Biopolitics and Necropolitics in relation to the Lacanian four discourses
Marina Grzinic

The question today that stays for art and theory, the social and the political is the question of the social bond and our place inside it. Are we capable of action, critical analysis, resistance, or better to say insurgency? If yes, how? What is the social bond that structures neoliberal global capitalism? How to talk about ideology, subjectivities, power and life, if it is said that we live today in the world of the post-ideology, post-politics conditions. The lecture will try to rethink these questions and as well confront two conceptualizations of mode of life, on one side the biopolitical and necropolitical and on the other the Lacanian four discourses, in order to answer to the main question of our capacity to react and moreover change these present conditions of capital over-exploitation and dispossession.

Therefore saying this I will examine the political and ideological conditions of the re/production of life, art and culture in the present moment of neo-liberal global capitalism. This involves rethinking European cultural policies in the context of an analysis of the prevailing discourses on migration, integration and the struggle against racism as well as the re/production of capital.

I examine the processes of *racialization* in contemporary neo-liberal global capitalist societies. My thesis is that this process of racialization develops a racist basis for practices, structures and discourses in the field of culture and art, as well as being reproduced in contemporary division of labour and in new forms of exploitation and expropriation. Racialization has, at its point of departure, colonialism that is today enabled through new forms of post-colonialism, i.e. *coloniality*, that is, in the specific field of our research culture and contemporary art made operative by three interrelated shifts. The first tackles life and its management, and is conceptualized as the shift from biopolitics to necropolitics. The second shift is on the level of ideology. The third is the shift that conceptualizes capitalism through rethinking how it formulates itself in the shape of the state. Finally racism enters in a new and perverted form that now reigns in neo-liberal global capitalism.

Necropolitics as First Capitalist World politics par excellence
The first shift I am proposing is the shift from biopolitics to necropolitics. Nataša Velikonja, a Slovenian writer and lesbian activist, stated brilliantly on the eve of the capitalist financial crisis in 2008 that 'Europe is boring'.[1] Then, with the crisis and the subsequent rescue of banks rather than people, *Étienne Balibar* proclaimed, 'Europe is dead'.[2] Though he did not make a reference to Achille Mbembe's 'Necropolitics', it is clear that in the last decade life, its modes and the social and political space of global capitalism have been managed and organized by the logic of death. In 'Necropolitics',[3] Achille Mbembe discusses this new logic of capital and its processes of geopolitical demarcation of world zones based on the mobilization of the war machine. Mbembe claims that the concept of biopolitics - one of the major logics of contemporary societies, due to the war machine and the state of exception - should be replaced with necropolitics. Biopolitics is the horizon of articulating contemporary capitalist societies from the so-called politics of life, where life (which does not matter anymore, following Giorgio Agamben, if it's bare/naked life or life-with-forms) is seen as the zero degree of intervention of each and every politics into contemporary societies; but today, capital's surplus value is based on the capitalization of death (in Latin: *necro*) worlds.

The term 'biopolitics' was coined by Michel Foucault in the 1970s.[4] For him it meant 'make live and let die'. It is obvious that Foucault's biopolitics, originating at the time of the Cold War, is a specific conceptualization of capitalist liberal governmentality exclusively reserved for the First Capitalist World. It presented the liberal capitalism of the 1970s as 'taking care' - but only of the citizens of First Capitalist World nation states. What was going on in the Second (the Eastern European) and Third Worlds was not at the centre of the management of life in the First Capitalist World. The title of one of the James Bond films from the 1970s is an accurate description of biopolitics: *Live and Let Die* (1973).

As with biopolitics, I propose a short definition of necropolitics in order to understand Mbembe's conceptualization of it. Necropolitics states: 'let live and make die'. Necropolitics presents a management of life for the global neo-liberal capitalist world. It transforms the aim to 'make live' into 'let live', but 'let live' is a form of life that is far from the cosy structures of *better* life ('make live'). 'Let live' presents a pure abandonment. You can live if you have means (with the help of a lineage or pedigree of money and power) and all those who cannot live in the situation of a pure abandonment by the neo-liberal public capitalist structures are to be left to die, or in many other occasions made to die, for example in New Orleans, Haiti, Iraq, Afghanistan and in many other places and times around the world.

Though Mbembe elaborated necropolitics in order to name the intensified subjugation of life in Africa to capital exploitation and governmentality of the social, political and economic through the war machine (named the 'postcolony' by Mbembe in 2010,[5] proposing a view on Africa different from that of post-colonialism), necropolitics was shaped palpably throughout the world with the 'War on Terror', launched by the USA (supported by Great Britain and NATO) as a response to the September 11 2001 attack on the Twin Towers in New York.

