system and environment (e.g., entorno), that he also renders in terms of “center” and “periphery” (not in the geopolitical sense of the terms but to characterize a given social organization). As I suggested before, this is not

a case of application of Luhmann’s theory but its reversal. This is one of the obstacles that decolonial thinking has to solve. One way to go is border epistemology or border gnosis, a problem that is not a problem for the re-orientation of the European left in thinking “the common” since the re-thinking takes places, internally, within their regional genealogy of thought. Badiou doesn’t need to deal with “Chinese thoughts” but Sun Yat-sen and Mao Zedong had no choice but to be confronted with “European thought” from the right and from the left.

As Patzi Paco explains, Luhmann is concerned with social stability while he is interested in social transformation; furthermore, Luhmann’s analyzes modern society in which different fields are self-constituted (the political field, the economic field, the religious field, the artistic field), while in the ayllu this situation doesn’t obtain. In his own words:

“Asi una sociedad organizada en subsistemas, para Luhmann, es una sociedad que no dispone de ningún órgano central. Es una sociedad sin vértice ni centro. Mientras mi planteamiento consiste en que toda sociedad tiene su esencia o centro y una periferia. Esta diferencia es sin duda comprensible debido a que la preocupación de Luhmann es la de preservar la sociedad moderna, por eso podemos ubicarlo dentro del paradigma de una teoría general de la estabilidad. Mientras que nosotros proponemos una teoría de transformación.”¹¹

If then, social organizations are structured around two pillars of the system, which constitute its core (political and economic management) and its environ-

ment (or entorno), then the liberal state in Bolivia and the Indian organizations around the ayllus are both characterized by their system and their environment. This hypothesis explains that state multiculturalism (or the pluri and the multi as the expressions went) was an attempt from the Bolivian state to co-op the environment of the ayllu while ignoring, at the same time its core: the political and economic management. Here resides the second strong motivation to bring to the foreground the communal system and to confront it as an alternative option to the liberal system.

We can see now that both the “common” and the “communal” describe two horizons of expectations, one coming from the history of Europe and concocted by the European left and the other coming from the colonial histories of the Americas and concocted by Indigenous decolonial thinkers. What counts here is that a break through took place: the awareness of the indigenous leaders, Indian communities and non-Indian middle class supporters, that a de-colonial path to the future was opening and global futures cannot longer be thought out in terms of “good” universals that shall replace the “bad” universals of official Christianity and liberal capitalist civilization.

I can anticipate two kinds of smiles here: a) Romantic Indianism for the first case (Bolivia) and b) Imperialist pretensions of having a world homogenized by the communal system (global reach, not globalism or globalization in the neo-liberal sense of the word). Whoever has been following the events in South America since the Zapatistas uprising, and in the Andes in the past 15 years, would have a

hard time convincing me and others that this is romantic political theory. The second, we (all on the globe) are at the point in which abstract universals are no longer tenable: global reach of communal systems (which will not necessarily be based on Aymara-Quechua experiences if the system is worked out in China or South Africa) doesn't mean monotopic universality. What it means is that de-colonial options toward global futures have in the communal system both a philosophy of life, a non-capitalist economy where the main reward in life is to accumulate wealth, a non-liberal voting system to elect the candidate who propose themselves as candidate; and a non-communist organization in the hand of an omnipresent state. But what is it the communal system?

Briefly stated: “Entendemos por concepto comunal o comunitario a la propiedad colectiva de los recursos y al manejo o usufructo privado del mismo. Por eso esta categoría debe ser entendida no sólo como algo referido a las sociedades rurales o agrarias, aunque son las que han sabido adaptarse muy bien a los cambios contemporáneos. De ahí que, sin duda, nuestro punto de partida para el análisis de los sistemas comunales son las sociedades indígenas. A diferencia de las sociedades modernas, las sociedades indígenas no han producido los esquemas de diferenciación ni tampoco han generado la separación entre campos (campo política, campo económico, campo cultural, etc.).”¹²

I would like to propose here a change in the vocabulary. Patzi Paco remains within a sociological vocabulary shared by liberal and Marxists: “property” albeit with the modifier “colectiva.” But “collective

property” may be a confusing expression if we want to clearly distinguish between a communal system and communism or the commune. I would rather look for an expression like “collective rights to resources and group/family rights to use the fruits of their labor” (which means that people are not exploited by other people who appropriated the fruits of their labor as is the case in capitalist economy).

As I observed before, Patzi Paco looks at both the liberal and the communal systems in their core and their environment or “entorno.” In their core, there are both organized and consolidated on two pillars, economic and political/administrative managements. The difference lies in the type of economy and the political organization, both constituted by two types of “entornos” that Patzi Paco describes as “internal” and “external.” Internal “entorno” is generated within the system itself, liberal or communal. Crucial here is how both the system and the entorno are “coupled.” Patzi Paco introduces the concept of operational coupling and structural coupling.¹³

Through operational coupling a system, communal or liberal, can appropriate elements from the “entorno” of other systems. Thus, actors living by the rules of a communal system can appropriate elements of the entorno of the liberal systems, for example technology. Indian insurgencies that controlled the city of La Paz on a couple of occasions that ended with the presidency of Sánchez de Losada and later on of Carlos Mesa, were organized following the habits and the logic of the ayllu using cellular phones.¹⁴ The liberal system can, by means of operational coupling, appropriate elements

from another system, the communal, and “include” them next to the elements of the “entorno” internal to the liberal system. This is a common strategy to build the rhetoric of “inclusion” without modifying the core, political/ administrative and economic management.

