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The idea of Europe

Introduction

Today, the EU as Fortress Europe is a regime that is producing an accelerated, legally sanctioned system of restrictions, discriminations, and economic dispossessions, a space of intensified racialization that has at its core *racism*. Racialization refers to a process by which certain groups of people are singled out for unique treatment on the basis of real or imagined physical characteristics. Mostly it targets the activities of those termed (ethnic) minorities. It transforms societies into racialized societies. This process is today going so far that we have a process of racialization being imputed, without any “race” prerogatives but serving as a measure of class discrimination, subjugation, and finally dispossession.¹

The EU is providing the grounds for not only a state of exception but for a racial state, giving a free hand to detention, segregation, and discrimination under the veil of the protection of nation state citizens and even the protection of refugees from “themselves,” from their “drive” to try to illegally enter Fortress Europe and therefore probably finding themselves in a potentially deadly situation. The EU established a special agency, i.e. *Frontex*, which for years effectuated border surveillance in the Schengen border zones. The Schengen Area operates very much like a single state for international travel purposes, with external border controls for travellers entering and exiting the Area, with common visas and no internal border controls. In 2013 the EU established *Eurosur*, which is *Frontex*’s new European Union border protection agency, which uses high technology

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to coordinate activities on the EU's external borders. Supposedly, Eurosur was established to prevent incidents on the Schengen border and to stop refugees even before they try to smuggle themselves into the EU. One of the reasons for establishing Eurosur was that the EU was facing harsh criticism due to the extreme number of dead refugees found in its territory. In one case, off the coast of Lampedusa in Italy, 350 refugees from Africa drowned in a single day on 12 October 2013.

These processes of invigorated border control, the expulsion of refugees, etc., are judicially, economically, and, last but not least, discursively and representationally (as different semio-technological regimes), ratified, legislated, and normativized. Today it is of central significance to draw a genealogy of racism that parallels capitalism's historical transformation and historicization.

Racism passed from *institutionalized* to *structural*, to now be identified as *social racism*. To talk about social racism means "to talk about an all-pervasive racism; its violence legitimized by the state itself."² In the proposed genealogy of racism we identify processes of racialization that pass from institutional mechanisms of ordering individuals within a given community toward structures that expand the institutionalization of racism to structural mechanisms of racialization. Contemporary social racism is an all-pervasive racism that fully impregnates the neoliberal social body and is approved by the respective nation state's government. It is socially (approved) and internalized to such a micro level that the structures of violence produced by social racism are said to be a type of (micro) fascism. Making reference to Étienne Balibar's repeated reactions on raising racism already in 1988 before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, it is possible to claim that social racism constitutes the essential form of "European apartheid."³

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This brings us close to a more specific point: the Cold War. Nikhil Pal Singh argues that Cold War discourses and particularly the theory of totalitarianism (as the Cold War's primary ideology), born immediately after World War II, displaced the imperial and colonial genealogies of the Nazi Holocaust, as a form

² A statement by Nasim Lomani, an Afghan refugee who works in an immigrant social center run by volunteers in Athens, Steki Metanaston.

³ Cf. Étienne Balibar, "Y a-t-il un 'neo-racisme'?" [Is there a "néo-racism"?], in: Étienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (eds.), *Race, nation, classes: Les identités ambiguës* [Race, Nation, Classes: Ambiguous Identities], La Découverte, Paris 1988.

of industrialized killing, outside the context of Western history and theory.⁴ So the period of decolonization or, to be more precise, the anti-colonial struggles of the 1960s, were filtered through the Cold War discourses on totalitarianism, allowing for a disavowal of colonial violence and its undisturbed continuity. This allowed a shift toward an opposition between democracy and fascism that was soon replaced by totalitarianism. Singh cites William Peitz's essay "The Post-Colonialism of Cold War Discourse,"⁵ which states that "what happened in the debate on the Cold War and totalitarianism helped to frame a profoundly dishonest historical conversation."⁶

Singh writes that the theory of totalitarianism "enacted a displacement of fascism outside the main historical currents of Western moral, political, and intellectual life."⁷ The result was that Nazism, first identified as being part of "the family of Western imperialisms and as the exemplary modern instance of rationalized, technology-driven state terror,"⁸ was transferred elsewhere.

Actually, the anti-colonial movements after WWII in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere were harshly opposed by the West's "democratic" former colonial and fascist states.⁹ This was going on under the shield of Cold War discourse with the rhetoric of opposing anti-colonial movements being derivative of Marxism and Communism. There existed numerous unfinished decolonization struggles that were, at the time of the Cold War, brutally suppressed, suspended, etc., by the First Capitalist World in the name of fighting communism. Today it is clear that due to the coexistence of two divisions at the same time in Europe, the newly obsolete West/East divide and the newly reactivated Occident/Orient division, we are witnessing a shift in the process of subjugation by re-westernized global capitalism, a shift from communism toward Islamic extremism. Aimé Césaire, in his book *Discourse on Colonialism*,¹⁰ clearly elaborated "that Hitler applied to

⁴ Nikhil Pal Singh, "Cold War," *Social Text*, Durham, 27 (3/2009), pp. 67–70.

