

**INVISIBLE
VIOLENCE**



INVISIBLE VIOLENCE

Partner institutions:

Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade

Artium, Basque Museum-Center of Contemporary Art, Vitoria-Gasteiz

Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg

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Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art /

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Artium, Basque Museum-Center of Contemporary Art

Salzburg, Austria: 14 February – 10 April 2015

Salzburger Kunstverein

Curators: Blanca de la Torre, Zoran Erić, Séamus Kealy



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Figures of Invisible Violence in Europe

What makes violence invisible?

The theme of violence as a subject for an exhibition is naturally a sensitive one. The question that occurs right from the beginning, after all the historical examples of extreme violence and the more recent paradigm of terrorism, is how to differentiate between these and the so-called invisible violence? How do we theoretically articulate what the very notion of invisible violence represents among the numerous concepts of violence that are considered as a vast and everlasting theme in political and social theory? In order to narrow down the field of references, our starting point for an analysis of this theme was the distinction Slavoj Žižek made between subjective, objective and systemic forms of violence. Apparently, the first form of subjective violence, manifested in crime and terror, is the most visible among the three. However, things get more complicated when he introduces two other forms of violence: objective i.e., racism, hate-speech, discrimination, etc.; and the systemic, seen in the “catastrophic effects of economic and political systems”.¹ The major distinction for Žižek is that subjective and objective violence operate on different levels. While subjective violence disrupts the “normal” peaceful state of affairs, objective violence is exactly inherent to what appears, and is perceived as a “normal” condition. To make this distinction sharper, Žižek concludes that: “objective violence is **invisible** since it sustains the very zero-level standard against which we perceive something as subjectively violent.”² Within this triangle, the last form of systemic violence is again seen in opposition to subjective violence and could thus potentially also be invisible and inherent in the processes of social systems such as globalization, capitalism, fundamentalism or language.

As an extension to Žižek’s distinction that itself was a triggering point for reflecting on a concept of invisible violence in the context of Europe, another seminal reference was the analysis of Etienne Balibar on the failure of the concept of common European citizenship identity and, namely, his distinction between two opposite but complementary modes of violence. The first one he sees inherent to the current state of capitalism and coins it “ultra-objective”. Its systemic role is to provide the societal mechanisms for the segregation and marginalization of “undesired” social groups - from homeless to the unemployed to refugees – that are seen as

1 Slavoj Žižek, *Violence*, (London: Profile Books, 2009), 1-2

2 Ibid.

“democratically invisible”.³ The other mode of violence Balibar describes as “ultra-subjective”, which is manifested in the resurgence of fundamentalist ideology based on ethnicity or religion.⁴

Curatorial & artistic strategies

Bearing in mind these initial theoretical concepts and distinctions, we didn't wish to impose them on the artists as exclusive lines of perception for the conceptual framework we set up for the project. On the contrary, the synchronous point of departure for the project was the analysis of concrete artistic practices that may research and reflect upon examples of so-called invisible violence as it is discernible within the quotidian, domestic, work-related, and/or the “micro-fascisms” of everyday life. The numbers of case studies were also focusing on the administrative and bureaucratic violence practised on the marginalized social groups such as immigrants and migrants. Furthermore, subtle forms of sectarianism and community animosities were investigated from recent historical circumstances. These comparisons of violence were explored by bringing together artists' work that problematize territorial, nationalistic, mythological and identity-related topics, without being bogged down by dualistic, partitioned or oppositional representations. This was a key and inherent part of the geo-political specificity of the project, since each original area of curatorial concern (Ireland, Serbia and Spain) had a deeply associable overlap with these topics.

From the outset, our curatorial strategy was to resist an undue focus on issues of war, genocide and extreme violence, while enabling these to be a tangible, if unseen, backdrop to the project. The violence that was to be mainly explored – that is, depicted or investigated through the invited artists' work – is apparent in the forms of violence within language, within representation, visual violence in advertising and media, or violence as a result of shifting socio-economic conditions, and shifting ideas and policies that may be identified as enacting a cultural violence upon geo-political bodies and individuals. This did not mean that these more topical and more pronounced forms of violence (terrorism, war, ethnic cleansing and genocide) were explicitly avoided, but that instead they did not dominate the field of references, which itself aimed to cast several beacons on different forms of cultural and contemporary violence simultaneously.

3 Term introduced by Costas Douzinas

4 See Etienne Balibar, “La violence: idealite et cruauté,” in *La crainte des masses: politique et philosophie avant et après Marx*, (Paris: Editions Galilee, 1997). as quoted in Žižek, 14

Setting up the discourse

Our curatorial goal was to raise all these issues and theoretical debate at the conference held the day after the opening of the first iteration of the exhibition in Belgrade. At that point, we gathered theorists and artists to discuss three major thematic clusters that were discerned as key symptoms that express invisible violence within the European context today: retraditionalization, bureaucratization and exploitation.

In the new political context in Europe where the idea of the left-wing partisanship has nearly vanished, the current trend of conservative, right-wing politics reveals many symptoms of retraditionalization manifested in the resurgence of forms of nationalism, and an enhancement of national identity often based on recycling national myths and folklore. Rediscovery of tradition was often used in different contexts to make a Manichean antagonization between “us” and them,” where “our” (ethno)national identity had to be proven to be “older” and thus dominant over the “others”. The tradition was thus used as a tool for the construction of national narratives, often based on fake identities and interpolations of myths into the historical discourses. The side effects of these retraditionalization processes (happening most notably in the cases of former socialist countries) was the erasure of history and all remains of past ideological constructs. An ideological void and amnesia have thus been necessary for the introduction of new political, national and cultural identities. Similar processes also happened in more subtle, more “invisible” manners in western European nations, through commonalities of consent, lack of political will due to a collective wish not to disrupt a common identity, and through ideologically-bent language formation.

The other dominant process of bureaucratization is manifested both on the national level and on that of the supranational level of the EU parliament where we are witnessing the violence induced by new legislations; the problematic of institutional governance and political interference. One may even go so far to conclude that a new class of bureaucrats has been growing and absorbing more and more power and privileges in order to keep the new geographical EU borders but also inner societal borders based on new sets of legislation impenetrable for the alien, the Other, or non-EU citizens. This has turned a new corner with the current Brexit situation, where the faceless bureaucracy of the EU is now considered the actual adversary to a resurgence of nationalistic urges.

Finally, due to the prevalence of global capital networks in Europe, new types of exploitation are occurring, followed by new political hegemonies within the EU that are having a strong effect on the position of workers and labour conditions in general. The old Cold War polarization between East and West has resurfaced in

the new context of labour flow from east to the west within the EU, and the outsourcing of labour and contracting companies in the opposite direction. The new hegemonies are hereby based on routes of exploration of natural resources like gas or oil with the pipelines that are passing across different borders and thus making those countries in need of energy supplies dependant on big transnational companies on the one hand or Russia on the other as the richest country in natural gas. These economical hegemonies are making new alliances and shaping new geopolitical maps within Europe.

Moreover, an even sharper distinction is made on other geographical axes like North-South after the global financial crises that threatens to destabilize the EU from within, starting from the crises in Greece up to the recent Brexit. This North-South axis speaks of a clear intracolonialism within Europe. The old instruments of colonialism – political or socio-economic subordination, etc. are perpetuated from the north to the south through what has been also called internal colonialism.

European Union at test

The content and thematic focus of the project considers some important and sensitive areas in the production of new common European identities and the main obstacles to this process that might even lead to its demise. By fostering the public debate on the issues of invisible violence occurring in each corner of Europe, both in EU countries and others that are in the process of joining it, this project questioned the need for the production of a common public sphere in Europe, and the need to revisit crucial ideas of European citizenship, and thus to put a spotlight on the EU from within.

We are today arguably facing a situation where new laws, legislation and inter-state agreements within the European Union may generate capacities for new types of violence. Current, topical issues such as disaffiliation of the impoverished and marginalized populations in Europe and the violence perpetrated upon them due to their being different (particularly immigrants), have been defined by theorists like Bertrand Ogilvie as a system that engenders the production of “disposable humans” (*l’homme jetable*). Etienne Balibar goes even further in asking if there is a new type of European apartheid that is being produced with new restrictive and exclusive legislation. In the wake of the current refugee crises we are facing again the long-forgotten barb wire fences and barricades installed in order to prevent immigrants entering EU territory. The EU is put again to the test by the flow of millions of refugees that have to be absorbed and “proportionally” distributed among member states which itself is causing strong reactions, restrictive national policies and the closure of borders followed again by the rise of the xenophobic right wing in

many countries.⁵ The refugee crisis is now the worst since World War Two, when the concept of refugee status itself entered enshrinement within international law. Can we speak about a new concept of refugee at this moment? Is the concept of the refugee constructed from the outside and maybe a category within the “alterity”?

Balibar opposes to and challenges these new polarizations and divisions with the need to create a common European public sphere where new identities of European citizenship will be created, albeit concluding that it is becoming late for such an idea. Nevertheless, for this project it was important to show that these ideas should be discussed exactly at each corner of Europe, at its fringes and borders. Altogether, this project’s aim was to highlight new forms of invisible violence as they are currently prevalent throughout Europe. These forms of violence are seen as the reason of the failure of the production of a common identity and egalitarian ideals of European citizenship. One thing is clear: this fractured Europe is bringing to light that once-bastioned, utopian “pan-European” idea, a construction of Europe that has been based only on an economic basis.

Troubled geographies: the project caught by its own title

The initial geo-political context of the project was a European triangle formed out of the Spanish Basque region, Ireland (especially Northern Ireland), and Serbia that all bear the stereotypical image of being notorious for violence and terror. This common denominator and constellation was a constant backdrop to the project, from its start to finish. While remaining cognizant of cultural stereotypes associable with these regions, the project has striven to rise above questions of how these are transferred to a broader European and international context. It has instead delved into the more hidden territories of invisible violence as a subject with a universalizing potential.

However, a variety of obstacles appeared during the production of this overall project, which ironically may be defined as key examples of invisible violence. Originally a three-country project between Serbia, Spain and Ireland, the project ended up with just the first two partner countries when the Irish institution, under new management, decided to abandon the project. Being a leading partner in the joint successful application to EACEA, the Irish institution The Model, after the departure of its director (and co-curator of the project), didn’t claim the awarded grant. This caused a peculiar case in the history of the European funding body and clarifies our decision to present all the official documentation received from the EACEA, which

5 The situation that recently escalated due to the civil war in Syria and created sharp polarizations within EU countries.

shows the sequence of events leading to the loss of the awarded grant. In short, the grant was withdrawn due to the passivity of the lead-partner institution after its director's departure. As a consequence, the processes of this project's development had unexpectedly and inadvertently uncovered forms of invisible violence. In retrospect, we might see the irony of this situation, however this loss created great hardship for the project organizers. The EACEA grant had guaranteed about 50% of the project's funding and was suddenly gone. Regardless of this, the curators narrowed down the production means and the scale of the project, without sacrificing the overall ambition, and after Serbia and Spain, the project was finalized in Austria where its last iteration was held in the Salzburger Kunstverein.

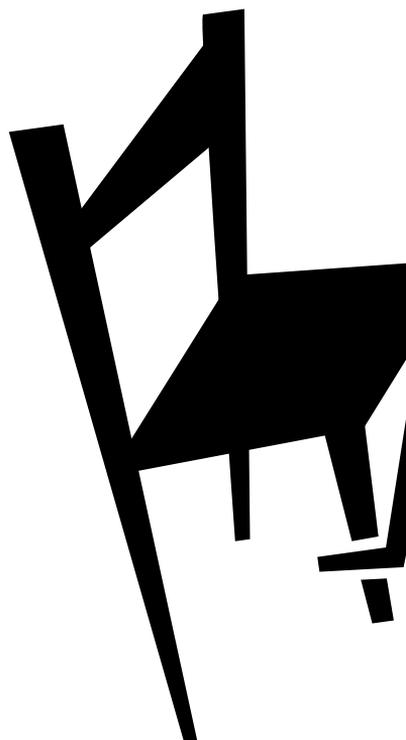
At each stage of the project, the exhibition has been adapted to its different contexts. Thus it was fitting that the final stage of the project was in a European country that now has its own context of invisible violence (itself on the brink of a possible extreme right-wing presidency and a democratic election overturned seemingly undemocratically by the courts), albeit not quite full circle as we might have anticipated. That is, the so-called story of invisible violence that this project encircles is an open-ended one.

Curators:

Blanca de la Torre

Zoran Erić

Séamus Kealy



ARTISTS' PAGES

Exhibited at the venues

Belgrade



Vitoria-Gasteiz



Salzburg







Repair Analysis 2013

Repaired broken mirror,
mirror & copper wire
24 cm × 32 cm × 5 cm

Courtesy of the artist & Galerie Nagel Draxler

Kader Attia (FR)



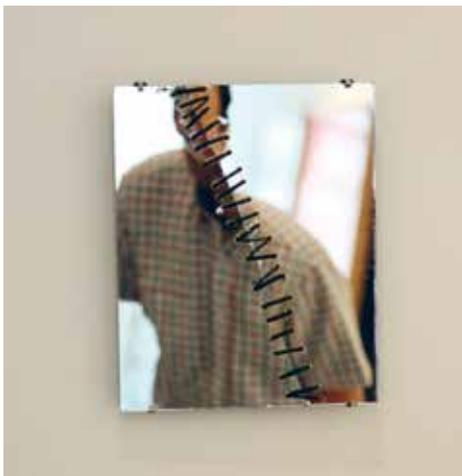


The series Repair Analysis is a continuation of Kader Attia's research on the concept of Repair. The piece is made of broken mirrors that have been repaired using wire. The stitches are made of copper wire which criss-cross the surface in a way that suggests both early modern surgery — such as that carried out during WWI — and the repairs found on traditional, non-Western artifacts. Anyone looking at their own reflection in these repaired mirrors will see their own image intersected with a network of scars, almost like physical wounds, bearing the psychological impact of what “life has carved” onto all of us.



The Irreparable Repair

This work shows that some faults can never be totally repaired and that they leave permanent marks on the body and the soul, despite modern Western society's desperate attempts to erase them, chasing after a myth of the perfect like another Sisyphus.



In traditional non-Western cultures, the act of repairing doesn't imply bringing an object back to its original state, to a state of “how it was before”. Repair aims to give objects a new aesthetic, a new life in the continuum of natural evolution. It also embodies the ground for self-expression of the repairer as a demiurge: his repair has to be outwardly seen as a signature; a signature of the Self for the Group. When it uses Western scraps such as rusty steel wire, it signifies cultural resistance through mimetism: Repair is also Resistance.

The fist is a ubiquitous symbol, which has amassed myriad significance throughout the epochs of recorded time. Following its trajectory through historical and fictional narratives, the fist is the central character in the work, beginning with a video installation, and stretching into the material realm with a 3D print. Barrio inspects this history with a rhizomatic approach, encompassing the multiplicity of meanings housed within this simple but loaded icon. The settings of a strip club, a cave, and a lab become stages, which act as portals through which we travel through time and space, conflating different iterations of our central character.

Acknowledging references to violence, labor, social revolutions, and gender, we see the evolution of the fist coming into its own as a symbol — standing alone, severed from the body. Through yet another portal, we are led from symbol production to post production. In the editing process, Barrio implements repetition and collage in order to fuse together a variety of media, from super-8 film, to HD video, and smart-phone footage. Just as the fist had to be cut between wrist and elbow to produce this emblematic image, the film itself relies on cinematic cuts and splices, suggesting the non-linear connections present in this entanglement.

The video includes text by writer Dia Felix, whose narrative fiction reinforces the larger mythology, and commentary by historian Lincoln Cushing, grounding the work in non-fictional details from his studies of the fist in a political art context. The History of the Fist also references the recent archaeological discovery that most early cave paintings were likely made by women, highlighting the potential of what is missing from the recorded history of human experience. Swiftly transitioning from this deep reaching human narrative, Barrio also hints at the sensual promises of future-gazing cyborg cultures, through digital fabrication of this archetypal body part. We are left to wonder what is it that we produce now that will be remembered, which symbols will survive us, and how they will be interpreted by generations into the future.

Rachel Steinberg

Itziar Barrio (ES/US)





The History of the Fist 2014

Video installation, sculpture

Variable dimensions

Courtesy of the artist



**Ursula
Biemann
(CH)**





Black Sea Files is a territorial research project on the Caspian Sea's geography: the world's oldest oil extraction zone. A giant, new subterranean pipeline that runs through the Caucasus is pumping Caspian Crude to the West. The pipeline connecting the resource fringe with the terminal of the global high-tech oil circulation system is the leitmotif of the video. However, the narrative in the video is by no means a linear one. Avoiding the main players of such a setting, the video sheds light on a multitude of secondary actors — oil workers, farmers, refugees and prostitutes who live along the pipeline. Lending their profiles to the video, they contribute to a wider human geography that displaces the singular and powerfully signifying practices of oil corporations and oil-focussed politicians. Drawing on investigatory fieldwork as practiced by anthropologists, journalists and secret agents, the *Black Sea Files* comments on artistic methods employed in the field and the ways in which information and visual intelligence is detected, circulated or withheld.

Black Sea Files 2005
Synchronized 2-channel
video installation, 43', wall map
Courtesy of the artist

In *After four rotations of A, B will make one revolution* (2009 ongoing) Rossella Biscotti & Kevin van Braak transfer existing figurative socialist sculptures into minimalist objects of the same material, weight, historical reference and name. The scale of the new work is small in comparison to the original sculptures due to its abstraction. This complex relationship raises questions about historical symbolism, whilst the process of melting metal is suggestive of the end of a regime or ideology, when sculptures may be

destroyed and sold as raw material. In Belgrade, a series of seven bronze portraits of Josip Broz Tito is used as a reference point. These portraits were made by the Yugoslav sculptor Antun Augustinčić (1900–1979). The bronze cubical pieces make reference (in their material, measurements and display) to the series of Tito's demolished sculptures first shown in the exhibition *The Anatomy Lesson* by Dragan Srdić at the Belgrade Cultural Centre in 2000. Since the 1990s, Srdić has been

**Rossella
Biscotti
(IT)
&
Kevin van
Braak
(NL)**



collecting art pieces and symbols of Tito's epoch, which have been thrown away in scrap yards, using them in installations and exposing them to the public again as pieces of erased, neglected and rewritten recent history. By referring to his work, Biscotti & van Braak point out the importance of artistic mediation and continuous rethinking on the issues of memory and identity which are negotiated by the work itself and the actual collaboration with a local artist.

Josip Broz Tito 2014

After the exhibition *The Anatomy Lesson*
by Dragan Srdić,

Belgrade Cultural Centre 2000

100 × 128 × 128 mm, bronze 14.5 kg

100 × 120 × 120 mm, bronze 12.7 kg

100 × 120 × 120 mm, bronze 12.7 kg

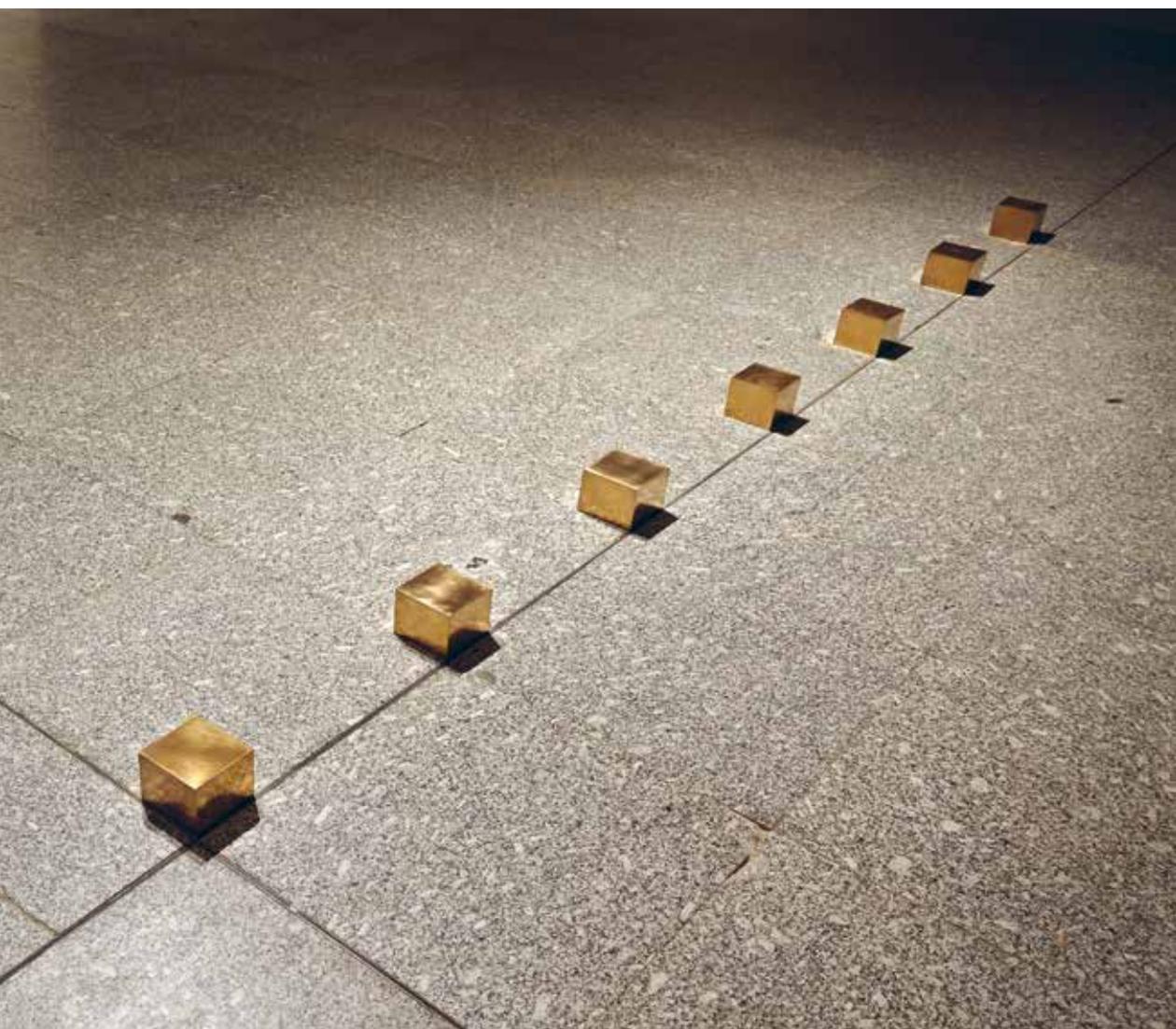
100 × 122 × 122 mm, bronze 13.1 kg

100 × 130 × 130 mm, bronze 14.8 kg

100 × 124 × 124 mm, bronze 13.5 kg

100 × 123 × 123 mm, bronze 13.3 kg

Courtesy of the artists



**Extract from the audio
in the installation:**

When I'm talking about communication, I'm talking about *human* communication, because that's where revenue is at the moment. But in the future, machine-to-machine communication is a growing area. They use different frequencies, what are called the *beachfront frequencies* that are consumed solely by humans – for our enjoyment, frankly. And when I'm talking about radio I mean any device that broadcasts and receives; so that includes televisions and mobile phones as well as what we usually think of as radios...

In the cognitive radio world, we introduce the notion of some autonomy to the radio... The *radio* can actually decide how it decides. It *tries*, and it *learns*. It tries something; it sees that it fails; that goes into its memory bank... so it has memory. Radios wouldn't have had memory before. Even a radio that could make decisions doesn't have memory. The worries then would be, how do you bound that? Can you bound its outputs? If it's allowed to do things, if it's allowed to learn... what happens when you have a room full of radios all observing each other, all learning; what's going to happen then?

**Sarah
Browne
(IE)**



The Cognitive Radio 2014

Sculptural installation (polished and unpolished marble) with recorded audio
Variable dimensions

Courtesy of the artist







Group Portrait with Explosives 2014

16 mm film & HD, 42'

Courtesy of the artist

Group Portrait with Explosives connects the former nation of Czechoslovakia with South Armagh in Northern Ireland. Though not areas that one would normally associate with one another, through the vagaries of industrial manufacturing and international trade an imperceptible link was developed between the two.

Czechoslovakia came into being in 1918 when the country declared itself independent from the collapsing Austro-Hungarian Empire. Containing 80% of the industry of the Empire, the new country was built on a strong industrialised economic base. After generating profit from the mass production and export of weapons, Zbrojovka Brno, the former Austro-Hungarian artillery, moved into other forms of industrial production, such as cars, typewriters, aircraft engines

Declan Clarke (IE)





and tractors. The Czechoslovak company Synthesia developed the plastic Semtex in the late 1950's. Hugely successful, it went into mass production in 1964.

South Armagh is located just north of the border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State that was created in 1922. As a rural area, agriculture is the primary economic source in the region. It became notorious for its violent resistance to the British presence in Northern Ireland throughout the period that became known as the Troubles. With the installment of numerous watch towers and cameras, by the early 1990's South Armagh had become one of the most heavily monitored parts of the world. It was the most dangerous place for a British soldier to be stationed until British forces entered Afghanistan as part of

Operation Enduring Freedom on October 7th, 2001.

With the development of cheap, lightweight tractors, Czechoslovak tractors began to appear in South Armagh in the early 1960's and radically altered farming in the region. By the early 1970's, as the Civil Rights Movement collapsed into open conflict between the Provisional IRA and the occupying British forces, Czechoslovak weapons, and later Semtex, were also exported to the region and had a significant impact on events thereafter.

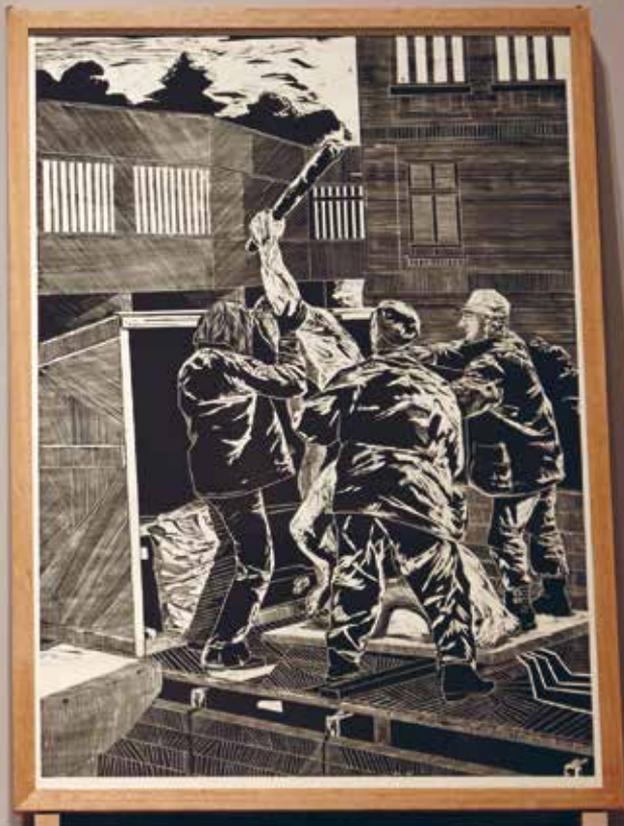
Group Portrait with Explosives ruminates on the historical and political narratives of these two places alongside personal recollections of South Armagh in the late 1970's and early 1980's where the artist spent much time in childhood.



**Istvan
Csákány
(EU)**



This wood engraving was inspired by an archival snapshot from the 1950's that documents the transportation of a memorial statue. In part, the work's title alludes to this rather comical moment that took place on the back of a delivery truck: what is seen are several manual workers struggling with a bronze figure, seemingly frozen into a single sculptural entity. The piece also refers to the complex, contradictory and almost entirely forgotten history of the statue in question: Pál Pátzay's "Snake



Killer". The once officially commissioned memorial statue portraying Raoul Wallenberg — the Swedish diplomat who saved the lives of thousands of Hungarian Jews — was removed in 1949 most likely based on governmental orders, and its erection years later in front of the medical university of a provincial town turns the bronze statue of the naked snake killer into a time capsule: in its universalist modernist iconography, any reference to its particular political and historical context disappears.

Suspended 2010
Two-part graphic tableau,
paper/woodcut,
paper/acryl, each 126 × 175 cm
Courtesy of the artist

Ancient Ground 2011

Video installation, colour, sound, 8'

35 mm film transferred
to High-Definition video

Courtesy of the artist

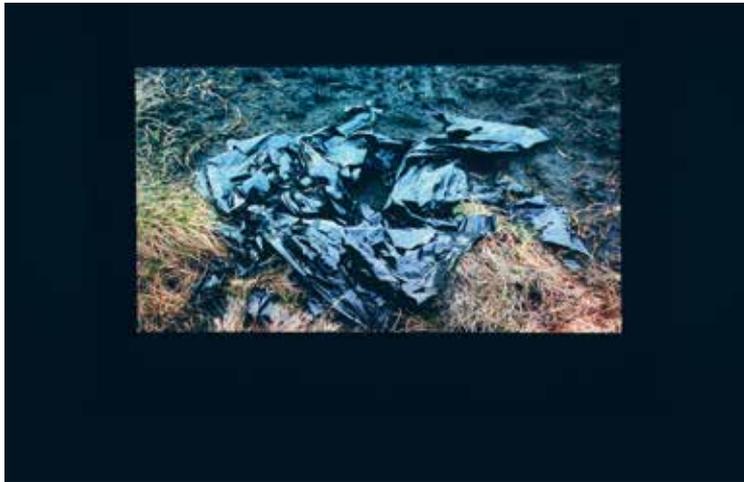
Willie Doherty unflinchingly confronts the underbelly of society, making what is concealed more visible. The video *Ancient Ground* focuses on the imperceptible traces of human trauma within a rural setting in Ireland.

References to undefined violence are spoken alongside particular attention to detail in the landscape, implying that whatever unspoken occurrences took place in the past will not disappear and cannot be forgotten. The artist's concerns with territory, surveillance and the part that land plays in cultural hegemony can be traced back to his photographs of his native Derry and its environs from the 1980's.

Doherty's work is rooted in the politics and topography of his native Derry, the walls of Derry and the river Foyle with its east bank and its west bank and the proximity of its border with the Republic of Ireland is, as he says, "a perfect theatre of war". His practice however, transcends the specificities of any particular context. This work shifts between the urban and the rural. What the terrain has witnessed is patiently tracked down. His discoveries, the scars of human activity on the land, are yielded up and captured on camera. Willie Doherty's engagement with the land is very particular — where one may sense a shifting ground that resists a sure footing in landscape and memory.

Willie Doherty (UK/IE)







On Support 2015

Video installation,
four videos, 9'55", 10'26", 18'02", 1'25"

Courtesy of the artists

**Eva
Engelbert
(AT)
&
Katharina
Schniebs
(DE/AT)**





In 2014, the question of how Europe faces a constantly growing number of refugees arose with particular urgency: There were a rising number of geographical hot spots that are hardly geopolitically delineated as well as warlike conflicts frequently leading to humanitarian catastrophes. European nations are continually called upon to act, but yet actions of the relevant authorities often amount to nothing more than delays and dismissals in view of agreements to divide the refugees among individual countries according to particular conditions. Refugee policy becomes a cynical game of numbers and thus precisely negates the criteria that should be its central focus: the individual's need for protection. This applies particularly in Austria, where the refugee policy is considered to be particularly restrictive. Though directives are implemented nar-

rowly on an institutional level, commitment within civil society is diverse: The starting point of the project *On Support* is our interest in the initiatives of people living in Austria who themselves support refugees. We searched for these people and asked them: What is possible? What can this support look like? How is the practice of solidarity and humanity articulated here? What can one oppose openly emerging institutional violence? And because taking someone in also means accepting that person: How does one manifest civil courage in a country where integration is rarely a reciprocal process?

Several videos documenting our journey are presented in a "supportive" display that is both an installation and a parallel space to the people who appear in the videos.

Monatl. Durchschnitts-Verdienste in DM



In-Formation (Aufstellung) 2005

Single channel video installation,

DigiBeta, color, silent, 16'

Courtesy Harun Farocki GbR

Harun Farocki (DE)



The diagrams depicted in this video were used to help represent consumer market baskets, pension deficit or migrations, and are highly anachronistic, evoking nineteenth century political allegories. Whether pictographs or simple bar or pie charts, their abstractions all display an impotence that is touching. By collecting examples of diagrams found in newspapers, school textbooks and official publications, it was possible to reconstruct the history of migration in the Federal Republic of Germany. What the artist is seeking is a conceptual critique of the ways in which migrations are presented by pursuing the icons and symbols back to their origins and examining them with regard to content which is indirectly denoted.