Necropolitics precisely defines the forms taken by neo-liberal global capitalist cuts in financial support for public health, social and education structures. These extreme cuts present intensive *neo-liberal* procedures of 'rationalization' and 'civilization'. Their outcome is privatization of all public services, a policy which brings together structural racism, massive poverty and class divisiveness. 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 are today pure biopolitical machines (dedicated solely to protecting themselves and their hegemonic Euro-Atlantic interests) while the social and the political (with its allegedly 'autonomous' judicial system) are pure instruments of necropolitical global capitalism.

The proposed shift from biopolitics to necropolitics is a measure of the radical recapturing of the biopolitical in the light of its production of apolitical ideological subjects, or stylish biopolitical ones (not political subjects at all), predominantly in the First Capitalist World. Within such a context, it is therefore necessary to ask how the political can be conceptualized in the light of neo-liberal processes of governmentality within capitalism (that today constitute a state of exception imposed on subjectivities) that regulate, subjugate and systematically control us? More poignantly, how are we to reconcile the overarching political and social structures of global capitalism and turbo-powered neo-liberalism with the autonomy (i.e. 'freedom') of conceiving art projects, implied by our current configuration of the originary biopolitical character of the paradigm of contemporary art? The consequences of such a shift are terrifying: as artists are coopted within the machinery of the neo-liberal global state of exception, it becomes possible for the regime to spatially or temporally reintegrate its

own transgressions as tokens of its functionality. This presents itself as the pacification of all diversity into a bizarre collusion based on a struggle for rights to become commodified (or less dispensable), on the one hand, or a licence to kill, on the other, hence producing necropolitics as the politics par excellence of the First Capitalist World.[6]

And now coming to the point of Lacan discourses. First it is obvious that the four discourses Lacan developed in the 1960s The Master's discourse; The University Discourse; The Hysteric's Discourse and The Analyst's Discourse

The dominant discourse in the world today is no doubt the discourse of power. Lacanian Psychoanalysis is not, in and of itself, a discourse of power. Psychoanalysis deploys the power of the cause of desire in order to bring about a *reconfiguration of the analysand's desire.* As such analytic discourse is structured differently from the discourse of power. But still in the discourses we can see how the social bond, the relation in between agency, the other, the surplus or vast functions. Therefore we get a description of a system of capitalism, that is actually carrying the name of each of the discourses, it is possible to say that though a lot was written that the University discourse is the one that defined the contemporary capitalism, that means simply where knowledge is in the position of agency, rational, objective and etc, and the "master2 is hidden besides it, MORE and MORE is becoming clear that the analyst discourse is the one that organizes global capitalism. It brings a self-reflective or better to say a perverse situation that allows for a situation not of emancipation but a performative, formalist emptying and a very powerful process of disintegration of any social bond.

The abnormal content and the empty form
Global capitalism has at its core a mechanism that simultaneously produces and eschews content, leaving us with an empty form – a performative repetitive mechanism so self-conscious that it neutralizes any revolutionary potential of the content. This mechanism, as I call it, (discussed in more detail below), will help us understand what it is that makes more or less all large contemporary exhibitions and projects obsolete in terms of resistance and critique (though they are not obsolete for those who organize, curate and take part in them). To put it another way: what we have today, especially in big powerful exhibition projects (biennials, documentas, manifestas, etc.), are a myriad of artworks that present *as content* unbelievable features of contemporary capitalist exploitations and expropriations; these 'features' are more and more visible, artists show it all, *tout court*, without any mediation. These art exhibitions present artworks that show capitalist corruption, police repression, massacres of people and animals, all made visible with more and more drastically elaborated dimensions, reasons, connections of exploitation, expropriation, executions: but all remain impotent.

Even as it is presented, the content is simultaneously made obsolete through a repetitive performative mechanism that functions as a process of extracting meaning, in the sense of voiding or emptying. These forms of performance present and encapsulate a process of emptying (not only of diminishing, but in many cases completely nullifying) what at the level of content was made visible. In the past, social reality was presented as 'normal' on the level of content. Therefore on the level of the (art) form, it was necessary to produce something 'abnormal' – something as a formal invention or as an excess, as an excessive surplus (in accordance with the social and political system in which it appeared, be it socialism or capitalism) – in order to say that what was commonly accepted as 'normality' was in fact a

lie. But what we have today is precisely the obverse; on the level of *content* the world is captured as it is, in all its dimensions of abnormality, monstrosity, exploitation, expropriation, while on the level of *form*, this abnormality is normalized and presented in such a way that the power and meaning of extreme content becomes empty, obsolete.

