Introduction

The text is a collaborative theoretical analysis by three members of the artistic-political-theoretical and discursive platform known as Reartikulacija (Rearticulation), which was established in 2007 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. This serves as a platform for interventions in the Slovenian space of art, culture, the social and the political, in both the EU and worldwide. Reartikulacija also publishes a bilingual (Slovenian and English) journal with the same name that is distributed freely around the world. The way in which Reartikulacija functions is defined by an extreme (self-)organized strategy. It is the result of a counter strategy developed to attack the tightly applied neoliberal global capitalist processes of control, censorship, expropriation and evacuation within Slovenia, making its space of public and media completely restrictive and connecting Slovenia directly to similar mechanisms that are widely implemented and legalized across the whole territory of the EU. Therefore, what we can perceive is a process of extreme control through judicial and economical radicalization by the EU administration. These extreme conditions result in extreme processes of subjectivation as put forward by Rozalinda Borcilă & Cristian Nae, in

Our theoretical essay tries to present the mechanisms that can be termed as the appropriation of social, historical, and political space, Slovenia and the EU apply intensified forms of neoliberal global capitalist forces that act within the Schengen border territories for solely one reason – the intensification of reproducing an always higher surplus value and widening radically and deeply the gap between those small technocratically and managerially orientated groups in power that control capital allocation, and all the others who live under the existential minimum.

I. Marina Gržinič: Ljubljana, a long struggle for independent social and artistic spaces

On the 31 March 2008 the platform Reartikulacija proposed a Resolution to change the state of things regarding spaces and funds given to the independent social and artistic spaces in Slovenia with which to address the Mayor of the city of Ljubljana, the government and government sectors of the Republic of Slovenia and as well the Parliament of Republic of Slovenia. The Resolution was written after a public platform was held on 27 March 2008 in the Social Centre “Rog” in Ljubljana, which was attended by independent artistic
„Rog“ во Љубљана, на која учествуваа независни уметнички и културни центри, нежедини организациите, личности кои придонесуваат во културниот, уметничкиот и автономниот општествен живот во Љубљана и заинтересирани посетители од Љубљана, Словенија и од странство.

Социјалниот центар „Rog“ е привремен центар организиран од активисти и независни уметници, сместен во еден напуштен индустриски комплекс во самиот центар на Љубљана, близу еден друг независен центар познат како „Метелкова“. Пред создавањето на „Rog“, во „Метелкова“ се собираше независната и алтернативна сцена од Љубљана во раните деведесети. „Метелкова“ е одлично изграден комплекс воен бараци кој останал празен по прогласувањето на независноста на Словенија. Во деведесетти, градските власти ветиле дека ќе го подарат на независната уметничка и културна сцена, но потоа тајно започнале да го уриваат со намера да изградат трговски центар. Поради ова, диви станари го зазедоа просторот во 1993 година; битката за просторот и уредувањето на неговиот статус сè уште се отворен случај.

Важно е да се наведе дека својата платформа во Социјалниот центар „Rog“ во Љубљана беше свикана на 27 март 2008 година заради личната посета на Центар од градоначалникот на Љубљана, господин Јанковиќ, на 20 март 2008 година, доцна во нокта. Ваквата лична посета на градоначалникот доцна навечер претставува нечувена закана и пречекорување на правата на словенечките граѓани. Го претставува градоначалникот како во нокните часови се претвора во привремен „шериф“ од Дивиот Запад и лично им се меша на активистите од Социјалниот центар „Rog“ и инсценира закануваачка претстава за граѓаните на

The social centre “Rog” is a temporarily organized centre by activists and independent artists in an abandoned industrial complex in the pure centre of Ljubljana and situated in the vicinity of another independent centre known as “Metelkova city.” Prior to the existence of “Rog,” “Metelkova” was squatted by the independent and alternative scene in the beginning of the 1990s in Ljubljana. “Metelkova” was an excellently structured army barrack complex that remained empty after the declaration of independence of Slovenia. In the 1990s, the city authorities promised to give it to the independent scene for art and culture, but then it started secretly to demolish the complex in order to build a shopping mall. This resulted in a squatters taking up the space in 1993; the struggle for the space and the regulation of its status is still an open case.

It is important to state that the public platform in the Social centre “Rog” in Ljubljana was convened on 27 March 2008 due to the personal arrival of the Mayor of the city of Ljubljana Mr. Janković on 20 March 2008 late at night in the respective centre. This personal arrival of the mayor late at night represents an unheard-of intimidation and encroachment upon the rights of Slovenian citizens. It represents the Mayor, who in the night hours transmuted from a mayor into a contemporary wild west “sheriff” meddling personally with the activists of the social centre “Rog” in Ljubljana, and staging a theatre of intimidation for the citizens of
the Ljubljana’s central district where the social centre Rog is based. This arrival points to the state of exception being introduced in the sphere of independent and non-institutionalized art and cultural scene in Ljubljana. Exception functions as a mechanism of differential inclusion and exclusion; the “inclusion” of the citizens in that city district is performed via the exclusion of the activists of the social centre “Rog” in Ljubljana.

Why is it that the Mayor had to come personally and “solve things”? The form of intervention developed here by the mayor is the so-called governmentality that is the major form of governing of all the social spheres in neoliberal capitalism. It consists primarily – and I am reworking this in reference to Giorgio Agamben – in putting an end to a conflict, or, better to say, it presents a complete suspension of any conflict. This, is as well the general attitude in the neoliberal societies where every conflict, social contradiction or every direct question posed to clear a given social situation is seen as disturbance of the achieved normality. Governmentality means to leave, to abandon the interest in regulation, and then to intervene at the end of the day. After an exhausted process of non-intervention that is seen as “democracy and respect” – while taking a decision is seen as an abrupt, fierce involvement of the authorities, – the politicians are in the end asked to intervene and bring peace.