⁵ Cf. William Peitz, "The Post-Colonialism of Cold War Discourse," *Social Text*, Durham, (19–20/1988). Quoted in Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

⁶ Peitz quoted in Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

⁷ Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox, Grove Press, New York 2005.

¹⁰ Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham, Monthly Review Press, New York 2000. First published in 1955.

European colonialist procedures, which until then had been reserved exclusively for the Arabs of Algeria, the coolies of India and the Blacks of Africa.”¹¹

As Singh states, “the theory of totalitarianism (as the major ideological point of the Cold War), not only linked fascist destruction to the Soviet regime, it also suggested an extended chain of reasoning about existential dangers posed by ‘terrorist uses’ of technology, by those lacking proper philosophical conditioning and historical preparation for exercising state power.”¹²

This resulted in shifting the debate regarding the systematic procedures of death exercised in the colonies away from the systematic procedures of death in the concentration camps in Europe during WWII. This is instrumental in understanding the current situation of former Eastern Europe vis-à-vis Western Europe and/or the European Union as the European Union appears to be the modernizing saviour of the whole region. It is said that Eastern Europe no longer exists and it is therefore now called *former Eastern Europe*. However, paradoxically, its very non-existence as former Eastern Europe is over-present and over-existent when we consider the allocation of Western European capital. This move allows me to interpret, read, and understand Eastern Europe as the non-existing frontier of (as/in/at) the new Europe, (more precisely of the European Union), which sets its hegemony against the rest of Europe.

To formulate this differently, former Eastern Europe is a frontier, but it is a spectral one; it does not divide, as a frontier normally does, but rather allows for a repetition and reproduction within itself of modes of life (biopolitics), modes of death (necropolitics), structures of governmentality, institutional control, systems of knowledge and regimes of aesthetics, and contemporary art and theory from “former” Western Europe.

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Moreover, it is possible to argue that, in global capitalism, the institutions—primarily—of the ideological state apparatuses function as biopower; therefore, art and culture, along with theory and criticism, and education as well, are today pure biopolitical machines (only taking care of themselves and their hegemonic Euro-Atlantic interests), while the social and the political (with its, as it is

¹¹ Césaire quoted in Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

¹² Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

claimed, “autonomous” judicial system), not to mention economy, are pure instruments and conductors of the necropolitical global capitalism. Why has this happened? Capitalism is a system that lives from exploitation, dispossession, and discrimination and is not at all cultural (although it affects culture), but it also is an economic and therefore social and political system. This has the consequence that presently art and its institutions are only biopolitical machines, while the social is necropolitical. It is of fundamental importance to expose the role of *debt servitude* being imposed on mass populations in the interest of transnational capital.

Europe is being renewed today through a genealogy that excludes all those who are seen from its Western perspective as unimportant (who are constructed as *subhuman* through a process of dehumanization). This process stays unreflected upon also due to the new rhetoric developed in contemporary philosophy and theory of the *posthuman*. As stated by Maldonado-Torres

These dehumanizing forces, logics, and discourses hardly seem to find an end in the current neoconservative and neoliberal moment or in the liberal and Eurocentric radical responses that it sometimes generates. Continued Manichean polarities between sectors considered more human than others, the accelerated rhythm of capitalist exploitation of land and human labor—sometimes facilitated, as Fanon well put it, by neocolonial elites among the groups of the oppressed themselves—as well as anxieties created by migration and rights claims by populations considered pathological, undesirable, or abnormal—to name only a few of the most common issues found today—make clear that decolonization will remain unfinished for some time.¹³

Part 1.

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As developed in many of my writings, I argue that in neoliberal global capitalism two modes of life are present at once: Foucault’s biopolitics¹⁴ (“make live

¹³ Nelson Maldonado-Torres, “Thinking through the Decolonial Turn: Post-continental Interventions in Theory, Philosophy, and Critique—An Introduction,” *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, California, 1 (2/2011), pp. 2–3. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/59w8j02x>.

¹⁴ Michel Foucault, *Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–76*, Mauro Bertani, Alessandro Fontana (eds.), trans. David Macey, Penguin, London 2004.

and let die”), and Mbembe’s necropolitics¹⁵ (“let live and make die”), which regulates life through the perspective of death. These two modes of life present a brutal difference in managing life and death. In biopolitics, life is under control but it was still about providing a “good” life (if only for the citizens of the sovereign first world capitalist countries), while today life is being increasingly abandoned and what is at hand is “let live” under harsh systems of surveillance; at the same time, death is managed, used, and capitalized by the war machine. Today in global neoliberal capitalism biopolitical and necropolitical modes of life reproduce themselves near one another, transforming many of the former biopolitical sovereign states into necropolitical ones.

Unity of capital/power, co-propriety of capital/power

At end of the 1960s and at the beginning of the 1970s (which is the beginning of what is theoretically called the *Great Transformation*, signifying the beginning of the transformation of the working class by way of its total decomposition, as stated by Sandro Mezzadra and Agostino Petrillo¹⁶) capital had to free itself from the antagonistic force that had historically constituted it and correspondingly limited and conditioned it.¹⁷ This precisely defines the change from Fordism to post-Fordism as the change of the mode of labour in capitalism that allowed for the new accumulation of capital. This change was induced in order to start a new cycle of capitalist accumulation. The Great Transformation brought a decomposition of society, politics, and the economy through a series of events that López Petit lists as: the free circulation of capital, the fall of the Berlin Wall (and with it the collapse of communism), and the advancement of new media and digital technologies.