Thus content becomes abnormal while the form is normal. Moreover, the form is being so snobbishly stylized, so to speak, that it is going out of all proportion. I want to say that the performativity with which the form is acknowledged in its representation undermines any possibility of critical meaning; this is what I mean by 'performative repetitive mechanism'. In such a situation, the knowledge that is 'captured' through scientific or artistic work is transformed through a performative politics of repetition into a purely ideological artefact, but with the proviso that the performativity of the process absolves us from the responsibility of seriously considering it. As a result, what we get is not just an upside (turned) down, but ideology made again 'unconscious' and presented in the form of a game or joke that is given a life of its own. If we follow Althusser's definition of ideology[7] as a deformed representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence (by which he meant the relations of production), then what ideology misrepresents today is not reality, but itself. It behaves as a cognizant post-Fordist mechanism that takes the presented operation of ideology's materiality as its raw material, as its content. But what does this mean, precisely? Today, art makes imaginary what was already identified as material; through the repetitive performative ideological mechanism, it translates the materiality of ideology and its apparatus onto imaginary levels. The materiality of ideology is made redundant, nullified and emptied through repetitive (ideological) performative mechanisms. To put it another way, what is clear and self-evident on the level of content is, on the level of form, made to be obsolete, ridiculous, not sexy or attractive enough, not obvious enough. The materiality of ideology is treated as raw material to be integrated in performative representations where this materiality is consciously relegated to the level of the imaginary.

What is additionally important now is that we witness the change between transparency and opacity. The 'opacity' of the 1970s, which Althusser clarified by demystifying the relationship between science and ideology, has become the utter transparency of the twenty-first century. The spectre of transparency, as argued by Santiago López Petit, is haunting us.[8] The only abnormal field is social reality, which is excessive and opaque, while the mechanism of its presentation is totally transparent, framed by processes of total obviousness. This obviousness presents itself as the performative repetitive mechanism outlined above that renders the content of abnormal society ridiculous.

In reference to López Petit,[9] the repetitive performative mechanism either functions in an indeterminate and irresolute way or it presents what he calls *gelatinization*. Gelatinization corresponds, for López Petit, with global capitalism, just as alienation corresponded with modernity. If alienation functions in relation to the distinction between the living and the dead, gelatinization requires a triadic model: the living, the dead and the inert. Gelatinization is the solid surrounded by the liquid that, I claim, is the repetitive performative mechanism. It is a double process of opening and closing. Reality is concurrently alive and dead and therefore, according to López Petit, is multi-reality. What is even more horrifying is that closing (the solid surrounded by the liquid) effectuates obviousness. Gelatinization means reality is covered with obviousness. Politically it presents, for López Petit, a catastrophe. Obfuscation is on the level of form practiced precisely with a double obfuscation; Marx would add that it is also speculative, while López Petit suggests that it is the former solid surrounded by the liquid that is the repetitive performative mechanism. The form is not hiding the content any more, but the way in which it is presented - through its formalization – makes

the content obsolete. We live in a time in which social reality is abnormal and the form of its articulation is not to normalize this abnormality but to intensify it through voiding this abnormality of any content, or meaning. This emptying takes place as obviousness.

In *Global Mobilization: Brief Treatise for Attacking Reality*, López Petit argues that if we think of globalization as the result of a process, we imply a development and a progression (also, temporarily, a regression, a crisis) and therefore render ourselves incapable of understanding the way capitalism functions. Capitalism, for López Petit, is not an irreversible process but a reversible and conflictual event. The core of this reversibility can in the world today be identified as one single event; not the crisis, but what he calls the *unrestrainment* of capital (*des(z)boc(ka)amiento* in Spanish), which can be more colloquially grasped as the '*unrestraining*' or '*unleashing*' of capital. Neo-liberal globalization is nothing more than the repetition of this single event, that is, the unleashing of capital. The unleashing of capital creates a paradoxical spatialization that requires two repetitions at once.

On the one hand, according to López Petit, there is a founding repetition with which a hierarchical system is re-established, leading to the constant reconstruction of a centre and a periphery; and, on the other hand, a so-called de-foundational repetition that presents itself as the erosion of hierarchies, producing dispersion, multiplicity and multi-reality. Repetition of the unleashing of capital, repeated vertically and horizontally, rearticulates a global space-time that repeatedly effectuates the co-propriety of capital and/or power. The unleashing of capital is, according to López Petit, the only event that – being repeated in any moment and any place – unifies the world and connects everything.

In the 1960s and 1970s, unlike today, we had only the repetition of the centre and the periphery. This is why we would talk about, rather than the global world, a planet divided into two by the Cold War. But now we must concern ourselves with two repetitions, repeated at any moment and in any place, that entangle the world. This entanglement is not a plural space of the social, political and economical, as often stated. On the contrary, it is a situation that does not allow any division. This is why, when somebody from, say, Ukraine or Moldavia (I cannot use my country Slovenia as an example, as we are the model of servitude to global capitalism) talks about a centre and periphery, the well-educated Westerner laughs about what they term 'the old division', as what they see is '*multiplicité, multi-réalité*…'. This was precisely the discourse exemplified by Sarkozy's infamous *Dakar* speech, when visiting Senegal in 2007, which can be paraphrased as: 'Oh, you Africans, you talk about colonialism, but it was not so horrible, and today you have all these opportunities…'.[10] Achille Mbembe retorted that it was unthinkable that this clown, the product of horrendous Western European and French colonialism, could come to today's Africa and claim that Africans must stop living in the past and accept the 'benefits' of colonialism.[11]