Therefore the arrival of the mayor in the middle of the night had two strategic objectives; first, to provoke a state of exception and chaos and then to bring order by settling the conflicts that are outwardly presented as conflicts between the centre “Rog” and its neighbourhood.
Santiago López Petit writes that the discourse on civic behaviour implies and requires today two elements: the first is a war state, which is a neoliberal capitalist mechanism that produces order based on war, and the second is postmodern fascism. Civic behaviour, argues Petit, is a spurious way of determining today the intervention by the largest population in the social and political sphere, while contemporary neoliberal global capitalism tries to depoliticize such interventions by transforming the “citizens that urinate on the street” and the “protesters that try to improve social conditions,” in to an equal group of citizens. The state qualifies them as just two types of criminals. Petit says that postmodern fascism acknowledges differences so that they can be used to unify order. In this context, as argued by Petit, the defence of personal autonomy is actually a form of control; freedom of choice means that nothing really changes.

According to Petit, democracy today is practically the re-articulation of the war state and postmodern fascism. These are not only the two major features of the post Yugoslav condition, but also of the European Union. However, each democracy, as argued by Petit, implements a specific articulation of these two features. Today the state in neoliberal global capitalism is realizing and articulating a strong policy of govermentality also through processes of de-governmentalilty that are going on with the total privatization of what was seen as the public sphere in the past. It was the idea of the European social state, which was also present in the Yugoslav context in the time of Socialism. In order to cover this complete privatization and the role of the

Сантъяго Лопез Петит пишува дека дискурсот на граѓанското однесување денес подразбира и бара два елемента: првот е воена состојба, неолиберален капиталистички механизам кой создава поредок заснован врз војна, а вториот е постмодерен фашизам. Граѓанското однесување денес, тврди Петит, е лицемерен начин на утврдување на интервенцијата од страна на најбројното население во општествената и политичката сфера, додека современиот неолиберален глобален капитализам се обидува да ги деполитизира таквите интервенции со тоа што ќе ги претвори „граѓаните што уринираат на улица“ и „демонстрантите кои се обидуваат да ги подобрат општествените услови“ во рамнopravnва група граѓани. Државата просто ги бележи како два вида злосторници. Петит вели дека постмодерниот фашизам ги препознава разликите со цел да ги употреби да го изрази поредокот. Во овој контекст, како што тврди Петит, одбраната на личната автономија во суштина претставува облик на контрола; слободата на избор значи дека вушност ништо не се менува.

Според Петит, денешната демократија денес практично е нов израз на воена состојба и постмодерен фашизам. Ова не се двете главни карактеристики само на постјугословенската состојба, туку и на Европската Унија. Меѓутоа, секоја демократија, како што тврди Петит, применува специфичен израз на овие две карактеристики. Денес, државата во неолибералниот глобален капитализам спроведува и изразува силна политика на говернменталност и преку процеси на деговерментализација кои се одвиваат со целосната приватизација на она што во минатото се сместаваше за јавна сфера. Таква беше замислата за југословенскиот контекст во времето на социјализмот.
state in neoliberal global capitalism that is just the agency of capital and multinational interests, processing necropolitics (the minimum under the minimum), a whole set of ideological practices are re-implemented across the whole territory of the EU. One such practice is the Blut and Boden (Blood and Soil) ideology, that means that the state and its apparatuses, depending of the respective nation state and through specific conditions and ideological languages appertaining to it, knock on the 19th century national pride and rights of Slovenes, Macedonians, Croats, Serbs and as well French and Germans, etc.

It is important to say that all that is going on in the centre of Ljubljana today is based on a clear strategic plan and this is the total privatization through the gentrification of the city centre. The plan envisages, as it was also presented by Mr. Janković, a project of changing the city centre into a “little Manhattan” that means changing of the city centre in a highly managerial and luxurious district that needs to get rid of cultural workers and artists who have been producing art as a social relation with emancipative politics as its framework. This is likely to have further reaching consequences; that those “quiet” residents who are not sufficiently wealthy will sooner, rather than later, be pushed out of the area.

Gentrification that has been already introduced in all highly developed countries and cities of Europe transforms the city districts in prestigious managerial business zones with high rents, high service prices and mischievous encroachment upon the rights of access of their residential buildings by the local city residents (in the name of “safety” and in order of preventing “crime”).
So drugi zborovi, ova znaci pretvaraне на градот во „хиgienски чисти и умртвени населби“.

In other words, this means changing the city into “hygienically clean and dead neighbourhoods.”

Ваквата нова визија за градот е визија на еден технократски и свиреп неолиберален глобален капитализам, којшто подразбира приватизација на кој било национален имот или јавен простор за потребите на капиталистичката и управна елита во градот и државата, додека центарот на градот се круи по терк на некој европски град (Копенхаген, Лондон, Берлин, Виена, итн.).

This new vision of the city is the vision of a technocratic and brutal neoliberal global capitalism that involves privatization of any national asset and any public space for the needs of capital and the managerial elite in the city and the state, while transforming the city centre into a made-to-measure European city (Copenhagen, London, Berlin, Vienna, etc.).