The downfall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 was not driven by a humanist sensibility that “smart” political leaders in the West of Europe in collaboration with “not so smart” (but more on the verge of being defunct) communist political leaders offered a humanist sensibility to the people of former Eastern Europe as an act of

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¹⁵ Achille Mbembe, “Necropolitics,” trans. Libby Meintjes, *Public Culture*, Durham, 15 (1/2003), pp. 11–40. Available at https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/currentstudents/postgraduate/masters/modules/postcol_theory/mbembe_22necropolitics22.pdf.

¹⁶ Sandro Mezzadra and Agostino Petrillo quoted in Santiago López Petit, *La movilización global: Breve tratado para atacar la realidad* [Global mobilization: A brief treatise for attacking reality], Traficantes de Sueños, Madrid 2009, p. 26.

¹⁷ López Petit, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

liberation from communist's totalitarianism. This was the outcome of the logic of repetition of the unrestraintment of capital.¹⁸ The creation of the trust agency named *Treuhandanstalt*¹⁹ in 1990 by West Germany, which turbo privatized (in the turbo expedient period after the fall of the Berlin Wall) all publicly owned enterprises in former East Germany (as explained in the first section, speaks clearly in favour of this thesis.

Similarly, the war in Iraq was presented as freeing the Iraqi people; a similar scenario was put into motion in Afghanistan (i.e. to help the liberation of Afghan women from the burka). In the first case (Iraq) it was oil that was at stake and in the second (Afghanistan) heroin, both vital for the contemporary imperial war states. The effect of this transformation is the present decomposition of societies.

Therefore, nationalisms, chauvinisms, racisms, homophobic madness and antisemitism are all processes that were and are used precisely to canalize the intensified effects of the Great Transformation. It is no surprise that they are most visible in the former Eastern European context, where they function as a genuine buffer to hide the "truth" that the fall of the Berlin Wall was necessary not to bring freedom, etc., but to adjust the limit (and not just to go beyond the limit) in order to provide new possibilities for capital accumulation.

Carlo Galli reported in his book *Political Spaces: The Modern Age and the Global Age*²⁰ that the modern space was a space that was constituted by a plurality of interests and ideologies,²¹ but I emphasize that neoliberal globalization is something else. It presents an inextricable complexity, which means that it is not a pluralistic space but a space in which complexity does not permit *extrication*.

¹⁸ I refer here to Santiago López Petit's notion *unrestraintment* [of capital]. Santiago López Petit, *La movilización global: Breve tratado para atacar la realidad* [Global mobilization: A brief treatise for attacking reality], *op. cit.*

¹⁹ In the span of the 30 months of its existence, the *Treuhandanstalt* agency privatized 8,500 companies; 4,000 companies were closed and more than three million jobs lost. By the end of 1994 the agency had generated a debt of 200–250 billion Deutschmarks (the reported figures vary). Cf. "Goldrush – How to Sell Off a Country," *Global Screen*, <https://www.globalscreen.de/mm/en/content/59813> (accessed: 10 September 2019).

²⁰ Cf. Carlo Galli, *Espacios políticos: La edad moderna y la edad global*, Nueva Vision, Buenos Aires 2002.

²¹ Carlo Galli quoted in López Petit, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

It is therefore a space that is not at all plural, but one that cannot be disentangled or untied.

Mbembe, in his analysis of Africa as a “postcolony,”²² envisioned precisely such a process, which he called “*entanglement*.”

If we try to delineate a genealogy of a short but dramatic restructuring of the composition of capital and its consequences for the historicization of capitalism, then we have to take into account its transformation that started in the 1970s and that today, as stated by López Petit, has come to an end. This is why we talk about global capitalism and its logic of financialization. The transformation named the *Great Transformation* presents the dis-articulation of politics, of the economy, and of the social life of the working class (the main protagonist of capitalism and its cycle of struggles in the 1970s). This period is best illustrated by Margaret Thatcher and the class struggle against the miners in Great Britain, or in Poland by Solidarnost.²³ The outcome was a rearticulation, or a mode of re-exploitation of the working class through its dis-articulation, which transformed it into a new motor for capital. The working class, through processes of precarization, was transformed “from an obstacle to capital into its new motor.” It is also necessary to take into consideration the new media technology and scientific developments (“the banal” event of MTV, or the Internet), which started to be of enormous importance already at that time.

In contrast to the society of discipline, the society of surveillance extends its control outside the structured sites of social institutions through “flexible and fluctuating networks.” Therefore, globalization cannot be explained in terms of one single displacement of the limit because it stays within the limit of capital, which is its very motor of unrestraintment and functions with the logic of repeti-

²² Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, trans. A. M. Berrett et al., University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2001.