Indignados 2012–13
Photography, flags, wall graffiti
Variable dimensions
Courtesy of the artist
Installation view Belgrade

**Daniel
Garcia
Andújar
(ES)**



Andújar created three different site-specific projects which he adapted for each context. For the MoCA in Belgrade he investigated the forms in which protest and resistance are articulated in the public space, as well as the ways in which they are controlled by governmental authorities. The artist questions the hierarchies of power and its control mechanisms used by politicians, civic and state security forces alongside other actors on the public stage. The installation consisted of a series of photographic portraits of undercover

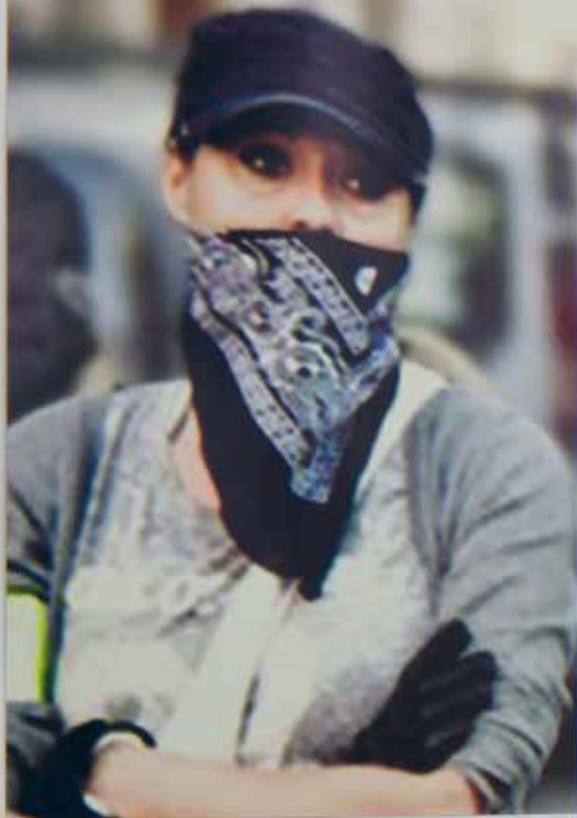


policemen who had infiltrated the “indignados” demonstrations in order to manipulate them. It also included flags, graffiti and other instruments of protest.

For the Salzburger Kunstverein, Andújar presented the same portrait series of undercover policemen and below this a series of drawings of them in action poses.

Both installations, at Belgrade and Salzburg, could serve as a point of departure for an

intervention, a workshop and/or public performance. In the installation slogan “Let’s Democratize Democracy” there is an open call to explore different protest forms that use the Street as stage (this being a central preoccupation). The project intends to question structures of democracy, participation and social transformation processes. The main interest lies in particular conflicts and the difficulties inherent in democracy with all its fragility, requirements and alongside all our expectations.



Installation view Salzburg



Finally, at Artium, he speaks about the existence of a Deep Web, an Invisible Web and even a Dark Web which very few are able to penetrate. Here is material which is never seen on the Surface Web, meaning the sites indexed by search engines. Multifarious networks for sharing digital content co-exist, set up for the purpose of keeping private the identities and origins of those sharing this material. To gain access to these networks you need certain additional information which is generally shared by a small group of people, and you also need to run specific software. As the communicating parties are keen to remain anonymous, networks of this type commonly employ cryptographic algorithms, making any kind of surveillance or monitoring difficult.

This underground Web is associated with all kinds of illegal and dissident activities or is intended to support clandestine movements. The artist infiltrated one of these forums for a few weeks, trying to deal in all kinds of illegal material and with criminals, extortionists and a disturbingly large number of pedophiles. Eventually, he made contact with a public employee who claimed he played “a part in the process from the time drugs are seized to their destruction”. The advert which caught the artist’s attention read “BRICK OF COCAINE”, uncut, 190 g. For 5.000 euro, Spain”. The man had, so he said, stolen a 190-gramme brick of uncut cocaine when the drug was about to be destroyed. If the deal went through, he committed to procuring within a matter of weeks a two-kilogram brick. As is standard in this kind of business, all payments were to be made in bitcoins via an encrypted transaction. Not long afterwards, images of the commodity were received.





El Capital / La mercancía 2014

17 photographs, digital print, 329 × 483 mm

Courtesy of the artist

Installation view Vitoria-Gasteiz



Crowd 2007

Tensa Barriers, paint

Variable dimensions

Courtesy of the artist & Kerstin Engholm Gallery

**Eva
Grubinger
(AT)**





This evocative installation by Eva Grubinger presents the notion of public and controlled population-separation in a concrete, spatial way. *Crowd* is composed of commercial crowd-control devices known as TensaBarriers, used to keep people in orderly lines and to move them forward in a predetermined direction, under control by an often unseen but ever-present authority.

The cordoning maintains order and civility in potentially chaotic environments, from Disney World to airports to the local bank. However, in Grubinger's setup in the con-

text of the exhibition, there is not a desire-fulfilling or consumer-based destination per se, nor a lurking, invisible authority, unless it is ourselves. However the work does end up having a clever relationship to the other artworks in the exhibition. It encourages us to think about forms of coercion, employed by institutions and corporations especially, that herd and direct people, and ultimately place them under scrutiny and control, often without their direct consent, but always with absolute participation. Grubinger's installation gives us an idea of what this control looks like from another perspective.



Untitled (After *Cut Piece* by Yoko Ono) 2014

Performance

Courtesy of the artist & Bosi Contemporary

Cut Piece is a seminal performance work by Yoko Ono first performed nearly half a century ago. In the first performances, Ono sat kneeling on the stage, wearing her best suit. A pair of scissors was placed on the floor in front of her while members of the audience were invited to approach her, one at a time, and cut bits of her clothes off, which they were allowed to keep. In her

book *Grapefruit, A Book of Instructions and Drawings by Yoko Ono*, she gives instructions for performing the piece, where we find also that “the performer, however, does not have to be a woman.” *Cut Piece* is an open piece, performed by Ono herself as well as by many other artists around the globe and throughout the decades, including the Canadian art-pop performer Peaches just last year at the Southbank Centre in London. “In the re-enactment of *Cut Piece* for *Invisible Violence*, I will be wearing the uniform created for my performances *25. maj* (Belgrade 2011), *Pionirka* (Belgrade, 2011) and *Operation Nightingale* (New York, 2013), closing with it the cycle of works dealing with identity and patriotism.”

Marta Jovanović (RS/IT)







Marbles 2014

From the series *Conversations: Hula Hoops, Elastics, Marbles and Sand*
 7 channel sound installation + 30 777
 15 mm glass marbles, cardboards
 Variable dimensions / 46'

Courtesy of the artist
 Installation view Belgrade

Dejan Kaludjerović (RS/AT)





The installation *Marbles* conceived for this exhibition is one of the site-specific installations from a series *Conversations: Hula Hoops, Elastics, Marbles and Sand*, produced in different parts of the world. Each installation is made in relation to the local site and accompanied with a sound piece emitted from 6–7 speakers (each speaker for the voice of one child); the children are narrating / answering questions about political issues such as social exclusion and inclusion, about foreigners, language, war, money, poverty.

This installation is produced with 30 777 glass marbles, which are equal to the number of boys and girls born in the same years and

the same towns as the seven interviewed children. These are 7 to 9 year olds, school children with different ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. In the postproduction of the recorded material, the questions asked are omitted and only the children's answers are edited to create a narrative. Listening to the sound of the installation the spectator has the impression that he/she is listening to a conversation between these seven children.

“My intention is to reflect and question both the ideological, cultural and socio-political patterns that are imposed on children through the family, education and media as well as their reasoning about the given topics.”



Tin Man 2013/14

318 × 282.5 × 93 cm

Cardboard boxes, inkjet prints (2014)
includes *Keine Angst vor
kleinen Tieren* Video, 1' 20", loop (2004)

Courtesy of the artist

Installation view Vitoria-Gasteiz

This installation immerses an image of the Tin Man, from the *Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), with two arm-like beams, bearing a swing on one, and a video on the other. Initially associated with the carefree childhood (interpreted by way of the swing), this installation, upon secondary reading, evokes the sensation of the lack of self-confidence and instability, typical for all the characters of this novel — for Scarecrow and Cowardly Lion as much as for Tin Man himself. This feeling is confirmed in the video *Keine Angst vor kleinen Tieren* (No Fear from Small Animals) from 2004, which is projected on a hanging panel and establishes a(n) (in)balance with the empty swing on the opposite side of the beam.

In the video, three kids are restaging the scene on a poster-advertisement for children's garment, originally published in the German fashion magazine *Burda*, at the beginning of the 1980s. On this poster, three kids are dressed up in rabbit, cat and dog pattern rompers. A boy and a girl are standing, and the boy is pushing a carrot into the mouth of a second girl who is sitting between them. This scene, once accepted as an appropriate image of commodity, restaged in a contemporary context, reveals explicit sexual allusions. *Keine Angst vor kleinen Tieren* emphasizes the instability of representational forms, by setting free a potential truth hidden under cultural artefacts, thereby revealing politics and economic forces that had once established a social order.*

* from the text: "Impossible Identity and Instability of Representational Forms in the work of Dejan Kaludjerović" by Goran Petrović Lotina





1st of May 1977 is a deconstruction of an 8mm family film in which a small act of violence is isolated and played out while its cause remains concealed. Split into two separate locations, the work is comprised of a sound piece in one space that is based on interviews with members from the two families who witnessed and directly participated in the act of violence and a slide projection made from the 8mm film in the other. Considering the event occurred in 1977, it now exists as a distant memory for each person interviewed and the differences and discrepancies in their accounts attesting to the subjective nature of memory and perception.

Originally captured in a single moment, the act of the boy throwing a rock at the girl's head becomes 29 slides, which are then looped into a four minute sequence. By creating stills from the 8mm family film and representing only a brief instance from the day it occurred, the slide projection isolates and prolongs the act of violence. By separating the testimonials of the witnesses and participants (sound) with the "evidence" of the act of violence (slides), the visitor engages in the act of becoming a witness themselves by carrying the contents of one space mentally to the other or at least a thin remembrance of it. Because the two spaces are approximately identical in character and the distance between them is just long enough to begin the process of forgetting, the absence of the images and presence of sound in one space and the absence of the sound and presence of the images in the other space creates a parallel scenario to the act which is itself in question.



1st of May 1977 2014

2-channel sound installation

29 slide loop, 2 identical rooms,
dimensions variable

English version 13' 15",

German version 15' 48"

Courtesy of the artist & Galleria Bianconi, Milan

Installation view Salzburg



Rendered History 2014–2015

Series of ink wash drawings on paper
Various dimensions

Courtesy of the artist

Installation view Vitoria-Gasteiz

Vladimir Miladinović (RS)



Work on this series was instigated by the need to re-examine the dominant narratives of the recent past in the post war societies of ex-Yugoslavia. Public space that is politically contaminated and largely determined by falsified histories requires a fundamental rethink. In these conditions the artist commenced a daily research routine in various institutions that contain archival materials related to the war time events. One of the main initiators of this process was the question of the personal relation towards narratives about which there is a strong social consensus which is rarely questioned.

As a result of archival research, mainly from daily newspapers, conducted in the National libraries of Serbia, Spain, Ireland



and Austria, the artist produced a series of handmade ink wash drawings of entire newspaper pages. The focal point of the research were newspaper pages on which were articles about the war in ex-Yugoslavia. The artist produced a series of ink wash drawings depicting such pages. The drawings from different archives and contexts depict the complexity of the events during the wars.

The idea of a dominant revisionist ideology to create a unified historical narrative is called into question. History is often interpreted in ways that are in line with the predominant ideological matrices. One can see how different historical periods change the social consensus on the dominant historical narratives. This is apparent when one looks



at the drawings made from Austrian archival material from the period before WWII. This series (of drawings) is based on newspaper advertisements from the period just after the “Anschluss” (15th March 1938). It subtly investigates the dramatic socio-political shift which took place in that period which led to the 20th century’s greatest catastrophe, and raises questions about the transformation of signs between different paradigms, as well as how this infamous part of the past continues to resonate in contemporary nationhood and identity.

The overall framework of the project *Rendered History* is war and post-war trauma and how this is represented in a public discourse. The project is an example of art that deals with the media, forensic, political and moral identification and presentation of war crimes and the current transitional ideologies of their denial and erasure. Such an evaluation shows the dominant struggles over the memory of the wartime period. It also shows the creation of new metanarratives about wartime events. This kind of memory simulation creates the potential for resistance and offers a critical approach to the existing narratives dealing with the post war interpretations of the recent past. The artist wishes to question how the media and institutions in post-conflict societies create public space, and thus shape the collective memory. The goal is to work with art as a *Counter public sphere* form which raises questions about war media propaganda, manipulation, historical responsibility and intellectual engagement.





Installation view Salzburg



Day of the Rat 2010

Duratran print, Slimline LED Light Box

120 cm × 180 cm × 4 cm

Courtesy of the artist

... *Day of the Rat* is a large print of a photograph of the view chanced upon by the artist through an upstairs window in the artist's mother's home, on the day that the artist, his young daughter, his mother, his brother, were all ensconced in the upstairs room while a rat catcher was at work downstairs. The image *Day of the Rat* is also a psycho-geographical case study, which captures the precise laws and specific effects of the urban environment in the emotions and behaviours imposed on the viewer by one single urban view, with multiple emotional and biographical registers of private and public, enclosed and open, concrete and barbed wire prison-like walled structure and a natural, wooded vista. And while these narrative, social and quasi-biographical registers all exist in the work, the work *Day of the Rat* is also an exemplar of dynamic mark-making, pattern-forming, and shape-making on a flat picture plane made by multiple levels of colour, form and tone made visible or obscure interacting across various layers of distance from the camera lens...

Extract from "Who made you the centre of the universe?" by Declan Sheehan. From the catalogue to accompany the exhibition *A Week in Goals* by Locky Morris 2013

**Locky
Morris
(UK/IE)**







Are these yours, have you taken these photos?
Yes, yes but why these photos are here?

One day I was called in the Police Station of Milan because of some photos that I made. On these photos my daughters were represented with a stamp on their back that is the stamp of exit that the Albanian police put on the passport when you leave.

It was a work that I called *Exit*. The video *Believe me, I am an artist* shows the dialog I had with the policeman who suspected that I am a person who abuses with minors. I try to explain him that I am an artist and I use this word like a protection, but at the same time you can see all the fragility of an artist. The dramatic of the story, the reflection of the status of artist today and a kind of auto-irony are brought together in this tape.*

**Adrian
Paci
(AL/IT)**





In fact it's not important why these photos are here.
What is important is why these stamps are on the back
of your daughters.



Look I write this down in the declaration.
Yes, yes okay. Just a minute...

Believe me, I am an artist 2000

Single channel video, color, sound, 6'54"

Ed. of 5 + 2 AP

Courtesy of the artist & Galerie Peter Kilchmann



**The Invention of Antiquity,
The Invention of Tradition,
The Invention of Folklore** 2011

C-Prints, framed, 30 × 30 cm each
Images sourced from the archives
of the Press and Information Office,
Nicosia, Cyprus
Courtesy of the artist & Rodeo Gallery

**Christodoulos
Panayiotou
(CY)**





The Invention of Antiquity / The Invention of Tradition / The Invention of Folklore, are some of the titles of a large number of archival photographic constellations. They belong to a corpus of themes emerging as a result of research at the Press and Information Office in Nicosia. The work engages in an excavation that brings to light the 'cults' and 'obsessions' of Cyprus as an emerging state and reveals the wider mechanisms of modern construction of national narratives.



**Garrett
Phelan
(IE)**



The word 'PHENOMENON' within the title stems from the artist's considerable interest in Neolithic and Megalithic monuments and the influence they continue to hold in our contemporary consciousness. Neolithic and Megalithic sites litter the local landscape and surrounding countryside. In some places they dominate the landscape and exist as subconscious triggers for fears and anxieties surrounding the 'unknown'. Phelan applies the word phenomenon to these objects/spaces as they have no absolute definitive meaning. Their explanation and interpretation is based on scientific analysis and conjecture until

proven otherwise or what has been orally handed down from generation to generation spanning millennia. Phelan has begun to develop the work and has made independent trips throughout Great Britain and France examining sites of similar importance. As a result of this research, an increased awareness of folklore, from oral tradition to artefact, has taken place and inspired the new body of work *A VOODOO FREE PHENOMENON*. A particular interest is how folklore continually integrates itself into the contemporary human psyche as a means to assert directives, moral or general.



Study for A VOODOO FREE PHENOMENON
A VOODOO FREE PHENOMENON ZINE 2013/2014
Moving image animation, photocopy for Zine
Courtesy of the artist



Condensate 2014

Installation, mixed media

(Steel plates photographs, 2 × 1 × 0.5 m, screen-based videos, lectern, propane, wood)

Courtesy of the artist, produced by MoCAB and sponsoring companies

Installation view Belgrade

**Nikola
Radić
Lucati
(RS)**





... Take, for all that is good, for all that is gone,
That it may lie rough and real against your collarbone,
This string of bees, that once turned honey into sun.

Osip Mandelsteim — The Necklace

The introduction of the South Stream pipeline to Serbia is set to influence our country's politics and human rights even more than the economy itself. The "lex specialis" on land expropriation will define new relations between the state, its sovereignty and human rights. The shape it has taken is the consequence of the rising trend toward economic and political *dependence* as the dominant model of the state's strategic planning, which has established *abandonment* as the dominant emotional and therefore cultural undertone of present-day Serbia. It

places the decisions on citizens' lives into a secondary, residual plane, compliant to the geo-political interests of foreign economic powers. It also means that, in contemporary Serbia, the new, primary acquisition of capital is also a derivative process based on the remainder of what was once publicly owned property. *Condensate* is an investigative work tracing the route of the projected pipeline through Serbia and surveying the people and their land, at the same time inviting them to reclaim their voice by revealing their unguarded emotional responses.



Condensate 2014

Installation, mixed media

(Steel and resin objects, text, photography, video)

Courtesy of the artist, produced by MoCAB and sponsoring companies

Installation view Vitoria-Gasteiz





Speaking about invisible violence means finding voice for the productive body, i.e. (quoting Friedrich Engels) between the very basis of property: family and state. After the *Arab revolts* and the crisis of fishermen in the Kerkennah Islands (Tunisia's easternmost point, closest to Italy) in 2012, the South Mediterranean has increasingly become what is known as the anonymous tomb for more than 17.000 immigrants who have died there since the beginning of the 1990s. The EU migration policies

and border control has intensified since the creation of the Frontex agency in 2004. Frontex is a good example of the term "necropolitics" coined by political scientist from Cameroon Achille Mbembe. According to "necropolitics," after postmodernity, the politics of the state took a step further in the governing of bodies and lives, by managing the dead and especially the bodies of those along the borders.

The artist's work is rooted in her life, her experiences in Tunisia, the estate and the family of her partner. Therefore she aims to reflect upon this through images and words, through the tracks and footprints of those who remain in its maritime tombstone, *ob-scenae*, those who have to stay invisible in order to uphold the simulacra of democracy, neo-colonialism and the necropolitics of human rights.

María Ruido (ES)



the dream is over 2014

Video installation

(video HD + super 8), 47'

Courtesy of the artist





Corsica Newsstand 2014

Installation (printed magazines, shelves)

Variable dimensions

Courtesy of Galeria Estrany de la Mota

Co-production FRAC Corse – Artium



Pegasus Dance (Choreography for Anti-Riot Trucks) 2010

Video installation, 11' 30"

Courtesy of the artist

Fernando Sánchez Castillo (ES/NL)



By subverting representations of power, Sánchez Castillo stages a romantic dance protagonized by two anti-riot trucks. In a sort of love ritual, where irony and political criticism are joined together, the nature of power normally associated with these vehicles is contrasted with delicate and anthropomorphic movements and the poetry of a ballet by Strauss.

The work was created for the Rotterdam anti-riot police in 2007 and was filmed at the international harbour. The basis of the artist's cooperation with them was to "promote democratic values by showing that the police are on the side of the citizens."



In general I am not so brave. Even though sometimes I do things that may be considered to go beyond common sense or secure behaviour. I have to confess that I am kind of a coward when I have to exist under dangerous circumstances. Therefore, when I was invited by the Dir Gallery in Tel Aviv to do a project in their space, I accepted with mixed feelings. On the one hand, I was flattered that one of the best galleries in the region would like to work with me, but on the other, my mind was completely blanked by: "What if, when I am in Tel Aviv, I get involved (to put it mildly) in one of those accidents that occasionally makes the headlines?"

After a lot of torment and hesitation, I decided to take the only reasonable step, no matter how naive and unusual this step may sound. As I am from and live in Sofia, Bulgaria, I contacted Mrs Benvenist-GARBY, a representative of the Israeli State there, and Mr. D., a representative of the Palestinian Authority in Bulgaria, with the request that, if possible, my brief visit to Israel in the Autumn of 2003, the Israelis and Palestinians could have a temporary cease-fire in order for me to do my exhibition.



Nedko Solakov (BL)



Negotiations 2003

Video installation and printed text of the artist handwriting

Courtesy of the artist & Dir Gallery



In general I am not so brave. Even though sometimes I do things that may be considered to go beyond common sense or secure behaviour, I have to confess that I am kind of a coward when I have to exist under dangerous circumstances. Therefore when I was invited by the Dvir Gallery in Tel Aviv to do a project in their space, I accepted with mixed feelings. On the one hand, I was flattered that one of the best galleries in the region would like to work with me, but on the other, my mind was completely blocked by: "What if, when I am in Tel Aviv, I get involved (to put it mildly) in one of those accidents that occasionally makes the headlines?"

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New World Summit is an artistic and political organization founded by visual artist Jonas Staal in 2012, which aims at developing alternative parliaments for stateless and blacklisted political organizations. These parliaments take the shape of large scale architectural constructions that the organization builds in art institutions, theaters and public spaces. As such, the New World Summit engages the space and imaginary of art to redefine the space of a radical, emancipatory democracy. The parliaments of the summit were created in Berlin (7th Berlin Biennial, 2012), Leiden (Museum de Lakenhal and De Veenfabriek, 2012), Kochi (1st Kochi Muziris Biennial, 2013), Brussels (Royal Flemish Theater, 2014) and Utrecht

(University of Utrecht and BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, 2016). Currently, the New World Summit is commissioned to construct a new permanent public parliament for the autonomous Kurdish region in Rojava (northern-Syria), to be inaugurated in spring 2016. To the six summits the organization initiated so far, more than forty stateless and blacklisted organizations contributed from amongst others Scotland, the Basque Country, Catalunya, Kurdistan, Azawad, the Amazigh in Libya, Oromia, Ogadenia, Southern-Azerbaijan, the Al-Ahwaz in Iran, Baluchistan, East-Turkestan, West-Papua, the Philippines and the Aboriginal Nations. Videos of all contributors can be viewed online at www.newworldsummit.org

New World Summit 2013

3 Maquettes:

Berlin 90 × 90 × 17 cm;

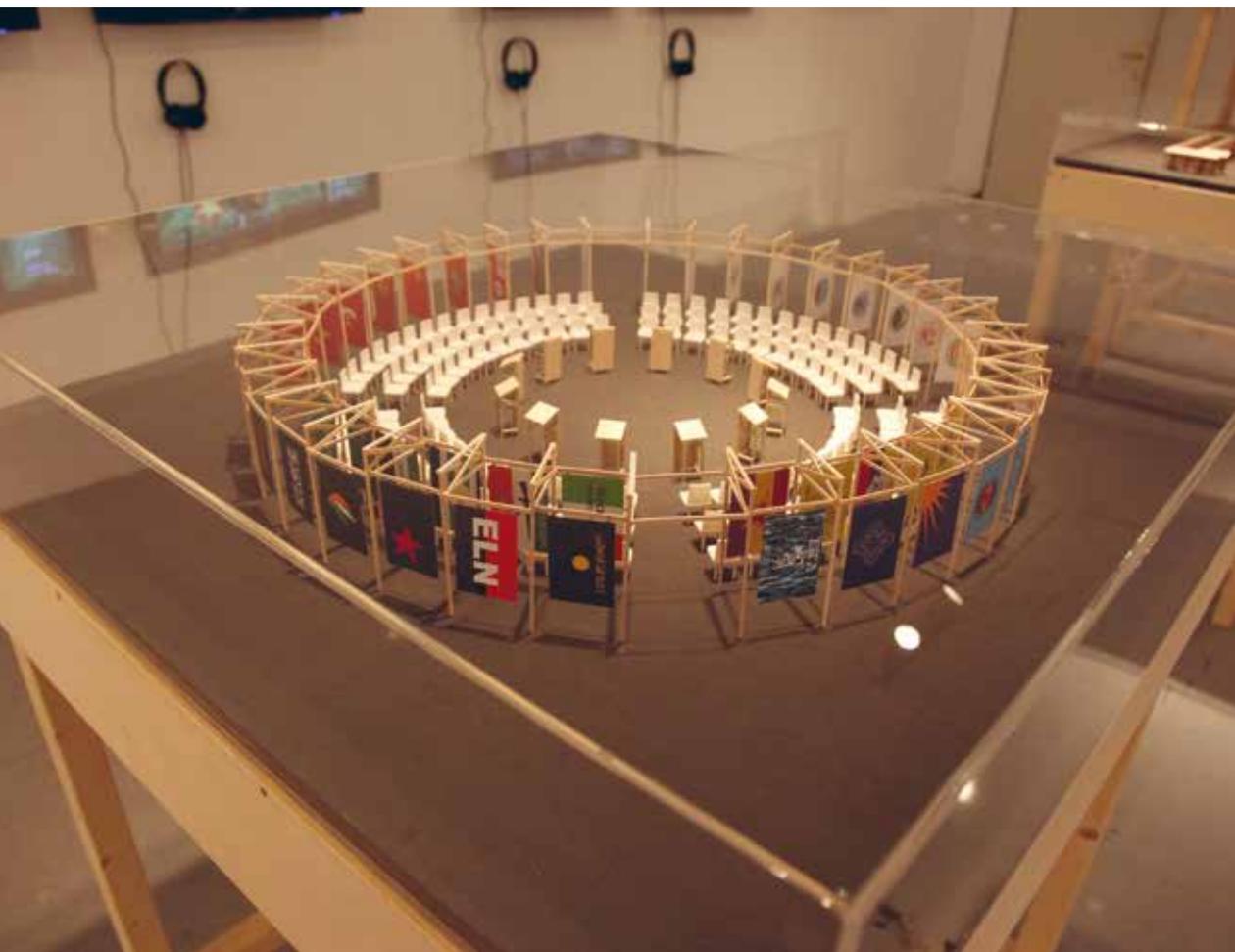
Kochi 90 × 90 × 30 cm;

Leiden 70 × 70 × 12 cm

Courtesy of the artist

**Jonas
Staal
(NL)**







Warmth 2009

Installation of industrially produced felt made out of human hair, from approximately 250 000 people, gathered in 2009 from hairdressing salons in several Serbian cities

Courtesy of the artist & MoCAB

Zoran Todorović (RS)



The history of the use of hair as a material is a rather long one. It was an unavoidable element of Victorian jewelry and high fashion, not to mention its ancient ritual past. There is however one single example that completely recoded our self-understanding of the phenomenon: it is the infamous and dramatic example of the usage of human remains, including hair, in the concentration camp industry of death during the Second World War...

Not attempting to address this historical infamy but nevertheless alluding to it, the work *Warmth* makes a kind of a link to this experience, putting it into a contemporary liberal environment, which is to say into



our everyday life. *Warmth* connects our everyday hygienic practices with a statistical and industrial procedures and the result is an industrial semi-finished article, the felt made out of human hair, heavy with different potentialities. The felt is now sold by square meter, and this selling is part of the performance of that work. It is sold as an art object, and can be found in various private and state museum collections, but it is also bought as a fetish or as a souvenir.

However, the central topic of this work is the current proletarianization of the body, thus, in a way, reflecting the actual issues of bio-industry, genetic engineering, but above all the ambivalent relation between bio- and necro- politics.

At the same time the work puts into question the idea of national representation, but also the representation in general, since it was initially conceived and produced for the Serbian pavilion at the 53rd Venice biennial.



RE-ASSEMBLING: Art and its Relation to Labour 2014

Installation (documentation, text, drawings and photos on paper, reading stands, library)

Courtesy of the artist

Drawings: Luna Joksimović, Manja Topalović, Milica Tomić

**Milica
Tomić
(RS)**





RE-ASSEMBLING: Art and its Relation to Labour is a project investigating the interplay of labour, politics, economy and art within participatory production of a work of art (e.g. *UNTITLED*, Rudolf Stingel, 2002).

RE-ASSEMBLING reveals the labour behind such an artwork; analyses its stability through the network of exploitation underpinning its production, as well as exhibiting strategies within practices often referred to as relational aesthetics and participatory art.

RE-ASSEMBLING analyses mechanisms of artistic practices that insist on producing a new type of collective, one devoid of repressive relations within collective labour. Whilst appearing to invite participation, the very act of calling for participation is also the site of the artist's control and monopoly over the outcome. It is precisely by appearing to be offering his/her creative labour and status up for collective use that the artist simultaneously reserves absolute authorship. Despite their claims on emancipating democratic practices, these mechanisms are, in fact, a reflection of the ideology of participation in civic society and parliamentary politics.



The Motto of Today. Rise Again 2011

Single channel video, 31' 32"

Courtesy of the artist & SpazioA, Pistoia

**Katarina
Zdjelar
(RS/NL)**





The Motto of Today. Rise Again takes place at the World Refugee Day celebration in an asylum centre in Slovenia. The video combines three forms of footage: firstly, Zdjelar's filmic documentation of the World Refugee Day ceremony in the asylum centre where the refugees have to act in front of the politicians; then, a combination of mobile phone clips recorded in the woods of Croatia by the refugees themselves, during their illegal border crossing and, finally, enacted parts that take place in the intimate setting of a park not far from the asylum centre. The footage of the WRD ceremony pays particular attention to back-stage events, focusing on insignificant imagery; it does not offer a first-hand view of the setting, nor does it offer a single panoramic shot. With such an approach Zdjelar violates the basic rules of report-

age. By introducing a medley of allegorical imagery and martial arts segments, played out and documentary scenes, the video develops a narrative structure in which asylum seekers appear in enfolding transformation. Moving between these registers, they demonstrate different roles and meanings, they connect and articulate different historical and geographical scenarios. The fluctuation between familiar media and cinematic imagery, bringing to mind soldiers, refugees, victims or adventurers on a group expedition, paves the way for the process of de/familiarization to take place. Excepted from this, perhaps, is "Bruce Lee", who is himself one of the Afghan refugees; whose likeness to the Hollywood hero is embraced (rather than staged) thus leaving the viewer wondering whether he is acting out a role or pursuing his daily training routine.

FILM PROGRAMME







Chişinău – City Difficult to Pronounce 2011

Video, 57' 25"

Courtesy of the artist



Inspired by Walter Ruttmann's 1927 film *Berlin: Symphony of a Metropolis*, Brăila's project follows the life of the city throughout one year, at the end of which he is editing the footage as one day, no narrative, no commentary, just the documentary material with the real sound. The constantly changing appearance of his city as well as the lack in the national archives of the country of any recorded visual material documenting these changes from the past 20 years had made the artist determined to embark on this memory project, which is at the same time an urban diary and a historical and anthropological filmic essay. More than the formal cinematic experience created by the different rhythms of the city, and in a multiperspectival shift offered by the triptych presentation, the project constitutes itself in a document which allows the viewer not only to follow the city's idiosyncrasies but also to become a witness of its irreversible transformation. His project is thus a chronicle of a present rapidly becoming history, with its public being the only ones retaining a memory soon to be erased.

(from the text of Raluca Voinea)

**Pavel
Brăila
(MD)**



Shoes for Europe 2002

Video, 26'

Courtesy of the artist

Pavel Brăila's video gives a demonstration of the differences in cultural and economic identity in Eastern and Western Europe. At the tiny railway station of Ungheni, along the border between Moldavia and Romania, the track width of the Russian train from Moldavia needs to be converted to the standard width used in Romania and Western Europe. Working clandestinely — the artist filmed the laborious transition of the train from East to West, along with the enormous amount of manpower needed to complete the adaptation. Each train is detained for three hours and lifted two meters into the air for the undercarriage to be replaced, while passengers are being checked by customs officers.





Bernadette 2008

Color and black-and-white 16 mm
Film transferred to DigiBeta, 38' 10"
Courtesy of the artist & LUX, London

Bernadette presents an unravelling, open-ended story of the female Irish dissident and political activist, Bernadette Devlin. Duncan Campbell is interested in fusing documentary and fiction in order to assess both the subject matter and the mode of communicating it.

Duncan Campbell (IE)





Make it New John tells the story of the DeLorean car, its creator John DeLorean and the workers of the Belfast-based car plant that built it. The film deftly contrasts the DeLorean dream with its spectacular downfall during a critical period in Northern Ireland's history, and the canonisation of the car — the DMC12 — as a symbol of the American myth of mobility.