Thus, the two pillars of the communal system (as of any other social system, sultanates, kingdom, modern-European liberal societies or modern/colonial societies in British or independent India or colonial or independent Bolivia) are then “the system of economic management” and the “system of political/administrative management.” The fact that the two systems of management could be distinguished doesn't mean that the economy and the government of the Sultanate shall be equal to the British State; and that the current organization of the modern states shall remain forever the model for the management of the community. Theoretically then the questions are not how the Andean communal system differs from the Bolivian version of the liberal system, but how it could be similar to any other social systems in the present that has been affected and disrupted by five hundred years of Western expansion.

Now, I am not suggesting here that Patzi Paco's modeling of the communal system shall be like the architect design for either remodeling an old building or building a new one. We know that people can be pushed to do what they do not want to do to a certain point. José Carlos Mariátegui saw it clearly and distinctively when he referred to building national-states grounded in liberal principles, in Peru after independence, in early nineteenth century. He stated:

“A society cannot be transformed artificially, still less a peasant society (here he is referring to Indians society indeed) deeply attached to its traditions and its legal institutions. Individualism has not has not originated in ay country’s constitution or civil code. It must be formed through a more complicated and spontaneous process. Destroying the ‘communities’ did not convert the Indians into small landowners or even into free salaried workers; it delivered their lands to the gamonales and their clientele and made it easier for the latifundista to chain the Indian to the latifundium.”¹⁵

Patzi Paco’s conceptualization of the communal system cannot be thought out as a replacement of the current modern/national state for it will not result on a plurinational but on a mononational state with different configuration. But for the same reason, it should count in the discussion for a pluri-national state for the current modern/colonial and mononational state could not offer a solution for a pluri-national state. Ignoring Patzi Paco’s proposal by the progressive left may end up in an excuse to prevent Indigenous and peasant leaders and communities to intervene in de-colonizing the current mono-cultural state that have been disputed by the white (Creole-Mestizo) right and left. A pluri-national state cannot be the left in power with the support of the Indians against the extreme right of the lowlands with the support of the international market.

III.

The United Nations will honor President Evo Morales with the title of “Defensor de la Madre Tierra.”¹⁶ In fact Evo Morales has

been very vocal and clear advancing decolonial views of Western conceptualization of Human/Nature relations, particularly since Francis Bacon’s *Novum Organum* (1620). The move by the United Nations supports recent conversations and celebrations of the declaration of “the rights of nature.” But the “rights of nature,” like “human rights” are necessary in a society in which “mother earth” is indeed “exploited” as provider of “natural resources” for a society based on the Industrial and Technological Revolutions, both part and parcel of a liberal and capitalist civilizations. There was no need of the “rights of nature” for example, in Tawantinsuyu or in Ancient China. For there was not Industrial Revolution that needed to deplete natural resources to produce artificial commodities and to dump the waste (and to dirty the water) on “nature” whose rights have been violated to produce artificial commodities, industrial and technological. The United Nations’ move responds to honest liberal intentions but at the same time silencing the process of the de-colonial Pachakuti (an Andean philosophical concept meaning a radical turn around of time and space) that the idea “of the communal system” is bringing to Bolivia, South America and to the world: the communal system doesn’t propose a more equitable distribution of wealth, but an horizon of life where wealth is not the goal. The goal, as it is being repeated today and inscribed in the Ecuadorian constitution is “el bien vivir,” and “el bien vivir” cannot be attained through an economic system that promotes accumulation at the expenses of human lives and of all living systems simplified under the name of “nature.”

Notes

1. <http://www.conamaq.org.bo/>
2. http://www.lacan.com/essays/?page_id=99.
3. Ayllu were the basic political and social units of pre-Inca and Inca life. These were essentially extended family groups but they could adopt non-related members, giving individual families more variation and security of the land that they farmed. – Explanation found online by the Editor.
4. Representatives from the Ayllu are sent to the National Council of Ayllu and Markas of the Qollasuyu or Conamaq. – Explanation found online by the Editor.
5. The Inca Empire (or Inka Empire) was the largest empire in pre-Columbian America. The administrative, political and military center of the empire was located in Cusco in modern-day Peru. The Inca Empire arose from the highlands of Peru sometime in early 13th century. From 1438 to 1533, the Incas used a variety of methods, from conquest to peaceful assimilation, to incorporate a large portion of western South America, centered on the Andean mountain ranges, including large parts of modern Ecuador, Peru, western and south central Bolivia, northwest Argentina, north and north-central Chile, and southern Colombia. The official language of the empire was Quechua, although hundreds of local languages and dialects of Quechua were spoken. The Quechua name for the empire was Tawantinsuyu, which can be translated as The Four Regions or The Four United Regions. Tawantin is a group of four things (tawa “four” with the suffix -ntin which names a group); suyu means “region” or “province.” The empire was divided into four Suyus, whose corners met at the capital, Cusco. – Explanation found online by the Editor.
6. See for instance the recent conference at Birkbeck College, University of London, on “The Idea of Communism,” http://www.lacan.com/essays/?page_id=99.
7. For the contextualization of “grupo comuna” see http://www.scielo.cl/scielo.php?pid=S0718-090X2005000100006&script=sci_arttext. Four names associated to it are Alvaro Garcia-Lineras, current Vice-President of Bolivia, Raquel Gutierrez, Raul Prada, also working in the government and Luis Tapia..
8. Sistema Comunal. Una propuesta alternativa al sistema liberal. Una discusión teórica para salir de la colonialidad y del liberalismo, CEA (Comunidad de Estudios Alternativos), La Paz,

2004. I will refer particularly to chapter V that contains the proposal.

9. During his visit to the UNC – Duke Consortium of Latin American and Caribbean Studies, in November of 2004.

10. Translated by John Bednarz, Jr with Dirk Baecker. Stanford U.P., Stanford, 1995.

11. Since the book by Patzi Paco, published in Bolivia, is not of easy access, I am quoting here from the reproduction of the main chapter (chapter 4), printed as “Sistema Comunal: Una propuesta alternativa al sistema liberal,” in *Las vertientes americanas del pensamiento y el proyecto des-colonial*, eds., Heriberto Cairo and Walter Mignolo, Trama editorial / GECAL, Madrid, 2008.