But from time to time, amidst multiplicity and multi-reality, the police intrude. In Greece they intervened when the students protested, imprisoning hundreds of them at the university campus without any 'openness' towards the multiplicity of the students' multi-reality. In France, they sent hundreds of Roma families back to the periphery of the European Union, to Romania; if we but looked, we could see the foundational repetition working quite mercilessly, and backed up by hundreds of EU laws from Brussels 'democratically' advising the EU member states. In the case of France, the EU 'protested', but the point is that out of the EU's multiplicity of hegemonic directions that support and reinforce the institutional racism of the EU, France was able to deport hundreds of Roma families to the supposedly

'non-existent' periphery of Europe.

How does this performative repetitive mechanism work in the context of the so-called relationship between Eastern and Western Europe? Former Eastern Europe and present Western Europe are no longer in opposition, but in a relation of repetition. An excellent case of such a repetition is the project *Former West*, begun in the Netherlands, an international research, publishing and exhibition project for the period 2008-2014, curated by Charles Esche, Maria Hlavajova and Kathrin Rhomberg.[12]

Former West is not a joke, although it could be seen as one. It recapitulates the key logic of global capitalism, the perfect logic of repetition. Why? As with its performative repetition (Former East / 'Former West') it claims a perverse equality, saying we are now as 'Europe' all the same, and therefore we have to equally redistribute responsibility, debts and powers between former Eastern and 'former' Western Europe. This new perversity of 'being in the same boat', 'all in this together' is the outcome of the 'agenda' imposed primarily by Germany after the fall of the Berlin Wall to get rid of any reference to past divisions within Europe and Germany itself (East Germany and West Germany). Europe's wilful ignorance of past divisions has been realized as well in the insistence of projects such as *Former West* that not only the 'East' but the 'West' as well must become 'equally' outdated. This demand was of course abundantly financially supported by European cultural financial institutions. In the case of Eastern Europe, the modifier 'former' means that the processes of evacuation, abstraction and expropriation imposed by the West are actually 'over', relegated to the past, as proclaimed by Germany in 2009 when it celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall with the slogan: 'Come, come in the country without borders' (and, I might add, without memory as well). But in the case of the 'former' (as it should at least be written) Western Europe it implies a purely performative, empty and speculative gesture. While Eastern Europe is excluded more and more from the materiality of its history, knowledge and memory, Western Europe just plays with a speculative format of itself, presenting itself as being 'former'; it wants us to think that the roots of its power and capital are fictional! If this is not a markedly strange move today, it is because it comes at a time when we can talk about 'financialization', a term which refers precisely to the process of reducing all value that is exchanged (whether tangible, intangible, etc.). In our case it means to diminish drastically the historical roots of the wealth of Western Europe, especially of its modes of colonial dispossession, subjugation, exploitation and so on.

Therefore the word *former* in front of 'Western Europe' presents a speculative matrix that enables Western Europe to perform as if it is unconscious of its own historical and present hegemonic power – and therefore not responsible for it. This speculative character of *former Western Europe* resembles with perfect accuracy the speculative character of financial capitalism, as well as its crisis. In the future we can expect projects, symposia and statements in which the imperial colonizing forces - Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, etc. - will try to prove that they were also colonized in the past, and that what is happening to them in the present is the result of some strange forces that have nothing to do with the internal logic of capitalism itself and its two - and only two - drives: towards making profit at any cost and towards privatization.

The necropolitical projects of the contemporary art world imply that we are all in the same situation, together in the '*merde*' or more simply 'in the shit' (the fact that the mess in question was and is produced by the First Capitalist World is conveniently forgotten). In

Former West the relegation of Western European dominance to the past is presented as an unquestionable fact, not even as a thesis; use of the term the *former West* does not even necessitate quotation marks. Simultaneously the now reborn *former West*, the old colonial powers, by describing itself as the 'former' wants to convince us that it is capable of a process of decolonization, but I argue that such decolonization is purely fictive, unsubstantiated by any actual decolonizing mechanism or process. If there is to be a process of self-decolonization which will overcome the present and purely fictive one supposedly undertaken by the EU, it will consist of and necessitate an analysis of the colonialism of the western powers and the structural racism of the European Union. Achille Mbembe is precise when he states: 'This half-century of decolonization is not only an African affair. France, which gives the impression of paying only lip service to the democratization of the continent, wants to make 2010 the "Year of Africa". [But in fact] It has ferociously opposed African democratization since 1960, freely resorting to assassination, corruption and force in the process.'[13] The structures of exploitation, inequality and racism within the EU remain untouched, or more accurately are reinforced, with disastrous consequences.