In *Make it New John* Campbell fuses a documentary aesthetic with fictive moments, using existing archive news and documentary footage from the 1980s as well as new 16mm footage which imagines conversations between DeLorean factory workers. Campbell questions the documentary genre and reflects here on broader existential themes and narrative drives.

Make it New John 2009

Beta and 16 mm transferred to video, 55'

Courtesy of the artist & LUX, London



Welcome to Belfast 2004

Video 14'

Courtesy of the artist

**Iratxe
Jaio
(ES)**





A movie about the complex representations of the political conflict in Northern Ireland from the perspectives of three foreign visitors. After the peace agreement in 1998, tourism became a developing industry in Belfast. The city had to reconsider its public

image. But how can a city with such a history of conflict, that isn't completely over yet, make itself attractive? And what role does the tourist have in the reorganization of this society?



**Jesse
Jones
(IE)**





The Selfish Act of Community 2012

HD digital film, 50'

Courtesy of the artist

The Selfish Act of Community is a film work by artist Jesse Jones that explores historical experiments in conflict resolution therapy as a type of Brechtian script. The film is an adaptation of an iconic encounter group therapy session originally staged in 1968 by American psychologist Carl Rogers. The encounter aimed to bring together a cross section of American citizens to examine the role of 'self' in social dynamics. By re-stating this historical event as an adapted Verbatim script, Jones aims to re-inhabit the encounter to make visible the shifts in our understanding of feminism and politics in the past half century focusing on in particular how the ideas of the 1960's counterculture permeated the desires of the 'silent majority'.

In a moment of similar crisis and rising political dissent, the film asks what can be learned that may be useful to contemporary ways of thinking through convergence and being together in the world. It questions how we may look, not only through the lens of vast historical movements but also through the incremental shifts in how we inhabit our everyday lives and experiences. The film is structured around a rotating single shot, creating a cinematic platform that aims to mimic the action of Bertolt Brecht's theatre in the round. The intense performances by the cast articulate the complexities between human emotional experience and its broader social sphere of experience. The role of dramaturge and therapist are scrambled in this attempt to see the evolution of political experience as an embodied relation to reality and to community.



Women in Love 2013

Video, 13' 30''

Courtesy of the artist

Ferhat Özgür (TR)



Women in Love is about a group of middle-aged widows reminiscing about their lives with their husbands. Their conversation is shaped around their vulnerability, fragility and the isolation imposed upon them as child brides. Their painful descriptions of domestic violence and alcohol abuse heighten our awareness of the nature of matrimonial loyalty through stories of love and loss.



Life is Beautiful 2010

Video, 6' 24"

Courtesy of the artist

Life is Beautiful focuses on a group of drunken young men in Ankara's Sakarya Street (a.k.a. Sakarya Beer Park) and their excessive behaviour in what has become a fundamental and iconic expression of nationalism: the army send-off. Sakarya Street is not only a performance platform that has become an open hub of political protest where divisions between the rich and the poor, the uneducated and learned melt away, but also a forum where different cultural groups meet and carouse.

"In Sakarya Street I encountered young men chanting and singing songs both in the Turkish and Kurdish language. Improvising, I plunged into the mass with my camera and encouraged them to take their inordinate behaviour to its extreme. Cheered on by me they started to push and shove each other in provocation, creating make-believe squabbles and losing themselves in cursing and jokes. Prompted by their heightened nationalistic feelings to attack everything Kurdish on the one hand, they were unaware of the fact that they had stepped into an altered world in which Kurdish folk songs provided the backdrop."

In this piece, the author's personal aesthetics determine the development of the images' textures with fade outs, superimpositions, electronic noise, and time alterations in scratches (slides of memory); Memory's hangover after certain spacio-temporal modifications; memory in the process of recovering from jet-lag after the journey of initiation which was the work on "Los Lobos" and after the frustration produced by the historical facts of the moment. This is an examination of the likelihood and probability of manipulation, a reading and interpretation of so-called audiovisual "documents".

Colisiones sin título is like an enumeration or classification of personal diary notes. Some of these images, or similar ones, have already appeared in the author's previous installations (what Ruiz de Infante defines as "sequences in space"). This piece is filled with a certain nostalgia for the fears of the past (in the form of relapses in images and sound), with recycled images of the past's sorrows in an adult age ("... but children are seeds of adults who have not yet understood where they are to grow."): fear of natural and political catastrophes, of society, for our children, for our health, for our lives. Deja-vu of feelings in ten tablets. The countdown of ten collisions ("where only one exists as such"):

- Collision 10: a man's fall viewed from his starting point;
- Collision 9: flying ants peregrinating towards the light viewed by an enclosed eye;
- Collision 8: eight superimposed images of an airport within the same space, overlapping different moments with different speeds (and a propeller);
- Collision 7: a propeller as a howitzer against a firing destroyer;
- Collision 6: dangerously washing an egg in a sink;
- Collision 5: virtual crashing of trains on a bridge, in the style of a nineteenth century photograph;
- Collision 4: fans invading a sports field (after the victory?);
- Collision 3: three consecutive events: the storm, the communications tower, the earthquake in the office and the bandaged hand continuously opening and closing;
- Collision 2: glass of water and girl crying;
- Collision 1: horses falling and swimming, as in a stampede with riders.

Francisco Ruiz de Infante (ES/FR)



Colisiones sin título 2001

Video, 17'

Courtesy of the artist



**João
Salaviza
(PT)**





Frames from Cerro Negro

Arena 2009

Short film (1.85, 35 mm, 15')

Cerro Negro 2011

Short film (1.85, 16 mm, 22')

Rafa 2012

Short film (1.33, 16 mm, 25')

“Although my films suggest the opposite, in my work I never start from a single theme, because I find that notion tremendously boring. Quite to the contrary, I like to think about the film starting from very simple and clear assumptions that I can forget completely about while I shoot. And when I forget about them, it is because they were also forgotten by the people I shoot. In those moments of escape I feel that I’ve discovered something unique in a body or a space: like in *Rafa*, when the kid forgets to look for his mother and gets lost watching a bunch of skaters, or a dog by the river. Or, like towards the end of *Arena*, when Mauro lies down to sun himself. Then, there is no theme, story, circumstance: what matters is an individual, a man who becomes bigger than everything else, for a moment. In a way, those moments

are like points of escape, departure. I believe that the film then projects itself into another space, which is not visible. Nevertheless, I have noted that, between *Cerro Negro* and *Rafa*, there are some elements which are repeated from film to film, and that I somehow construct a trilogy without even being aware of that. In those films, the camerawork is restricted to following a single character, as if witnessing his existence in a short amount of time. On the other hand, I tend to shoot people who are somehow imprisoned in their own bodies, like they are going to explode at any moment: this materialization of captivity seems to me even more powerful than the notion of a real prison. This is why I never shoot institutions, although they are always present, off-screen: it is in this invisibility that one feels their power.”

In this piece Salazar enacts in front of the camera a performance linked to youth culture. The artist himself offers his own case as an example of the emotional uncertainties that young people face in Western culture. We will be taken from fascination to hate not knowing exactly how: Salazar builds a bomb in this video.

Salazar's performance reconstructs a real story: a young admirer, having sent his idol numerous messages of love and admiration, decides to end the life of the latter after not receiving any response from him. The process of mental disturbance is nothing more than a response to the interests generated by the merchandising industry, whereby concepts such as reality and construction, desire and impossibility, are dangerously mixed up.



**Pepo
Salazar
(ES)**



Second Kjob Corpse 2001

Video, 4' 40"

Courtesy of the artist

The video begins with references to club culture, with cliché statements—the significance of the Pacman videogame for a whole generation—and bright colours. As if we were watching a domestic DIY programme, Salazar builds those elements that are identifiable with consumer culture, but with strange edges. He uses a very polished aesthetic, characteristic of the world of fashion. After finishing a banner, we watch him tie a basketball to his stomach. The ball is like a stamp that “tatooes” his stomach with Minor Threat’s logo, an iconic group of the hardcore scene. The name of the group will appear repeatedly on different parts of the artist’s body.

Within this context of demonstrating one’s identity in front of the camera, Salazar decides to build a bomb. The bomb becomes an attractive and desirable object, that does not stand out within the bipolar logic defining the character in the performance: admiration and disappointment go hand in hand.



ESSAYS



Invisible Violence as the Basic Instinct of Life

Very often philosophers are used to thinking about the metaphysical structure of reality in order to grasp some of the basic proprieties of reality itself. My sense is that invisible forms of violence, which are now imprisoning contemporary western society, have to be faced primarily through a reflection on the metaphysical nature of violence. As we have some intuitions about the nature of violence, we will be able to explore some cases in which violence is invisible, hoping to make it visible and to make our consciousness more sensible to isolating it.

Every time we tackle the topic of violence we have to reflect at least on three major issues: the nature of violence, its structure and all the forms (both visible and invisible) in which violence manifests its nature and effects. As I said, I'm quite convinced that a deep reflection on the forms and manifestations of violence is not possible without a deep exploration of the metaphysical structure of violence. So it is important to explore questions like these: What is violence? What kind of entity is it? What forms can it assume?

Two philosophers in particular were interested in capturing and exploring the inner essence of violence. I'm referring to Thomas Hobbes and Friedrich Nietzsche who explored the nature of violence respectively in human societies and in the constitution of the individual personality.

A common thread emerges comparing the very fine analyses outlined by Hobbes and Nietzsche. Through their arguments, we can notice that violence is something basically invisible: that is, something existing as a component of things or as a relation between persons or between persons and institutions. This component becomes visible only when violence explodes, so to speak, but it is silently present in most circumstances. Why is invisible violence so diffused? Hobbes and Nietzsche would both reply that this is due to the inner constitution of human nature: because of their physiology, which is very close to the animals', human beings' actions have very deep roots in the instinct. Of all instincts, one in particular is able

**Tiziana
Andina**

to reveal the essence and form of violence: the will to power, as Nietzsche called it. The notion of the will to power tries to capture a very basic idea: the necessity that life be affirmative of itself through the will and the agency of the individual ego. My sense is that the Will to Power as an auto-affirmative instinct is the most basic form of invisible violence. This instinct is so close to the subject, a proper part of its nature that it is not in the power of the subject to acknowledge it. The Will to Power wants itself and nothing else. This idea basically means that the will to power is an expression of desire, that of expanding one's life and one's space of influence, subtracting life and spaces of influence from others. This instinct, in a word, is the form of pure life that all human beings share through history and different forms of life.

To be an animal (human or non-human) essentially means to be an individual who must violently impose his/her will to power. There is just one difference: non-human animals do this simply by living while human animals generally impose their will to power by using sophisticated and often misleading strategies. In the Nietzschean view, violence is indeed necessary and it becomes all the more invisible the more human beings distance themselves from their animal origin.

Was Nietzsche right? Does the invisible violence of the will to power become really more subtle and sophisticated the more society becomes civilized? Since Nietzsche certainly identified the importance of the will to power in being able to understand violence as an intrinsic component of the human nature, my sense is that the progress of culture and civilisation remains the only possible strategy to reveal the multiple and invisible forms of violence. Art, due to its meta-ontological structure, is particularly useful to show invisible violence. As is well known by both artists and philosophers of art, the boundary between art and life is one of the main topics in the arts. This boundary — which is often marked physically in the body of the work of the arts or in the context in which the works of art are placed — is a formidable real space that renders the language used by the artworks as something that goes beyond the rules of epistemic knowledge.¹ The space between art and reality is safe from the instinct of the will to power, to the point of being completely open to the re-presentation or representation of objects from real life. In this space, through the works of artists and the reflections of philosophers, we can see violence become visible and in a way, also tangible. My sense is that good artists have a great power: they are able to feel and capture one of the most basic instincts of life — that is, the will to power — and to embody it in a representation showing its essence.

1 A deeper discussion in T. Andina, *The Philosophy of Art. The Question of Definition from Hegel to Post-Dantian Theories*, London-New York, Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.

I would like to try and explain this idea by reflecting on some cases in which we see invisible violence in life and then by considering some of the representations of this violence made by artists.

Personal Identity. The Nineteenth century was the time in which the Cartesian idea of the self was systematically discussed and problematized. The idea of personal identity as something transparent and coherent was outlined as a methodological myth introduced by philosophers to ground their systems on something stable. This theoretical idea is the nucleus of the Cartesian system which regarded the whole of epistemology as founded on the transparency of the subject.

Now, someone could ask where is the violence here. Well, the answer is quite simple: just consider the cost the subject paid in order to be a whole as required by Cartesian philosophy. The subject was intended as something basically coherent: there were no differences between her impulses or passions, nor between her ideas. The person was thus transformed into something hypothetical, a mere logical postulate. And, of course, it is very difficult to live as a logical postulate. This is a very insidious form of violence introduced by scientific thought and is due to the vanity of scientists and philosophers. Human beings have to be rational and logical in their deep essence — this is the main thesis. This assumption is particularly dangerous for all those who have unstable personalities, less coherent with a supposed regulative unity: they are taken to be guilty for this supposed deficit of rationality. The real subject, the subject who was not idealized by rational thought, is very well portrayed by Francis Bacon. Bacon's portraits light up the torsion of a soul that is permanently without a centre and without boundaries. Pervasive rationality and calculating thought generally try to veil this perturbing reality but Bacon — as a metaphysical portraitist — unveils this ambiguity and depicts it as in a slow motion film. Three portraits of the same face are placed together as a film sequence: a very impressive technique to project the movement of the soul. The internal deformation of the soul — we may say — is reflected in the exteriority until the perfect casing of the face is completely corrupted.

What do you see when you look at those faces? Do you see a man whose artistic portrait is opening a clear representation of the self? I don't think this is the case. We see, rather, something definable as forces in action. It's as if the artist had made a picture of all those forces that, under the veil of the skin, are deforming the soul.

Human Body. And what about the human body? What is the invisible violence that artists can unveil simply by representing or re-presenting human bodies? Plato once

said that the body is the tomb of the soul. The Platonic judgement was going to mark the whole history of western philosophy and of religion as well. If the soul is something perfect and incorruptible, very close to ideas, the body carries the signs of time and is similar to a wax board on which the world impresses its actions. The postmodern era deeply subverted Platonic thought by declaring the death of god and relegating the existence of humans to a merely physical dimension. All that is left are bodies without souls.

Is this subversion a kind of violence? I think it is. Damien Hirst explains the reasons for this thought by using objects and installations instead of arguments. What is left when we take away from a living human being all the proprieties that cannot be reduced to mere physicality? The artist's answer is illuminating: simply nothing beyond that physicality. So, all that we have left to look at is bare physicality: this is why Hirst makes a great effort in dissecting or representing mere body parts. Look at the cross with the skeleton. That cross is placed horizontally by the artist, differently from the classical iconography, which shows the cross as perpendicular to the ground. In all the major classical crucifixions, the dead body is exposed perpendicularly but Hirst prefers to suspend it horizontally, embedding the skeleton in the middle of a transparent cross. So, "death is irrelevant" for a body which has lost its soul. That body is a mere skeleton, embedded in a symbol that has become transparent because it has lost its power.

Is this a form of violence? I think so: it is the violence deriving from a silent and radical deletion of human spirituality. Now the question is: who is responsible for this violence against humanity? It is difficult to see and difficult to say. But, probably, this violence is another effect of the will to power.

Animals. Darwinism taught us that life is a continuous chain. It is a chain including impressive differences: one of the most meaningful is certainly conscious thought. Philosophy, and science as well, has to face many compelling puzzles regarding conscience: what is consciousness exactly? Where is it placed? Is consciousness really reducible to the brain?

Among all these questions, one of the most interesting is that about the carriers of consciousness. So — again — what is consciousness and who has it? In a nutshell, we can define consciousness as a thought about thoughts. It is the capacity of some beings to reflect on their own thoughts. Humans, typically, have this ability and they normally feel that this is the main feature distinguishing them from all other living creatures. They are different — this is the intuition — because of their consciousness which gives

them the power to change and determine the life of other beings. But all this considered, are we really sure about the fact that human beings are the only beings with conscious thought? And, even more, are we really sure that our conviction is sufficient to justify the idea of human supremacy over all other species?

Some time ago a well-known American moral philosopher, Thomas Nagel, said that it is logically impossible for humans to know and describe what it feels like to be a bat. Humans are just able to describe what *they* see: that is, bats normally sleep during the day, catch their prey during the night, and use ears as if they were eyes, as a radar. Do human beings have justified claims to conclude that they really know what it is to be a bat? Nagel's answer is "no": this claim is not justified, because human beings draw their conclusions using their sense organs which are different from those of bats, and their conceptual schemes, which probably are also very different from those of bats.

There is no serious argument to conclude that humans are animals with something that non-human animals do not have. We are not really in the position to understand and explain how a non-human animal feels but, in spite of this, the human will to power often takes an affirmative form, imposing upon non-human animals the human way of interpreting world.

Chaim Soutine seems to express exactly this idea in his painting: a beef carcass which is half meat, half a man. There is no separation between human and non-human animals and every time humans introduce a separation, they are manipulating reality, using violence upon a part of the natural world.

In *In nomine patris*, Damien Hirst represents the continuity between the domain of animality and that of the divine. The installation presents an animal body hanging as on an imaginary cross. The body is transformed into a carcass which has very close semblances to the holy body that we are used to seeing exposed on a wooden cross. The artist is expressing death through a re-presentation of a real dead body. In this way he is showing perhaps the only property that is shared by all beings, including those that are very close to the divine. All beings belong to the same living space; so it is undoubtedly an invisible violence on that which is made by introducing a separation between different forms of life. The power of Hirst's image lies in capturing all the living in one body, invested with a great symbolic meaning.

Words. How much violence is hidden in some words? We know from experience that words can be full of violence. Violence is often visible: we can clearly see words which express violence through meaning or sounds.

Marina Abramovic at the beginning of her performance career explored very deeply the force of sound without meaning (consider “AAA AAA”, 1978). We can feel the force of a sound and that force could become devastating if it is associated with powerful meanings. We have all experienced something similar and we are quite prepared to defend ourselves from violent words. But what do we know about the invisible violence in words?

My sense is that, especially in the contemporary era, people are generally very vulnerable to populisms. Populism is a form of communication that uses words in a strategic way. Typically, populism is embodied by charismatic leaders who tell people what they want hear so as to get political consensus. The language used by these leaders is never concerned with truth or falsity or good or evil. It is simply a matter of consensus and of instruments used by the leader to obtain it.

In philosophy we generally say that words are semantic vehicles; that is, they are physical vehicles embodying meanings, generally sensitive to the truthfulness and falseness of the meanings they carry. And those meanings obviously exist in a relation with the external world and its objects. However, when words are used in a populist way, they become insensitive to truthfulness and falseness and are merely sensitive to the reality constructed and described by the political leader. Now, where is the violence? What kind of violence is in action here?

Well, it is the soft and silent violence through which the populist leader transforms reality into a collective dream or nightmare. The aim is clear: to replace the knowledge of reality with its narrative. A useful definition of knowledge can be this: true and justified information. This means that generally we intend that knowledge, in order to be knowledge, has to be justified. This condition is not necessary for the structure of narratives. Narratives are mainly used in fields like literature or history, as was masterfully shown by Arthur Danto. Both literature and history belong to domains different from that of epistemology which is notoriously concerned with the conditions that make scientific knowledge possible. The narratives typically used by literature and history are not of the same type. The former is absolutely unconcerned with truth and falsity, the latter is concerned with truth but in a way that is not that of epistemology.

Now let us turn to our problem: the invisible violence of populist leaders. In a society whose structures of powers are ever more diffuse and liquid, populist power uses the narrative model of fantasy to communicate and impose its own image of reality. My feeling is that the more the power of the populist leader is effective, the more he resorts to the narrative model instead of the epistemological one in order to understand the world.

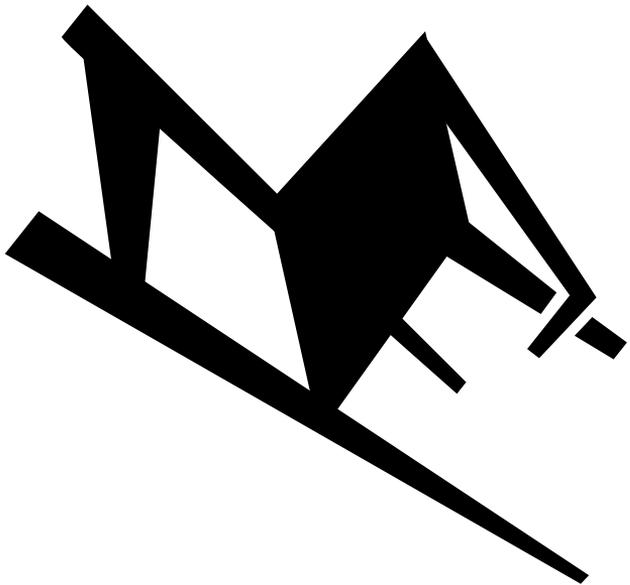
My opinion is that words must capture things, their proprieties and facts, which already belong to the world itself. If they are used just to create narrations independent from the external world, they are doing violence to reality and to people as well, who become simple appearances utilized in a narration written by the prevailing power.

Artists can be sensitive to these circumstances in two ways. Let me refer to two well known artists as an example: in some cases they were both critical of economic-political populism whilst supporting populism in other cases. Andy Warhol has certainly been one of the leading Pop artists in the world. Warhol's paintings and installations were great examples of how artists can criticize political populism; however Warhol has also been one of the artists who has magnified American economic populism. Andy Warhol's *Mao*, painted in 1973, represents Mao Tse-tung, the famous Chinese leader, in the same Pop style he used to iconize Marilyn Monroe. If there isn't any difference between an actress like Marilyn and a political revolutionary like Mao — if they are both symbolic figures, simultaneously authors and components of two different national mythologies — the artist can underline this particular aspect by representing both in the same Pop style. Certainly Warhol could have titled Mao's painting *Demythologizing Mao*. Nevertheless, Warhol also contributed in other ways to mythologizing the American society of the late nineteenth century. This marvellous Coca-Cola is one of most amazing examples. Warhol's Coca-Cola is an artistic tribute to Coca-Cola as Coca-Cola is. Coca-Cola, that is, as the symbol of American life style, is simply perfect as it is and Warhol decided to reproduce a Coca-Cola bottle without any stylistic redundancy. This is Coca-Cola, this is America; both are simply great.

Wang Guangyi² is a contemporary Chinese artist whose famous cycle — *Great Criticism* — has a clear aim: using Pop style to demythologize the most important American or European cultural symbols. But do Wang Guangyi's paintings simply deconstruct the mythology and the populism hidden in American and European culture, market and politics? No. In his demythologization of Western culture, Guangyi is also mythologising Chinese history by using a narrative which is deeply populist.

What is the moral of the story? We must be careful: we all become very imaginative when we want to express our will to power upon the world, often using many forms of invisible violence.

2 Tiziana Andina and Demetri Paparoni (eds.), *Wang Guangyi e la filosofia*, in "Rivista di Estetica", n. 61 (1/2016).



All that is Seen and Unseen: Notes on Art and Post-Conflict Northern Ireland

I

Recently, I was struck by a curious correspondence between two ostensibly unrelated news images connected with Northern Ireland. The first of these (found in the travel section of *The Guardian* online) accompanied a story about the forthcoming *Giro d'Italia* — the world's second most famous cycling race — part of which, in 2014, was to take place along the County Antrim Coast in Northern Ireland. The image used for the article showed a cyclist overlooking a long, wide beach, pausing to take in the dramatic coastal scenery at a moment of rest during his journey. The context for the image was largely promotional — the travel article using the occasion of the *Giro d'Italia* to reflect on the tourism potential of this part of Northern Ireland's landscape. As such, the picture represented an alternative to some prior ways of representing this part of the world: the media image of Northern Ireland having been for many years associated with violent sectarian conflict and/or military control (depending on one's perspective in the historical situation). And indeed it was a curious phenomenon to find, as the article noted, that in advance of the *Giro d'Italia*, many buildings, pavements and sites of public display had been painted pink for the imminent sporting spectacle — the customary colour of *Giro* branding replacing, in some places, the usually prevalent colours of nationalistic (and especially British) allegiance that are often in evidence during the spring and summer months across Northern Ireland. A very positive, welcoming new tone was thus established in these settings, marking a significant change from wearily familiar displays of political affiliation and territorial demarcation.

The second news image was, however, more directly related to the history of what has long been called “The Troubles” in the North of Ireland. This was a similarly composed shot of another coastal setting: a view from a raised vantage point showing another potentially attractive sea view. But in this instance, the beach that the camera gazed down on was one on which a large-scale excavation process was underway. For details had emerged to suggest that here, beneath the sand, bodies

**Declan
Long**

were buried, bodies of people who had disappeared decades before in mysterious circumstances. Such missing victims of violence are referred to in Northern Ireland — and in similar circumstances elsewhere — as “the disappeared”; and though there has been significant political progress in the region in recent years, the ghosts of such “disappeared” people still haunt the society. So, just as Northern Ireland was preparing itself for the beginning of the exciting Giro d’Italia tourist spectacle — and as its scenic coastal landscapes were being advertised as places of leisure and beauty — it was also undergoing another period of disturbing exorcism. At this moment, the ongoing search for the disappeared brought the political sphere once more into crisis as those formerly associated with making the case for “armed struggle” in Ireland were being called to answer for committing or excusing such atrocities in the name of their cause. (And around this time, in fact, the leader of the main Republican party Sinn Fein, Gerry Adams, was arrested in relation to inquiries regarding “the disappeared”.)

These two images are, in an accidentally coinciding way, twin images of the “new” Northern Ireland: a society in which there has been substantial, palpable political progress — a place that is now strenuously promoted as an appealing tourist destination — but one in which, at the same time, much remains invisible, unsaid, unresolved. It is a place where legacies of “the Troubles” are not always visible, but where tensions relating these years of violence are not far from the surface.

II

The “post-troubles” period has been an era of extraordinary transformation in Northern Ireland’s society and culture. It is a period when a protracted peace-process, fraught with disturbances and setbacks, led to an internationally celebrated accord between political parties and the eventual establishment of new devolved institutions of government. The “Good Friday”, or “Belfast”, Agreement — different names for the accord are used by different political factions — which was approved in referenda on both sides of the Irish border, inaugurated a “post-Troubles” period of optimism and relative economic prosperity. Some parts of Northern Ireland’s city spaces underwent significant rebuilding and rebranding. Belfast, in particular, became widely promoted as a shopping and entertainment destination; instead of a place to be wary of as a result of conflict (which was the presumed case during the three decades of the Troubles) it was increasingly advertised as a desirable, lively, fashionable city-break option.

But if this post-Troubles period has been one of unprecedented political progress, of publicly proclaimed “peace” and widely manifested “peace dividend”, it has

also been one of recurrent political crises, of sporadic but serious and continuing paramilitary-related violence and of enduring sectarian division and tension. The Troubles appeared to reach an official conclusion as a result of the political parties and national governments achieving an agreed solution, but many underlying problems have stubbornly persisted. It is often said, for instance, that there are now more miles of security fence between politically divided communities in Belfast than there ever were during the years of conflict. And indeed, for some commentators, it has been important to ask if the strategic emphases and structural outcomes of the peace process — and the dominant discursive formations regarding “progress” more generally, shaped to a significant degree by the imperatives of corporate investment and commercial development — have in fact masked the ongoing difficulties and unresolved aspects of the long-running conflict in ways that might be deeply damaging in the longer term. The critic Colin Graham, for example, has drawn attention to how in the Good Friday Agreement itself, the matter of “history” was — aptly if problematically — “shuffled into the past”: paragraph two of the Agreement’s opening declaration proposes that we can best honour the dead and injured of the Troubles “through a fresh start”. Such well-meaning, future-oriented rhetoric, Graham suggests, is nevertheless indicative of fundamental emphases in the process that have forced “the entanglements of everyday existence to remain outside the dominant political discourse” (Graham, 2005, p. 567). It is crucial to note in this regard too that in the form of regional government that is now in operation, political representatives must declare an affiliation to either “Nationalist” or “Unionist” in key votes in order to ensure that a form of cross-community consensus is maintained. The downside, of course, is that this “solution” to the perpetuation of political disagreement depends on adherence to the fixed categories of identity and community that have been at the heart of the decades-long conflict. Related issues are raised by Greg McLaughlin and Stephen Baker who have argued that a prominent and powerful “propaganda of peace” provided the consensual vocabulary for a much-needed political settlement, and so also helped boost Northern Ireland’s image abroad (attracting tourism and securing economic development packages) but it has subsequently served to truncate political debate more locally. The peace process, they argue, has been constructed within official spheres of political discourse and through the mainstream media as “the only show in town”, to the extent that “dissenting voices have been marginalised or maligned, political activism viewed as disruptive of the social order and pacified domesticity presented as the preferred model of citizenship”. (McLaughlin & Baker, 2009, p. 13).

Moving to a post-Troubles moment in Northern Ireland’s politics appears to have required — even if it doesn’t always seem so — a shift towards what we might

call, following Chantal Mouffe, a “post-political” situation, in which awkward or unruly antagonisms are contained or marginalised, rather than addressed or granted legitimate space for expression. What is undervalued, some argue, is the need for a more inclusive and open sense of democratic exchange and representation; despite the inevitable difficulties in a post-conflict situation, acceptance of a diversity of possible arguments and identities should be encouraged. All societies, Mouffe argues, are underpinned by “an ever present possibility of antagonism”. This requires us, she says, to come to terms with “the lack of a final ground”; we thus need to acknowledge “the dimension of undecidability which pervades every order”. This requires, in other words, “recognizing the hegemonic nature of every kind of social order and the fact that every society is the product of a series of practices attempting to establish order in a context of contingency.” (Mouffe, 2005, p. 17) To see “every order [as] the temporary and precarious articulation of contingent practices” means, for Mouffe, acknowledging that “there are always other possibilities that have been repressed and that can be reactivated” (2005, p. 18).

A great deal is at stake, then, in how “post” Troubles politics are viewed and understood — and in how we might understand the relation of current models of progress to “other possibilities”. Significant potentiality — and difficulty — may yet arise from reflection on what has been “repressed” and on what could be “re-activated” in the wake of the peace process. For McLaughlin and Baker the term “peace” in particular has come to signify “the absence of politics”. Moreover, this post-political form and orientation of the peace process and its aftermath suggests to these writers motives on the part of governments (and other, less democratically “visible” but nonetheless powerful agents of apparent “progress”) that go beyond the ostensible primary objective of resolving a complex long-running conflict that variously has involved, and been interpreted in terms of, national and regional allegiances, sectarian prejudices and post-colonial legacies. These writers consider “the possibility of a deeper ideological purpose” to the “propaganda of peace”, which may be “to interpellate Northern Ireland within the political and cultural milieu of contemporary capitalism; after all its denial of politics may be conducive to this end” (2010, p.15). In this way an important association is made between the complex, incomplete “end” of the Troubles in Northern Ireland and a broader “end of history”. This much-celebrated moment of historical closure is widely constructed in contemporary political discourse as the ultimate terminal point for antagonistic politics — this is a “common sense” view in Western societies, as Mouffe suggests, that considers individuals to be now “liberated from collective ties”, free to dedicate themselves “to cultivating a diversity of lifestyles, unhindered by antiquated attachments” (2005, p. 1). The value of finding alternatives to “antiquated attach-

ments” cannot, of course, be underestimated in relation to changes in Northern Irish society. And yet this global “end of history” can also be thought of as precisely resulting in the eradication of real alternatives. Describing the current conditions of capitalist globalisation, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri contend that this new all-pervasive and all-consuming “Empire” presents itself as:

an order that effectively suspends history and thereby fixes the existing state of affairs for eternity. From the perspective of Empire, this is the way things will always be and the way they were always meant to be. In other words, Empire presents its rule not as a transitory moment in the movement of history, but as a regime with no temporal boundaries and in this sense outside of history or at the end of history. (2000, p. xv)

Crucially, in relation to Northern Ireland, we can recall to Hardt and Negri’s argument that though “Empire is continually bathed in blood”, “the concept of Empire is always dedicated to peace — a perpetual and universal peace out-side of history” (2000, p. xv).