12. Op.cit, p. 70.

13. These concepts were introduced originally by Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, *El árbol del conocimiento*, Editorial Universitaria, Santiago de Chile, 1984. They were used without explicit reference by Niklas Luhmann. But this issue is for another discussion.

14. Esteban Ticona, personal communication.

15. Jose Carlos Mariategui, *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality* [1927]. Translated by Marjori Urquidí. The University of Texas Press, Austin, 1990.

16. At the time I am writing this article, no information is available in English, on Google. But it is all over the place in Spanish. http://spanish.china.org.cn/international/txt/2009-08/28/content_18419184.htm

De-Linking from Capital and the Colonial Matrix of Power: Class Racialization and the (De)Regulation of Life

by Sebastijan Leban

What is the sense of producing a critique of capital, or as well, a critical reflection on the ever increasing forms of exploitation, subjugation, racism, sexism and so on ad infinitum, if nothing seems to ever really change? Certainly, one can reassure you that it is about the production of the critical discourses, about warning of the incapability of the system, about awakening social awareness and localizing the common denominator for the new global struggle, or any other reason that might include a possible counter relation in which to confront the dominant structure of power – Capital. But does this constitute a real alternative, a real radical, critical discourse capable of forming the new struggle that will reject capitalism as a world order? Or are these ideas only endless repetitions incapable of producing any significant change? Is it really possible to produce a change without updating the basis of the struggle – theory? One thing is absolutely certain: capital as a world order will continue its existence through its line of exploitation whether encountering any opposition or not, and in order to achieve this, it will take recourse to any known strategy possible.

The very implication of a change does not reside just in the will to produce the change, but in the precise act of provoking that change to happen by any means. Even in this perspective, we have had events in history when those changes were provoked and where dominant structures of power were challenged, but none of those events liberated society from the dominator-dominated relation or changed the (un)natural course of capital. Upon second thought, however, never in history has there been at our disposal such a sheer amount of production of critical discourses and reflections on the current dominant structures of power. Starting from philosophy, on through theory, activism and artistic practice (each of these specific fields follows its own genealogical line of reference), enormous amounts of texts, critiques, analysis, interventions and art projects are being produced. Despite such an enormous critical production, we are more castrated than ever, with almost no possibility to react, with no critical mass on which to rely.

The implication of living in the neoliberal capitalist era includes not only the condi-

tion of being exploited by capital through the appropriation of surplus value and the neoliberal strategies linked to the market economy, but also that of being subjugated through all the other mechanisms of oppression, repression and discrimination that have been meticulously developed by capital in its formation as a world order. Starting with the medieval period, through mercantilism, industrialism, monopolism and up through now, the capitalist machine has been in constant evolution. The notions of usury, colonialism, enslavement, race and class classification, as well as any other form of discrimination, have been scrupulously expanded in order to allow the capitalist matrix to proliferate on a global scale. What is more, these strategies were not implemented separately one by one like usury in medieval period or colonialism in the period of mercantilism, but were gradually combined together to form a perfect machine/matrix, capable of producing simultaneous forms of oppression that result in infinite exploitation.

This condition as such of the development of capital by subjugating people and classifying them into ranks (either of race or class or gender) has become, after many centuries, even fiercer and is exponentially increasing. Thus, it's no surprise that we are witnessing an escalation in poverty, social inequalities, contemporary forms of colonization, marginalization, racism, sexism, etc., which is in itself a paradox, since by the very definition of development one would assume the evolving of society into a more socially oriented structure. What happens in real life is exactly the opposite; capital increases its production of surplus value by introducing amelioration in the areas of

technological development by way of which it is capable to exploit more. The collateral effect of this is the generation of ever-new forms of oppression that are suffocating the major part of the world's population.

In producing its fake concern about the care for the planet, for the people, for the entire society, capital alters reality. Obviously, this alteration is not perceived as a fiction but as reality in itself (Žižek). But what if we go beyond the psychoanalytic model of investigation and try to analyze the production of fake concern from the radical-critical perspective. One of the basic concerns today on the global level is climate change and how we can reduce global warming. The latest in a series of attempts to achieve this reduction is the Copenhagen Climate Conference, conceived as a pre-signing act, since the Kyoto Protocol will run out in 2012 and there is an urgent need for the signing of a new protocol to which all nations will adhere, especially the most powerful ones.

It is exactly in this regard that I want to analyze a speech given by Barack Obama on the topic of clean energy. From this analysis, I intend to draw a line that not only clearly shows how old colonialist aspirations are in use today (proving that colonialism never ended), but also detects how power structures once based primarily on race classification have upgraded and posited as their basis the condition to pertain to the upper class. This does not mean that old forms of classification are not in use anymore; rather, this means that the formation of the upper class is not constituted only of white capitalist/bourgeois males but that it has

been, as a consequence of globalisation, forced to invent a new leading/elite class (defined by money, not by skin color). What is more, this reorganisation has as a consequence of the formation of class racialization a new form of categorisation that I will develop further in the text.