From Nation-state to War-state
At this point, we have arrived at our penultimate destination. All the transformations that I have examined – from biopolitics to necropolitics, obscurity to a gelatinization masquerading as transparency – lead us to one, primary question: when the contemporary state is constituted today within global capitalism, what has changed and what has been lost?

In the trajectory of capitalism's development we can grasp as well the notion of a transition from nation state sovereignty to transnational institutions of power and the war state politics.
With the fall of the Berlin Wall, and enabled by it, came the disintegration of the Westphalian power-principle. Established by the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, the principle of sovereignty of nation states is recognized by international relations scholars as the fundamental basis of the modern Western global system of states, multinational corporations and organizations as sovereign subjects. When the Berlin Wall fell, the Westphalian principle disintegrated and new states proliferated in the so-called post-Cold War era. The old world powers eschewed direct, brutal force in an attempt to control the new and multiplying states, instead transforming themselves from imperial nation states to 'war states'. It was this logic that enabled the major international powers to maintain order and their hegemonic control over the new states born into the post-Cold War world. This transition has curbed the sovereignty of nation states, which prevailed until the 1990s, and, more importantly, it has considerably limited the sovereignty of the new nation states constituted after the fall of the Berlin wall. This allowed for the proliferation of numerous new states but without the old nation-state sovereignty and on the other side implemented the transition of the old colonial, imperial nation states to war states. Today, nation states can no longer give amnesty, at least in theory, to those who have committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.[14]

This change in sovereignty and hegemony that happened in the transition from nation state to a new form of state, the war state, in global neo-liberal capitalism enabled the old colonial and imperial powers of the West to stay in power without recourse to direct military intervention (this is used only when no other 'friendly mediation' by big powers is effective, as for example in the case of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and so on). It was necessary to use a certain 'veil' to conceal this transition from nation state to war state. It is at this point that global or transitional justice enters the equation.

Transitional justice and the demand for 'universal' respect of human rights played a key role in this process. Global justice was the framework within which these processes were conceptualized and naturalized. Within this context, the question posed by Hazan – whether the 1999 NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, the subsequent de facto partitioning of Kosovo and the 2003 Iraq War reflect higher principles, or simply reflect the Western powers' promotion of their own political and economic interests – is of primary importance.[15] Those without economic and military power have to accept the universal, global capitalist protocol of international justice, but it does not apply when the interests of major powers and/or war states (the US, Russia and China) are at stake. In the case of Srebrenica it is therefore accepted by the international community that neither the Dutch soldiers nor the UN need to show repentance for failing to intervene in a massacre.[16]

Therefore I propose (based on Hazan and López Petit) that if education and religion were exported during colonialism, the time of (neo-)coloniality evinces another process. The West exports concepts of justice and the 'universal order' in order to smoothly safeguard its economic interests within a system of legally-framed procedures. Culture and religion can be both formalized and borderless at one and the same time, as is the case with reform in present-day universities (the Bologna Agreement to create European Higher Education).[17] The result is the 'international community's neo-Kantian vision of universal values defended by supranational legal institutions'.[18]

I have tried to rearticulate the genealogy of the form taken by the state in neo-liberal global capitalism in order to expose the new role that the nation state plays in the current global system of capital accumulation. Global capital pressures the nation state in order to remove the legal and/or political barriers that prevent the unconditional mobility of trans/multinational capital. This is one of the major functions of the European Union legislation which operates across the whole space of the EU. The civilizing mission of the old, bourgeois, colonial Western European states at the core of today's EU is not a benevolent attempt to help the other former Eastern European states to 'progress'; it is the way in which the new regulation is made effective. Capital, within global neo-liberal capitalism, specifically impinges on the legal and/or political barriers between states. The fact that we live in one world, as it is so often said, and a neo-liberal world at that, does not mean that we are exempted from borders, but that certain obsolete forms are removed in order that the mobility of transnational capital might flourish, while at the same time new and other forms of borders are erected.

In the war state, the state apparatus exists only to maintain the illusion of social harmony, not to take care of the lives and needs of a proper population. From being characterized by its biopolitical features, manifest in the politics of taking care though systematically controlling the life of the population, the contemporary state transforms to a necropolitical regime, where its politics are solely concerned with fighting the state's part in the war of transnational capital, leaving its citizens to fend for themselves. In this change from the nation state to the war state we have to take into account the 'missing link'; that is, the racial state. In this case, however, the link is not 'missing' as much as it is unspoken; the racial state exists, but goes unnamed. In what follows, I base my elaboration on the brilliant analysis of this topic by Ann Laura Stoler.[19]