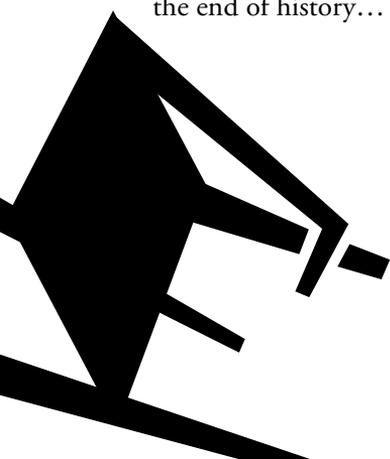
III

The work of artists in Northern Ireland is often positioned or conceived in relation to these altered circumstances. In the simultaneously “settled” and “unsettling” wake of The Troubles, the art field has been, to a significant degree, characterised by tentative and anxious investigation of how we might access or address what has been “repressed” in order to facilitate progress and by uneasy experimentation with ways of “making visible” the lost or the marginalised — those stray images and issues, those under-considered sites and stories, now incompatible with official visions of the post-Troubles society. Such aftermath-related work by artists has often tended to “shadow” more mainstream forms. Visions of the changing society are offered that might, for instance, resemble or relate to familiar media imagery but that operate with different intentions, employing alternative models of presentation and distribution, and that may have disconcerting, unpredictable and *de-familiarising* effects. Such artworks are determinedly indeterminate “after-images” that often prioritise anxiously subjective forms of viewing or intentionally “uncertain” modes of composition and display. (We could be reminded here, in some respects, of works by Declan Clarke and Locky Morris in the *Invisible Violence* exhibition.) Equally, artists have been driven again and again to seek out what may persist *in the shadows* of the new post-conflict landscapes. The art of the post-Troubles era in Northern Ireland has been acutely concerned with uncertain conditions of site and situation. A great deal of recent art from Northern Ireland has been devoted to

searching through neglected landscapes, imagining unexpected ways of addressing geography, conceiving of alternative, subjective and collective, senses and sign-systems of place to those shaped by sectarian identifications or prescribed “from above” — from, that is, those potentially “repressive” influences on the shape and experience of location, ranging from residual Troubles-era security protocols to post-Troubles regeneration planning. This has been an art of patient exploration, an art of estranged ordinariness discovered through idiosyncratic wandering. (This is, certainly, one way to characterise the films and photographs of Willie Doherty, also featured in *Invisible Violence*.) Crucial also to the multiple versions of contemporary landscape practices recently found in the north of Ireland is the fact that the journeys undertaken by artists have involved travel through time as well as space. This has been an art of traces, an art of tracking the lost histories of particular places that at times resembles the “ghost-hunting” of obscure subjects that Hal Foster has elsewhere admired in the work of artists such as Tacita Dean and Joachim Koester — artists who, Foster writes, are “drawn to blind spots in which the turns that history has taken, and might still take, are sometimes revealed to us” (Foster, 2006). Again, the obscure investigations of the relation of a personal past to a wider public, political context in Declan Clarke’s story of how the borderlands of Co. Armagh connect with the history of international arms production seems relevant. Similarly, the Foster’s “ghost” metaphor is particularly useful in developing an approach to contemporary art’s post-Troubles predicament in Northern Ireland. It is a fitting figure of indeterminacy that may represent a terrifying threat to an established order — so evoking here the real danger implied in calling forth the unresolved past in this moment of “peace” — and that might, at the same time, indicate a more welcome weakening of certainties, allowing us to imagine in this context a necessary unsettling of post-Troubles, post-political consensus and orthodoxy. In focusing a passing or protracted gaze on overlooked elements of the past that might linger unacknowledged within the altering environments of the uneasily peaceful present, recent artists in the north of Ireland have attempted to “gain access to a hidden dimension of urban reality”, trying to connect “with a past whose traces still seem present in the recesses of the city”, exposing themselves to each city’s “capacity to release the ghosts harboured by its monuments” — and here I’m borrowing comments made by Michael Sheringham in relation to W. G. Sebald’s novel *Austerlitz* (2010, p. 9). By so doing, these artists resist the potential amnesia represented by the new circumstances of this society: a society that is today being strategically shaped after a long period of trauma and division from the impossibly “untroubled” perspective of “a fresh start”. But my attraction to the figure of the ghost has also been inspired, in particular, by the marked spectral turn in the recent work of Willie Doherty. Doherty is a central figure in art from Northern

Ireland — a respected ghost-hunter in the post-Troubles landscape. In *Ancient Ground*, featured in *Invisible Violence*, Doherty brings a forensic gaze to an open, rural landscape, but study of the material presence of the land is combined with a concern for what is not visible, for what haunts these places. Crucially, Doherty's work over recent years has been drawn to all that haunts the present moment and the promise of progress. And, Doherty's films and photographs are almost always concerned with “old haunts”— with repeat visits to places well-known to the artist, to sites well-viewed already in his work. His art deals with the potentially uncanny effects on consciousness of the most familiar locations — and a resulting sense of subjective and spatial uncertainty is linked to the challenge of registering the significance of what has “taken place” at a time when, in many cases, the specific historical markers of the past in the Northern Irish landscape are in the process of being erased.

In considering Doherty's recent, spectrally-fixated work — and the recent art from Northern Ireland more generally — Jacques Derrida's comment that we must “learn to live with ghosts” (1994, pp. xvii–xviii) is acutely relevant. This claim is, first of all, a call for fidelity in politics to those “who *are not there* ... those who are no longer or who are not yet *present and living*” (Derrida, 1994, p. xviii). It is a commitment of anxious allegiance to the ghosts of our histories and our possible futures. Secondly, the insistence on “living with ghosts” implies a requirement in “theory” that we address the “spectral” element that haunts our knowledge of the world — what we might also think of as the “blind spots” in our vision — and as such it necessitates attending to “the non-contemporaneity with itself of the living present”, and to “that which secretly unhinges it” (Derrida, 1994, p. xviii). We must, in this way, think beyond the supposed certainties and finalities of given present day, post-conflict conditions. The spectral as Fredric Jameson has written, enables a querying of “belief in the stability in reality”, unsettling our sure sense of a “reality that is supposed to rebuke us by its changelessness” (1999, p. 38). Derrida's ghosts are, Jameson says, “these moments in which the present — and above all our current present, the wealthy, sunny, gleaming world of the postmodern and the end of history... — unexpectedly betrays us.” (Jameson, 1999, p. 39).



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The Lack and its “Supplement”: Visible Monuments, Intolerable Violence

The main aim of the text is to address the urgent need to deconstruct the visible and invisible violence that is produced in the realm of the symbolic, imaginary or “real” regarding memorials, monuments and other sculptures in public space. Almost always representing certain traumatic events from the past, the monuments are the symptoms of the repressive socio-political and cultural structures and strategies which call for the over-writing of different historic narratives and often prompt a relocation or even destruction of the monuments from previous epochs - a kind of ‘monumentomachia’.

In parallel to this, the visible imbalance between male and female figures dominating public space constructs and reinforces a visual culture and type of public space which is dominated by masculinity, aggression, violence and militant tropes. I will make particular reference to the case of the recently built monumental and public sculptures in the government sponsored urban project “Skopje 2014” (in Skopje, the capital of Macedonia) as an attempt at re-writing history by a rapid transformation of the urban and architectural design of the main city square and other public spaces, and thus compensating for the incomplete and faulty national identity of the state that is itself regarded as “rogue” (taking into account the “name issue”).

I offer an analysis of what is lacking (or erased, emptied out, renamed): the obvious strategy of omitting from public spaces visual representations of woman’s social role and that which is used in its place, as a “supplement”: the pregnant or objectified and eroticized representations of women in order to support the notion of patriarchy as a prevailing phenomenon in visual culture. Also, I’ll discuss how compensating for the lack of a European historic cultural past became evident in the construction of a new ‘Triumphal Arch’ and other new buildings or in the addition of neo-classical, pseudo-baroque and other stylised ornaments and columns on to socialist-modernist and brutalist architectural objects. One of the main questions of my text is also whether the virtual public space of the internet can be treated as a

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catalyst for the acting out of public discontent which actually also leads to a certain type of violence which itself plays out in real space; and whether such actions can in fact enable the democratization of cultural policy and possibly the production a kind of virtual agonistic visual *public space and public sphere*.

I offer this text as an *ágalma* dedicated to yet another “*ágalma*”: to the Macedonian government project “Skopje 2014” which recently turned Skopje, the capital of the Republic, into a memorial park of “false memories.”¹ Over the last five years, a series of ineptly cast figurative monuments have appeared throughout Skopje, installed during the night as if lifted into the public spaces by the animated hand from the opening credits of *Monty Python’s Flying Circus*.² Figures from the national past (some relevant, some marginal), buildings with obvious references to Westernized aesthetic regimes (mere imitations of styles from periods atypical for the local architecture) and sexist public sculptures have transformed the once socialist-modernist city square into a theatrical backdrop.

More than ninety years ago, in a kind of a manifesto of anti-monumental architectural and artistic revolution, Vladimir Tatlin challenged both the “bourgeois” Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty with his tower *Monument to the Third International* (1919–25), which never was constructed. Since then, discourses on contemporary monuments have flourished elsewhere in Europe (“anti-monuments,” “counter-monuments,” “low-budget monuments,” “invisible monuments,” “monument in waiting,” “participatory monuments”³) but this debate has completely bypassed the Macedonian establishment.

The government’s promise that the Skopje 2014 project would attract tourists and journalists to Macedonia was realized for all the wrong reasons—in many tourism articles, Skopje’s city centre is depicted as a kind of “theme park” and some of the

1 In ancient Greek, *ágalma* means “ornament” or “gift.” It refers to images and statues that were used in temples as votive offerings to gods. “False memories,” a well-known phenomenon from psychopathology, refers to trauma-driven, imagined events that show as real in the subject’s memory.

2 Reference to Monty Python’s Flying Circus, opening credits series 1-4, Last Accessed May20, 2014. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tq37WSg9ESg>

3 See, for example, *The Contemporary Art of Trusting Uncertainties and Unfolding Dialogues*, ed. Esther Shalev-Gerz (Stockholm: Art and Theory, 2013); and Katarzyna Murwaska-Muthesius, “Oskar Hansen and the Auschwitz ‘Counter Memorial,’ 1958–59,” *ARTMargins Online*, May 20, 2002. <http://www.artmargins.com/index.php/2-articles/311-oskar-hansen-and-the-auschwitz-qcountermemorialq-1958-59>

new museums are referred to as “chambers of horrors.”⁴ In short, Skopje 2014 has become a laughing stock for the foreign press. According to critics, the city’s abundance of public sculptures, monuments, administrative buildings and museums has surpassed, in terms of *preposterousness* and pompousness, both Las Vegas and the Neutrality Arch, an oversized monument built by Turkmenistan’s leader Saparmurat Atayevich *Niyazov* from 1985 to 2006.⁵

The citizens of Macedonia first became aware of the scope of this large-scale urban project in 2010 after it was announced, without any public deliberation, in the state-financed promotional video “Macedonia Timeless.”⁶ When the rudimentarily animated video portraying the projected buildings and statues was first broadcast in February 2010, hardly anybody took it seriously because it resembled a kind of stage set (and was even accompanied by dramatic music). In this adoration for an imaginary national past, there is hardly any consideration for monuments which might address the present or future generations. How was it possible to carry out such a massive building project in one of the smallest and poorest countries in Europe without even consulting the public? The project, which was funded by taxpayers, cost over €500 million.⁷

The Name Issue: “State of Exception” and “Rogue State”

Official attempts to explain the purpose behind Skopje 2014 were unconvincing, as for example when the mayor of Skopje stated that the project was meant to function as a kind of 3D history textbook which would compensate for the city’s lack of history books. This contrasts sharply with Viktor Shklovsky’s parable about historical monuments in post-revolutionary Russia; he wrote that they functioned

4 See, for example, Adelheid Wölf, “Im mazedonischen Geschichtsgruselkabinett,” *Der Standard*, May 14, 2014. <http://derstandard.at/1399507404886/Besuch-im-mazedonischen-Geschichtsgruselkab-inett>

5 The Neutrality Arch is a seventy-five-meter-tall monument topped with a rotating, gold-plated statue of Niyazov. It cost an estimated \$12 million to build. Recently, it was made even taller. See Richard Orange, “Turkmenistan rebuilds giant rotating golden statue,” *The Telegraph*, May 24, 2011. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/turkmenistan/8533427/Turkmenistan-rebuilds-giant-rotating-golden-statue.html>

6 See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iybmt-iLysU>

7 The project’s finances are far from transparent, so the exact cost is difficult to confirm. But one statue, *Warrior on a Horse*, is estimated to have cost \$7.5 million alone. Most of the statues and buildings were claimed to be of local significance, and since it was officially initiated by the municipal government of Skopje, the project could bypass any parliamentary discussion.

“as a strange alibi for not telling the whole truth” or even “a quarter of the truth.”⁸ Skopje’s abundance of monuments and public sculptures can be seen as an attempt to use ultra-nationalism to compensate for the incomplete and faulty national identity of the “rogue” state, an outlaw nation which is not complying with the international laws accepted by most other states.⁹ After the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Macedonia—one of the first Yugoslavian states which proclaimed independence in 1991—began experiencing problems with its neighbour Greece.

The main source of conflict emerged when the first post-Yugoslavian government in Macedonia decided to hold onto its Yugoslavian name, the “Republic of Macedonia.” More fuel was added to the fire when the Macedonian government decided to use symbols, such as a flag with sixteen sun rays, which were associated with Ancient Macedonia and did this in spite of Greece’s claim to have the exclusive historic right to these symbols. Then in 1993, under pressure from the Greek government, the UN officially designated Macedonia as “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.” This was later replaced by the unrecognizable acronym “F.Y.R.O.M.” Negotiations with internationally appointed mediators ensued. During these negotiations, the Greek government proposed amongst others the names “Northern Macedonia” and “New Macedonia” for its northern neighbour. The territory and culture of Ancient Macedonia, however, does not completely fall within either contemporary Greece or Macedonia. For more than twenty years, this name dispute put Macedonia into a limbo (e.g., waiting to be accessioned into the EU)—an ongoing, normalized “state of exception.”¹⁰

8 Viktor Shklovsky, *The Knight's Move* (1919–21), written in Petrograd, Moscow, and Berlin, quoted in Svetlana Boym, “Tatlin, or Ruinophilia,” *Cabinet* 28 (Winter 2007–08). <http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/issues/28/boym2.php>

9 Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 97. Derrida cites several authors who have examined the use of the expression “rogue state” in foreign policy, including Noam Chomsky, Robert S. Litwak, and William Blum.

10 For a discussion of the theoretical and philosophical interpretations of this dispute in the context of the project, see *The Renaming Machine*, which examines the arbitrariness of the names, the problematic issue of equating names with identity, and the implications of the politics of memory being erased through renaming. This cross-disciplinary curatorial project comprised ten different events (exhibitions, conferences, and seminars) in Ljubljana, Skopje, Pristina, Zagreb, and Vienna in 2008–2010. See: *The Renaming Machine: The Book*, ed. Suzana Milevska (Ljubljana: 74, 2010). For extensive research into the political arguments in this dispute, see Zlatko Kovach, “Macedonia: Reaching Out To Win L. American Hearts,” *Scoop World*, Feb. 26, 2008. <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0802/S00363.htm>

The difference between “rogue states,” as discussed by Derrida, and “states of exception,” as theorized by Giorgio Agamben, derives from two different interpretations of the “force of law.” The concept of a “rogue state” deals with the possibility that one state declares another state unlawful according to international standards and intervenes in its internal affairs. The phenomenon of “states of exception,” on the other hand, has more to do with the declaration by a sovereign power that the conditions within that country have gone so far beyond the possibility of governing according to constitutional law that exceptional rules need to be applied. A “state of exception” must be officially declared.¹¹

By the the postponing of a resolution of the “name issue,” both the “state of exception” and the “rogue state” created a long-term power vacuum. The rule of law was passed over and Skopje 2014 (one of many dubious projects) became possible, first as an exception and excess, but soon as the norm.

According to Derrida monuments, like tombs, inevitably announce “the death of the tyrant.”¹² But what kind of void is filled by *Warrior on a Horse*, the twenty-five-meter tall *ágalma* that has “adorned” the main Skopje square since 2011? What were the real reasons for building a monument so obviously dedicated to Alexander the Great, yet generically titled *Warrior on a Horse*?¹³

Ágalma and Collective Enjoyment in the Void

To build a monument is by definition to attempt to represent the sublime—that which is incomprehensible, bigger than us. Any monument offers a remembrance of a certain unperceivable and unrepresentable sublime. It commemorates incommensurability and incomprehensibility, as stated by the philosophers who contributed

11 Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2005), 23. According to Agamben, the emergence of camps in the Nazi period signaled that the state of exception had become the rule, transforming society into an unbounded and dislocated biopolitical space. See also Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1998), p. 166.

12 Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (London: Prentice Hall, 1982), p. 4.

13 See Jasna Koteska, “Troubles with History: Skopje 2014,” *ARTMargins Online*, Dec. 29, 2011. <http://www.artmargins.com/index.php/2-articles/655-troubles-with-history-skopje-2014>

most to our understanding of the sublime, Immanuel Kant and Edmund Burke.¹⁴ By definition, a monument is something negative—marking absence, the past, death and above all a certain loss. In Skopje 2014, the celebration of unrecognized and incomplete identities, marginal heroes and exaggerated victories from the past were used as strategies for inducing collective enjoyment and ultimately self-delusion.

One of the most obvious historical interventions in Skopje 2014 is the erection of the monument *Gemidžii*, which celebrates the nationalist organization the Boatmen of Thessaloniki, also known as the Assassins of Salonica. This was an anarchist group active in the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the twentieth century. It did not shy away from murder or terrorist attacks. But rather than analysing the stylistic and aesthetic aspects of such constructed objects, more insight might be gained from formulating a psychoanalytical interpretation of the ultra-nationalist cultural policy of the right-wing neoliberal elites. This policy functions as a kind of ongoing election campaign—unfortunately a very successful one.¹⁵

Jacques Lacan used the term *ágalma* in his psychoanalytical discussion of the pursuit of truth. The *ágalma* was imagined as a certain unconscious truth that we seek and wish to find in analysis, and as a kind of agency, endowed with certain magical powers, intended to please the gods and thus to secure certain favours for its bearer. Lacan used the term *in connection with the object-cause of desire*: “Just as the *ágalma* is a precious object hidden in a worthless box, so the *objet petit a* is the object of desire which we seek in the Other.”¹⁶

Likewise, the monuments of Skopje 2014, although expensive, are creatively and aesthetically worthless objects, yet they stand for something much more important: they become the empty signifiers of the sought-after identity that can complete

14 In his “Analytic of the Sublime” (1790) from *The Critique of Judgment*, Immanuel Kant locates examples of the sublime not only in nature but also in the human condition. He famously argued that the sublime, unlike the beautiful, “cannot be contained in any sensible form but concerns only ideas of reason.” Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Walter S. Pluhar (Indiana: Hackett Publishing, 1987), p. 99.

15 The ruling coalition that has been in power since 2008 (and that was recently reelected in parliamentary and presidential elections in April 2014) is formed by two major right-wing parties, the VMRO-DPMNE (consisting primarily of officials of Christian-Macedonian descent) and DUI (consisting primarily of officials from the Muslim-Albanian minority).

16 The concept of *ágalma* was introduced by Lacan in the context of his writing about Socrates’s “Symposium” in his Seminar VIII (1960–1961). See Lacan, *Le séminaire, Livre VIII: Le transfert* (Paris: Seuil, 1991). <http://lacan.com/seminars2.htm> Lacan always insisted that the term *objet petit a* should remain untranslated because the “a” in *objet petit a* stands for “*autre*” (other).

Macedonia's incomplete contemporary identity. In a compensatory move, they reach back to antiquity, a time when Macedonia was praised and revered.

However, it is important to state that the *objet petit a* in Lacan's writing is the cause of desire, not its aim. For Lacan, what one possesses is not necessarily related to what the other lacks. The phallus emerges as "the only signifier that deserves the role of symbol," sometimes the *agalma*, and sometimes "an operating libidinal reserve that saves the subject from the fascination of the part object. Hence, the importance granted to symbolic castration, a castration at the origin of the law."¹⁷ Lacan based the concept of the *objet petit a* on Freud's concept of the "object" and on concepts developed by a number of renowned British psychoanalysts, such as Melanie Klein and her "partial object," and Donald Winnicott and his "transitional object."

For Winnicott, the "transitional object" (a term he coined in 1951) denotes any particular object to which an infant becomes attached and attributes a special value. Transitional objects, such as a piece of cloth or a teddy bear, originate when the infant is four to twelve months old—during the phase of the infant's development when the first distinctions between inner and outer reality become evident. According to Winnicott, partial objects come to include the entire sphere of culture because they straddle subjective inner reality and shared external reality.¹⁸ For Lacan, the *objet petit a* is the object-cause of desire, the imaginary part-object that, as a kind of leftover or surplus of meaning, is "the remnant left behind by the introduction of the Symbolic in the Real." It "becomes the ultimate jouissance."¹⁹

According to Slavoj Žižek, the *objet petit a* relates to the lack, the remainder of the Real that sets in motion the symbolic movement of interpretation, a hole at the centre of the symbolic order, the mere appearance of some secret to be explained, interpreted, etc.²⁰

When it comes to Skopje 2014, the introduction of the Symbolic—the identity—in the Real is the secret that needs interpretation through the monuments. This becomes the ultimate truth of the political reasoning behind the government's

17 Lacan, *Le séminaire, Livre X: L'angoisse*[1962–1963] (Paris: Seuil, 2004).

18 Donald W. Winnicott, "Transitional objects and transitional phenomena: A study of the first not-me possession," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 34 (1953): pp. 89–97. See also Winnicott's *Playing and Reality* (London: Tavistock, 1971).

19 Lacan, quoted in Dylan Evans, *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 129.

20 Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (New York; Verso, 1989), p. 54.

populist posturing, as was profoundly discussed by Ernesto Laclau in his *On Populist Reason*: “But the presence of the Real *within* the Symbolic involves unevenness: *objets petit a* presuppose a differential cathexis, and it is this cathexis that we call affect.”²¹

The Triumph of Excessive Power and Surplus

When pro-government journalists and other supporters of Skopje 2014 praise the project for the quantity of its constructed objects (e.g. by saying: “At least they built a lot”) Žižek’s explanation of the constitutive role of neoliberal enjoyment comes to mind:

It is this paradox which defines surplus-enjoyment: it is not a surplus which simply attaches itself to some “normal,” fundamental enjoyment because the enjoyment as such emerges only in this surplus, because it is constitutively an “excess.” If we subtract the surplus, we lose the enjoyment itself, just as capitalism, which can survive only by incessantly revolutionizing its own material conditions, ceases to exist if it “stays the same,” if it achieves an internal balance. This, then, is the homology between surplus-value—the “cause” which sets in motion the capitalist process of production—and surplus-enjoyment, the object-cause of desire.²²

Žižek’s conclusion wittily draws the connection between the Lacanian *objet petit a*, lack, and surplus in the context of capitalism’s excessive power:

Is not the paradoxical topology of the movement of capital, the fundamental blockage which resolves and reproduces itself through frenetic activity, excessive power as the very form of the appearance of a fundamental impotence—this immediate passage, this coincidence of limit and excess, of lack and surplus—precisely that of the Lacanian *objet petit a*, of the leftover which embodies the fundamental, constitutive lack?²³

The iconoclastic radicality of such a “void,” a desiring machine that doesn’t produce anything except the absence or lack behind such an emptied-out representation, is

21 Ernesto Laclau, *On Populist Reason* (London: Verso, 2005), 118-119. For a complex discussion of names, empty signifiers, and populist rule, see the chapter entitled “The People and the Production of Emptiness”, pp. 67-124.

22 Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, p. 54.

23 Ibid.

particularly important in the context of Macedonia's inferiority complex. Among many embarrassing diplomatic blunders of late, the most famous was committed by the former minister of foreign affairs Antonio Milososki. In a 2010 interview with the *Guardian*, he stated that the *Warrior on a Horse* was a way of "saying [up yours] to them!" This statement provoked ridicule from the local press, as well as calls for a new sculpture—of the minister's middle finger.²⁴

One of the most symptomatic of all the monuments built as a part of this mega-celebration of failed, impotent diplomacy is the triumphal arch titled "the Gate of Macedonia." Usually, a triumphal arch is intended to both memorialize a past victorious event and anticipate and enable future victorious events. A triumphal arch is a monument that supposedly has the power to collapse the time before and after the event that it celebrates; in a way, it consists of an open multitude of events—a list that can be endlessly rewritten. But the few events that have been marked by public gatherings at the Gate of Macedonia have not been so glorious: in 2011, the Macedonian national basketball team celebrated its fourth-place finish in the European Championship under the gate and in 2012 the organization Aman gathered there to protest at high electricity bills.

Recently, the triumphal arch and the other monuments in Skopje have been placed in a sort of spatial rivalry with a newly installed merry-go-round in the city's central square. The sculptures on the merry-go-round—of beggars, frivolous women with bare breasts (no female heroes were given a monumental representation), bulls, fish, dancers and trees turned into human beings—sit alongside militaristic historical figures, most of whom are riding horses and holding weapons. As capital investment flows into such problematic projects, art and cultural institutions are deteriorating. Artistic leadership is entirely overridden by the ruling party's taste which is driven by political interests, ignorance and an admiration for traditional values (read: figurative and representational art). Such a hypocritical situation is paralleled by regular claims of a lack of funds—for example, when it comes to Macedonia being represented at international contemporary art events such as the Venice Biennale.²⁵

24 Helena Smith, "Macedonian statue: Alexander the Great or a warrior on a horse?," *The Guardian*, August 14, 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/aug/14/alexander-great-macedonia-warrior-horse>

25 See Suzana Milevska, "The Internalisation of the Discourse of Institutional Critique and the 'Unhappy Consciousness,'" in *Evaluating and Formative Goals of Art Criticism in Recent (De)territorialized Contexts* (Paris: AICA Press, 2009), pp. 2–6. <http://www.aica-int.org/IMG/pdf/SKOPJecomplet.pdf>

But today's monument is tomorrow's ruin. We have already seen so many neglected and destroyed monuments from the socialist past. While Skopje 2014 claimed to address a lack of Macedonian identity in European cultural history, it compensated for this lack by building the brand new triumphal arch. By adding ornaments and columns in neoclassicist and Baroque styles to existing socialist-modernist and brutalist architectural objects, Skopje 2014 has erased other memory fragments, such as Macedonia's antifascist past. The Skopje 2014 project does not bear the signature of one individual artistic or architectural creator or a team. Instead, it feels like it emerged from one of the prime minister's nightmarish fantasies. In his speeches, he even refers to it as *his* project. The government and the prime minister have thus reimagined themselves as chief "curators" in charge of the *objet petit a*, but the ugly box is still empty, devoid of the ultimate object-cause of desire. The intolerable violence of the highly visible monuments of "Skopje 2014" is at the farthest degree of the famous Robert Musil's take on monuments, that "there is nothing in the world so invisible as a monument."

The internet already "hosts" many selfies of tourists and Skopje citizens with some of the "Skopje 2014" monuments. However, the violence of the project "Skopje 2014" does not take place only in the visual field and within aesthetic disputes: it affects with intolerable aggression our conception of democracy, art and the possibility to decide on how the common public space is shaped. Brad Evans and Henry A. Giroux in their recently published book *Disposable Futures* warned us how the neoliberal regime normalizes violence, aggression and cruelty and how neoliberalism renders the victims of spectacle disposable and commodifies the spectacle of relentless violence while selling it to us as entertainment.²⁶

Although it is still hard to imagine that these monuments will "disappear" from our perception any time soon and become "invisible" due to the desensitisation alluded to in Musil's statement, the indirect and invisible aggression caused on many different socio-political and cultural levels is already carving its traces over the sensitive mnemonic textures in Macedonia, exactly due to the reciprocity between the field of visual culture and the political system.

The article is based on Suzana Milevska's presentations at the conferences in Belgrade and Salzburg organised in the context of the project *Invisible Violence* and on her article *Ágalma: The Objet Petit a, Alexander the Great, and Other Excesses of "Skopje 2014"*, published in e-flux journal #57, September 2014, 09/09.

26 Brad Evans and Henry A. Giroux, *Disposable Futures The Seduction of Violence in the Age of Spectacle* (San Francisco, CA.:City Lights Publishers, 2015).

Memory's Invisible Violence

Is there such a thing as an „invisible violence“? How invisible is it and to whom is it invisible?

I propose that speaking of „invisible violence“ not only does make sense but is also indispensable to understanding the way in which we relate to our individual and communal origins. Remembrance itself is marked by an invisible violence and this violence, rather than being a defect of individual or collective memory, stems from the political nature of even apparently purely subjective remembrance.

I

In what sense can an act or experience of violence be said to be „invisible“? There are of course violent acts which remain „on the whole“ unnoticed, unseen or unheard of. This means: mostly unnoticed or unnoticed by most. Violence is then thought of as partially invisible or invisible from certain angles; but at least for those on the receiving end of it, we cannot surely say the violence they find themselves exposed to is invisible to them. The scandal of such a matter lies in the fact that their suffering remains unacknowledged by us, „invisible“ to us (and we must not avoid the apologetic undertone that talk of „invisible violence“ might acquire in this context).

Confronted with the idea of a partly invisible violence, or of a violence unnoticed by most, we naturally direct our gaze to those structures and practices which constitute and facilitate violent situations. We try to understand how they are equipped with the power to cloak their own violent nature and remain unseen or how it can happen so regularly and with such unquestionable aptitude that these violent structures go unnoticed by the eyes of a wider public. We are familiar with these forms of invisible violence through every innocent visit „abroad“, dulled by privilege as we cross the borders of Fortress Europe. There is ample opportunity to recognize the violence inherent in systems of positive law — from regulating citizen's partici-

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pation in social welfare to determining which kinds of strike are to be regarded as „permissible“, or which fights for worker’s rights (if not social emancipation) remain within the boundaries of legality. Yet, it seems that these forms of violence are not that mysterious; no problem arises in understanding them in general. At most, we might be shocked by how western societies which are so beautifully justified by philosophers can still harbor such hidden violence. This is not a philosophical problem but merely a problem of philosophers who find the realities of political life too harsh for their delicate liberal ears.

But what if violence was not incidentally just out of sight but invisible in principle? Is that even conceivable — a violence which is invisible by its very nature? It is tempting to reason that I could not conceive of or imagine violence without instantly understanding its manifest effects as experienced by someone. Yet, there are two sides to the idea of an „invisible violence“. So far, I have only qualified the seen object as „invisible“, that is, as somehow itself possessing the property of eluding sight. But what if the mistake lies not with the object but the subject of sight — might it not be she who lacks the power of apprehension? This is an uncomfortable idea: to think that perhaps the violent act is not just concealed (e.g. due to some clandestine effort on the part of some hidden perpetrator) but that violence is invisible because we do not, cannot, maybe even do not want to see it; that the fault does not lie with the violent act (its circumstances and institutional properties — that it is being committed behind closed doors, or in public posing as a different event entirely, like the political assassination in Costa-Gavras’s “Z — Il vivant”) but rather lies with the subject of vision which would suggest a form of violence whose invisibility belongs to the very form of our sensibility.¹

II

So how to grasp a form of violence that is, so to speak, “hardwired” into our sensibility in a way which does not preclude vision but compels us to *unsee* what we see as the novelist China Mièville put it²; not merely an *inability* to see but rather an ability to block out, distort, render insignificant what we perceive? We are, I fear, all too familiar with phenomena of this kind. Consider, for example, the experience

1 There are then two ends to the idea of invisibility (as to the idea of experience in general) which owe their opposition to Kant’s epistemology. Of course, this remark hearkens back to Jacques Rancière: Those who cannot make themselves heard within the boundaries that our conceptual framework sets for „politics“ are not only disabled or hindered but de-subjectified: they cannot appear, even to themselves, as beings which could become potent; and hence, they cannot — or so Rancière reasons — appear as subjects or even recipients of any „enabling“ or emancipative politics in the classical sense.

2 Cf. his *The City and The City* (2011).

of conflicting recollection, two people remembering one and the same situation in distinctly different ways; think of false memories, when we remember with certainty an accident for example of a younger sibling as our own accident. Consider, finally, how reliant we are upon remembrance's different media: narration, pictures, even bodily postures and forces of sense-perception. We can have vivid recollections of a childhood event — only to find that we remember it only so far as a photograph reaches, unable to say with certainty whether the photograph is merely a depiction of what we would remember anyway or whether the photograph and its pictorial properties have shaped or distorted our memory. James E. Young discovered that accounts of Shoa survivors differed dramatically, depending on whether they told their story in scriptural hebrew or colloquial yiddish, and the difference was not primarily in the words and grammar used but in the plot elements, the tropes, images and phrases these languages placed at the narrator's disposal. Languages and their usage determine the form of experience; hence, they determine the shape of past experiences and their recollection; they place formal constraints on how and of what there can be remembrance.

Consider for a moment the uncanny effects this has. Shoshana Feldman, in characterizing the *Shoa* as an event which cannot be witnessed, of which there can be no testimony, points beyond the horrible singularity to a general problem in the idea of testimony itself which only now, after civilization's disruption, has become blatantly and brutally unavoidable. Feldman writes: "it is [...] impossible to bear Witness to the Holocaust from inside", yet "even more impossible to testify it from the outside. From without, the inside is entirely *ungraspable*" (Felman 1989, 232). From "the inside", from the viewpoint of the survivor, physical and mental trauma violently obstructs recollection; there is no circumventing what the damaged life has suffered. This is the very definition of trauma: a violence essentially unnoticed, for its real form would be unbearable; a hidden violence begetting ever more suffering, yet precluding giving to the violent case "gestalt", a name or a face.