Ваквата претензии на целосна приватизација на градот - од која се исключени месните жители и градителите на независниот културен живот во центарот на Љубљана - се врзува и со други мерки на Република Словенија, или поточно на словенечката влада, која го воведува железниот закон на капиталот, приватизацијата, пречекоруването и ограничувањето на правата во секое поле. Во уметноста и културата ова е пропишано со Националната програма за култура за периодот 2008-2011. Во општествените и политичките области се спроведува со помош на јасните некрополитички мерки од страна на словенечката држава против нејзините избришани жители. Избришаните жители на Словенија се група од 18.305 граѓани (речиси 1% од словенечкото население), по потекло од некој од другите републики на поранешна Југославија (Хрватска, Босна и Херцеговина, Србија, Црна Гора и Македонија), чии лични идентитети, на 27. февруари 1992 година, беа незаконски претворени од регистарот на луѓе со трајно државјанство во регистарот на луѓе без законски статус во Словенија. Причината за бришење биле што тие не конкурирале за државјанство во рокот од шест месеци, пропишан од страна на Одробата за државјанство на Република Словенија од 1991 година.

These claims for full privatization of the city – from which the local residents and co-creators of cultural independent life in Ljubljana city centre are excluded – can be linked to other measures of the Republic of Slovenia, or rather the Slovenian government that is introducing the iron law of capital, privatization, encroachment, and limitation of rights in every area. In art and culture this is legislated through the National Programme for Culture for the period 2008-2011. In social and political areas, this is reinforced through the clear necropolitical measures by the Slovenian state against its erased residents. Erased residents of Slovenia are a group of 18,305 (almost 1 % of the Slovenian population), originating from one of the other republics of the former Yugoslavia (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia), whose personal data were, on 27 February 1992, unlawfully transferred from a register of people with permanent residence to a register of people with no legal status in Slovenia. The reason for erasure was the fact that they did not apply for Slovenian citizenship within the six-month deadline set by the 1991 Citizenship of the Republic of Slovenia Act.
The papers of the erased people, mostly workers from the former Yugoslav Republics, were confiscated on the basis of an outlaw administrative paper written by those in power in Slovenia in 1992.\(^5\) The third level is the “revengeful politics” that is incorporated within the new Penal Code of Slovenia (2008).\(^6\)

Therefore the state of exception that is being introduced in the social centre “Rog” is not limited to culture and art alone, and it concerns not only a handful of “marginalized citizens of Slovenia” – as mass media want to convince us – rather, it will befall everyone, even the “most suitable citizens of the most suitable district community.” The final aim is not only to close the Social centre “Rog,” but “Metelkova city” as well. This is going to happen as well through an unjust system of allocating financial resources by the city and the state. With this system the city and the state execute consistent politics of pauperization, hindering and finally abolishing the independent cultural, art and social scene in Ljubljana and Slovenia at large.

The consequences will be catastrophic not only for the independent scene, but also for the social and civic in general that are undergoing a transformation into highly functional business enterprises of neoliberal capitalism. This transformation is supported by continuous reduction of life conditions under the limit of a minimum that transforms the present biopolitics into a clear measure of necropolitics.

In “Necropolitics,” (2003) Achille Mbembe discusses that the logic that organizes the contemporary neoliberal
современото неолиберално глобал-капиталистично оштетено тело (и поранешните и идните колонии) не е максимум од животот, туку минимум за живеечка, а некогош ниту ова. Mbembe тврди дека поимот биополитика можеби треба да се замени со некрополитика, која се состои од вонредна состојба како геополитичка демаркација на зоните и од донедопамнешната мобилизација на воената машина.

Меѓутоа, сегашната состојба на систематско уништување на љубљанската незavisна сцена е производ на една долга историја. Она што денес се случува беше предвидено пред точно една деценија кога, врз основа на анализата од незavisната група стручњаци во Љубљана (1997), претскажав радикализација на санкциите, попречување и ограничување на незavisната уметничка и културна сцена во Љубљана. Радикализација која ќе повлече систематско уништување на незavisната продукција и социјалните центри, каков што е случјот денес. Овие процеси може да се опишат како процеси на евакуација и создавање амнезија на неколку нивоа, од условите за создавање до историјата на незavisната сцена.

Како се спроведуваат? Овие процеси се потпомогнати, организирани и спроведувани од страна на бирократско-административните механизми на градот, државата и нивните тела, од Министерството за култура на Словенија до државните репресивни механизми. Претставуваат облици на постојана канibalизација на условите за продукција и на оштетените и естетските обележја на незavisната култура и уметност.

However, the current situation of systematic destruction of Ljubljana’s independent scene is the result of a long history. What is going on today was predicted exactly a decade ago when, based on the analysis of the independent group of experts in Ljubljana (1997), I foretold a radicalization of sanctioning, hindering and limiting of the independent artistic and cultural scene in Ljubljana. A radicalization that would bring about the systematic destruction of independent production and social centres, which is exactly the case today. These processes can be described as processes of evacuation and production of amnesia on several levels from conditions of production to history of the independent scene.

In which way they are carried out? These processes are supported, organized, and implemented by bureaucratic-administrative apparatuses of the city, the state and their respective bodies, from the Ministry of Culture of Slovenia to the state repressive apparatuses. They present forms of continuous cannibalization of conditions of production and of the social and aesthetical features of independent culture and art.
We have three levels of systematic functioning together:

1. The bureaucratic-administrative apparatus that backs up the national cultural politics, its legislative regulation, and its policy for financing art and culture.

2. The national cultural institutions, which are official institutions of art and culture that live in a tacit consensus with this bureaucratic-administrative apparatus and fully collaborating in processes of evacuation, expropriation and cannibalization, which are from time to time turned against them (the case of “Moderna” Gallery /Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana etc).

3. The discursive-theoretical-critical and mass media operations that include writing, curatorial praxis, media presentations.