²³ Polish: *Solidarność*; the independent self-governing trade union “Solidarity,” was established at a conference held on 17–18 September 1980, in Gdańsk, and officially registered on 24 October 1980; in 1981 the organization’s membership reached close to 10 million (approximately half of the Polish working class). Cf. Mikołaj Gliński, “The Solidarity Movement: Anti-Communist, Or Most Communist Thing Ever?,” Culture.pl, 21 September 2015, <https://culture.pl/en/article/the-solidarity-movement-anti-communist-or-most-communist-thing-ever>.

tion. As stated by López Petit, it is about thinking of the event of the unrestraintment of capital as its new way of being accumulated. The consequences of the Great Transformation that brought about the complete decomposition of society in the sole interest of capital were extracted from the terrain of politics and shifted into the space of culture. It was also the beginning of the advancement of theories about the cultural turn (with Fredric Jameson²⁴) that allowed for the unbelievable expansion of cultural studies into the realm of theory, a process of the “culturalization” of politics and the economy instead of the “re-politicization” of political economy.

The Great Transformation presents a shift in the relation between capital and power. Before the disarticulation of the working class, we could talk, via López Petit, about the *unity of capital/power*;²⁵ in the course of the Great Transformation we see the dismantling of this unity and its transformation into the *co-proprietty of capital/power*. Therefore, this relation can be historicized, and it changes with the historical/present mode of capitalism. The changes are not a question of a nice established narrative, but they do show an intensification of the processes of expropriation and exploitation carried out in accordance with each specific historical moment of capitalism. The discussion put forward by Paolo Virno regarding the important shift from a Fordist to post-Fordist mode of labour in capitalism can also be reworked, as proposed by López Petit, as a shift from the unity of to the co-proprietty of capital/power.

This unity of capital/power presented a social pact between workers and capitalists (i.e. the bourgeoisie) and the outcome was capitalist social democracy, which brought—not as a generous gift but as a result of a struggle—social, health, and pension benefits for the workers (the welfare state was the most advanced form of this unity). The trade unions had an extremely important role in this process. López Petit argues that the class struggle was functioning, so to speak, within the plan of capital. Capitalism needed a pact in order to produce surplus value; moreover, the way labour functioned within the composition of capital production presented the only way for capital to survive.

²⁴ Cf. Fredric Jameson, *Representing Capital—A Reading of Volume One*, Verso, London 2011.

²⁵ López Petit, *op. cit.*, pp. 35–36.

The socialist planning state, which was/is rarely part of the discussion in the West (and if it is, then only as a totalitarian restriction of working rights), was the best example of this unity. Therefore, it is possible to say that the imposed vision of socialism as only and solely totalitarian was necessary in order to hide the best example (of the already realized nightmarish form) of the West's Fordism, which was the socialist planning state.

Former Yugoslavia was almost a role model at the time, but was hidden, while today, being a true historical model, it is being presented in numerous panels in the East and West as a brand (I will argue) for a defunct future. The socialist planned economy was the perfect display of what in Fordist capitalism was, so to speak, hidden. When the unity of capital/power was threatened, the response (or, better said, the punishment) by capitalists, as explained by López Petit, was exemplary. López Petit speaks of true social engineering methods of punishment (and not of the "control" that is connected with post-Fordism) that were presented in a vertiginous form of inflation, and open-ended crisis, etc. This is why the penalization of miners by Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain in the 1980s, when post-Fordism was already in the house, so to speak, was so exemplarily tough (what we witnessed was "class struggle" in the West at its purest).

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

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In the background of the unrestraintment of capital is the absence of the limit of capital, but beware, it is not about going beyond the limit. Therefore, the crash of the neocons and neoliberals does not signal the end of globalization, but its continuation—although maybe (and I repeat, maybe) without a neoliberal ideology (or, put differently, with a neoliberal ideology that is modified), because, as stated by López Petit, neoliberal globalization, or global capitalism, is a historical form of capitalism.

Therefore, to recapitulate what we have elaborated so far, it is possible to say that there exist two modes of the relation between capital and power. One is the unity of capital/power and the other is the co-propriety of capital/power. The co-propriety of capital/power signifies a mutual drive, force, the push of capital, and power. Capital is going further beyond its limit thanks to power, and, as stated by López Petit, at the same time power is expanding thanks to capital. We saw this mutual drive not only with the proposal to rescue Wall Street and U.S. banks from collapsing in November 2008 by the U.S. Senate, but also in the shift of capital's voracity to the level of morality.

When capital pushes power beyond it (further away from it), and inversely, when power pushes capital, then we effectively start to explicate the unrestraintment of capital. Co-propriety means that there exists interchangeability between them, allowing for mutual substitution, but under a condition, with the proviso, as emphasized by López Petit, that they have to maintain their specific identity, or they have been given equivalent status, but under the condition of maintaining their difference.

I want to further rethink some of the processes implemented in Southeastern Europe in order to explore the logic of global capitalism, the changes it has brought to the territory, to the understanding of hegemony, democracy, zoning, ideology, and “underdevelopment.” Southeastern Europe (which, for the purpose of clarification, consists—or consisted, since the list changes daily—of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia) has come to be synonymous with animosity between the above states. Slovenia is, at the present moment in 2019, not on this list.

If one looks at the political agenda of the states classified by the European Union (EU) as part of the Southeastern European region, becoming a Member state of the European Union is a common feature of their process of dis-affiliation with the Southeastern European region. With the exception of Greece, which has been a member of the European Union since 1981, and Slovenia, which became a member on 1 May 2004, followed by Bulgaria and Romania in the second wave of EU enlargement (1 January 2007), the “rest” of the region within Southeastern Europe has recently been renamed the “West Balkans,” and so forth.