A clear signal on how contemporary colonization is taking place is to be detected in Barak Obama's speech at MIT, where he stated: "from China to India, from Japan to Germany, nations everywhere are racing to develop new ways to produce and use energy. The nation that wins this competition will be the nation that leads the global economy. I am convinced of that. And I want America to be that nation."¹What first comes to the fore is the clear imperialist diction hidden behind the agenda of clean energy. By stating that America has to be that nation, a pure colonial manifestation is taking place, determining two things simultaneously: firstly, that the American agenda is to continue the American imperialism of the 20th century throughout the 21st century and beyond; and secondly, that by defining the search for alternative sources of energy that will decrease global warming as a race/game, it transports us back in history where old imperialist (England, France, Spain, etc.) were competing with one another to win more colonies, territory and power.

The second level of the problem is to be found in the diction racing to develop new ways to produce and use energy that implies market competition logic and has as a consequence a total disinterest in finding a solution to global warming. That is, it merely reorganizes/reshapes the ecology topic into an economic one, thus

pinning the rules of economy onto the ecological context. Striving for profit, for the accumulation of surplus value, for the master position, are facts that have been continuously shaping our reality for centuries. The point is not to save the planet and its population, but to invent new forms of their exploitation.

What is the trigger by which the master-slave dialectic never ceases to exist even though it is proclaimed in the West that we are living a perfect dream where a truly democratic equality of each and every man is taking place? Obviously enough, we are today – as we were in the past – confronted with the ruthless structure of domination ruled by capital whose one and only aim is the disproportionate accumulation of surplus value on the one hand, and the (de)regulation of life on the other.

The modus operandi of the capitalist matrix could be clearly detected in the latest financial crisis triggered by the mortgage crisis in the U.S. One of the major preconditions for this to have happened is to be found, as stated by Melinda Cooper and Angela Mitropoulos, in the usurious debt system of subprime home loans. "To denounce usury is to point an accusatory finger at debts whose repayment cannot be guaranteed and therefore should not have been promised. Unlike the debt that can be repaid, which in its repayment makes the future a calculable version of the present, usurious debt assumes the existence of an incalculable, unknowable – and, quite possibly inflationary – risk."² What is even more interesting are the results deriving from Cooper and Mitropoulos's analysis, which clearly shows that "the greater proportion of sub-

prime was composed of women, and African-American and Latina women in particular (most of those demographed as 'single parent' households or living in non-normative 'arrangements')."³

As further claimed in the analysis, the types of loans (prime, semi-prime and subprime) were not calculated on the basis of a person's net income or his/her credit histories, but on the basis of race, gender and marital status. We are thus confronted with the logic of functionality of the capitalist matrix executed through/by the home loans on the parameters of class/race/gender classification. If we want to understand the method in use by capital as it is presented through the act of home loans, we must analyze on which basis were the parameters of the modern social classification established. According to Anibal Quijano, it was only "after the colonization of America and the expansion of European colonialism to the rest of the world, that the subsequent constitution of Europe as a new id-entity needed the elaboration of a Eurocentric perspective of knowledge, a theoretical perspective on the idea of race as a naturalization of colonial relations between Europeans and non-Europeans. Historically, this meant a new way of legitimizing the already old ideas and practices of relations of superiority/inferiority between dominant and dominated. From the sixteenth century on, this principle has proven to be the most effective and long-lasting instrument of universal social domination, since the much older principle – gender or intersexual domination – was encroached upon by the inferior/superior racial classifications."⁴

Following the epistemological research

line of the project of de-coloniality, we can clearly detect that race classification rests at the very core of the formation of Western civilized society as we know it today. However, it is only from the Enlightenment that its postulate also started to dominate through the geopolitics of knowledge (Eurocentrism). As argued by Ramon Grosfoguel, Descartes had formed the basis of modern Western philosophy by defining a new moment in the history of Western thought, where "the figure of God – the foundation of knowledge in the theo-politics of knowledge of the European Middle Age – has been replaced by the figure of the (Western) man – which forms the foundation of knowledge in European Modern times."⁵ All the attributes that were until that time only in the domain of God have become the right of (Western) man. Grosfoguel further argues that the universal truth beyond time and space, privileged access to the laws of the Universe, and the capacity to produce scientific knowledge and theory have been placed in the mind of Western man.

What is the importance of understanding the basis of race classification? Why bring to the fore old techniques of subjugation and analyze them, if those techniques from the past seem to be left out of the spectre of present domination? Does the past really have no connection with the present? Or is it exactly the opposite, that what we are facing today is just the unavoidable consequence of the historical formation of capital?

The monstrous appetite of capital, as a vampire-like creature, for appropriating, enslaving and exploiting is far from drawing to an end, for it is enclosed in the pro-

duction of the capitalist matrix. Therefore, the latest crisis of financial capital can be interpreted as a mere modernization of capital, as a new redistribution of power. We are today witnessing the imperialism of circulation that “in its frenetic processes, prevents the subversion, the attack of any master entity. Everything circulates, is exchanged, clearly dispossessed of any difference, and no obstacles are to be seen in the network that structures reality for us.”⁷⁶ This means that we face a constant regulation through biopolitics and regulation through necropolitics. If biopolitics involves the regulation of life, necropolitics involves its deregulation through the regulation and production of death. Therefore, biopolitics (Agamben) and necropolitics (Mbembe) are not diametrically opposed, but on the contrary, they constantly complement and upgrade one another through the imperialism of circulation. This last allows the capitalist matrix to carry out contemporary processes of subjugation, exploitation and oppression differently in different parts of the world.