What is the racial state?
Let's conceptualize the racial state through the example of the formation of the Slovenian

state that in 2011 celebrated 20 years of its short existence. In 1991, immediately after the declaration of independence by Slovenia, the approximately 200,000 residents of Slovenia who had citizenship of other republics of the former Yugoslavia were granted the possibility to obtain, through an application, the citizenship of the new independent state. The majority of those who, contrary to legal provisions, did not register themselves as 'foreigners' were removed from the registry of Permanent Residence in February 1992, losing all social, civil, and political rights. In 1992 the Slovenian Ministry of Internal Affairs literally and precisely erased 18,305 people from the register of permanent citizenship holders. These people are known as 'the Erased' (Slovene: *Izbrisani*). But of whom precisely are we speaking when we use the term 'erased people'? We are speaking of those internal immigrants from other republics of the former common state of Yugoslavia that were erased from the register of permanent residence in 1992, when Slovenia had already declared its independence. What happened to these erased people can be described as a 'particularly brutal' policy of dispossession and 'regroupement' under the auspices of the new state.[20] The Slovenian state itself does not have a history of internal immigration from and to the former Yugoslavia. To these erased people it is necessary to add the existence, a recent phenomenon both in Slovenia and the EU in general due to the passage from a biopolitical to a necropolitical regime, of a large group called the invisible workers of the world. These are migrants who are put through harsh procedures of exploitation, discrimination and segregation and are completely abandoned by the state, although they are constantly threatened by deportation. Benjamin Stora calls this 'ethnoracial regulation'.[21]

It is necessary to position racism as a central category within the parameters of the abstract state. Denunciations of racism are not adequate; nor is saying that the repressive apparatuses of the State have ameliorated the harsh treatment of migrants and youths of the second and third generations (though the consequences of the War on Terror that was launched in 2001 imposed radicalized discrimination procedures against those identified as Muslims). We need to recognize that we have a fully-constructed racial state in the form of European and global capitalism. Our task is therefore to question what kind of political, economic, social and cultural (as well discursive) dispositions have established the racial coordinates of the nation state as well as the racial episteme of contemporary neo-liberal global capitalist governance. The nation state rests today upon a foundation of structural racism and it is a racial state that has to be put at the centre of the analysis. We have also to be alert to Stoler's contention that 'the 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.'[22]

It is necessary to distance oneself from the nation state and its bourgeois sensibilities, incapable of referring to their racist histories when they are examined in relation to the imperial colonial pasts of Western European states in the EU. We must focus our analysis on colonialism and contemporary forms of coloniality.

In such a situation it is necessary to incorporate - in every art and cultural project and even more in every and each analysis that deals with the conceptualization of the state - three formations: the nation state, the war state and the racial state. As I showed in Slovenia's case, even though the country is only 20 years old, it uses racism as the central pattern of organizing the state. It employs racism in excluding, exploiting and discriminating against the erased people, the invisible workers of the world, migrants, wage-workers, the precariously employed, as well as in violating their basic human rights. Racism is also central to the way

Slovenia acquired its national history, by silencing histories of art and culture made by migrant intellectuals, by gay and lesbian groups and movements and so on. Therefore it is necessary to include a systematic presentation of racism and anti-Semitism (as a genuine racism) within the genealogy of a contemporary neo-liberal state and all projects that aim to counter it.

From Multiculturalism to Monoculturalism
To return to the repetitive performative mechanism which characterizes contemporary art, within its system we can now identify an even more subtle diversification. Sara Ahmed called it 'the non-performativity of the performative' when discussing the non-performativity of anti-racism.[23] Ahmed develops this non-performativity of the performative that is again another way of the contemporary performative to disqualify any content, meaning and etc, when she examines different modes for declaring whiteness. Ahmed is arguing that such declarations are non-performative: they do not do what they say. As stated by Ahmed "The declarative mode involves a fantasy of transcendence in which 'what' is transcended is the very 'thing' admitted to in the declaration (for example, if we are say that we are racists, then we are not racists, as racists do not know they are racists)."[24] In short, Ahmed states that it is precisely the non-performativity of anti-racism which allows racism to be articulated as a minority position (!), as an act of (majority whiteness) defiance of the multicultural (politically correct) stance that is today seen as 'orthodoxy'. This is a lethal attack on struggles against racism, and confirms once again that racism is the lingua franca through which the social and political spaces of Europe are articulated in global capitalism today.[25]
Multiculturalism, the ideology of the 1990s, has been slowly installed as a norm of the new post-2001 society. In the last two decades it was more and more concealed under a normative mainstream discourse of diversity. Sara Ahmed talks about a new form of hegemony, describing hegemony 'as the dominant way of ordering things that reproduces things in a certain order. Hegemony is not really reducible to facts as it involves semblance, fantasy and illusion, being a question of how things appear and the gap between appearance and the real.'[26] With the injunction of liberal multiculturalism as the new hegemony and the prohibition of talking about racism and disqualification, Ahmed argues that:
... [firstly] the speech act, 'we must support the other's difference' is read as hegemonic, and is taken literally as a sign not only that it is compulsory to support the other's difference, but we are not allowed to refuse this support, and, secondly, the speech act is read as doing what it says, but is not the case, as it is precisely blocking what it performatively declares, even more it is reproducing and reinforcing that what it should prohibited.[27]
In her book *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Ahmed argues: 'We can see this at stake in the making of the multicultural nation: Britain is represented as being multicultural because of its national character: as being tolerant, open, loving, hospitable, and so on.'[28] She continues in her project on diversity in organizations:
... [w]hen Black staff spoke about racism, organizations often responded by pointing to their race equality and diversity policies, as if these policies were the point. Black staff spoke of how they deal with whiteness everyday and how diversity and equality as organizational ideals get in the way of reporting these experiences. […] Diversity as an ego ideal conceals experiences of racism, which means that multiculturalism is a fantasy which supports the hegemony of whiteness. In such a fantasy, racism is 'officially prohibited'.[29]
Ahmed argues, therefore, that the prohibition against racism:
... is imaginary, and that it conceals everyday forms of racism, and involves a certain desire for racism. The prohibition of racist speech should not then be taken literally: rather it is a way of imagining 'us' as beyond racism, as being good multicultural subjects who are not