The process of *zoning* (as we call this shifting of names) is therefore a process that changes the territory from one paradigmatic space of economic interest to another paradigmatic space of economic interest and that coincidentally requires transformations in the judicial, political, and cultural prerogatives so that they conform to the needs of the EU. The most important condition that a state inside the process of zoning must satisfy to be eligible for future EU membership is the establishment of a functioning *democracy*, with its incident rule of fully embracing the (neoliberal capitalist) law. Kosovo offers a paradigmatic example of this shift.

Part 2.

Nationalism

Nationalism has surfaced as the prevalent mode in which social and political life is organized in the countries of the former Eastern Europe. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the countries comprising Southeastern Europe have been considered *transitional*. It is said that the appearance of nationalism only represents what has already been there for decades, but had been successfully suppressed during the past socialist and communist periods, and came overtly out with the “liberation” of these countries from the totalitarian communist system. Our thesis is that nationalism, contrary to such a claim, is the mode in which the present transitional elites (from the East of Europe, helped by those from the West of Europe) buffer or hide their direct submission to neoliberal global capitalism—in short, nationalism is the way they hide their readiness to open up their countries to the worst possible exploitation and expropriation by capital.

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The paradox, of course, is that losing social rights is presented as gaining neoliberal “capitalist freedom and democracy” (this shift, in reality, means being forced into a condition of wild precariousness and instability, marked by the loss of jobs and rights). To be socially de-privileged, without social, health, and labour rights, today means being “emancipated” within neoliberal global capitalism. This is presented through a system of intensified rationalizations (read: real shortages, etc.) that are imposed through the radicalized management of surveillance as well as the extreme privatization of the social, political, and economic space.

This nationalism is also supported by the EU, even more so by the old (West Europe) EU core, as they need the disorder and pathology of nationalist social and political spaces in order for them to execute the allocation of capital. What does the implementation of neoliberal global capitalism mean?

In the Western European context, this means the total embracement of the biopolitical machine as a force regulating every level of the capitalist system. The past capitalist “social” state, the so-called 1970s capitalist *welfare state* (a product of the capitalist social democratic vision) is dismantled today as well, although the reasons behind this are presented differently (different histories are constructed and different vocabularies are implemented). In Eastern and Western Europe, the vision of public interest no longer exists. Public health insurance, public social insurance, public education, and other public interests are being slowly and steadily privatized. In both contexts what is at stake is depoliticization, i.e., taking away the social contradiction (class antagonism) of the social and political space.

To “smoothly” handle these over-intensified privatizations, two different processes are implemented. In the “former” West a process of radical individualization as a biopolitical subjectivity is pushed forward, where the individual is presented as the manager of her/himself, which is seen as the most effective element of neoliberal global capitalism. Conversely, due to the incomplete process of capitalization, which prevents the smooth implementation of the complete fragmentation of the social and political space through radical individualization, a process of national “unification” has been imposed on the former East. The result is nationalism, a pathological model that provokes social disorder and allows capital allocation to bring about order.

Accordingly, nationalism is in fact a model of depoliticization that is simultaneously embraced differently by both the Right and Left political elites. While the Right political parties in the transitional countries rely on nationalism and feed themselves therewith (and also use it in such a way so as to capitalize on their own position), the Left political forces have to make a double turn. On the one hand, they have to de-link themselves, at least on the surface, from right-wing nationalistic forces. On the other hand, they have to de-link themselves from what was left of the working class from the past that still puts forward political demands.

The latter de-linking is necessary to prove their proper position as *apolitical*, neoliberal, managerial, depoliticized capitalist forces. In order to enter the big family of the depoliticized EU (which is, on the other side, harshly organized, framed, and made into a *Fortress Europe* through measures of intensified administrative and bureaucratic acts, and acts of law), the left transitional political forces have to prove their capability to de-link themselves from the past communism, which is today placed on the same level as Nazism. On 25 January 2006, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), which brings together parliamentarians from forty-six European countries, passed a resolution that for the first time strongly condemned the crimes committed by totalitarian communist regimes. The resolution urges former Eastern European communist countries to modify their textbooks and to build monuments to victims of the totalitarian communist regimes, therefore prompting a paradoxical form of an obscene “de-Nazification.” As has been argued by many writers, it would be “easier” to take the condemnation of communist state crimes seriously if the EU denounced the far bloodier record of European colonialism, which was a system of racist despotism that dominated the world in Stalin’s time and before.

One consequence of these superficially claimed paradoxical demands (which is consistent with the process of total depoliticization) is the use of gender as the marker with which to testify to and “check” the process of the emancipation of a certain territory. Instead of talking about politics or the changes brought about by neoliberal global capitalism, we are forced to talk about a certain situation, for example, of “emancipation” through the gender zoning of a certain territory. This act is then presented as a new manner of politics.

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I have already stated that the Left transitional political elite have to prove clearly that they are capable of performing and embracing depoliticization in a proper state in order to be embraced by their Western comrades. In the 1990s, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, we witnessed the development of capitalist society, with its tendency to instil brutal exploitation (approaching enslavement) and violent bureaucratic formalization (of responsibilities, etc.) in every level of society.