The latest financial crisis has clearly shown how dead labour (capital) can affect living labour (workers) by affecting the working sector, thus causing people to lose their jobs and houses and getting them even deeper into the sphere of class racialization. By class racialization, I refer to the new type of categorization that is formed of social classification (on the bases of class and race) and racism combined through different historical methods of oppression developed by capital with the purpose of classifying and segregating people on a global scale through a uniformed signifier (capital). A clear example of the functioning of class racialization lies in the fact that today in the

United States, “the white poor are encouraged to support the dismantling of the welfare state and the cutting of specific policies that could improve their life chances. Although policies stigmatized as affirmative action have helped hundreds of thousands of white women enter colleges, secure employment, and gain promotions, the white poor are persuaded that the blacks get more. For this reason, they are the most virulent opponents of affirmative action although they, too, suffer from economic hardship, social stigma and political disempowerment.”⁷⁷ In this way, the system continually maintains the hierarchical structure of the supremacy of the upper over the lower class, thus further weakening the class struggle by introducing racism, which establishes a field of separation within the class struggle itself and therefore reduces it to the minimum.

Class racialization thus defines the new subaltern subject that is placed in the lower class and is located both in the First capitalist world and outside of it. What first comes to the fore is the fact that to pertain to the lower class means to be absolutely exploited by capital through the working process, deprived of the surplus value and classified as commodity. If to this we add the fact exposed by Cooper and Mitropoulos that such a person was forced to take a subprime loan, which is by all means an usurious debt, we can clearly conclude that this person is being subjugated by capital on two different levels typical of two different periods of capitalist development: medieval and industrialist. Since this person pertains to the lower class, he/she falls under the regime of class racialization. This means that he/she is ranked by the same

classification methods that Quijano defines as being based on race and racial identity, which historically became the main criterion for placing people into ranks, places and roles. If we add the fact that he or she is also a gay or a lesbian, and thus treated immediately as non-human and accused by the so-called integral part of society of being a pervert, then we have a third component involved, namely, the segregation produced through discrimination. Finally, let us assume that this person, being a homosexual or a lesbian from a lower class and having a usurious debt hanging over his head, practices the Muslim religion; then we have partly defined not just the contemporary modus operandi of the capitalist matrix in executing its exploitation strategies over the oppressed, but have also located the new subaltern subject.

Race, gender and class classification, discrimination toward gays, lesbians and migrants, and old and new forms of colonialism, enslavement, usury, etc. are at work simultaneously, defining the new subaltern subject that it is not determined by just being located in the colonies, outside the First capitalist world, but by being located inside the parameters of class racialization.

To conclude, in order to start a real process of de-linking from capital, the colonial matrix of power and the geopolitics of knowledge (Mignolo) we have to understand the functioning of today’s capitalist matrix. We have to localize the mechanism that allows the imperialism of circulation to spread exponentially. The relation between biopolitics and necropolitics has to be upgraded with the crucial element that conflates the binary opposi-

tion of the (de)regulation of life. This crucial element is to be found exactly in the capitalist mode of production. It is the living labour that, through surplus value, produces capital, which is defined by Marx as being dead labour “that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks.”⁷⁸

Thus, capital does not just exploit workers, peoples and territories, but like a vampire, sucks their life away.

Notes

1. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PIVoyL8cck>.
2. Cf. Melinda Cooper and Angela Mitropoulos, *In Praise of Usura*, http://www.metamute.org/content/in_praise_of_usura.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Cf. Anibal Quijano, *America and the New Model of Global Power*, <http://64.233.183.104/search?q=cache:pnBnN65NYxYJ:socrates.berkeley.edu/~tochtli/AnibalQuijano.doc+Anibal+Quijano&hl=sl&ct=clnk&cd=7&gl=si>.
5. Cf. Ramón Grosfoguel, *Transmodernity, border thinking, and global coloniality*, <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2008-07-04-grosfoguel-en.html>.
6. Cf. Marina Gržinić, “Political act in contemporary art: Drawing borders,” published in this number of *Pavilion*.
7. Cf. Achille Mbembe, *Whiteness without Apartheid: The limits of racial freedom*, http://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy_power/africa_democracy/south_apartheid.
8. Cf. Karl Marx, *Capital I, Chapter Ten: The Working-Day*, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/ch10.htm>.

Beyond the State and the Market: Trans-Modern Art as a Way of Liberating Knowledge and Being

by Madina Tlostanova

One of the most devastating consequences of modernity with its consecration of market economy can be defined as a consistent cultivation and maintaining of the gnoseological and ontological bondage or, a coloniality of being and of knowledge. Throughout the last five hundred years this tendency has been expressed globally in various forms, yet essentially it can be taken down to the fact that the West has determined the single norm of humanity and legitimate knowledge, while all other people and knowledges have been classified as deviations, dismissed or subject to various changes with the goal of making them closer to the Western ideal. This claim and this zombification are still intact today. Ontological marginalizing of the non-Western people or, in N. Maldonado-Torres's words, "misanthropic skepticism" (Maldonado-Torres, 2007) has been expressed in a specific editing of subjectivity and knowledge, often by means of eliminating everything that does not correspond to the Western norm of the rational human being. A crucial sphere of intersection of being and knowledge is art, along with other forms of non-rational knowledge, thrown out of modernity. It is there that the most promising models of

decolonizing of being and knowledge are shaped. They cannot exit within the traditional disciplines infected by the virus of "disciplinary decadence" (Gordon, 2006). In many non-western, ex-colonized and newly recolonized through neo-imperial encroachments spaces, the sphere of art remains one of the few islands of liberation of subjectivity and knowledge, superseding the familiar discourses and clichés of modernity, not merely through a political opposition but also through an aesthetic subversion which is particularly important in the building of models of re-existence (Alban Achinte, 2006). Most often it takes place in the form of tricksterism based on constant reverting to such categories and models which modernity is unable to understand. They undermine and destabilize it from the position of the outside created from the inside (Mignolo, Tlostanova 2006, p. 206). This prevents modernity from its usual game of classifying the rest of the world and itself using itself as the only legitimate point of reference.