The external impossibility of testimony points to a formal constraint of remembrance and testimony — at least that is if we expected testimony to eliminate doubt. What we remember and subsequently can testify to are singular occurrences: situations, encounters and so on. Yet, we desire from testimony not a factual rendition of such occurrences but their connection: that which binds them together as phases or parts of a larger event; that which renders them meaningful. To speak of a historical event (regardless of its scale or significance) is not to speak of singular occurrences or situations, but of such situations *in the light of what connects them; in the light of their common principle*. Speaking of this rela-

tion is switching into another linguistic gear, or to a higher logico-linguistic level, for it addresses something which cannot itself be experienced, but only judged and interpreted. Only conviction in such relations provides us with the criteria to judge whether a witness is reliable and suitable. This does not pertain only to bearing witness to traumatic events or situations of excruciating violence. It exposes a dilemma that marks the very idea of giving testimony — an idea from which the example of the Shoa survivor’s testimony is not an *exception* but an extreme case that starkly exemplifies the idea’s nature. If that is true, then „giving testimony“, bearing witness, is violent on three different levels:

First, *subjective memory* is inevitably scarred by past experiences, and metaphors of “injury” and “scarring” concern our every quotidian recollection, for even they are re-collected and re-actualized as something that befalls us. Even in the self-conscious endeavor of thinking of something we somehow know we know (“I just read the prime minister’s name, what was it again...?”) the thought has to, as we say, “come to us”. Remembrance is characterized by this intertwining of active and passive aspects, being a mental act and an occurrence, and it is at least always possible that the passive aspect becomes prevalent i.e. our active power of thought is overwhelmed by the force of a recollection that befalls it.

Secondly, there is violence inherent in our very idea of a witness — for what we ask of her is something that amounts to *proof* of the facts. This approach is typical of an empiricist ideology in philosophy, expressed in its *evidential* demand towards the witness: that she should convey her knowledge about the facts in a way which, ideally, would make it possible to abstract them from her, from the fact that *she herself is testifying to something*. Following this train of thought amounts to likening the speech act of giving testimony to the allegedly “testifying” character of, say, the trace of a rabbit proving a rabbit’s recent passing, or to the sound of a doorbell “testifying” to someone’s visit. Understanding testimony in this “evidential” way is to neglect, to “strike through” the witness’s participation. A good witness, one who provides us with *evidence* regarding certain facts, would be one who makes her own testimonial act disappear.³

Thirdly: even if we chose not to follow this evidential approach, we still encounter the witness in an inherently violent way when we demand from her that she testify to something that logically exceeds her experiential perspective, or when we insist that — even though we do not demand from her to evidentially guarantee the

3 I draw heavily from Richard Moran’s papers (2005 and 2001), as well as from Ross’s (1986).

truth of her account! —it is still “the facts” that guides our judgment of whether the witness is reliable or — unbeknownst to herself — *not a witness at all*.⁴

III

There is an inherent, violent tension between recognizing the witness *as a person* and recognizing a person *as a witness*; and this violence is invisible because it stems from a tension which is always just on the verge of becoming unnoticeable. To recognize a witness *as a person* is, as Jacques Derrida put it, to distinguish „an act of bearing witness from the simple transmission of truth, from simple information“ by acknowledging that „in it someone engages himself with regard to someone else [...]. The witness promises to say or manifest something to another, his addressee: a truth [...that is] present to him as a unique and irreplaceable witness“ (Derrida 2000, 82).⁵

Understanding testimony is to understand that it first and foremost expresses and manifests the normative relationship between people who hold each other accountable, but — in the very same moment — respect and even commiserate each other’s shortcomings. In bearing witness, we are concerned with our present normative interrelations. There might be situations where we would more highly value consideration and tact and overlook a historical falsity instead of intransigently striving for a factual rectification of the misrepresentation. This is not as innocuous as it may sound; consider, for example, German debates about to what extent the population was aware of its participation in the fascist atrocities. Now, we indisputably know that knowledge of Nazi atrocities was as widespread as well as stalwart participation in its practices — and yet, we may be compelled to consider, for example, the recollection of a happy childhood in Nazi Germany as something unsettlingly sincere.

Still, to do away with the evidential approach and only recognize a witness as a person would not only invite a vicious relativism. It would itself rather be a violent

4 This is of course the dilemma Giorgio Agamben faces in his “Homo sacer” project when contemplating the “muselman”. As long as the witness is a person, she is (per definition) unreliable and fettered to her point of view; only when she is utterly de-subjectified (or so Agamben reasons) can she be seen as a piece of evidence that by itself „stands witness“ to facts. To take her seriously as a witness forces us, it seems, to not be able to take her seriously as a witness, for what her testimony means for us logically exceeds her subjective view.

5 Richard Moran formulates an identical point by saying that “in testimony [...] the kind of reason for belief that is presented [to the listeners by the witness] is one that functions in part by binding speaker and audience together, and altering the normative relationship between them” (Moran 2005, 22).

misrecognition of her as a witness, that is, as a person who is capable of binding herself to certain norms of rational discourse, of accepting her in her obligation as a witness to give us, to the best of her abilities, good reasons to believe her account, and to reflect upon her own singular narrative standpoint and the limits it imposes on her. This is the inevitable tension: To recognize a person as a witness is to hold her accountable to standards of factual truth and adequacy which demand we abstract from her singular viewpoint, or treat it as irrelevant to the matter at hand; to recognize a witness as a person on the other hand is to bear in mind that our practical and personal relation towards each other suffers insult and injury should we disavow its normative nature completely.

But is this anything more than a mere tension between viewpoints and something which merely highlights the problem of establishing a discourse of collective remembrance which can accommodate both viewpoints and prevent a violent one-sidedness? Isn't the expression "invisible violence" still just a pompous term for a rather trivial practical problem? I think not; for if this tension is essential to the speech act of giving testimony in principle, or even to communication in general (which Walter Benjamin called „Mit-teilung“, sharing communally what we convey to each other, hence experiencing *communio* in speech); if, in the words of Maurice Blanchot, every communicative speech act itself "testifies to the absence of [final] proof" of its adequacy (Blanchot 1986, 186), then it is not only (trivially) possible that the two perspectives upon the witness clash violently. As soon as we take into account that we inevitably encounter ourselves and each other overdetermined by our respective histories, entangled in our narratives and the linguistic means that literally make up our "second nature", we have to entertain the idea that such violent clashes are not only theoretically "possible", "likely" or "latent" but that they will have already manifested themselves in retrospect. Violence is, if you will, the twin specter of the idea of a „coming democracy“ — the possibility of an unavoidable failure as the product of an unnoticed deformation in our past and present way of life.

Yet, there is a chance to "fail better" if we take seriously this social and political form of even our most intimate recollections (even in private conversation or just „in our heads“). If the form in which we relate our actions and our experiences to ourselves and to each other, that is the form of practical self-consciousness, is aesthetically mediated and if these media (like "narration" in Walter Benjamin's conception) are practices of making experiences in sharing them — then remembrance is political all the way to the bottom. But in that case the endeavor of making explicit the implicit violence cannot be oriented towards the emergence of

some harmonious community which would be merely the ideological flip side of any narrative intending a homogenous social or ethnic identity, thereby (re)producing manifest violence. Any such plea for identity merely buries the violence more deeply in our practices and renders these practices even less suitable to any life-form under the conditions of modernity. Instead of this, the making more perceivable, conceivable, of invisible violence is limited to dealing with it in a bit better way. The Argentine novelist Sergio Chejfec, in his 1999 novel „Los planetas“, writes: “Of all invisible countries, the present is the most vast” (Chejfec 1999, 225)⁶; we might add that this is because “of all invisible countries, the past should always have been the most violent”.

6 And he shows how this violent vastness in the same instance enables and disables successful, humane self-relation: „there was a time when I tried to change my name; I wanted to take M’s. Perhaps tried is too strong a word, and I should say that I was ‚inclined‘ to change my name to his. Since he had the misfortune of being killed, since it was he who had suffered martyrdom, it seemed fair to me that, being the one to have survived, I would compensate for his absence by imposing his name over mine. I didn’t think of it only as a compensation; it was something more profound or superficial, depending on how you look at it: a balance that needed to be restored. I felt that M and I had achieved an unprecedented and varied sense of unity that should be recovered, if only in a purely verbal or even strictly figurative form. Yet despite the simplicity and precision of the reasoning, and setting aside the justice and dignity of the cause, some things are just impossible“ (Chejfec 1999, 208).

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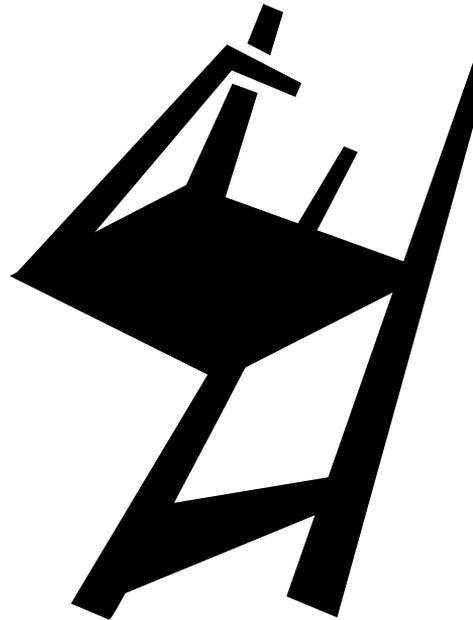
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The Revolutionary Institution of ‘Reversal’, Violence and the Institution in Gilles Deleuze

“Formons la cité!”¹
[Create the City!]

The institution and/or the figure of the ‘institution’ — through Deleuze’s carelessness in differentiating the singular and plural forms of this word, as well as in his introduction of the figure of a ‘figure’, another problem emerges (“*L’institution, (...) est un système préfiguré;*” “*L’institution, c’est le figuré*”²) — are, without doubt, that which is positive. There is not a single instance of Deleuze treating the institution as an obstacle, as something which is ‘ossified’ and ‘dead’ or where he calls for the reconstruction, resistance, struggle and tearing down of institutions. Even in the *Anti-Oedipus* from 1972/3, in which he develops in detail the models for thinking about the institution and institutional analysis, transforming completely his ‘theory’ of the institution from his first texts (or more accurately, his first fragments), Deleuze says that the great socialist utopias of the 19th century function as “*désinvestissement ou une “désinstitution” du champ social actuel,*” precisely for the benefit of a revolutionary institution of desire itself (*au profit d’une institution révolutionnaire du désir lui-même*)³. Twenty years earlier, in analyzing Hume and ‘*l’institution du gouvernement,*’ Deleuze was really speaking about the correction of sovereignty, the right

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- 1 A.-L. de Saint-Just, *Institutions républicaines*, in *Œuvres complètes*, Paris, Gallimard, 2004, p. 1138.
 - 2 G. Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité*, Paris, PUF, 1953, p. 37, 39. This ‘*figuré*’ is translated into English as ‘the figure’ (“The institution is the figure”). G. Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, tr. C. V. Boundas, New York, Columbia University Press, 1991, p. 49. The institution is the figurative, not literal, or the institution marks the figurative (that which exist figures in a different place and becomes something else, something transformed). This figuring elsewhere represents institutionalization, while the institution is the completion of this process.
 - 3 G. Deleuze, *Capitalisme et schizophrénie, L’Anti-Œdipe*, Paris, Minuit, 1972/1973, p. 38.

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to resistance and the legitimacy of revolution (*une légitimité de la révolution*)⁴ but even then, the only goal is the new and ideal institution. Institutions which ‘deinstitutionalize’ are not really institutions because they are determined by order and law (*les institutions légales et légalisés*)⁵. That which is institutional ought probably be that which is revolutionary. Conversely, it seems that the revolutionary should not be found anywhere outside of the institution or the revolution is in one way or another *la révolution institutionnelle* [the revolutionary institution].

Firstly, we are interested in Deleuze’s preference for the phrase *l’institution révolutionnaire* [revolutionary institution] as opposed to the less original *la révolution institutionnelle* [institutional revolution].⁶ Deleuze makes use of *l’institution révolutionnaire* in his texts, certainly fully aware that this phrase has had a chaotic and vague history in post-revolutionary periods and that it is perfectly in keeping with the spirit of Saint-Just’s intentions. We need to investigate whether this phrase best describes Deleuze’s potential theory of the institution, as well as his engagement with the theory more generally. A much more serious undertaking would be to compare Deleuze’s theory of the institution which is influenced by French phenomenology and philosophy of law with Searle’s theory and the most recent Anglo-Saxon theories of the institution as well as of the new institutionalism. The preliminary difficulty which immediately puts into doubt and devalues our commentary is Deleuze’s own refusal to thematize the institution and his own efforts at defining it and thus actually to provide answers to his own questions from the 1950s: what is it that explains the institution (*ce qui explique l’institution*)⁷ and “*quelles doivent être les institutions parfaites, c’est-à-dire celles qui s’opposent à tout contrat, et qui ne supposent qu’un minimum de lois*” [how should perfect institutions actually be, that is, should they be opposed to all agreement and presuppose a minimum of laws]?⁸ Instead of giving exact answers or detailed explanations of his own inspired or suggestive responses (for example, “*Les lois lient les actions; elles les immobilisent, et les moralisent. De pures institutions sans lois seraient par nature des modèles d’actions libres, anarchiques, en mouvement perpétuel, en révolution permanente, en état d’immoralité constante*” [Laws link actions; they immobilize and moralize them. Pure institutions, free of laws, would be models of free actions, anarchic, in perpetual motion, in permanent revolution,

4 G. Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité*, p. 42.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

6 G. Deleuze, *Présentation de Sacher-Masoch. Le Froid et le Cruel*, Paris, Minuit, 1967, p. 80.

7 G. Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité*, p. 38.

8 G. Deleuze, *Présentation de Sacher-Masoch. Le Froid et le Cruel*, Paris, Minuit, 1967, p. 80.

in a constant state of immorality]⁹), Deleuze writes too quickly and carelessly on the subject and differentiates influences and fragments copied from Hume, Saint-Just, de Sade, Renard, Hauriou, Durkheim, Malinowski and others. In the end, he completely succeeds in eliminating his ingenious project from 1953, *Instincts et institutions* [Instincts and Institutions]¹⁰. Of course the consequences of such a way of writing and theoretical work put into doubt the status of theory within the framework of institutions and within acts of the revolutionary change of institutions (who changes institutions, who purifies and who sullies them and who, if anyone at all, is the subject of institutionalization or deinstitutionalization?). Also — and this precisely is our problem — Deleuze’s carelessness and abandoning of his own early attempt at thinking the institution could possibly be a sign of his having intuited and recognized that the thematization of the institution is, as of yet, an impossible task. After all, did John Searle not recently show that a general theory of institutions has not yet been constructed and that its development is still in its infancy!¹¹

Still, let us attempt to ‘integrate’ this impossibility of thematization into systematically thinking or explaining the institution — the reason for this impossibility certainly concerns some ‘institutional’ or perhaps ‘un-institutional’ or extra- or anti-institutional resistance — in the framework of the great and pioneering work of Saint-Just, Hume, Deleuze, Gehlen and Searle. Let us assume, along with Saint-Just, that foreclosing the possibility of systematically thinking about institutions would render impossible the founding of a republic and the building of revolutionary institutions. If we wanted to identify Gilles Deleuze’s main contribution to a potential theory of the institution, and if in so doing we start with his forceful use of the phrase *l’institution révolutionnaire* within which is integrated the theoretical work of Hume, Saint-Just or de Sade, then this contribution is his insistence that there is a kind of reversal and sudden turning or perversion of *something* that is carried out by the institution or that happens within the institution and can be called institutionalization. This can be labeled as revolutionary. The pure institution or a permanently revolutionary institution — new concepts left to us by Deleuze — abolish, for example, corruption within the republic, they re-appropriate non-institutionalized spaces within the republic or transform or force the transforma-

9 *Ibid.*, p. 79.

10 G. Deleuze, *Instincts et institutions (textes choisis et présentés par G. Deleuze)*, Paris, Hachette, 1953.

11 J. Searle, “What is an institution?”, *Journal of Institutional Economics*, 2005, yr. I, no. 1, p. 22. Hugh Hecló showed this problem analyzing twenty-one definitions of the institutions (in fact there are many more) which are currently used. Cf. H. Hecló, *On Thinking Institutionally*, Boulder-London, Paradigm Publishers, 2008, p. 48–51.

tion of anything which is *limited* or in some way *particular*.¹² Opposed to this, the impotence of systematic thinking or the impotence of institutionalization (this is the process that ‘institutionalizes’ that which confronts or resists it) paradoxically shows that we are still in a truly pre-revolutionary and therefore pre-institutional time in which Saint-Just himself lived. Our eternally contemporary Saint-Just detects two phenomena outside of institutions, of which only the (revolutionary) institution is capable: terror and corruption. We can indeed confirm that these two forms of violence (let us be wary of this as of yet completely uncharted relation between corruption and violence) still today oppose the institution and also represent to it its main temptations. It appears that it was Deleuze who discovered that this idea was already present in Hume’s writings (although this too is never fully thematized): that the story of violence as the origin of the institution and order. Long before Hegel and Engels, (Balibar recently published a long text about violence which provides important explanations of the process of ‘conversion’ and ‘un-conversion’ of violence into an institution¹³), Hume discovered that violence enjoys an advantage over the contract and this in one way or another gives institutions their dynamic.

Deleuze’s Hume and Deleuze’s Saint-Just

It is entirely possible to reconstruct Deleuze’s effort and at the same time the difficulty he had in explaining his intentions, based on the sixty-six fragments from his collection *Instincts et institutions*.¹⁴ His “Introduction”¹⁵ to the collection and the few pages and fragments he wrote or delivered during his life (thus far known to us)

12 Deleuze’s engagement is different from Merleau-Ponty’s and his reconstruction of Husserl’s *Stiftung* and reinstationalization. For Merleau-Ponty the revolution is something already set in the *fondation*, in the first violence. The revolution is “*réinstitution, aboutissant à renversement d’institution précédente*” [the reinstituationalization, the achievement of the overturn of the previous instituion]. Cf. M. Merleau-Ponty, *L’institution. La passivité. Notes de cours au Collège de France (1954–1955)*, Paris, Belin, 2003, p. 42.

13 E. Balibar, *Violence et civilité*, Paris, Galilée, 2010, p. 48, 66, etc.

14 Deleuze collected portions of various texts about institution and intuition. The book contains writings by Malinowski, Alain, Hume, Levi-Strauss, Kant, Frazer, Freud, Eliade, Plekhanov, Bergson, Goldstein, Saint-Just, Renard, Bachofen, Comte, Marx and many others. It appears that Deleuze translated only four fragments from English (for example Malinowski and Frazer), while most fragments are taken from already existing translations into French. The early texts and intentions of Deleuze were written about inspiringly by Guillaume Sibertin-Blanc in his doctoral thesis *Politique et Clinique* [Political and Clinical], defended in 2006 (p. 48–74, etc.).

15 The short *Introduction* (p. viii–xi) was republished in the magazine *Philosophie* (no. 65, 2000, p. 23–26) and in the book *L’île déserte* [Desert Island] (1953–1974), p. 25–27.

only allow the recognition of precedence Deleuze gave certain authors: in his first book, Deleuze contributes two fragments from Hume, which he will then analyze elsewhere, and the famous paragraphs from Saint-Just on “*institutions, moeurs et loi*” [institutions, mores and law]; further more, a few fragments about institutions and organization (Buytendijk, Halbwichs); Deleuze will take from Hauriou his differentiation between the institution and personification, from Renard the difference between *contrat* and *institution* [contract and institution] which he will then go onto wrongly attribute to Hume, from Levi-Strauss and Frazer he will take the relationship between instinct and *tendance* [tendency] on the one hand, and instinct and institution on the other; and from Durkheim he will learn that enforcement is the main characteristic of the institution. From Malinowski, Deleuze again takes the link between the institution and the means (between *charte* [charter] and institution,¹⁶ etc.). It is also possible to show some oversights and dilemmas, that is, show what he did not do and which remain to be dealt with. For example, it is necessary to return to that place in the *Introduction* where Deleuze asks about the institution of the state, to which no particular tendency as such corresponds (“*auxquelles ne correspond nulle tendance*”). What is it that the state as an institution satisfies in us? Or what is the position of the state in the order of institutions (for Searle, the state is the *ultimate institutional structure* while Renard recognizes this in the federal state which he calls *l'institution des institutions*)? We ought always to reread that abrupt conclusion by Deleuze in *Empirisme et subjectivité* or rather the page that follows it “*ce qui explique l'institution, ce n'est pas la tendance, mais la réflexion de la tendance dans l'imagination*”¹⁷ [the institution is not explained by the tendency but by the reflection of the tendency in the imagination]. Whence comes imagination? However, it seems most important for us now, as was already mentioned, to construct a modest theory regarding Deleuze's interruption of his work on the theory

16 G. Deleuze, *Instincts et institutions (textes choisis et présentés par G. Deleuze)*, p. 4–5. The sentence “*L'institution se présente toujours comme un système organisé de moyens*” from Deleuze's introduction is in fact a sentence from Malinowski, “*The institution as the organized means of realizing the values...*”, which Deleuze did not translate. (B. MALINOWSKI, *Freedom and Civilization*, London, Allan Wigate, 1947, p. 157.) The two fragments of Malinowski found at the very beginning of Deleuze's book explain the socio-psychological moment in Deleuze's explanations of the institution. Social institutions exist to ‘answer’ or to ‘meet’ psychological needs, and every institution possesses *personnel, a charter, a set of norms, activities, apparatus, functions*, etc. Deleuze later uses the term ‘charter’ (a term Deleuze could have also found in Renard's book *La philosophie de l'institution* from 1939), which gives universality of structure to an institution, in a book dedicated to Foucault: “*Une institution comporte elle-même des énoncés, par exemple une constitution, une charte, des contrats, des inscriptions et enregistrements*” [An institution includes its own utterances, for example a constitution, a charter, agreements, inscriptions and records]. G. Deleuze, *Foucault*, Paris, Minuit, 1986, p. 19.

17 G. Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité*, p. 38.

of the institution and to explain his discoveries or sketch of a ‘new’ interpretation of the institution. Of course, this ‘interruption’ in his work on the institution means that Deleuze, without any major complications, is able to transfer and make further use of his earlier research in his later ‘theories of institutional analysis’ and we assume that Deleuze is able to somehow grasp what is ‘the essence’ of the institution while at the same time showing the difficulties and limits of any thematization of the institution. The results of his work from the fifties can be found to be ‘in effect’ later, primarily in his work in the eighties. We are talking above all about his model of argumentation, the progression of his thought or his succession of terms which we could term ‘institutionalization’ or ‘reversal’ (*renversement*). Deleuze could have found the origins of this method in those sixty-six fragments about the institution, more precisely, in the mixture of influences he drew from Hume and Saint-Just but also through an conscious or unconscious opposition to all classical forms of dialectic and especially Hobbes’ understanding of the institution. The absence of Hobbes in Deleuze’s choice of fragments signifies his rejection of a specific way of using the verb ‘to institute’ which Hume himself also neglected and relegated to secondary importance. In Hobbes, ‘to institute’ means to decide, to begin something by first determining it.¹⁸ It is this decisive subjective act of starting something (from nothing) which is actually opposite (but also analogous) to the creation of nature and is an act which is committed by Hobbes’ active subject.¹⁹ The uncertainty of the subject and also the sudden appearance of the object of institutionalization (*institué*)²⁰ — is this a way to explain the importance of Hume for Deleuze and for us all? — is based on at least three simultaneous and complementary operations. The neglecting of the sovereign act of the founding of a social form is conducted through the appearance of a contract (between any parties which agree on something as opposed to the single, sovereign decision), then by the introduction of multiple subjects or a group (a collective) whose members together ‘accomplish’ the process of institutionalization or for example the ‘legalization’ of their own property, and finally, the discovery

18 Cf. F. Rangeon, “Approche de l’institution dans la pensée de Hobbes,” in *L’institution*, Paris, PUF, 1981, p. 92–93.

19 Hobbes’ use of ‘to institute’ harkens back to medieval meaning of the term ‘*institutio*’ (an order or command). It is interesting that Pufendorf in *De iure naturali et gentium* uses the word *impositionis* (imposition) in this sense, which the French translator, Barbeyrac translates as *l’institution*. Since he cannot find an equivalent in French for imposition, he is forced to defend his solution. “[...] we use institution most often for that which is invented and established, as opposed to coming from nature. [...] our author (Pufendorf) wants to say when he posits that in fact moral things are such by imposition, and not in themselves or by nature.” Cf. R. Orestano, “‘Institution.’ Barbeyrac e l’anagrafe di un significato,” *Quaderni Fiorentini*, yr. 1, no. 11–12, 1982, p. 175–176.

20 Cf. G. Deleuze, „Trois problèmes de groupe“, in *L’île déserte* (1953–1974), p. 274.

that the decision or the institutionalization is neither perfect nor complete. Why institutionalization or the institution is not perfect and hence not sovereign is explicitly discussed by Hume in two places which are very familiar to Deleuze but which he, nevertheless, does not analyze. Here are the quotes now, in English, immediately pointing to the important problem of translation or the reversal of 'the institution' from Latin or English into French or our own language:

Time and custom give authority to all forms of government, and all successions of princes; and that power, which at first was founded only on injustice and violence, becomes in time legal and obligatory.²¹

Time, by degrees, removes all these difficulties, and accustoms the nation to regard as their lawful or native princes that family which, at first, they considered as usurpers or foreign conquerors. In order to found this opinion, they have no recourse to any notion of voluntary consent or promise, which they know never was, in this case, either expected or demanded. The original establishment was formed by violence, and submitted to from necessity. The subsequent administration is also supported by power, and acquiesced in by the people, not as a matter of choice, but of obligation.²²

Probably no one prior to Hume has clearly said or reiterated that this violence ('violence and injustice') is at the beginning, and that Hobbes' verb *to institute* or Hume's *to establish* is thoroughly muddled with violence. However trivial this demystification of the 'sovereign' and the 'institutional act' seems today, Hume will forever shift the accent from the institution as such or the sovereign who founds the institution to the process itself of institutionalization (a verb) and the object (that which is being institutionalized, *institué*, and then that which can be institutionalized). Of course, Hume's intervention will be a preamble to any further, and no less important, finessing and nuancing the thinking of the institution: various theories of 'counter-institutions' which one can find in the writings of Saint-Simon to Durkheim and Derrida; complex theories about the existence of institutions (and customs) which have not been established by norms or lastly the theory of the origin of social institutions in conditions in which there is no common will for their establishment (for example, the institutions of money, language, the market, law, etc.) (Carl Menger).

What is it then that Hume does? How was the perspective or the accent shifted

21 D. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739), book III, part 2, 10 "Of the objects of allegiance."

22 D. Hume, "Of the Original Contract" (1752), in *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*.

from ‘the institution’ to ‘the institutionalized’ (*institué*)? How does Deleuze read Hume and how then does he combine this question with above all Saint-Just? The answer to these questions should help to justify our insistence that Deleuze uses and transforms Hume’s intervention or discovery of the drama of ‘institutionalization’ (whereby something *forcibly* changes from one thing to another) into his main mode of executing his argument and his analysis. In other words, it should become clear how Deleuze grounds the *Introduction*, where institutions “*transforment la tendance elle-mêmes en introduisant dans un milieu nouveau*”²³ [transform on their own the tendency, by introducing it into a new context], and force and oppress²⁴ at the same time that they satisfy (a desire), and he turns this into the passive voice (“*l’espace institué par l’appareil d’Etat*”²⁵ [space instituted by the state apparatus]), and then into practice, into the discovery of a substantive derived from the verb ‘to institute’ — institutionalization, stratification. Deleuze formulates all of this in the following way:

*Les institutions ne sont pas des sources ou des essences, et elles n’ont ni essence ni intériorité. Ce sont des pratiques, des mécanismes opératoires qui n’expliquent pas le pouvoir, puisqu’elles en supposent les rapports et se contentent de les „fixer“, sous une fonction reproductrice et non productrice. Il n’y a pas d’Etat, mais seulement une étatisation, et de même pour les autres cas.*²⁶

[Institutions are not sources or essences and they have neither essences nor interiorities. They are practices, operating mechanisms that do not explain power because they assume these relations and content themselves with ‘affixing’ them, as a part of their function to reproduce and to produce. There is no State but only a stratification and it is the same for all other cases.]

Even though Deleuze’s and Foucault’s shared insights into institutions incorporate Saint-Just’s and de Sade’s visions of new and future institutions²⁷ in which there is

23 G. Deleuze, “Instincts et institutions,” in *L’île déserte* (1953–1974), p. 24.

24 Cf. G. Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité*, p. 37.

25 G. Deleuze, *Capitalisme et schizophrénie, Mille plateaux*, Paris, Minuit, 1980, p. 592.

26 G. Deleuze, *Foucault*, p. 82.

27 Cf. G. Deleuze, „Pensée nomade“, in *L’île déserte* (1953–1974), p. 353–354. “*Trois principaux moyens de codage: la loi, le codage et l’institution. (...) Et puis il y a une troisième sorte de livres, le livre politique, de préférence révolutionnaire, qui se présente comme un livre d’institutions, soit d’institutions présentes, soit d’institutions à venir.*” [Three principal means of coding: law, coding and the institution. (...) And then there is a third kind of book, the political, preferred by revolutionaries, which presents itself as a book of institutions, whether present or future.]

dominant “*un modèle dynamique d’action, de pouvoir et de puissance*”²⁸ [a dynamic model of action, power and force], these insights would not exist without Hume. Hume, but also Saint-Just, both construct the institution as a large, common action that unfolds in an unfinished time. The instance of time is precisely the key difference between the institution and a contract, about which Deleuze writes inspiringly whilst not mentioning Hume.

*On connaît la distinction juridique entre le contrat et l’institution: celui-là en principe suppose la volonté des contractants, définit entre eux un système de droits et de devoirs, n’est pas opposable aux tiers et vaut pour une durée limitée; celle-ci tend à définir un statut de longue durée, involontaire et incessible, constitutif d’un pouvoir, d’une puissance, dont l’effet est opposable aux tiers.*²⁹

[We are aware of the legal difference between a contract and the institution: the first in principle assumes the willing participation of the parties and is defined between them as a system of rights and obligations and does not refer to a third party and lasts a definite duration; the latter tends to define a long term, involuntary and inaccessible position, constituted by power, a force, and refers to other parties.]

A multitude makes institutions or the people makes an institution (*l’institution des peuples*³⁰), and this work happens in front of everyone’s eyes, it is a public thing, it concerns everyone, like the republic. In both the fragments quoted here, Hume shows that time gradually hides (or reveals) what lies at the root of power and the establishment before the eyes of the multitude. Over time, gradually, the process of institutionalization happens and violence and injustice is reversed into stable forms; forms which bind not only those who participated in the original violence and injustice but also all those who will in due course become members of a given community (‘other, third parties,’ *tiers*). Hume thus recognizes two processes: firstly, the shadow of violence and injustice within the power of institutions, or *underneath* the institutions, which are the former processes of ‘founding’ (*was founded only on injustice and violence*) and ‘forming’ (*was formed by violence*), but also at the same time he claims that several factors will contribute to the fading of this shadow and its eventual ‘insti-

28 G. Deleuze, *Présentation de Sacher-Masoch. Le Froid et le Cruel*, p. 78.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 77–78. This slightly changed interpretation of Renard’s difference between the institution and the contract is ‘pressed’ by Deleuze’s early and late attempts to construct an implicitly Humean differentiation between contract and institution. Cf. G. Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité*, p. 35–37; G. Deleuze, “Hume” (1972), in *L’île déserte* (1953–1974), p. 232.

30 A.-L. de Saint-Just, *Institutions républicaines*, p. 1091.

tutionalization.’ And although it seems that the key factors in the realization of this second process are time (its passage) and the common engagement of the multitude — there is no institution without the pressed, controlled, obligated, forced, bound,³¹ etc. — it is necessary to also add that the process of ‘institutionalization’ is *a priori* expansive and never only partial, meaning that everyone must be engaged and every form of violence abolished. There is nothing *outside* the institution. For the violence which destroys parts of the community and forcibly occupies objects and territory and for the violence which comes from simple egoism and limitation to be able to cease, Hume thinks it is necessary to stabilize the given establishments together and that the outcome of this process will be power, i.e. the *institution* as the manifestation of power. Two words, *establishment* and *institution*, which Hume differentiates and a difference which Deleuze or French translators do not spot, could explain, paradoxically, our debt to Saint-Just.³² Terror and corruption, the two ‘forms’ of violence that, according to Saint-Just, are outside the institution or that have yet to be institutionalized, are found in precisely the place of Hume’s analysis and in the place of prepositions *under* (*establishment*) and *outside* (*institution*). When institutions become damaged or perverted (*pervert*),³³ when people and human nature sully them, when they become occupied by perversion (another word Hume uses) and corruption, it is then possible to recognize that the very same violence (killing, robbing etc.) or terror lies at the origin of these *establishments*. Violence and terror become visible *elements* of order and the institution (for example, the institution of property, which greatly interests Hume — in *A Treatise of Human Nature* Deleuze first of all carefully reads and analyzes Hume’s analyses of property and obedience in *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*) — when they become inadequate in stopping opposition to the process of institutionalization (reversal or revolution).