The former Left (now transitional neoliberal managers, parties such as LDS, SD) despises workers and their demands for political answers. From the leftist perspective, the working class should be a political force aiming for change, but this class is so demeaned as to make the leftist intellectuals ashamed of being

connected to it. On the Right side, whole strata of society (sexual minorities, migrant minorities, etc.) are identified as disrupting national unity,²⁶ which is increasingly associated with the “decent” people of the nation through a clearly chauvinistic and racist mechanism.

In Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Romania, it is the Roma people who are targeted. In France, it is the second and third generations of French citizens from the colonies, in Austria, refugees and migrants. Intellectuals, artists, cultural workers, and theoreticians are also distancing themselves from what is being increasingly publicly identified as “lower class elements.”

Therefore, in parallel with what was defined as the unique cultural post-modernism of former Yugoslavia (in the 1980s), another process has to be envisioned and elaborated, a process that would permeate the culture, social fabric, politics, and economy of former Yugoslavia and all its respective republics, which are today new states in Europe. It was the process of the construction of second-rate citizens in Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, and throughout former Yugoslavia, based on the myth of lost ancient territories disseminated by the communist party nomenclature and military apparatus of former Yugoslavia that started the “Balkan War” therein in the 1990s.

The war resulted in the massive annihilation of people, the Srebrenica genocide, a myriad of other *ethnic cleansing* procedures, and the destruction of cities; all hastened to cite these emblematic cases of contemporary genocide after World War II in the heart of Europe. The Srebrenica massacre, also known as the Srebrenica genocide, refers to the killings in July 1995 during the “Balkan War” in Bosnia and Herzegovina, when more than 8,000 Bosnians (Bosnian Muslims), mainly men and boys, were slaughtered in and around the town of Srebrenica (BiH) by units of the Army of Republika Srpska (in BiH) under the command of General Ratko Mladić, supported by Slobodan Milošević and the mass media and public opinion in Serbia.

After the war, the ethnic cleansing continued through a myriad of processes of racialization, dispossession, exploitation, and deregulation. In 2002 Žarana Papić

²⁶ Cf. Tatjana Greif, “Schengen in Practice,” *Reartikulacija*, Ljubljana, (3/2008), pp. 9–10. Available at <http://grzinic-smid.si/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Rear2008tikulacija3.pdf>.

described this process in Serbia with the notion of neoliberal *Turbo-Fascism*.²⁷ At its core is a racialization that refers to the assigning of racial connotations to those termed (ethnic) minorities. These processes are judicially, economically, discursively, and, last but not least, representationally conceived and normativized, and they have progressively begun to metastasize.

Alternately, the only possible unity that is proposed and tolerated is the organic national body, which is actually based on the old ideology of blood and soil, which seeks to expel from the nation's (seen as "natural") body all those who threaten it (from im/migrants to ethnic Roma to non-heterosexual groups). In Slovenia, the results of such nationalistic operations are the *Erased People*. Slovenia (not Slovakia) has long been seen as a case of successful transformation from a totalitarian socialist republic into a miniature capitalist nation state. Slovenia has, as part of its history and present, the case of the *Erased*, which could be seen as a clear necropolitical measure in the heart of contemporary Europe (even before Achille Mbembe coined the term *necropolitics*).

The *Erased People* is the term for 25,000 to 30,000 people from former Yugoslavia whose residency rights were taken away in 1991 and 1992 by the newly independent state of Slovenia because they were "of other ethnicity." They lost the right to work, social care, everything. They simply stopped existing in the eyes of Slovenia.

How did this happen? In February 1992, at a time when Slovenia was still in its infancy, the Slovenian government, which was headed by the then Prime Minister Lojze Peterle (officially Alojz Peterle, a member of the European Parliament from 2004 until 2019) and the Minister of the Interior, Igor Bavčar (with the support of the State Secretary of the Ministry of the Interior, Slavko Debelak), adopted the macabre necropolitical measure of erasure, transforming 25,000 to 30,000 individuals into persons without residency permits, depriving them of any rights. These 25,000 to 30,000 people were mostly workers and internal migrants that were working and living in Slovenia; they were of non-Slovenian ethnic roots, Bosniaks, Croats, Serbs, Roma, Kosovars, Macedonians, etc. What happened on

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²⁷ Žarana Papić, "Europe After 1989: Ethnic Wars, the Fascisation of Social Life and Body Politics in Serbia," in: Marina Gržinić Mauhler (ed.), "The Body," special issue, *Filozofski vestnik*, Ljubljana, 23 (2/2002), pp. 191–205.

26 February 1992 (the date when the Aliens Act came into force) was the total revocation of their permanent residence status, and this revocation was implemented by a simple bureaucratic telegram sent by Slavko Debelak the next day, on 27 February 1992, with instructions for “the clearing of the records.”²⁸ The number of the telegram is 0016/4-14968. At that time Slavko Debelak was subordinate to Igor Bavčar.