Under tricksterism here I mean a dialogic concept negotiating between Dona Haraway's and Chela Sandoval's interpretations of trickster and also the real

trickster traditions that grew out of the geo-politics and body-politics of particular locales. Haraway's conceptualizing of trickster has something to do with the indigenous people protest thinking as it is a position of radical "mestisaje" which looks for similarity in difference (Haraway, 1992). In Sandoval's mind, differential mode of social movements and consciousness depends on the ability to read a concrete situation of power and consciously chose an ideological position, most adequate for the opposition to this power configuration (Sandoval, 2000, p. 60). The individual practicing such a mode is required, according to Maria Lugones, to make a nomadic journey between the worlds of meaning (Lugones, 2003). Differential consciousness as trickster's mind inclines to other principles of mobility and to metamorphosis and transformationism. For Sandoval a trickster "practices subjectivity as masquerade, it is the oppositional agent who accesses differing identity, ideological, aesthetic and political positions. This nomadic "morphing" is not performed only for survival's sake, as in earlier, modernist times. It is a set of principled conversions that requires (guided) movements, a directed but also a diasporic migration in both consciousness and politics, performed to ensure that ethical commitment to egalitarian social relations be enacted in the everyday, political sphere of culture <...>This ethical principle guides the deployment of all technologies of power that are utilized by the differential practitioner of a theory and method of oppositional consciousness (Sandoval, 2000, p. 62).

Turning to the changeable trickster metaphor, which acquires concrete

meanings in each cultural-epistemic locale, we can avoid the new abstract universal, and attempt at a mutual translation between the modern and trans-modern (Dussel, 2002) idioms. Tricksterism flourishes in the commodity racism (McClintock 1995) and boutique multiculturalism environment, when the relations with the other become finalized in their commercial and appropriation forms and an intellectual, a writer or an artist finds herself/himself in the grip of the market, which in post- and neo-totalitarian countries, is additionally accompanied by the hegemony of the state. The decolonial aesthetic sphere today gives birth to the most fruitful models of overcoming of these restrains and building the emancipated ways of being - around and beyond modernity, often by means of a fundamental ironic play on the commodified forms and disavowing their inherent motifs.

The trickster dwells in the borders of the imperial/colonial differences and from that experience there emerges a new trans-aesthetic that connects people through the world who have suffered the colonial wound (Anzaldúa, 1999). In the imperial/colonial borders there is an energy and a creativity that I. Kant imagined exclusively in the territory of European national communities. This trans-aesthetics emerges in artists who dwell in the cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and religious Spirit (far from Hegelian Spirit) of the imperial/colonial borderlands. They are de-colonizing aesthetics, parallel and complementary to de-colonization of being, of knowledge and of gender. This process is based on rehabilitation of space and rethinking of the Cartesian formula "I think therefore I am" into Walter

Mignolo's "I am where I think" (Mignolo forthcoming). With discrediting of neo-liberal teleology of market and consumption, the last progressivist universalist vector of global history vanishes together with the last closed utopia of the global salvation. As a result, topos, in a sense, re-conquers chronos. Consequently, there comes the task of looking for other grounds of organizing the chaos we live in and creation of other concepts which would not be confined to passive describing of the past by means of outdated and provincial categories of Western modernity, or to simple negation and criticism of modernity as such, but also would concentrate on the present and on projecting the open and pluritopic positive utopias into the future.

An example from the sphere of art which is an interesting realization of ironic tricksterism, playing on the market forms while using them at the same time, is the work of a young Buryatian painter Zorikto Dorzhiev (Khankhalaev, 2009). If in the West there is a rather long tradition of contesting art, marked with both ethnic and epistemic difference in Eurasia this problematic and imagery so far have been mainly conceptualized through Orientalism. Mostly Dorzhiev's works are reviewed by Russian (not Buryatian) critics who remain mentally within the frame of the (post)Soviet multiculturalism where Buryatian art could be only decorative and largely confined to the realm of handicraft, not art. Hence there are no instruments, no concepts and no theoretical tools for understanding and interpreting Dorzhiev's works. The artist himself does not like to explain what he does claiming that a work of art does not answer questions, it asks them. Critics

often describe his works as stylizing, for lack of a better term (Arsenyeva, 2009). Zorikto agrees but with a sly smile and we clearly see the absurdity of this definition offered by someone confined to the Western aesthetic principles. All of a sudden this shocked spectator realizes that the savage who before was seen as only capable of making simple articles, not only knows Leonardo Da Vinci but has the guts to laugh at his Gioconda in the scandalous Gioconda Hatun where the etalon of European beauty transmutes into a Buryatian one. This Gioconda is smiling even more cunningly because she is ironic about the Western aesthetic and ethical principles, as well as other characters of Dorzhiev's subverted quotations, destabilizing the Western originals (Are you Jealous?, Danae, Girl with the Coral Earring, etc.) The word "stylizing" carries a desperate strive to confine this enigmatic art within the limits of European aesthetic normalcy, where the use of indigenous cosmology can be allowed only through detachment, never in a serious way, exclusively from the position of the Western aesthetics shared by yet another Ariel. A Caliban, painting an ironic Miranda's portrait, making her look like his mother Sycorax, can not by definition be accepted in Prospero's reference system.

Anticipating Orientalist and progressivist interpretations, Dorzhiev claims that he does not go back to authenticity, that there was never a simple exoticist authenticity of the Western imagination. Instead he uses his genetic memory of a nomad to constantly remake, recreate and rework the images of the Great Steppe and its people, always trying not to lose the main thread which is retained

under any circumstances taking different forms. This method is far from stylizing. Rather it is groping for one's own ways of re-existence in the dialogue and in the cracks between the West and the non-West and not merely conceptualizing the past and the present, but also creating a new world with various means. Openly political activism would not find its way into Dorzhiev's art. Yet it does not make him apolitical or self-orientalizing. He simply practices a tongue in cheek existence – he is cunning, he is pretending and he is making fun of Western art and art theory, of Western aesthetic judgment, in such a way that the West would not guess it.