31 “*Si un homme n’a point d’amis, il est banni;*” [If a man has no friends, he is banished.] “*Celui qui dit qu’il ne croit pas à l’amitié est banni;*” [He who says that he does not believe in friendship is banished.] “*Si un homme commet un crime, ses amis sont bannis.*” [If a man commits a crime, his friends are banished.] *Ibid.*, p. 1102–1103.

32 In the most important place where he thematizes the institution in *Empirisme et subjectivité*, Deleuze first drops an important portion of the section from Hume’s *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, and then quotes Hume from *The Treatise of Human Nature* (page 620 in the French translation): “*Bien que l’institution de la règle sur la stabilité de la possession soit non seulement utile...*” (p. 37), while the original reads: “*Tho’ the establishment of the rule...*”

33 D. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739), book III, part 2, 9 “Of the measures of allegiance.”

Of reversal (renversement)

Let us assume that the ‘deformation’ or ‘perversion’ of which Hume speaks, and for which people or a corruptible human nature are responsible, is what marks the failure of reversal and a misguided revolution. There is no revolutionary institution because not everyone is engaged in the process of assembly or cooperation. There are still those who are passive, who block the way, to whom Saint-Just often calls out, earnestly advocating the importance of their engagement. The idea that there is someone who is missing and is beyond the control and pressure of the group, the idea that there is such a thing as no group or collective (institutional) responsibility, that there is an exterior, is a truly vital condition for the possibility that violence can be endlessly institutionalized, that is, to be *forever* erased and transformed into something else. This dynamic process that presumes there is no exception, no special case (no state of emergency) and that everyone works together and is *in toto* engaged in the creation and formation of the city suits Hume’s and Saint-Just’s use of the word *institution*. When Hume uses two different words, *institution* and *establishment* to imply that violence has ceased, his intention may have been to construct two different moments or steps in the undertaking of the legalization of ownership violently acquired. The first step, Hume calls it *establishment*, implies the building of power (the change of force or violence into power) through stabilizing the given state of affairs immediately in the aftermath of various crimes. This step, and with it simultaneously the birth of ‘the institution of property’ (this is Hume’s term), ‘the institution of social property,’ becomes binding for all social actors. The factor of time, especially emphasized by Hume, refers to the gradual broadening of the process of institutionalization to the inclusion and binding of all. Let us look at how Saint-Just and Deleuze understand this process and how they formulate it:

Il faut substituer, par les institutions, la force et la justice inflexible des lois à l'influence personnelle. Alors la révolution est affermie: il n'y a plus de jalousies, ni de factions: il n'y a plus de prétentions ni de calomnies.

Les institutions ont pour objet d'établir de fait toutes les garanties sociales et individuelles, pour éviter les dissensions et les violences; de substituer l'ascendant des mœurs à l'ascendant des hommes.³⁴

[Institutions ought to substitute power and inflexible justice of laws subject to personal influence. Only then is the revolution consolidated: there are no more jealousies or factions, nor pretensions or libel.

34 A.-L. de Saint-Just, *Institutions républicaines*, p. 1091.

The goal of institutions is to establish in fact all social and individual guarantees to avoid dissent and violence; to substitute the ascendancy of traditions with the ascendancy of man.]

Institutions ought to stand in for, to replace something that precedes them (violence, force and the different forms of these which divide people), for the revolution to be actualized or fully executed. The erasure of violence and force through institutions caps the revolution and is in itself revolutionary. At the same time, institutions prevent conflict and violence, both of which are obviously a consequence of an insufficiently actualized 'replacement.' Saint-Just obviously predicts that this process of replacement of violence with and by institutions occurs within a certain timeframe, whereby the dynamics and activity within institutions can be explained.

Deleuze uses the same verb as Saint-Just:

Le monde moral affirme sa réalité quand la contradiction se dissipe effectivement, quand la conversation est possible et se substitue à la violence, quand la propriété se substitue à l'avidité (...) Etre en société, c'est d'abord substituer la conversation possible à la violence.³⁵

[A moral world affirms its reality when the contradiction is effectively resolved, when conversation is possible and takes the place of violence, when property is replaced with greed (...) To be in society is first of all to substitute violence for a possible conversation.] Deleuze 'channels' Saint-Just in the book about Hume. Thanks to his mixing of two different registers and two different commentaries, it is clear that Deleuze announces once again (although neither explicitly nor without reservation) 'the subject' of institutionalization. This subject, however, is completely different from that of Hobbes. To be part of society or to be together presupposes 'the substitution' of violence by revolutionary institutions. All we can do now is perhaps tentatively list the conditions and the framework of the task which remains untouched from Saint-Just to Deleuze. It seems that this sketch of turning violence into institutions could only be successful if it can exactly position different forms of violence within this revolutionary theater:

- a) the substitution or the institutionalization is violent if it does not only consist of one act that bears or founds a new order or *establishment* but rather of many permanent actions and acts that become more complicated over

35 G. Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité*, p. 27, 29.

time. Institutionalization reveals the violence that precedes it and which it interrupts (raw violence or terror) and the violence which is opposed to it (corruption).

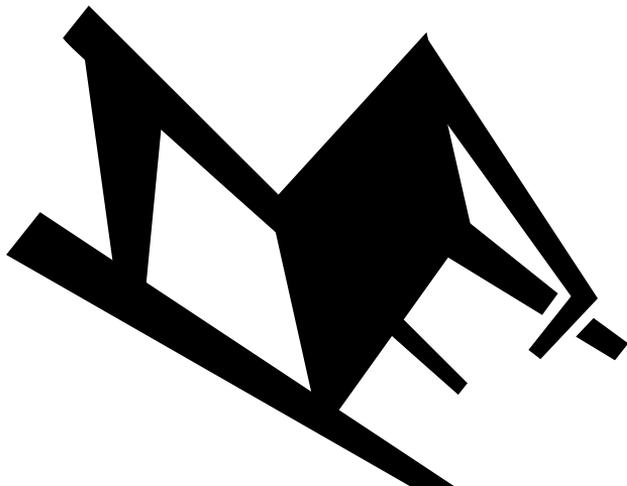
b) the form and strength of violence is determined by the number of actors who perform it. Violence is minimized in the process of institutionalization because it is performed by all or the largest possible number of actors.

c) the violence of institutionalization is violence in the process of conversion (Balibar).³⁶ The violence of founding (*fondation*) and the violence of terror is transformed (translated, transposed, reversed, substituted) into the coercion by rules and into symbolic or institutional coercion or pressure.

d) the revolutionary institution supposes that there is no violence that has not been turned into the 'body' of the institution, without remainder, and that therefore there is nothing outside of the institution.

Translation: Edward Djordjevic

36 E. Balibar, *Violence et civilité*, Paris, Galilée, 2010, p. 48.



A Means to an End

The violence of bureaucratic expertise and its effects on discipline

1) The conceptual origins of contemporary technocracy — a Kojévian profile

Our common problem today is one of invisible violence. We can assume that there might be an invisible violence hidden in the seemingly rational connection between means and ends. This is the profile and the ‘scheme’ we may try to use, for instance, to comprehend how contemporary economic diktats work. Such economic injunctions assail the ordinary, invisible, everyday life in several countries (in Europe, but not only in Europe of course). Today we speak of the “Trojka” (the World Monetary Fund + the European Central Bank + the European Union), as the effective and real organ which decides what should happen and what should not (both in an economic and a political sense). We should try to understand how such an explicit oligarchy not only became possible, but also how it has come to be silently accepted and felt to be acceptable. How the ‘dictatorship’ of the class of technician has become normality. This is what I’ll try to do from a philosophical perspective.

In fact, it is with thanks to an important Russian/French philosopher, Alexandre Kojève, and particularly to his unreleased book of 1942, *The Notion of Authority*¹ that four different ideal types of authority — in a Weberian sense — were isolated: The Authority of the Father, the Authority of the Master, that of the Judge and that of the Leader. In the latter modality, Kojève stressed the importance of the *Technician* as a sort of leader. Who is the Technician? Certainly a leader, but a strange kind indeed. Just like the teacher, who is ahead of the times in relation to the pupil, the technician is ahead in relation to his supporters: “He does see the bottom of things where the ignorant only sees the surface”.²

1 A. Kojève, *La notion de l'autorité*, Gallimard, Paris 2004.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 75.

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Palma**

Therefore the 'technician' is prefigured as an authority based on the notion of 'expertise'. Expertise gets to be reduced to the exclusive knowledge he *has* of the *ends* of the work done by a collective of material workers who use the *machine*, whatever this is. The expert, the technician, holds the keys of the 'project' in *all its features*. This is why the technician 'sees' the future. Counter-intuitively, the technician is not only he who knows the means to a particular end but he manifests himself as the one who in practical terms is the *Leader*, the one who dictates the keywords which steer the practical and political actions of his followers. He enunciates the *conditions of rationality* of the act itself in respect to its preconceived goals (the problem is: how many people *know* what goals are they?).

We can assert that this is probably something which we can recognize easily in certain characters, may they be anonymous or known, who today posit the economic goals of sovereign countries, acting in such a way that entire peoples sacrifice their political being on the altar of a few key-words (fiscal compact, balanced budget, austerity and so on...). But there is more to it than this: the analysis of the Authority of the Leader as a Technician which Kojève provides helps us to connect an 'irrational' authority with the most highly-renowned 'rational' forms of expertise which technicians usually show when pointing out the 'correct' path. The result of the analysis is the focalization of the ability of a 'technicians'-regime to be a close-knit assembly of those who know what the final destination is, the *Endzweck* of a collective action, dragging along those who underlie them in a kind of aggregate towards an end of which they are ignorant, because they *cannot* know it. In Kojève's 1942 text, one finds the concept of *technocracy* as a respected and recognized form of authority. (It may be no coincidence that just a few years later the Hegelian-Marxist Kojève was to become an important *fonctionnaire*, a prominent civil servant in Fourth and Fifth French Republics).

2) Which politics is strong enough...?

Certainly the philosophical approach to interpreting technique has been very complicated, from Plato onwards, oscillating between terror of the Machine (capital letter necessary) to a serious conceptualization of technique's internal logic. Some years before Kojève, Heidegger had tried to find technique's metaphysical-ontological roots — this is quite well known. But technique in itself had also been the object of 'dubious celebration' by Walter Benjamin in his late essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. In the 'third version' of this essay he provides us with a two-fold definition of technique. The first is to melt into or with rituals — the end and the tool by which to reach this end are man himself. The second involves

instead a domination by nature and technique holds nature at bay by the 'play' of the machines: the real aim consists in a harmonious play with nature.

Benjamin's variations on the concept of technique help us to unify its 'idea': technique, as its most general, is a system which implies a teleological scheme of means and end, involving machines as the means. Machines are means: the aspect of this project which is relevant for us is our political attitude towards them.

So, what about politics and technique? In 1929 the 'ambiguous' jurist Carl Schmitt made some key statements regarding essential 'depoliticization'. Benjamin re-read his statements whilst working on his 'Work of Art' essay. He was interested in Schmitt because he had stated that that "technical discoveries are nowadays the means for a huge domination of the masses", although the "decision on freedom and servitude does not lie in technique itself". In actuality, Benjamin read Schmitt through the eyes of Schmitt's harshest critic Karl Löwith whose conclusion was that "Schmitt's question is: which politics is strong enough to use technique as a means and to give it an 'ultimate sense'?"³

The problem of a politics which *uses* technique has been and is a major topic of interest in German political theory since Max Weber, the father of Sociology, who was Schmitt's 'natural father' (not legitimate father...) according to Jürgen Habermas. During the First World War, Weber in his militant writing *Parliament and Government* stressed the importance of a *strong politics* before technique. His idea of politics was of that which had to be able to live up to *democracy as a destiny* through the selection of leaders.

One of Weber's main points in his essay on *Parlament und Regierung* is how bureaucracy — the domination by a technician class — ends up setting itself free from political control. Politics only manages to keep control of bureaucracy when administrative actions remain strictly public and parliament makes full use of its *Enqueterecht*, the parliamentary right of inquiry to discuss and investigate the various acts of the administration. This does not foreclose the possibility of domination by bureaucracy which is something essentially different to politics. The most serious threat to a regime in which there is a high rate of *Befehl* or commands issued by civil servants — this is *bureaucratism* — is *dilettantism and ignorance of those who are subordinate*. Today, we are now facing not only this Weberian *nuance* but also a classical 'Foucaultian' issue: knowledge is power and such knowledge also confers an

3 W. Benjamin, *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit*, in *Werke und Nachlaß. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 16, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M. 2013, p. 310.

authority on the holder of this knowledge. According to Kojève, it is the inability to respond violently to a command. But this authority is very peculiar: it is based both on a specialist form of knowledge, ‘technical’ knowledge *stricto sensu* of how to ‘move’ the machine and on the *monopoly of knowledge of concrete facts* or the ‘bureau’s knowledge’ or *Amtswissen*.

The power of civil servants is therefore twofold — it relies on a specialist expertise and is also produced by the bureau’s explicit control of the contents of its knowledge by means of *Amtswissen* (“for example, the concrete facts which determine conduct). The more such control becomes exclusive, the more the *kratos* in bureaucracy confirms itself and is exacerbated.

3) The insignificance of ends is an end — Weber

Weber made a strict and normative statement in Parliament and Government.

In modern conditions, specialised instruction is a necessary precondition for the knowledge of technical tools to attain political goals. But to set political ends is not a technical issue. The specialised civil servant must not, in his quality of civil servant, determine politics.⁴

Weber’s attention on the separation of ‘technique’ and political means is recalled by Schmitt ten years later (Schmitt pays much more attention to the dual conceptuality of the ‘political’). Yet, Weber’s interest in ‘teleology’ in politics must be stressed because it is true that it can be said of bureaucracy that it has an «impersonal objective end» and that civil servants perfectly adhere as professionals to their office. But of course there are *kulturelle Wertideen* behind this.⁵

The way the civil servant proceeds receives a kind of ‘rationalization’ with a “peculiar revolutionary sense”. What is this revolution about? This first-class revolutionary force, claims Weber, is an “external” revolution in the sense that it “makes revolution through *technical* means” (i.e. the things and organization, the institutions and only

4 Cf. M. Weber, *Parlament und Regierung*, in Max Weber-Gesamtausgabe, vol. XV, *Zur Politik im Weltkrieg. Schriften und Reden 1914-1918*, Mohr (Siebeck), Tübingen 1984, p. 490.

5 Cf. *Bürokratismus*, Max Weber-Gesamtausgabe, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Die Wirtschaft und die gesellschaftliche Ordnungen und Mächte*, vol. 22-4, *Herrschaft*, Mohr (Siebeck), Tübingen 2005, p. 63: “Behind this impersonal end, there are usually cultural value ideas, which transfigure it ideologically” (my translation).

later the individuals). It influences and changes the “conditions of adaptation” to the external world, individuating new connections between means and ends.⁶

Such rationalization passes through modes of conduct (which makes us think of it as external) which direct and discipline: it consists of a command from above of how to adequate means to ends in a better way — hence, it supplies the conditions for adaptation. Human conduct becomes more adequately to the exterior world. In such a way, there is domination through discipline — an invisible and everyday imposition (violence).

All this happens in such a way which basically is in opposition to the charisma which revolutionizes individuals “from within” and which attempts to manipulate things and organizations according to a revolutionary will. In place of this, “rationalization develops in a way that the wide mass of those who are guided appropriates to or becomes adequate to the external, technical, practical results for their interests [...], while the ‘ideal’ content of their creators is insignificant to them”.⁷ Individuals have now become adequately to the exterior world via the means at their disposal and have been adapted to new conditions. That is they have now been tamed and made *indifferent* to the ends someone else has surreptitiously proposed. This is because bureaucratic rationalization replaces tradition “with a docility to the rules which have been stated with a sense”. “With a sense” only implies correctly adjusting the relationship between means and ends. According to Weber, the core process lies in the *political insignificance* of the ends and in the *irrelevant place* which *political teleology* occupies in bureaucracy and the disciplining effect of such an insignificance. We are hence able to observe the disciplining effect caused by technical domination — as we notice a homogeneous docility in the response to economic diktats. We may recognize in this the absence of political end as an end, the absence of a political goal.

4) Bourgeoisie and zoopolitics: the present stalemate

What are the social origins of such a stalemate as described by Weber? How does it come about that we are attendant on a progressive de-politicization of legislative power in favour of an efficacious, directive and managing administration? It is time to once again recall Alexandre Kojève and particularly a strange note from

6 See, in the ‘Herrschaftssoziologie’ volume — *Herrschaft* — the part whose title is *Transformation of Charisma*, pp. 481–535: 481.

7 A. Kojève, *La notion de l'autorité*, pp. 144–6.

the chapter Political Applications in his Notion of Authority of 1942. Kojève talks about the bourgeois revolutions in France from 1789 to 1848 which he says were the first to emphasise the Future and delete tradition (i.e. the Father). More astonishingly, Kojève claims that the logical consequence of this particular emphasis in the projects which were carried out in the bourgeois revolutionary spirit would be a direct line that runs from Montesquieu to Trockij. Eventually in 1848, the bourgeoisie realised that 'she' carried a subversive element in 'her' womb and imposed an injunction on herself to cease all 'futuristic' hinting in her politics.⁸

Using both Marxian and Schmittian tools, Kojève dates the last moment of bourgeois revolutionary potential back to 1848, a potential which aimed at the Future as its genuine temporality. After 1848, he says the bourgeoisie would have incarcerated itself in a type of permanent prison, paying attention only to its material needs. The historical path which the Bourgeoisie had originally followed, projecting into the future, in an anti-traditional key and viewing the Leader as the authority figure (he knows the way, he who projects) closed in 1848. However, in the period when it dominated, the Bourgeoisie postulated and lived "a 'natural', inhuman present, which is neither historical nor political". Kojève says that in this period, the bourgeoisie accepted and promoted the "progressive disappearing of *political* reality in itself". In this period, "life is dominated by its *animal* side, by feeding and sexuality issues".

This anticipates the famous note of the 1968 second edition of the *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, but here that incredible statement (the 'end of history') is historically determined as 1848. After 1848, the bourgeoisie therefore dwells in the *inhumanity* (i.e. *animality*) of the present. The present is depoliticized à la Schmitt.

In Kojève, one can also identify such a 'static movement' in the *bureaucratic domination of the City*. According to Kojève, the City is opposite to the Country. The Country lives in tradition and through 'duration'. The Country experiences the passage of time. "The City tends to forget the Past and to think about the Future, which 'actualises' the instant Present".⁹

But after 1848 and still today there is an invisible violence operating in the City aimed at adapting hetero-directed (or heterogeneously directional) masses into an efficacious connection of means and ends. The 'bourgeois' City we live in, be it global or not, prefers to respect the Leader as a Technician who remains silent

8 *Ivi*, p. 146

9 M. Weber, *Bürokratismus*, in *Herrschaft*, p. 185.

about the ends and the ideas that form his vision of the world. The Technician only *shows* the City that his model works better because it satisfies animalistic (feeding and sexuality) needs.

5) Technical superiority of bureaucratism: a machine at the marketplace

There are strong conceptual links between the historical role of the technicians' authority, its machine-like affinity and another key element, the market. Weber is very clear in defining bureaucratism. He uses the metaphor of the machine. "Precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs".¹⁰ These are the useful (and machine-like) sides of bureaucracy.

The rigid impersonality of the machine is nevertheless similar to that impersonality which is typical of another city-making place, the Market. The similarity lies in its three-fold functional analogy: labour division, impersonality, calculability. These three factors produce dehumanization and enfin, the approval of capitalism.

Ohne Ansehen der Person ist auch die Parole des 'Marktes', says Weber: Without regard for persons. Bureaucracy "develops the more perfectly, the more it is 'dehumanized' [...] This is appraised as its special virtue by capitalism".¹¹ Therefore the satisfaction of animal needs — feeding and sexuality — goes together with calculation and profit. This is the result of a historical path on which he who dominates is a class of technicians *disciplining us*.

6) Discipline and Adaption: why are we so disciplined?

According to Weber, apart from bureaucracy, the concept of discipline is based on the two models of the army and of economic enterprise. Here are the two elements Kojève individuated: project-ability and exclusive knowledge of the ends.

The means through which the oligarchic domination of the technical class is practised is therefore the rational calculation of irrational factors (economic, physiological needs) which lend themselves to instrumentalisation. This is what makes identi-

10 M. Weber, *Bürokratismus*, in *Herrschaft*, cit., pp. 186–7

11 M. Weber, *Erhaltung des Charisma*, in *Herrschaft*, p. 543.

fication possible with what can be called the oligarchic scheme — what makes the form of domination by the ‘technical class’ acceptable. A rational use of irrational elements concerning basic needs leads to an apparently elementary separation. There are two classes: a class which knows and a class which dwells in discipline. Discipline is the result, as Weber shows in *Conservation of the Charisma*, the chapter on the *Herrschaftssoziologie*, of the two facing sides of the issue (power and reception of power). Discipline is how an impersonal, bureaucratic domination becomes objective. Discipline is the tool to produce equal effects and equal contents in all those who once were followers of a charismatic person and who now have no leader, except for an anonymous domination apparatus left as his legacy.

Discipline, in general, like its most rational offspring, bureaucracy, is impersonal. Unfailingly neutral, it places itself at the disposal of every power that claims its service and knows how to promote it.¹²

Today, the peculiar non-charisma of technicians (which is based on their projectability and their exclusive knowledge of the ends) creates and guarantees its own discipline. Discipline means here homogeneous behaviour which is rationally oriented towards the end and the mass which is made docile with hetero(geneously)-directed goals. The difference, in regard to Weber’s analysis, is that nowadays even those in power, governments, seem to be hetero-directed or as Weber claims, *heterocephals*. What has happened? We have become *devoted*.

Devotion is normally impersonal, oriented toward a common cause, a rationally intended goal, not a person as such.¹³

Charisma has become impersonal. Weber stresses an evident mechanical factor, the fact of being part of a mechanism: this is precisely what makes charisma efficacious even when it apparently ceases to exist. Nowadays, the charisma which politics once possessed still remains solid though no one recognizes it as such. It is crystallized in the objectivity of economic imperatives which are formulated in a technical language and this is exactly what produces mass discipline. As Weber said, “the only effective element is indeed the mechanized drill and the individual’s integration into an inescapable, inexorable mechanism, which forces the team member to go on”. This is a form of “compulsory integration”, which was typical of slave plantations or of the work on galleys, but it is an element in all sorts of *discipline*.¹⁴

12 Id., *Erhaltung des Charisma*, p. 545.

13 M. Weber, *Erhaltung des Charisma*, in *Herrschaft*, p. 545

14 M. Weber, *Recht*, in Max Weber-Gesamtausgabe, vol. 22–3 (hg. v. W. Gephart – S. Hermes, 2010), p. 428.

What happens then is adaptation, training, getting into the habit. But what is this towards if we are not slaves nor galley-soldiers? We adapt to an abstract coercive condition. We adapt to purely functional laws, to purely economic laws. We have become disciplined, in a way, by the means which bureaucratic and capitalistic oligarchies exercise over the market, over the jobs market and the hetero-directional representation and self-representation offered by almost all forms of mass-media. Constraint is apparently only formal but it becomes strictly material when it is incarnated in *ethics*, i.e. in forms or codes of conduct which adapt equally to the abstract *laws* only known by the privileged. As Weber states, the *Marktgemeinschaft*, that huge market community we live in “produces a special kind of coercive situation” (with respect to both workers and entrepreneurs, producers & consumers), “in the impersonal form of the inevitability of adaptation to the purely economic ‘laws’ of the market-struggle” (*sich den rein ökonomischen ‘Gesetzen’ des Marktkampf anzupassen*).¹⁵ Hence the need for *more discipline* emerges. It is a very efficacious need, though it is not so openly acknowledged: “the more comprehensive the realm of structures whose existence depends in a specific way on ‘discipline’ — that of capitalist commercial establishments — [...] the smaller will be the circle of those in whose hands the power to use this type of constraint is concentrated”¹⁵.

It is indeed such a concentration of disciplining power in a few hands which has now to be examined, evaluated and criticized. It is not a military discipline, but a production of codes of conduct serving ‘pure’ economic laws whose main political end is definitely, I suppose, our de-politicization and our inability to say no and to imagine ourselves different.

15 *Ibid.*



The Violence in Property

I

In the German squatter scene of the 1960s and 1970s, one succinct slogan was coined that is still widely used today: “Lieber Instandbesetzen als Kaputtbesitzen”, “It is better to renovate by occupying than to destroy by owning”. This slogan (which unfortunately can only be very inelegantly translated) refers to the widespread custom by which homeowners leave their apartments empty in order to speculate on housing prices and boost rents, which practice effectively leads to the damage and disrepair of the buildings. Squatters, on the contrary, could occupy these vacant apartments and start to renovate them (that is as long as the police allow them to do so).

In this essay, I shall try to systematically justify this slogan. I will attempt to demonstrate that there is a specific violence in ownership — to be more precise in ownership as such, not only private property in the means of production — and that the project of a critique of violence therefore has to fundamentally put into question the Occidental property regime. I shall first reconstruct two critical approaches to property: one social critique of property, most prominently advocated by Karl Marx and one ontological critique of property, developed by the Franciscans in the late 13th and early 14th century and revitalized lately by Giorgio Agamben. By pointing out the importance, but also the limits of both of these critiques, I then want to propose a third strategy that can be called a political critique of property. In (almost) the entire tradition of political philosophy, the basic assumption that use necessitates ownership has been generally accepted i.e. in order to legitimately use a thing it is essential to be able to legitimately exclude others from it and therefore to create a universally binding regime of property relations. In Immanuel Kant, to give the most theoretically advanced example, the establishment of legal conditions under which it is possible to justly call something external one’s own is pivotal for Kant’s entire doctrine of right. “If it must be possible”, he concludes in the *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797), “in terms of rights, to have an external object as one’s own, the subject must also be permitted to constrain everyone else with

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whom he comes into conflict about whether an external object is his or another's to enter along with him into a civil constitution." (Kant 1996: 45)

There have however been some thinkers who challenge this widely shared assumption that use necessitates ownership. In his pamphlet *What is Property?* (1840), the French anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon attacks the institution of property at a very fundamental level by arguing the exact opposite: Property is not a condition of but an obstacle to use. "The Roman law", he claims,

"defined property as the right to use and abuse one's own within the limits of the law — *jus utendi et abutendi re sua, quatenus juris ratio patitur*. A justification of the word *abuse* has been attempted, on the ground that it signifies, not senseless and immoral abuse, but only absolute domain. Vain distinction! invented as an excuse for property, and powerless against the frenzy of possession, which it neither prevents nor represses. The proprietor may, if he chooses, allow his crops to rot under foot; sow his field with salt; milk his cows on the sand; change his vineyard into a desert, and use his vegetable-garden as a park: do these things constitute abuse, or not? In the matter of property, use and abuse are necessarily indistinguishable." (Proudhon 1994: 85, my italics).

Proudhon points out an important feature of property institutions: their inherently abusive character. Phenomena like those Proudhon mentions seem not to be contingent emanations but expressions of the very essence of the institution of property, since per definition it authorizes the owner's caprice and power to refuse all external interventions on moral or ethical grounds.

It is not quite clear, however, precisely how Proudhon's critique is to be understood. What exactly causes abuse in proprietary use? I.e., what is the 'destruction' in ownership, the violence in property? What political, economic, moral, juridical or ethical consequences follow from it? What kinds of action does it require and what kinds of institutional change does it entail? There are two main potential explanations of this abuse observed by Proudhon, which I will now go on to reconstruct. The first one is social: The problematic aspect of property is that it excludes others not only from using a thing but also from discussing and deciding how to use it. I will explain this critical strategy with reference to Marx. The other critical strategy is ontological: The problem is not only in the exclusion but already exists in the appropriation of a thing as such. I will try to make sense of this critical strategy by recalling the Franciscan poverty debate.

II

In his early notes on the critique of Hegel's philosophy of right, Marx observes that "private property is the specific mode of the existence of privilege, of rights as exception" (Marx 1975: 109). It is in the very nature of the private character of property that it detracts something from the community: property is the right to the exclusive use of a thing, thus preventing anybody else's use of the same thing. Contrary to Proudhon, however, Marx's critique does not stop at this point; he goes on explaining that as soon as this right to exclusive use concerns the means of production, such a property regime must inevitably lead to exploitation because it allows some capitalists to appropriate the surplus value produced by others. This leads to the famous main contradiction between labour and capital, namely that the wealth of a society is produced collectively but appropriated privately.

Marx's critique of the violence in property has several distinct dimensions.¹ The most obvious of these is the critique of injustice: The very fact of exploitation is unjust because it distributes both material wealth as well as societal power disproportionately, thus violating fundamental standards of equality. A study conducted by the Oxfam organization on global income inequality, published in January 2014, reminded us of the dramatic degree of this injustice: the 85 richest people in the world have as much wealth as the 3.5 billion poorest. Another critical dimension is the dimension of functionality: capitalism is inherently unstable and crisis-ridden. Without getting into a complicated discussion about the 'law of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall', it can be said that a system based on independent economic parties competing against each other, with the penalty of their ruin for losing, must systematically depreciate the social, political and — today maybe most importantly — ecological conditions of their own success. This, in turn, has itself violent consequences as can be easily seen if we consider the effects of global warming and other ecological disasters precisely on those who already belong to the world's poorest populations. A third critique dimension can be called ethical: the young Marx especially attempts to show that a society based on private property must lead to a deformed, distorted and deficient mode of human subjectivity and intersubjectivity. The buzzword here is alienation; since the worker is alienated from the conditions of his work, from the product of his work, from other workers and from the human species-being in general, she develops a one-sided and impoverished subjectivity which is marked by the fact that, in Marx's own words, the worker in her work "does not affirm herself but denies herself, does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely her physical and mental energy but mortifies her body and ruins her mind." (Marx 1972, 60)

1 In differentiating these three argumentative prongs in Marx, I use a distinction proposed by Rahel Jaeggi (2013)

However, it is important to note that all three of these major critical strategies only target private property in the means of production and not property as such. Every society, Marx argues, has some sort of property arrangement; never has there been or could there be a society which can avoid questions of ownership and appropriation. “The distinguishing feature of Communism“, Marx and Engels therefore were to conclude in the Communist Manifesto, “is not the abolition of property generally, but the abolition of bourgeois property.” (Marx 1976) Marx and Engels spell this out in further detail: In effect, communism will not abolish property but establish it. Communism will put the workers in the position to appropriate what they have produced, thereby enabling them to finally have property of their own: It is not the abolition of property but rather the abolition of the abolition of the worker’s property. Marx summarizes this process in *Capital*: “The capitalist mode of appropriation, the result of the capitalist mode of production, produces capitalist private property. This is the first negation of individual private property, as founded on the labour of the proprietor. But capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a law of Nature, its own negation. It is the negation of negation. This does not re-establish private property for the producer, but gives him individual property based on the acquisition of the capitalist era: i.e., on cooperation and the possession in common of the land and of the means of production.” (Marx 1996, 751) This means practically that communism entails a dialectical interplay of collective and personal property: The people collectively own land and the means of production, thereby allowing a distribution of goods to them individually.

At first glance, there is much to Marx’s critique of private property. It seems to allow for a social transformation that overcomes the problematic effects of capitalism — injustice, dysfunctionality and social pathologies — without giving up its achievements: collective production and thereby the creation of immense wealth. However, Marx remains within the Occidental paradigm of appropriation and therefore involves at least in a minimal sense an instrumental reasoning and a rather domineering relation to the environment. Marx’s goal is the establishment of the conditions of universal use-ability through collective property and he thus does not question but perpetuate the bourgeois presupposition about the mutual implication of use and property.

Marx’s economic, political and philosophical theory is certainly far more sophisticated than Proudhon’s. However, with the discovery of the indistinguishability of use and abuse in the matter of property, Proudhon did achieve a degree of radicalism that Marx’s critique of capitalism does not fully satisfy. I therefore now turn to a rather surprising intellectual source in order to complement Marx’s social critique

of property with an ontological dimension: the abdication of all property rights by the Medieval Franciscans.