One of the most hidden processes of performing evacuation with the outcome of termination and foreclosure of the independent art and cultural platform and its spaces is performed by the city and state officially supported cultural institutions. This is the most redundant way of maintaining the current status quo. Instead of accepting any form of reorganization and partial reallocation of financial resources and funds given by the state and the city, these institutions carry out a politic of re-appropriation of different independent projects. What we get is institutional vampirism – that is a feature characteristic of official institutions in the present time. It is a legalised vampirism that allows official institutions to appropriate the form of the projects from the independent scene without sacrificing any institutional prerogative and without really reflecting upon social relations, political emancipative demands
Identities and etc., which are being developed by the independent scene. Such vampirism is also implemented by the state and city municipality; they appropriate the language and models, which are beforehand emptied of any meaning. The cannibalization or the taking over of independent projects by official institutions has no element pointing to the social, political, or conceptual stance behind them. All this is connected with the process of decontextualisation or with politics of producing an empty space in history. Thus, we are witness to a construction of history, where alternative and independent praxis that were/are of great importance are completely erased/evacuated, presentations are popularized and romanticised, and individual projects are presented ab ovo. The right political pool writes history that glorifies Slovenian national cultural space, from which the international context or all that represents a threat for the national myth is excluded, while the centre populist left bets everything on the yuppie elite and cultural managers. Neither the left nor the right shows any propensity for the independent cultural production that through realization of its projects strives to code the space and its relations, and to occupy its place among the political, social, aesthetic and theoretical sphere.

Besides this institutional vampirism, the most efficient method is the control of distribution of funds. Through control of funds distribution, a fierce censorship is carried out. In other words, these independent centres can survive only because of an existential economization and inner capitalization of financial resources that arise from different projects. These borders are shrinking

односи, барањата за политичка еманципација итн., кои ги разработува независната сцена. Таквиот вапирлик го применуваат и државата и градските власти; ги преземаат јазикот и моделите, кои се однапред испразнети од какво и да е значење. Канибализацијата или преземањето на независните проекти од страна на официјалните институции не содржи елемент кој би упатувал на нивната општествена, политичка или концептуална заднина. Сеово ова е во врска со процесот на деконтекстуализација или со политиката на создавање празно место во историјата. Така, сведоци сме на создавање на историја во која алтернативната и независната дејност, кои беа/се од огромно значење, сосема се бришат/празнат, претставите се популяризираат и романтизираат, а поединечните проекти се претставени ab ovo. Десничарското политичко крило пишува историја која го велички словенечкиот национален културен простор, од кој се исключува меѓународниот контекст или се што претставува закана за националниот мит, додека централната популестицина левица ги полага сите надежи во јапиевската елита и културните раководители. Ниту левицата ниту десницата не покажуваат интерес за независната културна продукција, која преку остварувањето на своите проекти се стреми да го кодира просторот и неговите односи и да заземе своето место во политичката, општествената, естетската и теориската сфера.

Покрај ваквото институционален вапирлик, најефикасниот метод е контролата врз распределбата на средствата. Со помош на контрола врз распределбата на средствата се спроведува жестока цензура. Со други зборови, ваквите независни центри може да опстанат само поради егзистенцијално штедење и внатршно управување со финансиските
yearly. Unlike independent production centres, national cultural institutions are financed not only to be able to realize their programme, but they are given additional financial resources intentionally in order that they are maintained as such, as institutions *per se*.

Subsequently the independent scene has never been registered neither officially codified in any national cultural programme or Resolution. Considering that the independent cultural scene is excluded from any resolution of the national programme for culture, it is seen as an unnamed *terra incognita* – to which a precise portion of financial support is allocated. The procedural scenario is always the same, and it unfolds as follows: at state and city levels a phantom network body that consists of experts is being formed who have, supported by the state, the authority to decide about the programmes! After such procedural “theatre,” the last move is always up to the “state” or the person who is responsible for the cultural sector at the city level. Due to reduced budget for the independent scene and relying on “professional” opinions a process of harsh financial cut is at work. In addition, the legislation and executive acts are being adjusted accordingly. It seems that there is no cultural policy that influences the breakdown of financial resources for the independent art and cultural scene, rather it is all left to the sheer “expertise” in the first stage and to the sheer “economic necessity” in the second stage, while the legal framework for such procedures is given by the National Programme for Culture. Therefore, the *Resolution* that was proposed by *Reartikulacija*
includes requirements for the prompt settlement of the current situation, among others:

a) To stop the politics of allocation of financial resources at the state and municipal level being used as methods of control and censorship. Within this framework, we requested an impartial reallocation of state and municipal financial resources.

b) To stop the politics of closing and stealing, or, of total privatization of public spaces in the city of Ljubljana and elsewhere in Slovenia for purposes of capital and its managerial visions of the city and the state.

c) To promptly recognize the independent cultural and contemporary art scene as one of the important subjects in the area of contemporary art and culture, with emancipative social and political programs in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia.

Furthermore, due to a constant repression in relation to the independent scene with processes of constant pauperization of such production supported by systematic encroachment of legal, human and social rights, a conceptual and political proposal was put forward – to appeal to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia and competent European Courts. The idea is to sue Slovenia due to its systematic abandoning, ghettoization, and deprivation of the whole sector of cultural and social life in Slovenia that is known as the independent art and social scene.
II. Staš Kleindienst: Appropriated Discourses and the Apolitical in Contemporary Slovenian Art

Let’s continue with the following example. On December 10, 2007, Slovenia, along with other like-minded, peace and human dignity loving western countries, celebrated the Day of Human Rights. In doing so, the Slovenian government arranged a fancy celebration with all the necessary ingredients, from a highly aesthetic cultural programme to inspiring speeches delivered by high officials of the state, including the prime minister. The cultural programme was conceived by the most celebrated contemporary Slovenian writer and right wing government sympathizer Drago Jančar, and consisted of testimonies by political prisoners from 1945 on. Anyway, the celebration was a typical aesthetisation, mythisation and glorification of violations that marked a dark period in the history of the Slovenian nation, with a simple message that things like that should never happen again.