Janez Drnovšek was elected president of the Slovenian government in April 1992. Matevž Krivic refers to the recorded transcription of the first meeting of Drnovšek’s cabinet in June 1992, when Bavčar, being the Minister of the Interior in Drnovšek’s government as well, informed him of the “problem” regarding the violation of human rights in Slovenia.²⁹

What happened to them under the auspices of the new state can be termed a “particularly brutal” policy of dispossession and “regroupment.”³⁰ The Slovenian state also lacks a history of internal immigration from and to former Yugoslavia. It is necessary to acknowledge the existence—not only in Slovenia but also in the EU (in the passage of the EU from a biopolitical to a necropolitical regime) of different forms of subjugation, of harsh circumstances of exploitation, discrimination, and segregation. Benjamin Stora calls this “ethnoracial regulation.”³¹

In considering the “tensions of the French empire,” Stoler and Frederick Cooper, already in 1987, stated that the tensions reside in a network that “joined liberalism, racism, and social reform.”³² Similarly, we can say for Slovenia that it acquired a quasi-bourgeois EU identity as a malfunctioning copy of the European colonial state, where Slovenia in a turbo manner (in just few decades) joined neo/liberalism and racism, and, moreover, forgot about any social reforms. What is necessary, then, is to locate racism as a central category within the pa-

²⁸ “27. 2. 1992,” The Erased: Information and documents, Mirovni inštitut, <http://www.mirovni-institut.si/izbrisani/en/27-2-1992/index.html> (accessed: 11 September 2019).

²⁹ Matevž Krivic, “Bavčar: ‘Odmisliti človekove pravice!’,” *Mladina*, 7 March 2004, <https://www.mladina.si/94301/bavcar-odmisliti-clovekove-pravice/>. Cf. “4.6.1992,” The Erased: Information and documents, Mirovni inštitut, <http://www.mirovni-institut.si/izbrisani/en/4-6-1992/index.html> (accessed: 11 September 2019).

³⁰ Ann Laura Stoler, “Colonial Aphasia: Race and Disabled Histories in France,” *Public Culture*, Durham, 23 (1/2011), p. 134, note 39.

³¹ Benjamin Stora quoted in Stoler, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

³² Stoler, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

rameters of the abstract state. It should be acknowledged that in Europe we have a fully constructed entity of a racial state and global capitalism.

Likewise we have to be alert to the fact, as stated by Stoler, that “racial states can be innovative and agile beasts, their categories flexible, and their classifications protean and subject to change. They thrive on ambiguities and falter on rigidities. [...] Racial formations have long marked differences by other names.”³³

Borders

The European Union constantly speaks of how everything is becoming increasingly democratic as well as liberal and open to democratic possibilities and potentialities. However, in reality we can witness fascist tendencies, racist public speeches, and a torrent of hateful attitudes. These tendencies have become normalized and cohabit easily with the neoliberal capitalist machine, which is disgustingly tolerant of the social and political processes of discrimination.

In order to further understand the situation, we must both consider the historical factors and analyse the contemporary forms of racism, within Europe and the rest of the world, that are hidden behind different rhetorics. The contemporary Italian philosopher Domenico Losurdo³⁴ (2005) stated that in order to understand historical and contemporary imperialism, it is necessary to endorse an analysis of liberalism (at present, neoliberalism is the major ideology of global capitalism) and an analysis of colonialism, which forms the foundation of Western imperial wealth.

This paradox encourages us to ask: What is the logic that organizes a possibility to declare that the borders are gone? The so-called imbalance between Eastern and Western Europe today is no longer a question of opposition, but rather of repetition. It is the same repetition I suggested when speaking of global capitalism—a repetition of one event alone (according to López Petit): capital’s lack of restraint.

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³³ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

³⁴ Domenico Losurdo, “Le radice americane (e coloniale) del Terzo Reich” [The American colonial roots of the Third Reich], lecture, Milan, Italy, 15 May 2005.

Today, there is a lot of talk about the disturbance between the nationalistic East of Europe and the neoliberal West of Europe. But as we can see, we are witness to a repetition of the neoliberal capitalist West amidst the nationalistic East, but they do not disturb, so to speak, each other, but rather reinforce each other.

However, this repetition does not involve a process of mirroring, if this were the case we would then speak about repetition bringing the enjoyment of minimal difference. The repetition that is repeated presents a repetition of one part within the other. Based on Ugo Vlaisavljević's insights in "From Berlin to Sarajevo,"³⁵ I can claim that the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the consequent disappearance of the border dividing the East and West, while enthusiastically celebrated, resulted from the wrong conceptualization of the border itself.³⁶ Maybe it is necessary to rethink the concept of the border. Vlaisavljević, referring to Étienne Balibar, points to a process in Europe that states that the way we perceive borders changes, and with this change we can conceptualize Europe differently as well.

Vlaisavljević states that the best way to understand the position within the EU is to actually look toward the EU's borders that have been established by those states that are not integrated into it. Balibar, as Vlaisavljević's text reactualizes him, is presented as the theoretician who in his major works about Europe in the 1990s had already begun to identify a process of change in the definition of borders. Balibar envisioned a process of the simultaneous fragmentation and multiplication of borders, on the one hand, and the disappearance of certain borders, on the other.

In 1997, he posited that the borders were flexing, although he warned that this does not mean that they were disappearing. On the contrary, borders are becoming multiplied and diminished in their localization and in their function, stretched or doubled, becoming zones, regions, border-territories. What is at stake here is precisely a reversed relation between "borders" and "territories": borders, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, started transforming into zones.³⁷

³⁵ Ugo Vlaisavljević, "From Berlin to Sarajevo," *Zarez*, Zagreb, 11 (267/2009), pp. 23–25.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 23–25.