that. By saying racism is over there –'look, there it is! in the located body of the racist' – other forms of racism remain unnamed.[30]

This 'imagining of "us" beyond racism' is imposed as a norm of multiculturality and diversity, as a majoritarian discourse which allows racism to be, paradoxically and perversely, 'articulated as a minority position, a refusal of orthodoxy. In this perverse logic, racism can then be embraced as a form of free speech. Racism then becomes a minority position which has to be defended against the multicultural hegemony.'[31] Moreover, Ahmed states: 'Hegemonies are often presented as minority positions, as defences against what are perceived to be hegemonic, which is how they can be presented as matter of life and death.'[32]

This perversity goes so far, Ahmed points out, that today the colonial is seen as a good sign of British character. As an example of such thinking, she quotes Trevor Phillips: 'And we can look at our own history to show that the British people are not by nature bigots. We created something called the empire where we mixed and mingled with people very different from those of these islands.'[33] Ahmed formulated her critique, agreeing precisely with Phillips:

Empire here become[s] proof that British are 'not bigots', but are able to 'mix and mingle' with others. Indeed, empire itself becomes a sign of a British tendency towards happy diversity; towards mixing, loving and co-habiting with others. The violence of colonial occupation is re-imagined as a history of love (a story of mixing and mingling), whilst colonialism itself becomes a happy sign of a certain national disposition. Here, diversity, mixing and multiculturalism become happy insofar as they are 'gifts' given by the British towards others.[34]

The outcome of such thinking is that David Cameron, the current British Prime Minister, can state, in Ahmed's paraphrase, that 'multiculturalism went "too far": we gave the other "too much" respect, we celebrated difference "too much", such that multiculturalism is read as the cause of segregation, riots and even terrorism.' The result is, as Ahmed points out, monoculture instead of multiculture:

[The] current monoculture political agenda functions as a kind of retrospective defence against multiculturalism. [...] So now migrants must be British; we must defend integration, as a defence against multiculturalism, which in turn is what threatens the well-being of the nation. We have a return to national pride as defence of Britishness, as if this is a minority position. So the speech act, 'we must support the other's difference' read as hegemonic, is taken literally as a sign not only that it is compulsory to support the other's difference, but we are not allowed to refuse this support.[35]

Moreover, in a recent speech on the end of multiculturalism, Cameron noted that '[w]hen a white person holds objectionable views – racism, for example – we rightly condemn them. But when equally unacceptable views or practices have come from someone who isn't white, we've been too cautious, frankly even fearful, to stand up to them.'[36] Such an utterance by Cameron is deeply colonial as it presents, as stated by Šefik Tatlić, the typical rhetorical hijacking of the monopoly on judgement which implies that only a white man can condemn a white man; every other judgement is racist or 'extremist'.[37]

In the perversities of neo-liberal global capitalism, 'imagining [...] "us" beyond racism' becomes an imposed norm of multiculturality and diversity, and therefore a kind of a majoritarian discourse which allows the bizarre utterance, then, that racism is 'a proof of freedom of speech' in global capitalism. In this way racism is presented as an 'instrument of struggle' against orthodoxy; not just any orthodoxy, but a capitalist orthodoxy that commands us to imagine ourselves 'beyond racism'. In the context of the reality of today's neo-liberal capitalist global society and its abnormality, the implication is thus that social reality is not abnormal *because* racism is represented and performed today as an allegedly political

category, but because it is *not performed enough!*

The heroic story shaped by this thinking is that the acts of colonization perpetuated by the British empire actually – allegedly – enabled the multicultural society we have today; or, even more perversely, that colonialism was a struggle for the equality of all of 'us' and on our behalf. This ultra-perverse reasoning is the product of the way in which neo-liberal capitalism presents the social reality as abnormal while the capitalist imaginary is normal! This is a situation of pure disaster.