So why does it make any sense to write about a mediocre state celebration that only consumed some taxpayers money? Putting aside the highly aesthetic and almost contemplative form of the programme, where professional actors cited the testimonies in very minimalist, low light ambient, what interested me was, how a celebration like this can, in a certain sense, reflect the ideology of an adolescent neoliberal capitalistic state combined with its fruitful socialist history concerning violations of human rights, and how this ideology is transforming the Slovenian national identity accordingly to neoliberal standards of the European Union. The programme of the celebration was constructed in order to create a bipolar perspective on past and present, on then and now, through the optic of Slovenian independence as
what is important here, I think, is precisely the construction of collective memory (a systematic and long lasting process, in which this celebration plays only a small part), that is based on bipolar perspective of then and now; a perspective that creates ground for transforming the population into an apolitical entity, incapable of anything else but to agree with a neoliberal consumerist way of life. According to David Harvey, the need to save socialist and communist countries from the communist side of the iron curtain can be seen as a process parallel to de-colonization, both are constructed, produced and dictated by the United States in order to make ground for neoliberal capitalism to spread and re-colonize these countries; to reinforce the laws of privatization and free trade is a must. Harvey argues that the most obvious consequence of introducing the neoliberal economy to a certain country is the rise of nationalism, and we can notice that in Slovenia that nationalism has materialized through fascist and discriminatory processes, that are being enabled by a strange mixture of neoliberal individualism, clerical-fascist mentality and post-socialist complex that leads to aggressive behavior and at the same time a totally apolitical population.

Therefore, it is impossible to see this particular celebration of the Human Rights Day aside of the problem of the 18,305 erased people of Slovenia who were, in
1992 deprived of their documents and citizenship. It is almost paradoxical that the problem (and the whole process from the erasure until now, when the problem of the erased people is far from solved) could be put in direct relation to post World War II processes and killings (usually labelled as revolutionary violence) that took place in Slovenia from 1945 on (the events that are so highly condemned by the present government). What is interesting here is that the same government that condemns the post 1945 killings, is in fact blocking the retribution of the erased people by forcing individual legal proceedings so that only people who “supported” Slovenian independence would re-gain their citizenships and rights and the others will be left without existence.

Also concerning the above-mentioned celebration and the whole human rights discourse, I think that it can be seen exactly as an example of how a discourse can be appropriated in order to be used as a political tool to arrange a framework through which a certain system of power can reproduce its own ideology. The framework is set in a way that enables the political to be turned into an apolitical position by depicting processes of violation, abuse and exploitation as issues only of the past. In this sense the discourse about human rights is turned into an aesthetic commodity and is used only as a tool to entertain careless population (which is, in a way, a very common function for this particular discourse).

So why is this example so important for the analysis of the current situation of contemporary art in Slovenia? It is exactly through processes of appropriation that Slovenian history of art (and also cultural identity) was able to build itself into what official art in Slovenia
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represents now, a mixture of apolitical discourses and entertainment for the elite that sit on the modernist western European tradition and functions only as another commodity at hand in neoliberal societies. If we take a closer look at how the identity of Slovenian art was produced in 20th century, we could point out three important movements (the constructivist avant-garde,7 conceptual group OHO,8 and the Ljubljana underground movement of the 1980s9) that in a way invaded the peace and tranquillity of Slovenian modernist eclecticism, and were accordingly subjugated (through exclusion, appropriation and kidnapping) to the system of power produced by Slovenian art history and also by the political apparatus.

In the case of constructivist avant-garde, the almost only “male” art-history made sure that it was excluded from any kind of interpretation that would enable it to stand as one of more important movements of that time. In the case of conceptual group OHO, the appropriation of their discourse can be seen on one hand by depicting their exclusion from art scene (they were actually forced to stop producing art) as a self-motivated attempt to leave art world and disappear into “life,” while on the other hand their art production was particularized into an event that happened inside the autonomous space of Slovenian modernist tradition. If we talk about exclusion and appropriation (with political addition) in the cases of constructivist avant-garde and the group OHO, the underground movement that started in Ljubljana in the 1980s mobilized a broader political engagement from the authorities. With its discourses being more political than artistic (at least from the perspective of the art history men of that time), the reaction of the authorities needed a new way to appropriate the movement. Marina Gržinić links this process to the theoretical notion of

Vo случајот со конструктивистичката авангарда, речиси целосно „машката“ историја на уметност нејзиниот дискурс од една страна се гледа од тоа како нивното искушување од уметничката сцена (буквално беа присилени да престанат да создаваат уметност) беше претставено како самостоен обид да го напуштат уметничкиот свет и да исчезнат во „животот“, додека, пок, нивната уметничка продукција беше конкретизирана во еден настан што се случил во рамките на автономниот простор на словенечката модернистичка традиција. Ако во случаите со конструктивистичката авангарда и групата ОХО зборуваме за искушување и преземање (со политички примеси), алтернативното движење кое отпочна во Љубљана во осумдесеттите придвигна и поширок политички ангажман на власт. Бидејќи дискурсите му беа повеќе политички од уметнички (барем според тогашните маши историчари на

она што денес претставува официјална уметност во Словенија, смеса од аполитични дискурси и разонода за елитата потпрена на модернистичката западноевропска традиција, и делува само како уште еден достапен производ во неолибералните општества. Ако повнимателно разгледаме како беше изграден иденитетот на словенечката уметност во 20 век, би посочил три значајни движења (конструктивистичката авангарда7, концептуалната група ОХО8 и Љубљанското альтернативно (андер-гранд) движење од осумдесеттите9) кои некако ги пореметија мирот и стабилноста на словенечката модернистичка еклектиченост и соодветно му беа потчинети (преку искушување, преземање и играбање) на владејачкиот систем кој го создадоа словенечката историја на уметноста и политичките механизми.
kidnapped creativity, theorized by Suely Rolnik; the kidnapped creativity describes how capitalism can appropriate creative processes by separating them, through alienation, from the force of resistance, only to put it at the service of an accumulation of surplus value. It is exactly through the process of kidnapping that the system of power can create a form out of context and thus deprive its discourse of its political and liberatory value. The 1990s saw this kind of processes being adapted in order to take control over independent art and culture production in Slovenia.