He undermines the very grounds of the hegemonic Western aesthetics, which coded its ways of feeling and sensing as the only true and acceptable ones. Dorzhiev questions not merely what is the sublime and the beautiful but also who is the person who judges, how and under which factors his subjectivity and hence his taste has been shaped and why he has or has no right to universal aesthetic judgments. He can do it because he is a border artist who retains a Buryatian subjectivity even if he has a westernized education. Both of his parents are professional painters and Zorikto himself grew up as a city boy and not a taiga dweller. He was surrounded from the start by art catalogues and albums, he had a classical academic art education but soon discovered that life is wider than academic art and started to work on his own unique style, always changing yet recognizable as a jazz theme. There is nothing primordialist in it. Instead there is an attempt to enter the Buryatian imaginary as a river which is always changing

yet remains the same river, which falls out of the Western logic of either/or, assuaging what the Western modernity would interpret as contradictions in the act of balancing the change and the continuity. Instead of going back to a primordial tradition Dorzhiev liberates it from the grip of Western aesthetic and disciplinary divisions, concepts and categories. The river of Buryatian cosmology is entered not by a Kantian "raw" unprepared savage, but by a subject with a double and multiple vision, marked by his pluritopic position.

Zorikto Dorzhiev does not refer in his art in any direct way to the history of Russian colonization of his land, and its negative modernization. He creates his works as if this official history did not exist, he intentionally marginalizes it, making the colonization by Russia and the vassal relations with it look as merely the last and short chapter in the long history of Mongol-Buryats. He broods over an other history and an other genealogy striving to understand an other subjectivity, evading rational understanding and much more complex than a simple vector modernization. His personages do not suffer the subaltern inferiority complex, they are not trying to prove anything to anyone, they are self-sufficient and often immersed in meditation. Even his numerous warriors are never fighting but meditating, sleeping or dreaming, because for Dorzhiev the state of reverie conveys a person's core most accurately.

Discovered almost by chance by a Buryatian gallerist and patron of art Konstantin Khankalaye, he seems to follow the predictable way of a multicultural artist acquiring a global fame through a

skillful PR, which he has to subsequently work off. First he exhibits in the Museum of Buryatian history in Moscow, then in Khankalayev's own gallery, later in Taipei, Strasbourg, in the Tibet House in New-York, in the State Museum of the Art of the Peoples of the East in Moscow and only afterwards, in the Central House of Artists: in accordance with the Western museum logic, an oriental other is first seen outside the history of (Western or Westernized) art and closer to natural history and anthropology, and only after the Western blessing, his art is allowed to rise to the status of a truly aesthetic object. Dorzhiev says that a union between an artist and a producer today is the most optimal for the artist because it allows him not to think of the commercial side of art (Svobodina, 2007).

At the same time he manages to keep his art out of reach of the orientalist and commercial stereotypes. There is a parallel world of Buryatian aesthetics and subjectivity which Dorzhiev constantly puts in a dialogue with the world of normative Western imagery and ideas of the sublime and the beautiful. It is not an aggressive argument, not a negation, it is precisely a dialogue based on parity and mutual openness, led from a position of someone demanding and critical of himself, yet at the same time retaining a certain internal harmony, a meditative equilibrium, as he does not exist within the agonistic paradigm with its strive to succeed by winning over the others. Rather he is competing with himself, aware of impossibility of reaching the forever escaping perfection. As a true trickster, he is always in quest, in constant becoming; he creates his style anew with every new painting.

The main character of Dorzhiev's art is a paradoxical contemplating nomad. As the artist explains, the nomad is not a tourist, thirsty for new experiences and emotions and he is not looking for better life either. Rather nomads are artists, poets, philosophers – lonely as a rule, because it is easier to think when you are alone (Dorzhiev, 2007). And the Great Steppe where he resides is not a two-dimensional nationalistic symbol but a living collective organism, with which its inhabitants are in dynamic balance. He regards the nomadic world not as a real physical space with every-day life style and material details, but rather as an infinite and constantly changing existential and metaphysical space, which combines a personal and a cosmic dimension at once, and is stitched together by a sense of unity of everything and everyone in the universe. Dorzhiev avoids the deepest grounds of contemporary Western art – logic and rationality: he claims that for him the implementation of a rational idea is never a primary task, that he does not use bright colors because they are too logical, that he prefers to whisper instead of speaking loudly, because that way it is easier to hear the most important.

The proud girls from the Concubine Days of the Week series, the brooding postman in the snow covered steppe and the vagabond fallen asleep in the painting called The Return, the vulnerable princess sleeping on a pea and the old man dreaming of the non-existent sea – all of them are not flat and frozen images or folklore, pictorial and literary quotations, each of them acquires a subjectivity, a character, a unique story. In this sense Dorzhiev answers the model of

Maria Lugones's playful traveler who juggles cultures and other people's worlds with a loving perception (Lugones, 2003). However he always keeps an ironic distance, a border balancing on the verge of the tragic and the comical, and a grotesque alienation in relation to both Western allusions and the Buryatian and Buddhist imagery.