III

In his recent book *Highest Poverty* (2011), Giorgio Agamben attempts to tackle the challenge of finding a form of life beyond the dominant Occidental political rationality. In this context, Agamben revisits the important poverty debate within the Catholic Church in the second half of the 13th and the first half of the 14th century. The subject of this debate was the Franciscan doctrine of Evangelical poverty. Jesus Christ and his disciples, so the Franciscans claimed, had absolutely no property, neither individually nor collectively. Therefore, the Franciscans too, as Jesus' successors, aim at living a life completely without any money and any form of ownership; the Franciscan Rule of 1223, written still under Francis' personal leadership, thus states: "Let the friars appropriate nothing for themselves, nor a house, nor a place, nor anything else." (Regula Bullata, quoted in Mäkinen 1998, 17f.). For the Franciscans, poverty was not a matter of economics or politics but of ethics; only a life which does not enter at all into an appropriative relation with the world can be an ethically perfect life. This doctrine was provocative, not only because it challenged the worldly power and the monetary wealth of the church but also because it attempted to enable a form of life situated completely outside the established legal order. According to Agamben, this scholastic debate was therefore at the same time a struggle of existential-ontological significance.

The poverty debate has a complicated and rather intricate history, with several factions and sub-factions with distinct interests and theoretical arguments. Without going into too much detail, it can be said that since 1245 the papacy has claimed ownership of all Franciscan goods, thereby giving the friars the possibility to use goods without technically being their legal owners. According to one of the most important Franciscan theologians, Giovanni di Bonaventure, the friars not only renounced property rights but all possessive rights, restricting themselves to only a mere factual use (*usus facti* or *usus simplex*). Another Franciscan thinker, Bonagratius di Bergamo, drew an analogy to animals: When a horse eats its oats, it doesn't first claim ownership of it; rather, it simply uses, whereby this use is completely indifferent or incommensurable to the juridical order of property rights. However, this caused a direct confrontation between the friars and the Holy See when John XXII, a determined opponent to the opinion that Jesus and the apostles had possessed absolutely nothing, took the pontificate in 1316. With regard to the possibility to use a good without owning it, John advocated the proto-Kantian view that any legitimate use required some sort of property rights, even if it is exercised

jointly. With his bill *Ad conditorem canonum* (1322), John XXII revoked the church's administration of the Franciscans' possessions and thereby *de facto* forced them to become the legal owners of the goods they wanted to use. Furthermore, the pope declared the Franciscan poverty doctrine to be heretical, effectively forcing the most influential members of the order into exile.

The Franciscan doctrine on Evangelical poverty might initially seem to be a rather exotic episode in the history of a particular religion and therefore of not much interest for a radical property critique today. However, the friars' challenge to the canonical legal order is of lasting relevance for at least two reasons. First of all, the friars fought to hold onto the possibility of a life beyond the law, confronting a juridico-political order that was inherently universalizing and which aimed at converting all human interactions into its own currency. "What is in question", Agamben rightfully observes, "[...] is the *abdication omnis iuris* (abdication of every right), that is, the possibility of a human existence beyond the law." (Agamben 2011, 110). Second of all and more importantly, the Franciscans created a distinct property critique, the philosophical significance and political consequences of which are still not yet fully comprehended. Agamben mentions two major points of criticism: The first is that for the Franciscans the institution of property is problematic predominantly due to its affinity with command and mastery, the second that property renders impossible any meaningful use of things.

Regarding the first critical point, Agamben can make reference to the shared history of property and imperium, empire. Rather than accepting the world as our shared ontological horizon on which we are dependent, the concept of property accustoms us to an imperial and therefore unreflective and domineering use of it: with what rightfully belongs to us, we are authorized to act like small sovereigns, like kings of our own castles. The subjective sediment of this commanding relationship to the world is the will, which as Heidegger argued, is always already a will to power. This is a quite peculiar and specifically modern notion of our environment because it belongs to a paradigm of self-assertion and mastery, while it has also successfully displaced alternative worldviews which for instance see nature more as something comparable to language: it is necessary for each and everyone of us but nobody can ever 'own' it individually and exclusively. It is easy for Agamben to simply presuppose that due to its inherently imperial character, any world relation based on property is not only deficient but also is at least partly responsible for the state of perpetual war we currently find ourselves in. Imperially conceived property, he concludes, can therefore never create anything essential for its mode of operation is always only the "absolutely inessential command".

In the second critical point, regarding the impossibility of true usage under the auspices of law, Agamben is a bit more speculative and experimental. He refers to the Spiritualist wing of the Franciscans who use the example of the miser in order to illustrate the negative psychological effects of ownership. The figure of the miser, the Spirituals argue, in a way expresses the very essence of property in that he merely loves to have something but not to use it; what is more, the more the miser loves his riches, the less he dares to actually use them. One might say that in contemporary society where the wealth of some has reached a simply obscene level, it has become a sheer impossibility for, let's say, a millionaire to actually use what she owns. Agamben at this point permits himself an anti-consumerist side remark. It is only in today's society of mass consumption, he claims, that the true nature of the very concept of ownership is revealed: Today's products can no longer be used and today's property rights only lead to abuse. It is easy to support Agamben's rather cryptic formulation with more material from capitalist culture: The commodity fetishism of today's consumer culture seems to coincide in a strange way with a simultaneous disrespect for the product, in how the life cycle of a product continuously tends to get shorter and shorter.

The Franciscans thus arrive at the same point as Proudhon in the passage quoted above: In property, use and abuse become indistinguishable. This ontological critique of property is more radical than the social critique of property for it targets the institution of property as such and not private property in the means of production. Every emancipatory social transformation then has to question the very paradigm of imperial world appropriation if it wishes to enable a form of life which refuses the many impertinences of the European legal regime.

However, the ontological critique of property has its own problems and limitations. Using Nietzsche's famous term, we can say that the Franciscans were without reservation committed to a slave morality — they abstained from right but also from the power to effectively influence the being-historical trajectory of the Occident. Marx didn't make the same mistake: He explicitly attempted to overcome the capitalist society without giving up its accomplishments and achievements. It can therefore be said that the social and the ontological critiques of property mutually point out one another's respective flaws: The ontological critique spells out the fundamental damage to our relationship with others and to the world caused by the imperial and thereby inherently abusive character of property; the social critique enables us to think of an alternative use of the abundant wealth and the possibilities which capitalism has hitherto created.

IV

The question remains how to conceptualize a form of critique that combines the advantages of both approaches without inheriting their disadvantages. In the remaining time, I would like to propose such a critique which could be called the political critique of property.

Agamben repeatedly makes reference to an expression St. Paul uses in his Letter to the Corinthians: *hos me or as if not*. In awaiting the imminent coming of the Messiah, Paul asks the evangelical community to maintain a relationship with the world of *as if not*: Have, buy, cry as if you do not have, have not bought, have not cried since the world is soon to pass away (1 Cor 7:31). This attitude inscribes a distance, a referral or barrier between the subject and his environment. This barrier prevents the subject actualizing his will on the world and thereby renders inoperative any direct appropriation. The goal, for Agamben, is the establishment of social conditions which allow for 'the use of things without ever appropriating them'.

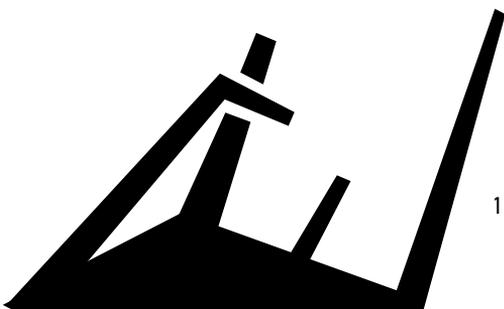
This idea is close to what I have in mind as a political praxis of property critique. Consider the figure of the squatter: she uses a building or a territory without ever owning it. The squatter benefits from the potential that lies in a given structure without entering into an appropriative relationship with it. Furthermore, her treatment of the occupied building or land is inherently careful or even restorative; she thereby counter-acts the prevalent connection of property and abuse by creatively constructing a new connection of occupation and use. But this practice is not only, as the Franciscans would have it, ethical but also political: it seeks confrontation with those who want exclusive control over their possessions, i.e. with those whose power and wealth is threatened precisely by this kind of action. Instead of being merely non-appropriative, the property critique as a political practice is expropriative. The squatter knows that it is socially as well as ontologically implausible for a building to remain vacant whilst there is still homelessness problem, for food to be thrown away while people are starving or for medication to be put and held under patent and denied to people who are dying from illnesses which could be easily cured. The example of squatting as a practical form of a political critique of property can be generalized. This, to say in closing, is one of the most promising aspects of the contemporary debates on the commons: it allows us to imagine dropping the restrictions of the tradition of Occidental ownership and to think of property not as a condition but as an obstacle to the shared use of resources.

In his aphorism "Refuge for the Homeless" in his *Minima Moralia*, Theodor W. Adorno develops his famous judgement according to which there can be no

morally adequate behaviour within a morally inadequate society. He does so by exposing a paradox in modern dwelling:

“[I]t is part of morality not to be at home in one’s home. This gives some indication of the difficult relationship in which the individual now stands to his property, as long as he still possesses anything at all. The trick is to keep in view, and to express, the fact that private property no longer belongs to one, in the sense that consumer goods have become potentially so abundant that no individual has the right to cling to the principle of their limitation; but that one must nevertheless have possessions, if one is not to sink into that dependence and need which serves the blind perpetuation of property relations. But the thesis of this paradox leads to destruction, a loveless disregard for things which necessarily turns against people too; and the antithesis, no sooner uttered, is an ideology for those wishing with a bad conscience to keep what they have.” (Adorno 2005: 39)

The aporia described by Adorno is only aporetic because he was not yet familiar with the praxis of squatting. ‘Renovation by occupation’ opens up the possibility of keeping in view and expressing precisely what Adorno demands: that private property no longer belongs to one; but of doing away with property without sinking into a paralyzing dependence and need. The moral imperative not to be at home in one’s home is thereby rehabilitated as a political imperative. Its contemporary expression is: Occupy.



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On the Violence of the General

I

Paradoxically enough there isn't a state system or penal institution which would use the term "violence" in its rhetoric or its judicial documentation when carrying out legalized acts of coercion. Within the language of authority, violent acts may only be committed by 'perpetrators'. These can never be the State or the Law. Meanwhile, all the theoretical works which claim violence to be an indispensable component of any emancipatory struggle (Sorel, Benjamin, Lukacs, Fanon, Žižek ¹) insistently place this term in the foreground, though violence is far from being the only component of an insurrectionary agency or a struggle for justice.

So, the law that tacitly applies violence in order to realise certain goals conceals and paraphrases its application with legislative rhetoric; whereas the aforementioned works, positing violence as a component of emancipatory struggle, unconceal the term violence. The reason for this insistence on violence as part and parcel of emancipation mainly lies in the absence of time for any gradual change. The existing system does not permit any transition, progress or transformation, hence violence becomes a kind of metaphor for the urgency in claiming an extreme and immediate termination of the present state of affairs. The urgency in this case can be thought of as the need to block and sublate the present rule and to reject the present world of injustice, oppression and inequality, that which cannot be transformed 'now' or even in the nearest future.²

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- 1 Sorel, G., *Reflections on Violence*, Ed. by J. Jennings, Cambridge University Press, 2004. Benjamin, W., 'Critique of Violence', in W. Benjamin, *Reflections*, ed. by P. Demetz, New York: Schocken Books, 1986, pp. 277–300. Lukacs, G., *History and Class Consciousness*, translated by R. Livingstone, Merlin Press, 1967. Fanon, F., *The Wretched of the Earth*, transl. by C. Farrington, Penguin books, 2001. Žižek, S., *Violence*, New York: Picador, 2008.
 - 2 Arendt subjects the transgressive function of violence to critique. Although she admits the agency of riot and rebellion, Arendt explicitly disputes the political potentiality of violence or its capacity to produce political power. Arendt, H., *On Violence*, New York: Harvest Books, 1970.

**Keti
Chukhrov**

G. Sorel (1906) differentiates the protective and establishing force of the State from the destructive violence of strike and revolution. For him, the reason why violence becomes a focalized term is the impossibility of changing the modes of production under the conditions of the capitalist state and its economy. Revolution cannot be developmental and evolutionary; it can only be eschatological or destructive.³ Destruction is inevitable in claiming a new world of non-capitalist equality. Therefore for Sorel destruction supercedes utopia. However, the theoretical stance of revolution as destruction ignores an important part of Marxist thought which concerns the historical and transformative role of production in affecting the disposition between forces and relations of production. Sorel's focus on eschatology is all the more problematic since it is unclear what would follow after the destructive and eschatological rupture: Sorel's theory stops at the moment of appropriation by the syndicalist groups of the means of production and at the act of sabotaging the owners by working class. Such conditions would both be inadequate to effectuating a new general socialist order and to preserving the economic hegemony of the strikers.

Benjamin's attitude is also eschatological in his treatment of violence as something emancipatory. However, by inventing the term "divine violence" as the procedure that can terminate the law-making and law-sustaining conditions of the capitalist state, he gives an explanation for the reasons for such a non-political eschatology (1921).⁴ "Divine violence" is after-political, theological and non-developmental. This is because insurgency cannot be seen as the continuation of the present politics by transforming it by means of democratic resistance; it has to eschatologically sublimate not only the present political situation but everything that abides to the present law. Benjamin's piece is probably the most poignant endeavor at revealing that the term violence is not only the tool of an insurgency distilled from bourgeois State law but that it should enable the leaping out of the world of inequality and that this leap out of the bourgeois order cannot happen politically, i.e. within the existing social and economic conditions; hence the term "divine" — which, on the one hand, marks the impossibility of radical social change but on the other hand appeals for it in spite of its social and political impossibility.

Unlike Sorel who embeds violence in the immanent proletarian syndicalist struggle and the framework of one class (the proletariat), Benjamin treats the act of empirical insurgency when using the term "general strike" as collateral. To be proletarian is not possible "in itself", one has to become proletarian "for itself". But the issue at stake is that becoming proletarian "for itself" is not merely emancipating a

3 Sorel, G., *Reflections on Violence*, Ed. by J. Jennings, Cambridge University Press, 2004.

4 W. Benjamin, *Reflections*, ed. by P. Demetz, New York: Schocken Books, 1986, pp. 277–300.

particular oppressed class but also necessitates establishing the condition of a common cause generally, universally for all classes and not solely the working class. So that “the general” as the condition of emancipation for the working class (the class needing emancipation) should also become necessary to the privileged classes that do not need as much emancipation; which implies that the common cause would lead to the loss of these privileges in favor of a common and general interest. Thus, what is central in the violent divinity of the “general strike” is the concept of the general (the common) rather than the actions of the proletariat as a specific social group. In other words, proletarianism is a necessary condition of generality both for the working class, the oppressed and for the non-oppressed i.e. for everyone. So the issue is not so much to broaden the power of the proletariat but to assert that the proletariat claims and exerts a general will and that this will is a condition for everyone, including non-proletarians. It is at this point that the general becomes extreme and cruel. Thus, the general strike is claimed as necessary not only for proletariat, not only in the name of the working class, but for the general system of equal justice. And it is here that cruelty and violence become inevitable. When the political exertion of the common and of the radically equal is impossible, one has to apply the methods and terms that accomplish political change via non-political means; hence Benjamin’s reference to the “divinity” of violence. Yet the application of the term “violence” by Benjamin is quite metaphoric. The case is not what violence and its empirical or even systemic applications are but what resorting to this term in Benjamin’s text serves for. As already mentioned, in asserting the violence of general strike the agenda is not only a radical form of proletarian resistance — i.e. the self-emancipation of one social group — but first and foremost the immediate and ultimate installation of the common cause.

* * *

Aside from the cleavage between law-making and divine violence, Benjamin puts forth another, less evident, but still very important antagonism: the ethical difference between life as such (“mere life” or “bare life”) and “the living”.⁵ In confronting the capitalist state proletarian violence is equally opposed to “mere” life (blossen leben) — which is nothing more than normal life as part and parcel of the capitalist state’s law and force. The guilt of mere life is that it is confined to a mere utilitarian existence. “Divine violence” — when surmounting the present social condition of inequality supported by the State — is the force that sublates not only the law of the State but as well the mere life embedded in that law and produced by it. In fact Benjamin speaks of a redemptive procedure that runs counter to the individual human life’s existential intentionality. For example, when Abraham chooses to

5 It should also be remarked that by ‘bare life’ Benjamin means not the life of the deprived, but the private life deprived of the dimension of common.

sacrifice his son Isaac, he does so out of his shame of living a mere life, which only divine violence can redeem. This act is to be a rejection of the old world of pagan servitude to gods and is to open up a new monotheist world. Benjamin says that a new world redeemed by “divine violence” does not *demand* sacrifice (as the old world of worship would do) but *accepts* sacrifice as the sign of ultimate fidelity. God does not demand that Abraham make such a sacrifice but he nevertheless decides to carry out this act — the act tearing away the advantages and laws of a mere life to leave a life accepted by God — which is actually the condition of universality — the life which no matter how cruel or violent cannot be anything but objective and general. (Interestingly, the courage and the readiness to carry out such a violent act ends up as an act of mercy).

II

In *Funny Games* by Michael Haneke (1997) we are confronted with a Benjaminean disposition: an unconditioned violence befalls a decent, law abiding middle class family — a couple and their child. The guests in white — the cruel “angels” — break into the country house where the family is spending a holiday and stage their attack as game, mercilessly bringing a gradual death on all three family members. Much has been written on Haneke’s visual methodology of representing violence in the film. However our focus is more on the dialectics between the unmotivated attack by the perpetrators and the inevitability of the violent invasion of the habitat of the ‘innocent’ law-abiding bourgeoisie.

The film was made in 1997, much earlier than any major global terrorist attacks. The two villains who terrorise the innocent family are not desperate jihadists or the raging third world subalterns. They are polite, young yuppies who look like they could be part and parcel of a welfare ‘Western’ democracy. When being violent, they speak the language of neighbourly hospitality. The plot exposes an important trait of the democratic order: the serene life of a decent family does not harm anyone yet what Haneke shows is that the civic continuation of the humanist social contract, even its humanitarian and frequent rhetoric of goodwill, hides the social colonization of the unequal ‘other’. This might be a potential ‘other’ of commons, the other of solidarity and equality, the other with whom to share the dimension of the general, but it might as well be the uncanny other (whom Žižek calls ‘a neighbour’ or who J. Butler defines as the melancholically internalized other⁶), — the one who cannot be loved but cannot be murdered, mourned or dispensed with either. This tacit subjugation of the unequal other by which s/he is kept inside and among us, in order to keep our conscience clean, is part and parcel of the social

6 This is the principal argument in J. Butler’s *The Psychic Life of Power*, the Chapter on ‘Melancholic Gender’, Stanford University Press, 1997.

security of the civil society and the private security of its members. Civil life is permeated by the unconscious fear of the intrusion of this tacitly eliminated unequal 'other' which sooner or later might invade.

The intruders in the film are not in any way the oppressed. However, the rhetoric used by these violent murderers reveals two aspects of violence: on the one hand, in their communicative behavior, they mirror the hypocrisy of the language of democracy which manifests social empathy but simultaneously aims at keeping at a distance and taming the evicted other. On the other hand, the cruel murderers structurally occupy the position that the oppressed "others" find themselves in. They are the newcomers or guests who are not welcome, who are treated like anonymous aliens, who are nevertheless hospitably received in the hope that they will go after their request has been satisfied. The mere private life of a middle class family is shown in the film as already guilty since its social complacency automatically presupposes *the non-recognition* of the "other" and indifference to its socially evicted position. It is this tacit *non-recognition* that becomes the spark for the violent act of the intruders which at first sight seemed unmotivated.

The recent events increasingly reveal the conservative and clerical turn taken by those layers of society who formerly would have formed the proletariat class. The Benjaminian "divine violence" in this case turns into surplus enjoyment by means of violence (Žižek).⁷ Only that this is the violence of resentment and revenge and not at all establishing the dimension of the general. It is pointless to enumerate such examples of reactionary insurgency taking place elsewhere today because the various modes of social aid — allowance, education, medical care, charity — do not empower or satisfy the underprivileged. In this case democratic aid to civilize and cultivate the underprivileged causes even more and harsher rage. The revenge against the *condescending non-recognition* of the civilized, enlightened and privileged classes manifests itself as an outrageous, merciless and senseless attack.⁸

7 Žižek, S., *Violence*, New York: Picador, 2008.

8 In his comments on the assault at Charlie Hebdo, Žižek emphasizes the logic of contemporary fundamentalism. Rather than fighting the sinful residents of the civilized West the pseudo-fundamentalists fight their own temptation, their own inability to be believers, the very fact that they themselves are not fundamentalist enough, which leads to the assertion, as Žižek puts it, that the rage comes not so much out of the fact that the civilized West is disregarding the real belief, or genuine values, but it is caused by the fact that the fundamentalists themselves experience their own inferiority to the "civilized" and non-recognition by them. In this case the motive might really be the envy for the enjoyment of the privileged other, and hence the attempt to retrieve some surplus enjoyment out of a violent act, as Žižek puts it. Žižek, S., 'Are the Worst really Full of Passionate Intensity', in *Newstatesman*, 10.01.2015. <http://www.newstatesman.com/world-affairs/2015/01/slavoj-i-ek-charlie-hebdo-massacre-are-worst-really-full-passionate-intensity> [accessed 8 January, 2016]

III

Democracy has to insistently assert civil equality and display a constant concern for the disinherited and underprivileged but at the same time it cannot help but keep them away from the conditions of genuine emancipation; such a disposition tacitly affirms inequality as an unsurmountable social condition but at the same time affects a social and institutional concern for the non-equal.

Yet the question at stake is not only one of the vicissitudes of democracy or of real politics but also the fact of falling into the trap of the social democratic rhetoric that is to be found in left leaning theory, artistic production and cultural politics. It is obvious that the leftist stance, be it in political activism, art and culture, social struggle, is critical of democracy under the conditions of the capitalist State. However, it is here that false democracy is simultaneously criticized but nonetheless implemented.

The biggest problem of the enlightened left today is the appropriation of the voice of the oppressed by a class which might be precarious but not necessarily oppressed. The support of the dispossessed in and by emancipatory discourses and institutions often is flung far away from the grasp of the underprivileged; in short, this “other” happens to be representative of alienated and lower social layers in its relation to the privileged bearers of critical theory and discourse. There is an explicit difference in the way emancipation discourse is applied today and the way it used to be applied at the end of 19th or the beginning of the 20th century. At that time, the theories of equality were able to incorporate the dispossessed into the struggle for emancipation both practically and intellectually whereas now the discursive and theoretical edifice of social critique cannot expand deep enough into the social field to form any political continuity with the underprivileged, a continuity that might exceed the mere rhetoric of solidarity. Anti-government emancipatory social work and politically engaged art projects are not enough to annul the class gap between the enlightened left and the socially underprivileged. It is worth mentioning here Sorel’s point in this context: he claims that the shame of the bourgeoisie for its privileges and its voluntary philanthropy is much more dangerous to the working class than their indifference, since social agency on the part of bourgeoisie for the sake of the socially underprivileged blocks the proletariat’s own agency and makes it more difficult to maintain the possibility of radical change.⁹

Of the few effects of such a contradictory situation one can mention the paradoxical outcome of the anti-Kremlin oppositions in Russia (2011–2012). The leftists in the anti-Putin movements appeared to be socially much closer to the creative class

⁹ Sorel, G., *Reflections on Violence*, Ed. by J. Jennings, Cambridge University Press, 2004. pp. 157–182.

than to the majority of the socially dispossessed who were either supportive of Putin or merely politically passive. As a result, the subjects of the discourses on emancipation and those who were to be actually emancipated were political and social adversaries. In this case the socially underprivileged population is socially colonized not only by the ruling regime but it is also manipulated by the enlightened agents of emancipation themselves. Unfortunately this paradox is not the only case for the so-called failed democracies (post-socialist countries, Russia is included), but resides generally in the impossibility of de-segregating the underprivileged other despite anti-government and anti-capitalist activities.

Interestingly enough, during the transitory period of the early 1990s, despite mass impoverishment in conditions of primitive accumulation, the formerly socialist societies (Russia in question) still preserved the as-not-yet-segregated social continuity between the completely impoverished and the suddenly enriched. The difference then was still not qualitative, it was ontic, i.e. it was not yet systemic. Boris Mikhailov in his “The Dusk” series (1993) documented the uncanny survival of post-Soviet Kharkov citizens, depicting how the early post-socialist period paradoxically retained the dimension of the common despite social collapse; that was because the irreversible class gaps and segregation areas had not as yet been established.

Returning to the issue of class, one could observe the following paradox. Contemporary art institutions engage with the problems of oppression, migration and neo-colonial injustices, relying on the revolutionary practices of the Russian avant-garde or the legacies of the protestant 1960s. However, solidarity confined mainly to rhetorics only widens the gap between the racially and socially segregated and creative and academic workers.

The most uncanny effect of such a “progressive” condition arises when art institutions try to make interventions inside social ghettos with their enlightening pretensions.¹⁰ The art institution attempts, on the one hand, to research social problems and import them as research material into an art space, and on the other — to position itself as a site of applied education and cultural production for the socially bereft. The outcome of such an activity is that the political responsibility of an institution and of its workers for the segregated contributes to the transnational praise of socially engaged art and its workers which in turn supports and justifies their funding. So that by researching and exhibiting the dispossessed we, the proponents of emancipation, both claim a bond of solidarity with the oppressed but

10 A frequent case for the Swedish socially engaged art institutions.

precisely by virtue of such a pretension increase the class gap with the underprivileged social groups.

It is in this nebulous zone that two violent outcomes might emerge: 1. an act of resentment on the part of the segregated in order to violently block the fake discourse of solidarity, which in fact is biased by *the non-recognition* of the segregated.¹¹ In the case when the segregated are in any way inscribed as exhibits into an art institution, claiming to help “them”, or even engaged as participants in any activist or research project, the incentive on their part would be to destroy such an institution, to paralyze its functions and thus supercede their own inferiority and non-recognition by the surplus enjoyment of this violent and destructive act.

Such an act would forbid the intellectual agents to use the underprivileged social groups as a “material” which confirms the intellectual agents’ progressive and enlightening activity without getting involved in the lives, aspirations and fates of the underprivileged *sensuously*, without granting them egalitarian conditions (i.e. it would ban a false enlightening activity which doesn’t emphasize the class gap and doesn’t confess occupying the privileged position).

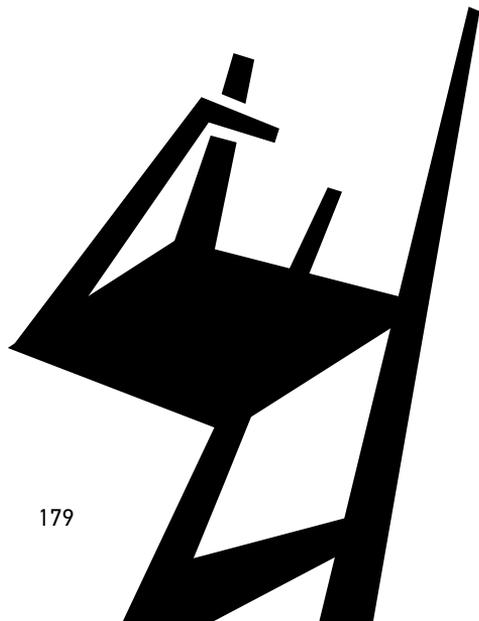
2. The Second option would be to imagine an impossibly miraculous situation — miraculous in the Leninist sense — when out of nowhere a general decision about equality becomes a matter of utmost urgency — a decision that would not only assert but implement the procedures of the general: in terms of the general interest, general will and common cause. Such a decision would be “divinely” violent — violent because it might tell cruelly on the interests of many of us, since we would then be compelled to carry the interests of all into a real practice and not only in discourse. Then, enlightenment and education would make sense only with the presumption of general equality and an overall civil recognition of such a condition. To attain equality it is not enough to equally distribute any property or wealth — be it material or immaterial but it can only come about when the need of the general is established as anyone’s personal interest. The general — be it property or immaterial wealth — is not distributed piece by piece but is something that belongs to each in all its fullness.

The question then is the following: is it possible to desegregate ‘the other’ without a revolutionary procedure, without a drastic and violent change i.e. is it possible to attain equality via gradual democratic reforms, as Lukacs questioned in his text

11 In fact, no progressive cultural institution would acknowledge such non-recognition of the socially bereft, when so much effort is invested into social work. However, the checkpoint here is not theoretical, or conceptual, it can only be practical and sensuous.

“Bolshevism and the Moral problem” (1918)?¹² Or should there be a decision that brings about an irreversible shift from a society of inequality to one of equality. Such a decision would presuppose sharing of the necessity of the general by all and hence might inevitably happen to be undesirable for certain social groups. That’s why it is not merely the revolutionary strike that might be violent but it is first and foremost the dimension of the general which in its urgent demand for overall equality is inevitably cruel.

12 Lukacs, G., ‘Bolshevism as a Moral Problem’, in *Social Research* #44, 1977, pp. 416–24.



DOCUMENTS







Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

Culture

Brussels, 01.03.2013
P5 – Culture/BG/fdf/D(2013)

The Model Arts & Niland Gallery Limited
Seamus Kealy
The Mall, null
IE - none Sligo

e-mail: seamuskealy@themodel.ie

Subject: Culture Programme (2007-2013) / Budget 2013 –Cooperation Projects (Strand 1.2.1) – Results of selection procedure

Ref. Your application n° - 536134-CU-1-2013-1-IE-CULTURE-VOL121

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) has completed the selection of the proposals submitted in the framework of the Culture Programme (2007-2013) / Budgetary year 2013 under Strand 1.2.1 – Cooperation Projects.

In total, 476 applications were submitted by the closing date for submission of proposals. Following the assessment of these proposals, a list of 114 proposals selected for EU funding has been established.

The evaluation procedure was conducted in accordance with the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget of the European Communities as well as the criteria and methodology set out in the Programme Guide (i.e. eligibility, exclusion, selection and award criteria).

Each eligible proposal was evaluated by two independent experts appointed further to the call for expression of interest EACEA/2007¹.

Projects were assessed on a scale from 0 to 100 and were ranked according to their merit. Given the budget availability the threshold was set at **81/100 points**.

We have the pleasure to inform you that your proposal received **82/100 points** and is consequently included in the list of proposals selected to receive a grant in the framework of Strand 1.2.1 – Cooperation Projects. The maximum amount awarded is of **160.292 €** which corresponds to a co-financing rate of **49.48 %**.

¹ http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about/procurement/eacea_2007_experts/index_en.htm

In line with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment, we enclose, for your information, the evaluation report drafted by the two experts who assessed your proposal.

We will soon contact you to formalise the grant agreement.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a final dot, representing the name Barbara Gessler.

Barbara GESSLER
Head of Unit



EDUCATION AUDIOVISUAL AND CULTURE EXECUTIVE AGENCY

Culture

Brussels, 9. 10. 2013
EACEA/P5 13D

The Model Arts & Niland Gallery Limited
Ms Emer McGarry
The Mall
IE - SLIGO

Email: emermcgarry@themodel.ie

Reference number: **Strand 1.2.1 Cooperation Projects - ref n° 536134-CU-1-2013**

Title: Invisible Violence

REGISTERED

Dear Ms McGarry,

In March 2013, the Agency notified your organisation that funding has been awarded to the project supported by Model Arts and its partners in the framework of the above-mentioned Programme. For the sake of clarity Model Arts is the entity mentioned as co-ordinator in the selected application and Mr Seamus Kealy was identified as its legal representative.

Brief recap of the situation:

On 16 May 2013 Mr Seamus Kealy contacted Ms Jouin Monteiro by phone informing her that he was leaving the organisation Model Arts and therefore would no longer be its legal representative (as from the 31 May 2013). During this phone call, Mr Kealy also expressed his concern regarding the future of this project and informed us that he would like to proceed to a change of coordinator: that is to replace Model Arts by Artium. Artium is a Spanish entity and one of the co-organisers in the selected application.

Given the demand and given the proximity of his departure from Model Arts, Ms Jouin Monteiro asked on 16 May 2013 by email to Mr Kealy to provide the Agency with the necessary documents to evaluate the impact of the requested changes.

Please note that according to the EU financial regulation, the Agency in such cases shall assess whether the requested changes will not impede the implementation of the project and its results and that the new proposal will not differ in substance from the application for which an EU co-financing has been granted. Furthermore, changes to be made in a partnership once the project has been selected necessitate that all partners agree on these changes.

On 05 June 2013 you contacted Ms Jouin Monteiro to inform her that as Mr Kealy no longer worked in Model Arts, you would like to know which documents had to be sent to the



EDUCATION AUDIOVISUAL AND CULTURE EXECUTIVE AGENCY

Culture

18. 11. 2013

Brussels,
EACEA/P5 13D

The Model Arts & Niland Gallery Limited
Ms Emer McGarry
The Mall
IE - SLIGO

Email: emermcgarry@themodel.ie

Reference number: **Strand 1.2.1 Cooperation Projects – Proposal n° 536134-CU-1-2013**

Title: Invisible Violence

REGISTERED

Dear Ms McGarry,

I am writing further to my letter of 9 October 2013 regarding your proposal n° 536134-CU-1-2013 (hereinafter the "Project").