What remains constant from the early 1990s until now is also the fact that Slovenian Ministry of Culture is firmly holding its monopolistic position when it comes to distribution of funds for production in the field of art and culture. This monopolistic attitude enables them to control production accordingly to ideological standards produced by those on power. The National Programme for Culture 2008-2011 (unanimously accepted by the Slovenian parliament in 2008) displays this ideology transparently visibly. For example, the promise to build a new museum for contemporary art can be seen as nothing else but as an excuse to evacuate contemporary production from Ljubljana’s Museum of Modern Art (the current renovation of which should not only bring new and improved architecture but also new leadership!).

Oko novo muzej veten vo Nacionalnata programma za kultura 2008-2011, interesno e што се промовира простор за сите облици креативност, но истовремено се предлага строгата селективна процедура да биде под надзор на
already mentioned art-history and art-critique on power. In addition, these, men mostly represent the ideology that was responsible for constant de-politisisation of Slovenian art and culture, for the construction of autonomous space of eclectic modernism and for the exclusion and appropriation of practices with emancipatory tendencies.

While a lot of independent organizations are still held hostage by being dependent on the state’s funds (only a small portion of organizations is now really independent), the majority of independent known as non-institutionalized art production is simply being erased and excluded from participation in sharing national funds intended for art and culture. The new visions of city planning in Ljubljana leave no room for spaces that would enable independent culture to work properly. The raw neoliberal capitalistic logic that is at work in Slovenian art world has deprived itself from any need to coexist with any other form of creativity and production since it has consumed all alternatives and replaced their discourses with apolitical content. It is precisely the process of apolitical (apart from production of surplus value) that links art and culture to any other segment of neoliberal capitalist society.

The conception of political in Slovenian contemporary art is now narrowed to re-enactments of political gestures from the past and to synoptic exhibitions on the theme of political, where bogus political art practices are framed inside the autonomous art space. The political thus becomes only a memory of what was supposed to
be political. And, in my opinion, it is time for alternative culture in Ljubljana and in Slovenia to find new temporary forms of resistance, but not only through squatting spaces, on the contrary, with production of critical art and theory that could exist outside the mainstream apolitical and neoliberal; with such a move it could establish positions that subvert authorities that are now in power.

III. Sebastjan Leban: The last temptation of capital: abolishment of the public, introduction of necroprocesses and extermination

It is interesting how the advocates of the neoliberal ideology try to convince us that the market economy is at the moment the best possible system which cannot be avoided and has no other alternative, and to which we should be devoted in order to achieve success. Such statements try to assure us that if you are at the threshold of survival, with no social security, it is your fault since you are not capable of making your life better or because you do not take enough risks. What is one supposed to risk if they have nothing, and how to improve individual’s capability/knowledge if these processes already encompass the strategy of controlled privatisation of everything that has not yet been privatised, including education? What is it that hides behinds such persuasions? No doubt it is the intention to maintain the status quo, where those in power not only dominate others but also procure the legitimization of such domination by law.

Meanwhile increasing social differences, aggravation of life conditions, violation of human rights, inequality of opportunity are all facts indicating extreme conditions, which as a result of neoliberal expansion logic are manifest in Slovenia at different levels; among which are
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The example of such strategies of extermination can be traced in various open calls that are being implemented through the Ministry of Culture, the Film Fund of the Republic of Slovenia and the like.

Let me briefly lay bare a few such examples that happened in the last year. Namely, the Open call for the promotion of Slovenian culture in the international arena for the year 2008, where the major part of the available funds were allocated to specific chosen/privileged subjects while the majority remained without the necessary financial resources for the presentation of their pre-arranged events. The Open call for co-financing the media programme in 2008, has introduced a new article that determines that publishers of printed media are not eligible to apply for the funds if they publish less than 12 issues per year.
These strategies of extermination, abolishment, and destruction are constitutive parts of the neoliberal ideology and a side effect of a market economy. It is therefore no surprise that even public spaces in Slovenia are subjected to the processes of ghettoisation and pauperisation aimed not to ameliorate the quality, serviceability, and safety of these spaces, but to empty them, and in a long run to privatize them. In order to realize these processes, structures on power reorganize the notion of the public, thus allowing to neoliberal expansionism to take place and give a basis to adumbrated strategies of privatisation.

When we talk about public we need to bear in mind the changes that have occurred in the post-neoliberal era in the West and especially the changes that were provoked by contemporary privatization processes in the former Yugoslavia as well as in other Eastern European countries. In the East the public designated something completely

конкурираат за средства ако издаваат помалку од 12 броја годишно (месечните изданија се задолжителни). Оттука, битно за нивните теориски и критички потенцијали, изданијата како Reartikulacija, Борец, Мaska, бидејќи не се месечници, од самиот почеток се спречени воопшто и да конкурираат за средства. Трет таков пример е случајот со Isola Cinema, филмскиот фестивал одржан во Изола, гратче на словенечкото крајбрежје. Во раната фaza на планирање, на фестивалот му беше одобрена ситна сума од Филмскиот фонд на Република Словенија; откако фестивалот се побунува за ситуацијата, истоот државен филмски фонд, наместо да направи нова проценка на финансиската политика, оформи нова комисија која целосно ја отфрли програмата на фестивалот!