---

[1] Velikonja, Nataša, 'Europe Is Boring', *Reartikulacija* 3 (2008), http://www.reartikulacija.org/?p=250, accessed on 16 January 2011.

[2] See Balibar, Étienne, 'Europe is a dead political project', *The Guardian*, 25 October 2010, http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/may/25/eu-crisis-catastrophic-consequences, accessed on 16 January 2011.

[3] See Mbembe, Achille, 'Necropolitics' (translated by Libby Meintjes), *Public Culture* 15/1 (2003), pp. 11–40.

[4] See Foucault, Michel, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979* (Basingstoke, 2010).

[5] Mbembe, Achille, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley, 2001).

[6] See Tatlić, Šefik, 'Anti-Semitism, Decoloniality and the Performative Forms of Judgment', *Reartikulacija* 14-18 (2011-2012,forthcoming).

[7] See Hamza, Agon, 'The specter of Ideological Apparatuses', *Reartikulacija* 8 (2009), http://www.reartikulacija.org/?p=689, accessed on 15 January 2011.

[8] See López Petit, Santiago, *La movilización global. Breve tratado para atacar la realidad* [Global Mobilization: A Brief Treatise for Attacking Reality] (Barcelona, 2009).

[9] Ibid.

[10] See Ankomah, Baffour, 'Shame On You, Mr Sarkozy', *New African*, 30 October 2007, http://newafricanmagazine.com/blogs/baffours-beefs/shame-on-you-mr-sarkozy, accessed on 16 January 2011.

[11] See Mbembe, Achille, 'Mbembe démonte le mensonge de Sarkozy sur l'Afrique' [Mbembe dismantles the lies of Sarkozy on Africa], *Africa Maat*, 4 August 2007, http://www.africamaat.com/Achille-MBEMBE-demonte-le-mensonge, accessed on 16 January 2011.

[12] See www.formerwest.org

[13] Cf. Achille Mbembe, 'Fifty Years Of African Decolonisation', *Chimurenga Magazine*, 25 December, 2010, http://www.chimurenga.co.za/archives/539, accessed on 16 January 2011.

[14] See Hazan, Pierre, *Judging War, Judging History: Behind Truth and Reconciliation* (Stanford, 2010), p. 152.

[15] Ibid.

[16] In the Bosnian silver-mining town of Srebrenica in July 1995, one of the most notorious modern acts of gendercide took place. While the international community,UN peacekeepers and Dutch soldiers looked on, Serbian forces separated civilian men from women and killed thousands of Muslim men *en masse*, or hunted them down in the forests.

[17] Launched in 1999 by the Ministers of Education and university leaders of 29 countries, the Bologna Process aimed to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010; it has further developed into a major reform encompassing 46 countries.

[18] Hazan: *Judging War, Judging History*, p. 48.

[19] See Stoler, Ann Laura, 'Colonial Aphasia: Race and Disabled Histories in France', *Public Culture* 23 (2011), pp. 121–56.

[20] Ibid., p.134 n. 39.

[21] Ibid., p. 125.

[22] Ibid., p.130.

[23] Ahmed, Sara, 'The Non-Performativity of Anti-Racism', *Borderlands* 5/5 (2006), http://www.borderlandsejournal.adelaide.edu.au/vol5no3_2006/ahmed_nonperform.htm , accessed 30 July, 2011.

[24] Ibid.

[25] See Ahmed, Sara, '"Liberal Multiculturalism is the Hegemony – Its an Empirical Fact" – A response to Slavoj *Žižek', darkmatter: in the ruins of imperial culture (19 February 2008),* http://www.darkmatter101.org/site/2008/02/19/, accessed 30 July, 2011.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ahmed, Sara, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Edinburgh, 2004).

[29] Ahmed: "Liberal Multiculturalism is the Hegemony" t.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Phillips gave his speech on 3 October 2005, to the Conservative Party's Muslim Forum (http://www.blink.org.uk/docs/Trevor_Phillips_speech_Nov05.pdf , accessed 30 July, 2011.Quoted in Ahmed: "Liberal Multiculturalism is the Hegemony".

[34] Ahmed, Sara, "Liberal Multiculturalism is the Hegemony".

[35] Ibid.

[36] Cameron, David, 'Speech on Radicalization and Muslim Extremism', Munich, 5 February 2011, transcript available at http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/the-staggers/2011/02/terrorism-islam-ideology, accessed 30 July, 2011.

[37] Cf. Tatlić, 'Anti-Semitism, Decoloniality and the Performative Forms of Judgment'.