On 5 November 2012, your organization submitted the Project to the Agency, within the ambit of strand 1.2.1 (Cooperation projects) of the Culture Programme 2007-2013.

On 1 March 2013, the Agency notified to your organization that the Project, involving Model Arts and its two co-organisers, was selected for an EU funding.

On 5 June 2013, you informed the Agency of the change of legal representative of your organization.

On 19 September 2013, you informed the Agency that Model Arts had the intention to withdraw its participation to the Project in light of its concerns regarding the possibility to raise enough funds for the performance of the Project.

On 9 October 2013 the Agency sent you a letter in which it requested a final response regarding the reasons for your withdrawal as Coordinator from the Project. In this letter, the Agency also asked you to send an official proof that states that you are the new legal representative of Model Arts, empowered to pursue the grant award procedure with the Agency.

On 15 October 2013 we received an email from you.

We acknowledge your withdrawal as Coordinator in the Project as your organisation cannot raise the funds necessary to pursue its participation. As a result, the Project, as it currently stands, does not fulfil anymore the eligibility criteria regarding the minimum number of participating countries for Cooperation projects (Strand 1.2.1).

Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, Avenue du Bourget, 1 – 1140 Brussels (Belgium)
Office : BOUR 4/02 – Phone: (+32) 29 96438 – Fax: (+32) 292.13.2
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm

BIOGRAPHIES





Tiziana Andina (IT) (Asti, 1970) is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Turin, Italy. She has been a fellow of Columbia University (2008-2009) and Käte Hamburger Kolleg, University of Bonn (2015) as well as Visiting Professor at ITMO University, Russia (2014). She has published many articles on philosophy and the philosophy of art in several international journals. Her recent work concerns the definition of art and social ontology. Her publications include: *Il volto Americano di Nietzsche*, La Città del Sole, 1999; *Il problema della percezione nella filosofia di Nietzsche*, Albo Versorio, 2005; *Arthur Danto: Philosopher of Pop*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2011, *The Philosophy of Art: The Question of Definition. From Hegel to Post-Dantian Theories*, Bloomsbury Academy 2013, *Ontologia sociale. Transgenerazionalità, potere, giustizia*, Carocci, 2016 (English translation forthcoming) and (ed.), *Bridging the Analytical Continental Divide. A Companion to Contemporary Western Philosophy*, Brill 2014. She is co-editor of the international journal Brill Research Perspectives in Art and Law and of the international series Analytic Aesthetics and Contemporary Art (Bloomsbury Academic).

Kader Attia (FR) (Dugny, 1970), grew up both in Algeria and the suburbs of Paris and draws on this experience of living in two cultures as a starting point to develop a dynamic practice that reflects on aesthetics and ethics of different cultures. He takes a poetic and symbolic approach to exploring the wide-ranging repercussions of Western modern cultural hegemony and colonialism on non-Western cultures, investigating the identity politics of historical and colonial eras, from Tradition to Modernity, in the light of our globalized world, from all of which he creates a genealogy. For several years, his research has focused on the concept of Repair, as a constant in Human Nature, of which the modern Western Mind and the traditional extra-Occidental Thought have always had opposing visions. From Culture to Nature, from gender to architecture, from science to philosophy, any system of life is an infinite process of repair.

Itziar Barrio (ES/US) was born in Bilbao in 1976 and lives and works in New York City. Her work is based mostly on the idea of reality as a construction that is constantly being recreated and which is the site in which language becomes knowledge. In this way she raises questions that are not overtly social or political, but which deal with the tendency of the human mind to create iconic and associative characters from its surroundings, whilst at the same time taking into account the effects of those associations on society. Thus, she develops a deconstruction of the icons and social codes that inhabit our daily lives, revisiting their original meanings and creating a new fiction/mythology around them. Barrio uses contemporary and classical references from the realms of language theory, film history and pop culture to explore concepts like desire and power dynamics. She has been a lecturer at: Parsons, The New School for Design, Long Island University and Westchester Community College, amongst others.
www.itziarbarrio.com

Ursula Biemann (CH) is an artist, writer, and video essayist based in Zurich. She investigates global relations under the impact of the accelerated mobility of people, resources and information. Major art projects on the ecologies of oil and water include *Black Sea Files* (2005), *Egyptian Chemistry* (2012) and *Deep Weather* (2013). Ursula Biemann is a senior researcher at the Zurich University for the Arts and publisher of several books. She was awarded an honorary doctorate in the Humanities by the Swedish University Umea in 2008 and received the 2009 Prix Meret Oppenheim, the national art award of Switzerland. www.geobodies.org

Aside from their individual paths, **Rossella Biscotti** (IT) (Molfetta, 1978) & **Kevin van Braak** (NL) (Warnseveld, 1975) collaborate to develop work which draws on their common interests in notions of history, memory and architecture. Using installation, photography, sculpture and video, their works use political and social events as points of departure. Their collaborative projects include *New Crossroads*, in Cape Town, South Africa, 2005; *Cities of Continuous Lines*, 2006; *The Library*, 2010.

Petar Bojanić (RS) is professor of philosophy and the director of the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory (Belgrade) and the Centre for Advanced Studies (Rijeka). He is the author and co-editor of several books and numerous texts on a variety of topics. His last book *Violence et Messianisme* (Paris-Milano: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin; Mimesis International) was published in 2015.

Pavel Brăila (MD) (born in 1971) is a visual artist and film-maker based in Chişinău, Moldova. He received international acclaim and recognition with his 2002 film *Shoes for Europe*. The projects he has since realized include *AlteArte* — a TV program on contemporary art aired on the national channel Moldova1, *Barons' Hill* — a six-channel video work (2005) showcasing new and vainglorious Sinti and Roma architecture currently appearing in Moldova, an award-winning film *Definitively Unfinished* (2010); and more recently, *Talking Letters* (2013), a film researching the Romani language. *Chişinău, a City Difficult to Pronounce* is part of *Odyssey MD- 2010*, an ambitious project aiming at documenting a year of life in Moldova.

Sarah Browne (IE) (born in 1981) is an artist based in Ireland. Her research-based practice investigates the materiality of how we communicate and create meaning (or value) through exchange and transaction. Flexible in form, the work often creates a temporary community for itself that is invested in the work's production and circulation. Her published writing explores relationships between art and economy, and the ethics of participatory and public art practices. Current collaborations include choreography for Fearghus Ó Conchúir's *Cure* and *Remembering Gray*; and a project involving poet Alice Lyons and architect Eileen Gray.

In 2009 she co-represented Ireland at the 53rd Venice Biennale with Gareth Kennedy and their collaborative practice, Kennedy Browne.
www.sarahbrowne.info

Duncan Campbell (IE) (Dublin, 1972) lives and works in Glasgow. He completed a BA at the University of Ulster, Belfast in 1996 and an MFA at The Glasgow School of Art in 1998. His films are primarily concerned with themes relating to the past and history. In particular, Campbell leverages these mediums in an effort to explore how social, political, and personal narratives are relayed and preserved over time. As such, he not only questions the degree to which documentary is fiction, but he also problematises the accepted authority and integrity of cultural records. Archival elements are therefore interwoven with Campbell's various personal understandings and interpretations, as imagery of his own construction is mashed-up with found, official documentation and original footage. Such is the spirit of Campbell's work: his smart, precisely crafted films convey engaging alternate stories and portraits.

Declan Clarke (IE) (Dublin, 1974) grew up in the Republic of Ireland during the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s and 1990s. He had family on both sides of the border drawn in 1922 because of the fallout of the Irish Rising of 1916, and as a youth he frequently traversed this border between the Irish Free State (established in 1922) and Northern Ireland. This coincided with a pronouncedly divisive and violent period in Anglo-Irish political and diplomatic relations. Clarke studied at NCAD, Dublin (BA Fine Art) and Chelsea College of Art, London (MA Fine Art). His films intertwine personal subjectivity and action with grand narratives and explorations of the historical edifices of power. His work ruminates upon the vagaries of political circumstance and its impact on individuals and societies over a period of time.

István Csákány (EU) was born in 1978, in Sepsiszentgyörgy, Romania. He lives and works in Düsseldorf and Budapest. His works present the transformations, disappearances and lingering of the late-modernist myths. No stranger to physical labour and building construction, his projects explore various notions related to work: that of an artisan, an industrial worker and of a contemporary artist. Through the persona of the worker — who is either absent or modelled after the artist — he points to the endgames of modernity, and to the empty spaces and new constellations that may very well be triggered in the near future.
www.csakanyistvan.com

Keti Chukhrov (RU) (born in 1970) is a philosopher and theorist, she is an associate professor at the Department of Art history and Cultural Studies at the Russian State University for the Humanities, visiting professor at the European Un-ty at St. Petersburg and runs the

theory department at the National Center for Contemporary Art (Moscow). She holds a ScD in philosophy from the Russian State University for Humanities. Her research interests include studies in performativity, post-humanism, critiques of aesthetics and analysis of communist condition. Chukhrov has authored numerous texts on art theory, culture, politics, and philosophy which have appeared in periodicals such as, amongst others: *Afterall*, *Artforum*, *Brumaria*, *documenta magazine*, *e-flux journal*, *New Literary Review*, and *Springerin*. Her full-length books include: *Pound & £* (1999), and *To Be — To Perform. 'Theatre' in Philosophical Criticism of Art* (2011, European University Press.) and two books of dramatic poetry, *War of Quantities—*, 2004 and *Just Humans*, 2010. With her latest video-play “Love-machines” she participated at the Bergen Assembly (2013) and “Specters of Communism” (James Gallery, CUNY, NY, 2015). Chukhrov lives and works in Moscow.

Blanca de la Torre (León, 1977) is an independent curator and art critic. She has curated exhibitions internationally in places such as New York, Prague, London and Madrid. From 2009 to 2013, she acted as Chief Curator at Artium, Basque Museum-Center of Contemporary Art (Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain). Later she curated shows in New York at Y Gallery and at the EFA Project Space; in Mexico at the Centro de las Artes, Monterrey, Museo Carrillo Gil, Mexico City and Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Oaxaca; in Colombia at NC-Arte Bogotá and the group show PIGS, travelling to different European venues. She is currently developing projects for the museums MUSAC in León or LAZNIA, in Gdansk, Poland, amongst others.

Willie Doherty (UK/IE) (born in 1959) is an artist from Northern Ireland, who has mainly worked in photography and video. Doherty was born in Derry, Northern Ireland, and from 1978 to 1981 studied at Ulster Polytechnic in Belfast. As a child he witnessed Bloody Sunday in Derry, and many of his works deal with The Troubles. Some of his pieces take images from the media which he adapts to his own ends. These and other works by Doherty explore the multiple meanings that a single image can have. Doherty has again suggested that this interest may stem from his witnessing of Bloody Sunday and the subsequent knowledge that many photographs of the incident did not tell the whole truth. Doherty's video pieces are often projected in a confined space, giving a sense of claustrophobia. The videos themselves sometimes create a mood that has been compared to film noir.

Zoran Erić (RS) (Novi Sad, 1968) is an art historian, curator, and lecturer. He holds a Ph.D. from the Bauhaus University, Weimar. He holds the position of the Chief Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade. His focus is on theoretical research, workshops and international projects which deal with issues derived from the meeting points of urban geography, spatial-cultural discourse, and theory of radical democracy. His curatorial practice examines the position of artists in the public domain, the underlying problems they confront while reflecting the particular context. Erić is particularly interested in the produc-

tion and reproduction of different contextual layers of social space and the role artists can play in this. He lives and works in Belgrade.

Harun Farocki (DE) born in 1944, in Nový Jičín in (Neutitschein), which was in German-annexed Czechoslovakia at the time, is the son of an Indian doctor and German mother. Between 1966 and 1968 he studied at the Deutsche Film und Fernsehakademie Berlin; from 1974 to 1984 he was author and editor of the *Filmkritik* journal in Munich; from 1993 to 1999 he worked as visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley and at the University of Florida, Gainesville; and from 2004 he was guest professor and from 2006 to 2011 full professor at the Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien. Harun Farocki was one of the most prominent documentary and essay filmmakers of the past century. Since 1966 he has created more than 100 productions for television and cinema, including children's television, documentary films, film essays and feature films. Harun's work has been shown at retrospectives in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Uruguay, Israel, India, Singapore, Indonesia and across Europe. Harun Farocki died in July, 2014, in Berlin.

Daniel Garcia Andújar (ES) (Almoradí, 1966) is a visual media artist, activist and art theorist who lives and works in Barcelona. Andújar began his artistic activity in the late 1980s, working mainly in the field of video and his projects intervened in public spheres dealing with racism and xenophobia, as well as the misuse of technology in surveillance systems. He uses irony and presentation strategies that employ informational and communication technologies to question the democratic and equalitarian promises of these media, criticizing the desire for control behind their apparent transparency. Most of his projects are based on collaborative research exploring in a critical way different political, historical, social and cultural phenomena and their media representations. Andújar created the fictitious *Technologies To The People* (1996), he is a long-time member of *irational.org* and has worked on encouraging different collective projects on the Internet. Andújar has taught and directed numerous workshops for artists and social collectives in different countries.
www.danielandujar.org info@danielandujar.org

Iratxe Jaio (ES) (Markina-Xemein, 1976) lives and works in Rotterdam. Her work explores the conflict between individual and collective identities, appealing to documentary methods in order to visualize the relationship between individuals and their social, cultural and physical contexts. Having graduated in Fine Arts in the UPV in 1998, she later moved to the Netherlands to attend postgraduate programs at the Piet Zwart Institute in Róterdam and the Jan van Eyck Academy in Maastricht. In 2003 she was awarded the Mama Cash Prize for women artists in the Netherlands. She has been awarded residences at Flax Art Program in Belfast and Re:Location Academy - Shake Society in Casino Luxembourg. Since 2001 she has been working in collaboration with Dutch artist Klaas van Gorkum.

Jesse Jones (IE) (born in 1978) is a Dublin based Irish artist. In her films and videos she explores historical gestures of communal culture which hold resonance in our current social and political landscape. Jones often employs Brechtian theatre techniques of estrangement within her work to play out narratives of conflicted or dystopic communities. Drawing from archival research she has recently developed works with transcripts from encounter therapy groups from the late 1960s and early 1970s. Using these as scripts performed by actors as verbatim theatre, the script becomes a dramatization of the moment of origin rather than re-enactment. Heavily referencing the history of cinema Jones uses melodrama and performance to heighten the re-experiencing of the archival material.

Marta Jovanović (RS/IT) (Belgrade, 1978) constructs throughout her multimedia works scenarios in which she interrogates politics, identity, beauty and sexuality. Whether through performance, drawing or photography, her interdisciplinary practice provokes a reconsideration of the dictates of culture and the construction of sexual identity. Appropriating the instantly recognizable characteristics of fashion mediums, her works reveal the limitations of the traditional canon of beauty while drawing attention to the fluidity of gender. Her performances, videos and photographs are an invitation to disregard conventional notions of beauty and embrace a more democratic vision of representation, free from all constraints. Jovanović is the alumna of Tulane University (BA, 2001), Scuola Lorenzo de Medici, Florence (2000), AIM Program of the Bronx Museum (2013) and Hemispheric Art Institute, NYU (2013) She was the winner of Roma Capitale Award in 2012 for distinguished artistic achievement.

<http://www.m-art-a.net/>

Dejan Kaludjerović (RS/AT) was born in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. He gained his MFA in Visual Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade in 2004. For his achievements in the visual arts, he has been granted honorary Austrian citizenship. Since the start of his career in Belgrade in the mid-1990s, Kaludjerović has been exploring the relationship between consumerism and childhood, and analyzing identity formation and the stability of representational forms. Most of his paintings, drawings, objects, videos and installations employ the processes of recycling, copying and reenacting, thus creating patterns that simulate mechanical reproduction, and criticize the homogeneity embedded in popular culture. He lives and works in Vienna and Belgrade.

www.dejankaludjerovic.net

Since January 2014, **Séamus Kealy** (IE) is Director of the Salzburger Kunstverein in Austria. He is also a regular Visiting Lecturer for the HISK (Higher Institute for Visual Arts) in Ghent, Belgium. From 2008 to 2013, he was Director/Curator of The Model, Sligo, Ireland. From 2005 to 2008, he was Curator at the Blackwood Gallery, University of Toronto. From 1996 to 2004, Kealy practiced as an artist with a concentration in painting and photography, and

between 2000 and 2005, as an independent curator and writer. He studied Fine Arts (BFA), including photography under Jeff Wall, and later Art History: Curatorial Studies (MA) at the University of British Columbia. Kealy has held artist and curatorial residencies in Canada, Chile, Ireland, Austria, and France. He has lectured at universities and academies in Ireland, Canada, Japan, United Kingdom, Denmark, Belgium, Germany and Austria. He is the recipient of many awards, including the Curatorial Writing Award in 2007 for his text “Ten Texts on 18:Beckett” by the Ontario Association of Art Galleries and Museums, the only award of its kind in Canada. He writes regularly on contemporary art and has a background in activism.

Daniel Loick (DE) (born in 1977) teaches philosophy at Goethe University Frankfurt. His first book *Kritik der Souveränität (Critique of Sovereignty)*, 2012) is a radical critique of state inflicted violence in all its different forms and aims at developing a notion of non-coercive law. His current project addresses the relationship between right and subjectivity through an investigation of “pathologies of juridicism”, claiming that the legal sphere fundamentally contaminates the way in which we relate to ourselves, to others, and to the world so that our (inter-)subjectivity becomes ethically deformed, distorted, or deficient. He has co-edited two volumes on the political philosophy of Karl Marx (with Rahel Jaeggi, 2013) and a special issue of the journal *WestEnd* on the sociology of the police (2013).

Declan Long (IE) is a lecturer in the Faculty of Visual Culture at the National College of Art & Design, Dublin, and is programme director (with Francis Halsall) of the MA Art in the Contemporary World. His academic research over recent years has been primarily concerned with the contemporary art of post-conflict Northern Ireland. He seeks to consider how attention to marginal, neglected or ‘failed’ sites within and on the margins of cities might create productive aesthetico-political spaces of uncertainty that prompt speculation on alternatives to the certainties of our present ‘reality’. He is a contributor to *Artforum International*, *Frieze Magazine* and *Source Photographic Review*. He is a board member of the *Douglas Hyde Gallery*, Dublin, and during 2013 he served as a member of the Turner Prize judging panel.

Vladimir Miladinović (RS) was born in 1981 in Belgrade. He graduated from the Faculty of Applied Arts in Belgrade. He is currently enrolled at the PhD studies of Art and Media Theory, University of Arts, Belgrade. He has had the status of Individual artist since 2007. Miladinović was the laureate of the 53rd October Salon Award. He is a member of the Working Group “Four Faces of Omarska”, an art/theory group that questions memorial production strategies, and is a co-founder of the Initiative for Contemporary Art and Theory. Within his artistic work Miladinović’s main interests lie with the politics of remembering, media manipulation and the creation and reinterpretation of the historical narratives. Since 2009, Miladinović has been involved in scientific research. His work has been exhibited widely in Serbia and across Europe. He lives and works in Belgrade.
<http://vladimirmiladinovic.blogspot.com>

Suzana Milevska (MK) is a theorist and curator of visual art and culture from Macedonia, currently based in Skopje. Her theoretical and curatorial interests include the post-colonial critique of hegemonic power regimes of representation, feminist art and gender theory, participatory and collaborative art practices. She holds a PhD in visual culture from Goldsmiths College London. In 2004 Milevska was a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar at Library of Congress. In 2010 Milevska published the book *Gender Difference in the Balkans* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2010) and edited *The Renaming Machine: The Book*. In 2012 Milevska was awarded the ALICE Award for Political Curating and the Igor Zabel Award for Culture and Theory. From 2010-2012 she was a professor of art history and theory of art at the Academy of Fine Arts in Skopje and in 2013 she taught visual culture and gender at the Gender Studies Institute in Skopje. From 2013-2015 she was the Professor for Central and South Eastern European Art Histories at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.

Locky Morris (UK/IE) was born in Derry City, Northern Ireland where he continues to live and work. He has been exhibiting nationally and internationally since the mid-1980s. His practice has included many works and interventions in the public realm. His early work was shown in the *British Art Show — New North and Strongholds* at the Tate Gallery, Liverpool, while also being exhibited in a wide range of spaces in his local neighbourhood— such as disused bookmakers, community centres and vacant premises. His varied output over the last ten years has drawn heavily on personal narratives, chance occurrences, and the rituals and banalities of family and everyday life, often incorporating an element of humour. A constant thread over the decades has been the idea of one's *immediate terrain*. This is an art of assemblages consisting of 'absurdist banalities that, through careful staging and cumulative thematic hypnotism, becomes visual poetry... It's art that's as touching as it is deceptively simpleminded' (The Guardian) www.lockymorris.org

Jan Müller (DE) is a Research Assistant at the Department for Philosophy at Basel University (Switzerland), where his research deliberates on the questions of the conceptual interrelation between forms of life, the nature of praxis, and political form (or "the law"). He has published papers addressing the relation of speech and action, the political perils of social remembrance and recognition, and the practical constitution of second personal obligation (as well as on Hegel, Wittgenstein, Anscombe and others, respectively).

Ferhat Özgür (TR) was born in Ankara in 1965 and lives and works in Istanbul. He graduated at the Gazi University, the Education Faculty's Department of Painting, and he acquired his Master and PhD degrees at the Hacettepe University's Faculty of Fine Arts where he taught for over a decade. Aside from his artistic work he also writes articles for different newspapers and periodicals. <http://www.ferhatozgur.com>

Christodoulos Panayiotou (CY) was born in Cyprus in 1978 and currently lives and works between Limassol (Cyprus) and Paris (France). He studied dance, theatre and anthropology; his work is formed in a range of media. An important part of Panayiotou's work focuses on the historical narratives one finds in archives, in their function of memorialization, and in their structures used in the production of national identity. He reflects on "cultural performances" such as rituals and ceremonies, on how myths, images and objects inform our perception of these events and thus formulate new identities. Adapting the method of field studies in anthropology and history, Panayiotou extracts images from recent historical events in Cyprus, especially since the country's independence.
<http://www.christodoulospanayiotou.com>

Adrian Paci (AL/IT) was born in Shkodër, Albania, in 1969. His work underlines one of the paradoxes of human intelligence, which consists of becoming aware of reality through irreality. Often inspired by subjects close to him, stories arising from his everyday life, Adrian Paci lets them slide poetically towards a fiction, which in its turn creates one or more wider realities. He represented Albania at the Venice Biennial in 1999 and has had numerous solo exhibitions around the world.

Massimo Palma (IT) (Rome, 1978) took his degree in Philosophy at the Sapienza University of Rome and defended his PhD dissertation in 2005 at the European School of Advanced Studies in Naples. His scientific activity focuses on both German and French twentieth century political thought. Since 2005 he has been at the Suor Orsola Benincasa University of Naples where he received a scholarship in Philosophy of Law. He has published books on Walter Benjamin (*Benjamin and Niobe. Genealogy of 'bare life'*, 2008), Eric Weil (*A Study on Eric Weil*, 2008), Alexandre Kojève (*Politics and Right in Kojève*, 2012). He is the editor and translator of the Italian historical-critical edition (Donzelli, Rome) of Max Weber's *Economy and Society* (*The City*, 2003; *Communities*, 2005; *Religious Communities*, 2006; *Domination*, 2012, *Law*, 2016). He has edited Walter Benjamin's *Political Writings* (Rome, 2011) and Georges Bataille's *Hegelian Writings* (Turin 2015).

Garrett Phelan (IE) (Dublin, 1965) has an art practice that would be mainly noted for his work with drawing installations, sound and independent FM Radio broadcasts and more recently photography/sculpture and animation. At the core of his practice lies his commitment to the use of Radio and his personal psychological relationship with the materials that he chooses to convey his ideas. Characteristically reflecting confusion and disjuncture within systems of conviction and principles — unknown spaces or entities, his work represents both certainty and true irrationality or perhaps ultimately the energy used when trying to rationalise the impossible, the main intention being to capitulate to the absolute present tense.
<http://www.garrettphelan.com>

Nikola Radić Lucati (RS), born in 1971, has focused his recent work on the intersecting points of history, human rights and culture. Publicly active, he is working and lecturing on the issues of historical research, narrative and remembrance as the right of minority self-interpretation and representation. His work traces the formation of causalities connecting economic events to the forming of historical narrative structures and the way such media products interact in limiting universal rights and freedoms. These processes and their consequences are dissected from the position of a researcher, a witness and analyst, and are presented using the media of drawing, installation, photography and video.
www.nikolaradiclucati.com, <http://dasseine.tumblr.com/>

María Ruido (ES) (born in 1967) is an artist, filmmaker and researcher who has been working on interdisciplinary media projects since 1998. In addition, she has also developed an investigation into the imaginaries of labour in post-Fordist capitalism, as well as the mechanisms that construct memory, with a particular focus on its relations with different historical narratives. She lives in Madrid and Barcelona, where she is a teacher at the Media Department at the University of Barcelona.
www.workandwords.net / <https://vimeo.com/user8826963>

Francesc Ruiz (ES) (Barcelona, 1971) uses comic book aesthetics, narratives and intellectual ideas, as well as historical and archival materials. Using such sources as contents or descriptions of the real — through their creation, alteration, restoration or assembly along other possible paths — he generates stories that reveal the driving forces behind the construction of social and individual identities, sexual identity or even the identity of a city. He is interested in Arab and Latin American comic-book history, the grotesque, situationism, OuBaPo, porn parodies, censorship, pastiche and experimental curating, among other things. In 2015 he co-represented Spain at the 56th Venice Biennale.

Francisco Ruiz de Infante (ES/FR) (Vitoria-Gasteiz, 1966) lives and works between Paris, Estrasburgo and Auberive, France. He is a leading video and installation artist of his generation. In spite of the first impression of arbitrariness and randomness of the his work, all the chaotic elements are in fact tightly interwoven and interconnected into an intricate and seamless whole, to the point where they form a network that simultaneously bars the spectator from full access while paradoxically demanding that same spectator's presence for the work's completion and genuine 'closure.' This inter-connectedness, is indeed the driving principal within all Ruiz de Infante's work. His work is in the permanent collections at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Musée d'Art Contemporain of Montreal, the Musée de Arte Contemporain of Zurich, Musac (León) amongst others. Ruiz de Infante teaches at the École Supérieure Des Arts Décoratifs of Strasbourg (ESAC).

João Salaviza (PT) (Lisbon, 1984) graduated from ESTC — The National Film and Theater Academy (Lisbon) and Universidad del Cine, Buenos Aires. His first feature film is now in post-production and will have its premiere in 2014. It comes after a trilogy of internationally awarded short films including *Arena* (Palme d'Or for Short Film in Cannes 2009), *Cerro Negro* (Rotterdam 2012) and *Rafa* (Golden Bear for a Short Film Berlinale 2012). His short films were selected for more than a hundred film festivals including Cannes, Berlin, Tribeca, Rotterdam, London, Pusan, São Paulo, Sarajevo, Tampere, IndieLisboa, etc. He received fifteen other awards, including the Award in Memory of Ingmar Bergman at Uppsala Film Festival. In 2012, the Centre Pompidou in Paris presented four of his films in a retrospective program. João Salaviza also directed the short films *Strokkur*; *Casa na Comporta* commissioned for the Portuguese architecture national exhibition at the Venice Biennale 2010; *Hotel Müller* on the work of Pina Bausch (2010); and *Two Close* while at the film academy.

Pepo Salazar (ES) (Vitoria, 1972) lives and works in Paris. He plays with words, with their meaning, their form and their position. The manipulation of words is a constant feature in his work which consists of photographs, videos, installations and objects. The work of Pepo Salazar can be located between the anguish of the loss and the need to do (art), in order to — in his own words — create the opportunity to generate attitudes and new expressions which are at the same time capable of being critical.

Fernando Sánchez Castillo (ES/NL) (Madrid, 1970) has a BFA in fine arts from the Complutense University of Madrid and a MFA in Philosophy from Autónoma University Madrid. He was a researcher at the Postdiplome ENSBA Paris and resident at the Rijksakademie van BeeldendeKunsten Amsterdam. Since 2003 he has been working with Galería Juana de Aizpuru Madrid and Tegenbosch van Vreden, Amsterdam. His works can be found in the collections of Pompidou, Reina Sofia, Mudam Luxembourg, Rabobank, Caldic and Fundación Botín, amongst others.

Nedko Solakov (BL) (Cherven Briag, 1957) lives and works in Sofia. Solakov's drawings, paintings, and installations call into question not only the art system but also collective "truths" and the contradictions of human existence. Drawing and thinking (often in form of narration or storytelling) are the two essential, inseparable poles of Solakov's art. Solakov is primarily a storyteller. These stories are not linear; they are often dispersed, multi-directional, or interwoven in networks. Very often they are combined with textual explanations and commentaries. The boundary between drawing and writing is blurred, and written texts become drawings themselves. Solakov has participated in numerous major exhibitions globally (including the documenta 12 & 13 and the Venice Biennial). His works are part of some of the most important collections around the world.
www.nedkosolakov.net

Jonas Staal (NL) (born in 1981) is an artist who studied monumental art in Enschede NL and Boston USA. He currently is working on his PhD research entitled *Art and Propaganda in the 21st Century* at PhD Arts program of the University of Leiden NL. Staal is the founder of the artistic and political organization *New World Summit* which develops alternative parliaments for stateless organizations banned from democratic discourse and founded together with BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht, the *New World Academy* which researches the role of art in stateless political struggles. He is further the co-initiator of the *Allegories* project (2011-ongoing, with Carolien Gehrels and Hans van Houwelingen) that organizes debates between artists and political parties, as well as of the *Artist Organizations International* platform (2015-ongoing, with Florian Malzacher and Joanna Warsza), which connects artist-led organizations through conferences and international exchanges. Staal's work includes interventions in public space, exhibitions, theater plays, publications and lectures, focusing on the relationship between art, democracy and propaganda. His written work appeared in e-flux journal, Manifesta journal, Frakcija magazine, Metropolis M, nY, NRC Handelsblad and de Groene Amsterdammer. Staal lives and works in Rotterdam. <http://www.jonasstaal.nl> <http://www.newworldsummit.org>

Zoran Todorović (RS) is an artist born in Belgrade, in 1965. He holds the position of a Docent at the Faculty of Fine Arts, of the University of Arts in Belgrade. His work often deals with issues of surveillance and control, shedding light on uncomfortable truths and concealed motivations. He is a representative of biopolitical performance, radical body art, interhuman performance art and politicised postmedia art. He works with affective individual and collective situations and representations of the borders of "human conditions". Todorović has exhibited his work in numerous leading media art institutions and events in Europe and further afield. He lives and works in Belgrade.

Milica Tomić (RS) was born in Yugoslavia. She explores different genres, methods and practices which centre on investigating, unearthing and generating debate on public issues related to political violence, economic underpinnings and social amnesia, with particular attention to the short circuit between intimacy and politics. She is a founding member of a New Yugoslav art/theory group Grupa Spomenik (2002); she conceived and initiated the Four Faces of Omarska project and the Working Group FFO (2010). From 2014 Tomić is a Head of the Institute for Contemporary Art at the TU Graz.

Katarina Zdjelar (RS/NL) was born in Belgrade in 1979 and now lives and works between Belgrade and Rotterdam. Voice, authority, and community are central lines of inquiry in the work of Zdjelar, whose practice encompasses video and sound pieces, publications, performances and platforms for exchange. www.katarinazdjelar.net



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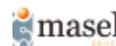
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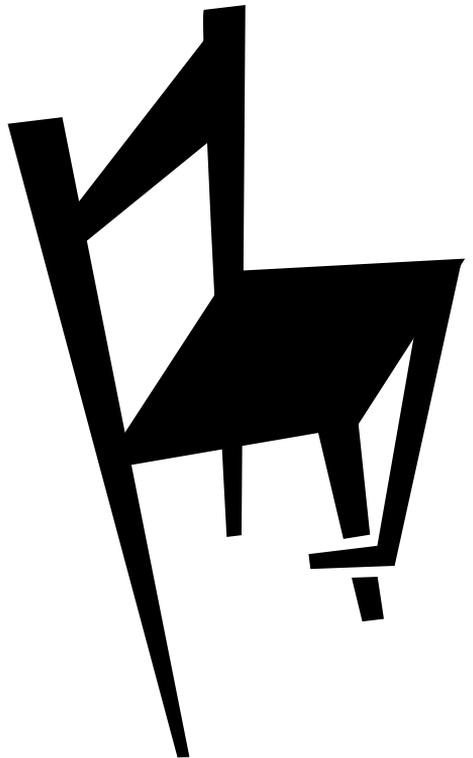


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