The second example of the creative border tricksterism overcoming the dictate of the market and the hegemony of the state is the Tashkent theater Ilkhom, the first independent theater studio in the Soviet Union which was founded in 1976 and has long since become the center of Tashkent alternative aesthetics (Ilkhom). Its performances are based on critical rethinking of the caricature or exoticist image of the East, questioning both the Western modernity and the ethnic nationalist or religious fundamentalist discourses. Already its first performance was an attempt at trans-cultural dialogue as it combined the traditions of the Uzbek street theater Maskharaboz with the latest theatrical experimentation resulting in the specific Ilkhom principles based on constant improvisation and plurilinguistic change of codes. First Ilkhom had to fight with the Soviet censorship. With Perestroika the theatre had a chance to finally become known in the world. But in the new independent Uzbekistan it was forced once again into fighting with nationalists, Islamists and the state, who opposed the artistic means, the texts of the plays, the homosexual theme that the theatre often touched upon, and more importantly, the constant mocking of the authority as such. There were attempts to burn the theatre, its director and creator Mark Weil was stabbed to death in 2007,

but the theatre still survives today, although its future is uncertain.

From the start Ilkhom has been a trans-cultural and multilingual theatre as the city where it exists, capable of accommodating the unlikely opposites, mixing on its stage the languages, the faces of Tashkenters, their tempers and their ways of life. This is particularly graphic in Weil's signature 1993 improvisation based on Carlo Gozzi's Happy Beggars. The show was built on the intersection of unexpected sources – *comedia dell'arte* and Uzbek street theater, the characters speaking Uzbek, Russian, Italian, Jewish, mixing clothes, cultures, religions, mentalities, classes, countries and continents. Ilkhom negates Gozzi's Orientalism that presented Samarkand as a fantastic dystopia, a place nowhere, fallen out of time and progress, as well as Baudrillard's beautiful and sad parable of the rendezvous with death in Samarkand. This production, in contrast with Baudrillard's essay from *De la Seduction* (Baudrillard, 1979), can be called "Life in Samarkand." Weil's Samarkand carries an atmosphere of a train station, a perfect place for beggars, put into a recognizable Babylonian cultural context of the early post-soviet life and a looming globalization, where no one is at home and everyone is a potential beggar, yet a peculiar hermeneutics of love, in spite of all differences, gives a promise of understanding.

In 2005 Weil came back to this problematic in his controversial and risky *Flights of Mashrab*, dedicated to the 250th anniversary of Mozart. Mashrab emerges not in his "combed" traditional appearance of one of the most talented Uzbek

poets of the late 17th – early 18th century, a contemporary of Mozart. He comes instead as a wild naked-ass dervish of a Sufi order, a heretic castrate and a cheeky wonderer who refuses to fear the power in any guise – Muslim or secular, and who rejects any organized religion. His life is a series of small and big acts of defiance similar to those that Ilkhom company and its director have gone through in the last two decades. Mashrab is a provocative radical and a trickster who jokes with power and urinates on the khan's throne and who does not keep silence if he disagrees, even when it threatens his life, just as Weil did himself. The performance is not merely trans-cultural (for instance, Mozart music is played using Uzbek instruments), it is also palpably connected with contemporaneity, as it obviously parallels the political situation in modern Uzbekistan. Weil was asked to make Mashrab less radical but he refused. What infuriated the authorities was Mashrab's free spirit and his refusal to accept the truth taken from someone else's hands, even if famous, powerful or respected.

Ecstasy with the Pomegranate is another example of trans-modern border aesthetics. It is a sensuous parable of yet another trickster – a Russian by origin, once modernist (suprematist) painter Alexander Nikolayev, who became fascinated with the Orient, came to Uzbekistan, later became a Sufi and turned into Usto Mumin (A Gentle Master), remaking and reworking the ancient Persian miniature style, the icons, the Italian and Muslim renaissance. The show attempts to recreate a story of the forgotten and forbidden art of trans-sexual bacha (boy) dancers who

became the muses of Usto Mumin. Ecstasy with the pomegranate is a virtuosic trans-cultural, trans-media and global phenomenon, not only in its presentation but also in its creation. The androgynous batcha dances were directed by a famous American dancer, writer, director and founder of the modern inter-racial and intercultural dance group Reality David Roussève. A young Uzbek artist Babur Ismailov did a fascinating work of adapting Nikolayev's paintings for video and animation presentation during the show. A Korean by origin composer Artyem Kim created a delicate, sensuous and suggestive sound track based on rhythmical leitmotifs repeated in various media – from traditional musical instruments to voice and even pebbles in the big metal pot. As a result, there emerged a border performance, always balancing on the edge of various art forms, languages (Weil used Anzaldua's type of bilingual repetition with variation when a phrase is first said in Uzbek and then repeated in Russian but with a deviation), rhythms (Central Asian mixing with Caribbean), and symbols (e.g. queer semiotics interchanges with the Sufi one).

It has long become a common place that modernity deadens with its commodifying touch all forms of knowledge and subjectivity. However it is important to stress that there remain the stubborn islands of resistance and re-existence which on many levels work for the liberation of consciousness and of knowledge from the zombification of modernity. I attempted to demonstrate how the contemporary art of the ex- and present Russian colonies carries a successful attempt at decolonizing of being and of knowledge in the aesthet-

ic form. Due to the double dictate of the market and the totalitarian state, such a liberation turns out to be impossible in legitimate (for modernity) forms of rational academic knowledge, the non-existent in these locales civil society or the strangled political society (Chatterjee, 2004). Yet the border trickster art on the intersection of ontology and epistemology, unexpectedly turns out to be effective in the process of liberation of knowledge and of being from the myths of modernity.

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Šefik Šeki Tatlić is a theoretician from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Master of Arts in journalism and currently enrolled in PhD program at the Faculty of Sociology, University of Zagreb. Works in field of political philosophy, culture and sociology. Has published works in Germany, Austria, Italy, Slovenia, Romania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Regular contributor to artistic/political/theoretical newspaper Reartikulacija, Ljubljana. Active as a producer of contemporary music.

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