³⁷ Étienne Balibar, *La crainte des masses: Politique et philosophie avant et après Marx* [The Fear of the Masses: Politics and philosophy before and after Marx], Galilée, Paris 1997, pp. 386–387.

One consequence of establishing zones or territories instead of fixed borders is that the question of borders disappears so that the physiognomy of the border can change radically. We no longer speak of Eastern and Western Europe, but about the transformation of an entire territory into a zone that functions in such a way that it becomes a (new) border. Vlaisavljević clearly points out that this is the function of the new territory called the “Western Balkans,” which has the function of just such a border-zone.

Vlaisavljević stated that the Berlin Wall is gone, but it has been replaced by a bureaucratic process of visas, and that the border police are not at the borders anymore, but in the hearts of those cities that are not yet part of the EU; within fortified embassy offices, policemen, rather than embassy and consular bureaucrats, keep the walls standing firmly. Today, as Vlaisavljević notes, the “former Western European” states’ embassy personnel are increasingly professionalized bureaucratic police. Integration into the EU, as states, starts before a future EU Member state is integrated.

In short, Europe no longer needs the Berlin Wall, as it has established invisible internal judicial police and managerial borders that function just as well. The slogan proclaimed by unified Germany in 2009 was: “Come, come to the country without borders”—the only problem being if you (we) happen to be, by “chance,” in any of the many detention camps or detention prisons in Germany or in similar facilities elsewhere in the EU, or if you (we) are waiting in line somewhere in “the land without borders” to get a visa or asylum papers.

Global capital pressures the nation state to remove the legal-political barriers that prevent the unconditional mobility of trans-multinational capital. This is one of the major functions of European Union legislation that is made operative throughout the whole space of the EU. The civilizing mission of the old bourgeois of Western Colonial European states indicates that what is at the core of the EU is not a benevolent mission to help the Former Eastern European states “progress,” but a way to make new regulation more effective.

The EU worked in the past through “gentlemen’s agreements” that kept outlawed transactions and violent processes of colonization concealed, and this is what is to be understood and implemented as well today. Capital within global neoliberal capitalism specifically pushes against the legal-political state barri-

ers. The fact that we live in this so-called neoliberal global world does not mean that we are exempt from borders, but that they are “removed” in order for the mobility of transnational capital to flourish, while other borders are simultaneously reinforced.

In line with Foucault, it is also possible to identify a nation state biopolitics that is in reality meant only for the population seen as “natural” citizens of the nation state; the *others*, both inside and outside the nation state simply meant nothing. Racism was a specific inclusion with exclusion; it was a situation of apartheid within and without the nation state. As Rastko Močnik has argued, the function of the nation state and its state apparatuses was to “coordinate” the interests of national capital (with state coercion, of course) and to provide life benefits to those being recognized (in blood and soil) as fellow nationals of the respective nation state.³⁸

But what do we have today? We not only have a transformation of the nation state, but also a development of a new form of state—the *war state*. What we have in front of us is now the opposite (but not a binary). The task of the war state is to maintain the illusion of society despite the ever more brutal logic of capital exploitation and expropriation (which was also brutal in the 1970s, but in a different way). That is why the unity of capital and power is no longer viable and instead we have to expose the co-propriety of capital and power. Attacks on the banks are not enough. It is necessary to also change the political structures that are caught in the relation of co-propriety with the centres of financial capital. So, if we see a radical difference between the 1970s and today, we can reformulate it as having to do with two different biopolitics, the classical one of the 1970s and the other that has changed into a necropolitics.

In the war state, the state apparatuses exist only to maintain the illusion of social harmony and not to take care of the life of a proper population. This measure means that from its biopolitical perspective (the politics of taking care of the population while systematically controlling it), the contemporary state changes

³⁸ Rastko Močnik, “Konec univerze, zmaga visokega šolstva: bo teorija ostala brez institucionalne podpore?” [The end of university, the triumph of higher education: Will theory remain without institutional support?], manuscript, 2011, p. 15. Available at http://www.sociologija.si/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Univerza_OS.pdf.

into a necropolitical regime, which only takes part in the war of transnational capital—abandoning the citizens to find a way to survive on their own).

Therefore, as summarized by Rastko Močnik, while the state of the past fostered the socio-economic level of the society, today it is only concerned with the socio-political level.³⁹ The *political* in such a case is but the management of keeping order in society and therefore presents a total depoliticization of politics. In reality, the agents of capital monopolize the political apparatus: a modern state policy, therefore, has the appearance of “general management” and uses, as stated by Močnik, strategies of show business and mass media advertising in order to manage the status quo.⁴⁰

Our task is therefore to raise the question of what kind of political, economic, social, and cultural (as well discursive) dispositions have made the racial coordinates of the nation state and the racial epistemic coordinates of contemporary neoliberal global capitalist governance so legible. What has changed, perhaps, is not only what is known about racist politics, but how normalized they have become in Slovenia and Europe today. The unrecognized, but palpably visible, although denied, racist history is then normalized within other topics related to the security and protection policy of the EU, which in the final reckoning becomes nothing other than Fortress Europe with its racist epistemic context.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p 16, note 49.