Ваквите стратегии на истребување, укинување, и уништување се составни делови на неолибералната идеологија и придружна појава на пазарното стопанство. Оттука, не изненадува што дури и јавните простори во Словенија се подложени на процеси на гетоизација и осиромашување, чиј цел не е да се подобри квалитетот, услугноста и безбедноста на овие простори, туку да се испразнат и, гледано долготраен, да се приватизираат. За да се остварат овие процеси, владееаачките структури го реорганизираат поимот јавно, со што му дозволуваат на неолибералниот експанзионизам да стапи на сцена и да им даде основа на прикриените стратегии на приватизација.

Кога зборуваме за јавно, мора да ги земеме предвид промените од постлибералната ера на Западот, особено промените предизвикани од современите приватизациони процеси во поранешна Југославија, како и во другите источновропски земји. На Истокот, јавно означување нешто
different in comparison to the West, since public, according to socialists logic, meant a public good and public property. On the other hand, the capitalist logic embeds the diction of private property that is propagated as a public good; the public is used to designate a space, which is made available for public use, but at the same time is a private property.

The contemporary pervert neoliberal logic in capitalism that is today branded as “global/sustainable development” has provoked a total vanishing of the former Eastern European notion of public; or maybe it is more accurate to say that public is rearticulated in Western capitalist societies through private property. The notion of public space as understood by Eastern Europeans implied a space that was not just open to public (free access and usage), but also owned by all the citizens of a certain country. In the rude privatisation processes hidden behind the slogan of universal freedom and democracy, most of what was a public property in Slovenia has been privatized. What is at work here is not a totally new logic of reorganization of the public (at the level of space, property, opinion making etc.), but also of all other areas such as education, health care, culture etc. that are driven today by the neoliberal watchword all for one, and each man for himself.

A clear example of this is the advertisement in which three Slovenian actors, two men and a pregnant woman (the figure of the expectant mother who bears life in her womb, life that is subjugated to the power of capital even before it becomes bare life) promote the advantages of taking a loan at the Slovenian bank Nova KBM. That this is an absurd case to the utmost speaks the fact that to the
question how she could possibly take a loan, the actress answers proudly that this is very simple: “I took the loan, and also my dad, my mum and granny as well.” Therefore, the capitalist logic promotes, through a very special offer, the possibility for young families or single parent families to buy a flat in spite of extremely high prices due to which the loan takers will have to work their whole life in order to be able to return the loan. So much the worse, three generations will have to return the loan: grandmother, mother and father, and the expectant mother herself. The figure of the expectant mother mediated by means of television is used to excite certainty within the precarious social conditions of a considerable part of the citizens of the first capitalist world.

If we apply the same methodology to analyze the last advertisement campaign of Suez company in the year 2007, we will find out that we are actually witnessing the latest perversion made possible by the media where dispossession, subjugation of life and violation of human rights are presented under the brand of sustainability and global development. The slogan of the advertising campaign is “Delivering the essentials of life.” Through this slogan, the Suez company guarantees sustainable solution in energy, water and waste services to developing and developed nations worldwide. The advertisement also includes the neoliberal propaganda of a better future which is being mediated to viewers by the diction You’re going to love the future. Actually, the question that arises is who will benefit from such a future and what will be the amount of deaths that will have to be produced for market (owner’s) needs. In this case we are dealing with privatisation of an elementary necessity of life – water – that should be accessible to everyone! Unfortunately, this is not the case, since this logic is not included in the contemporary privatisation strategies aiming at privatising everything that has not
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sovremenite PRIVATIZACISKI STRATEGII, KOI IMAAJ TAKZHE DOKAZOVI DA SIE PRIVATIZIRANO. STRATEGIIJA KOJ JA PRIMENUVAAT SOUES I SличNI MULTIKORPORACII IZMINONIJAJAJA DA DOBIJAT EKSKLUZIVNO PRAVO NA ВОДATA NADOM OD PRIVILOT KAPIHALISTIČKI SVET SE TEMELI NA UCENA. Vo горенаведениот пример, ова се забележува во улогата на Светската банка и ММФ KOI NA ZEMJIVE IM NUDAT KREDITI DOKOLKU SE SOGLASIT NA PRIVATIZACIJA NA HIVNOTO HODOSTOPANSTVO.

This analysis brings us directly to the principle of necroeconomy and the discourse on contemporary colonialism, which is maintained, through mechanisms of political, economic, and cultural control (Banerjee et al. 2006). Developing countries are in such a way constantly in the position of being overexploited.

This analysis brings us directly to the principle of necroeconomy and the discourse on contemporary colonialism, which is maintained, through mechanisms of political, economic, and cultural control (Banerjee et al. 2006). Developing countries are in such a way constantly in the position of being overexploited.

In the first capitalist world the sovereign power is used to control and regulate our life through biopolitics, whereas a totally different story is going on outside the first capitalistic world; a story were life is controlled and regulated through dispossession and subjugation of life to the power of death. Hence, it can be concluded that the first capitalist world has developed two strategies of regulating life which are applied in specific geographic areas; biopolitics for the first capitalistic world, and necropolitics for the rest of the world. If we are to draw a parallel line between these two definitions – organisation of life and subjugation of life to the power of death – we get a clear picture; in order to allow for life with style in the first capitalist world, two thirds of world population is dying. The hegemonic nations and systems of power today started to apply the strategies that in the past were used outside the first capitalistic world and are now being introduced within it. This means that the first capitalist world has incorporated necroeconomy, necropolitics, and necrocapitalist practices within its own borders thus
How are necroprocesses within the territories of the first capitalist world being implemented? Through the establishment of states of exception that allow for processes of subjugation and dispossession. One such process that is constantly present in the discourse mediated to the public by the mass media on a daily basis is the logic of contempt towards the alien, stranger, Other. The logic of contempt rests on the same stereotypes as xenophobia, fascism, and racism. In short, it rests upon the same matrix as all the other forms of intolerance towards those who are different and are therefore stigmatised. In case of Slovenia, the logic of contempt is being spread through the populist TV shows, which in prime time show various xenophobic jokes that are mostly intolerant towards other race, those who are of different sexual orientation and the like. These jokes are part of the strategy that with little daily doses of racism aims at maintaining and producing intolerance. In her text “Why Cut the Feet in Order to Fit the Western Shoes?: Non-European Soviet Ex-colonies and the Modern Colonial Gender System,” Madina Tlostanova argues:

“This happens within today’s general perverse paradigm of the human rights which is based on the principle of excluding large groups of people by putting them outside the category of the human, on erasing of difference and diversity and on unifying of all hopes for the seemingly universal norms of
for freedom and equality” (Tlostanova, forthcoming).

In the end what we witness are new contemporary strategies of abolishment of the public, introduction of necroprocesses within and outside the first capitalist world and extermination through which the systems of power driving the western expansionist logic continue to govern the world.

Notes:


2. Cf. http://tovarna.org/node/111. On 25th of March 2006 independent artists, activists and migrant workers started the initiative to open the abandoned edifice of the bicycle factory Rog in the center of Ljubljana, Slovenia, for temporary use and with the intent to carry out non-profit, non-established cultural, artistic and social activities on its premises. This initiative was not a classical squatting action, but it was presented as an initiative for a temporary, alternative, usage of the factory edifice. The 7,000 square meter large factory – owned by the City of Ljubljana has been left to decay for the last 15 years.

3. Cf. http://www.metelkova.org/indexe.htm. “Metelkova city” in the center of Ljubljana is an internationally renowned autonomous cultural zone situated on the site of former military barracks – the Slovene headquarters of the Yugoslav National Army. This public space was in September 1993 squatted by artists, activists, post punks and independent cultural and artistic organizations in order to prevent its illegal demolition and to carry out various forms of autonomous creativity. Neither the
City of Ljubljana nor the Slovene state have showed any interest in maintaining the status of the autonomous zone of Metelkova, and therefore the possibilities of the people involved in it, to further develop their creativity. Metelkova city has been a site of political abuse from its very start. In 1997, the then Mayor of Ljubljana and the current foreign minister of Slovenia, Dimitrij Rupel, had succeeded in demolish, because of “safety” reasons one of the buildings within the center. In 2006, the Inspectorate for the Environment of the city of Ljubljana unsuccessfully tried to carry out further the demolition of Metelkova, but was prevented each time by the physical yet non-violent intervention of people at Metelkova itself. Cf. Marina Gržinič, “Metelkova: actions in a zone of indifference,” at http://subsol.c3.hu/subsol_2/contributors2/grzinictext2.html

The Resolution on the National Programme for Culture 2008-2011 of Slovenia was adopted in December 2007 and laid out the principles and guidelines of culture policy for the coming four years in Slovenia. It was evaluated by independent artists and cultural organization as being very restrictive (economically, organizationally and infrastructurally) regarding the future of independent contemporary art and culture in Slovenia. The National Programme for Culture 2008-2011 was unanimously accepted by the Slovenian parliament in 2008.

5. On February 1992, at the time when Slovenia was still in its infancy, the Slovenian government which was headed by then-Prime Minister Lojze Peterle and the Ministry for Internal Affairs (then led by the Minister of the Interior Igor Bavcar and State Secretary Slavko Debelak) adopted a macabre necropolitical measure of erasure, transforming thousands of people (mostly from former Yugoslav republics) into people without residency permits...
and deprived of any rights. What happened on February 27, 1992 was the total confiscation of their status of permanent residence, and this confiscation was triggered by simple bureaucratic telegram sent by Slavko Debelak on 27 February 1992. To put an even more clear light in the darkness of the present moment, the event in 1992 is explained by the Erased themselves: “It is important to state that the status of permanent residence, at least in a state of law, that respects human rights, can be obtained or confiscated only on the basis of law, administrative acts, or court decisions. The status of permanent residence is provided by birth or through other legal means. This status provides duties and rights. Slovenia was in 1992 the legal successor of the former common federative state of Yugoslavia, together with permanent residents appurtenant to it, regardless of the nationality, sex, race, or religion of respective individuals. The basic existential status of the Erased has been taken from them without any law, legal act, or notification, only by a simple telegram!”

6. The Justice Ministry of Slovenia presented in 2007 the resolution of the new penal code, which introduces life imprisonment for criminal acts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. The code is drafted in a bid to bring Slovenian legislation in line with the Roma Statute of the International Criminal Court. The code is seen as extremely problematic as its supports a revengeful policy at its bases. Although the resolution of the new penal code was ferociously criticized in public, it was accepted by the Slovenian parliament in 2008.

7. The Slovenian Constructivist movement from 1920s represented primarily by Avgust Černigoj and Ferdo Delak is perceived as the avant-garde movement that developed new artistic tendencies within the framework of the European Avant-garde.
8. In the second half of the 1960s and early 1970s the group OHO had a very important impact on the former Yugoslav conceptual movement. The OHO Group worked in Kranj, Slovenia and in Ljubljana, Slovenia between 1965 and 1971 in the field of Reism, Process Art and Conceptual Art.

9. The 1980s underground movement in Ljubljana was an alternative movement which has subsequently introduced several new artistic practices and connected contemporary art with theory, social movements (gay, lesbian, etc.) and radical leftist politics in socialism.


12. The Isola Film Festival is the prototype for a new generation of film festivals. Based in small cities and although being poorly funded they present challenging film programs for the local and international public.

References:


