IDENTITY AND THE ARTS
Rastko Močnik

"Identity is the poor artist's survival strategy" – this is how I first intended to open this contribution. Yet, I soon decided not to use this opening: not only that it comes close to class-chauvinism in its ambiguous use of the expression "poor", it also hides the fact that also established artists often define themselves in the terms of identity, and use identitary mechanisms in their artistic practices and artefacts.

Most importantly, however, such an entry would falsely present "identity" as just a sort of extra-artistic cheating device that can be used for mundane promotion, but is ultimately destructive for the artistic achievement proper. This is too limitative a notion. Identity can productively be introduced into artistic practices. As one of the key ideological mechanisms of our time, identity can be taken by artistic practices as an "object" to be worked upon, and can, as any other ideological material, be elaborated in specifically artistic ways.

What is identity?

Very generally, one could say that identity is an ideological mechanism that has become particularly important during the last decades. As ideological mechanism, identity now has its material existence above all in the state regulations concerning culture. Under the pressure of powerful international organisms (World Trade Organisation, International Monetary Fund, World Bank), many states envisage privatisation and subsequent commercialisation of cultural activities and services – up to the limit when such a liberalisation would present a threat to *national identity*[1]. National (cultural) identity then legitimises the state intervention into the field of culture, and eventually justifies protectionist measures, as the quota and the like. It is interesting that EU has introduced "European" quota and has been, to a certain

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[1] A study of national reports of the EU countries within the Council of Europe cultural policy evaluation program shows "that national reports produced between 1986 and 1995 clearly reveal […] a change in the ideological horizon. […] The ideology that prevailed in the reports with later dates suggests that a 'cultural policy based on enterprise' presumably better meets the needs of consumers than the state regulation of 'access' to culture". The same study anticipates "that in the future European countries will retain the right to subsidize only that part of their cultural production that reflects ethnological characteristics of their environment". (Maja Breznik, 2004, *Cultural Revisionism. Culture Between Neo-Liberalism and Social Responsibility*, Ljubljana: Peace Institute).

limited extent, slowing down privatisation and commercialisation of cultures in the name of "cultural diversity". It seems that "diversity" actually refers to "identities" as they are seen from a more comprehensive European perspective. And yet, at a closer look, both notions seem misleading: they share the presupposition that cultures are homogeneous blocks, an understanding that seems a kind of simplified version of the 19th century folkloristic enthusiasm promoted by nationalist intellectuals.

It is supposed that cultures operate as mechanisms of social cohesion – a particularly delicate function in times when inequalities are rising in most parts of the world, including in those parts where solid levels of social equality were achieved in the past, i.e., in Western Europe and in former socialist countries. And yet, official documents of European countries and of EU display the belief that the rising social tensions and conflicts could be alleviated, maybe even abolished, with various measures against social "exclusion" among which "culture" is expected to play a prominent role. However, the "cultural" approach has so far not succeeded to mend the miseries of contemporary society, it has only "culturalised" its conflicts, that is, translated them into ethnic, religious and similar confrontations. Instead of "ghetto proletariat", Europe now says "second generation of immigrants". In this way, cultural identity seems to have become an instrument of control and discipline.

The mechanism of identity freezes a culture into a bundle held together by a set of identitary features. However, these "identity sets" are strangely inconsequent: they may be composed of survivals of traditional notions of social relations (like honour and dignity, authority of the elders, respect due to the males …), items of popular psychology (introvert or extrovert character, wide or narrow attitudes ...), local chauvinisms (laziness or narrow-mindedness), even items of local sex-chauvinism (relating to the mores of women, of course) … Identity is a classification device and therefore a relational term. However, the relations where identities are defined vary: various youth sub-cultures certainly define themselves in opposition to each other – but no less do they conceive themselves as opposed to the "mainstream" (in whatever way they then decide to understand it). "Gay" identity is not construed so much in opposition to the "straight" identity as against the "mainstream", i.e., against the dominating and repressive dimension of the presumed "normality".

Most often, identities are conceived with the reference to "*vertical*" relations that relate an "identitary community" to some larger and more powerful community or entity. This dominating entity is often felt as "repressive" – like in the case of the "majority" ethnic or religious group. The superior entity can also be conceived as such that it should be the source of "recognition" of the identity-group – like in the case of EU or "international community".

Sometimes, however, identities are defined with the help of "*horizontal*" relations to other identities of the same register (like Slovene identity as opposed to Croat identity; or Catholic

as opposed to Orthodox; or Christianity *vs*. Islam). The identities so related usually insist that they can themselves lay claim to "universality": in consequence, their confrontation may be particularly lethal, since they tend to construct their relation as mutually exclusive.

Social productivity of contemporary Empire[2]

The question to be considered is then: Why do contemporary world-wide processes produce, especially at structural "peripheries"[3], ethnicities and their apparatuses (the new "national" or, rather, "post-national states" like Slovenia, Croatia etc.; various "minority" arrangements, like "national minorities", "immigrant communities"), new religious or, rather, post-religious ideologies and their apparatuses, patriarchal familial groupings and their extensions ("tribes") – all those new types of social "cohesion" that seem to entail internal and external violence as a constitutive element of their mode of production of "the social"?

The present spread of the capitalist generalised commodity economy in its contemporary (de-regulated, trans-national) form penetrates local societies much deeper than in the past, and brutally, perhaps definitely destroys other types of economy and sociality that have until recently still succeeded to survive: various household economies with their specific forms of familial solidarity and intergenerational exchange; or communal systems of mutual assistance, or various types of limited, "small" commodity exchange; and other kinds of social relations that do not rely upon extensive markets and are not propelled by profit-seeking. During this process, social networks break down, leaving formerly integrated individuals alone and without social support. "Atomisation" is further precipitated by the social pattern that replaces the destroyed forms of sociality, by the capitalist logic of "commodity fetishism". These processes trigger unprecedented tensions and new conflicts.

Not only are these processes more radical than in the past, they are also channelled towards radically different directions than in the times of classical colonialism and neo-colonialism. In the times of national economy and nation state, the relics of dismantled social relations were re-articulated into "culture" within the national social construction. The modern-capitalist sphere of culture was ideologically experienced as a realm that was separated, even emancipated from social practices and historical processes that had generated its components[4]. Within the modern cultural sphere, bits and pieces of destroyed forms of

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[2] I use the term proposed by Hard and Negri (2000, *Empire*, Cambridge – London: Harvard UP) to indicate the specificity of contemporary processes; "global capitalism", "neo-liberal capitalism" would be alternative, but perhaps even more problematic indicators.

[3] "Periphery" is strictly to be understood in structural sense: the Balkans are periphery as well as *les banlieues*, Iraq as much as parts of London.

[4] In her study of historical emergence of the modern "autonomous sphere of culture" during the period of humanism and renaissance, Maja Breznik shows how the emergence of an "autonomous sphere of culture and art" is at the same time the result of class struggles *and* a decisive factor in the march to

sociality were ideologically re-articulated in a pluralist manner. Cultural confrontations, artistic movements, ideological innovations translated and productively articulated social tensions and conflicts. During the modernity, cultural articulation, despite its artistic achievements and intellectual framing, certainly did not appease the brutality of social conflicts and did not prevent the violence of their resolution. However, along various, sometimes extremely violent historical paths, the modern cultural articulation did lead towards the constitution of the modern political sphere of formally free and equal individuals. In most parts of the world, political practices achieved the construction of the modern state. On the periphery, modern political constitution was fought out by revolutions – in two historical sequels: the 19th century revolutions and national unifications achieved upon the model of the French revolution; the 20th century revolutions and national liberations inspired by the October revolution. Within the rich core of the world system, the same has been achieved by political struggles and in a reformist way. Towards the mid-twentieth century, both developments resulted in re-distributive national states that were able:

- to secure a high level of social peace by political articulation of social conflicts and cultural articulation of competing socio-historical models, ideologies, existential attitudes etc.;
- to achieve a high level of social equality by the state intervention into the national economy.
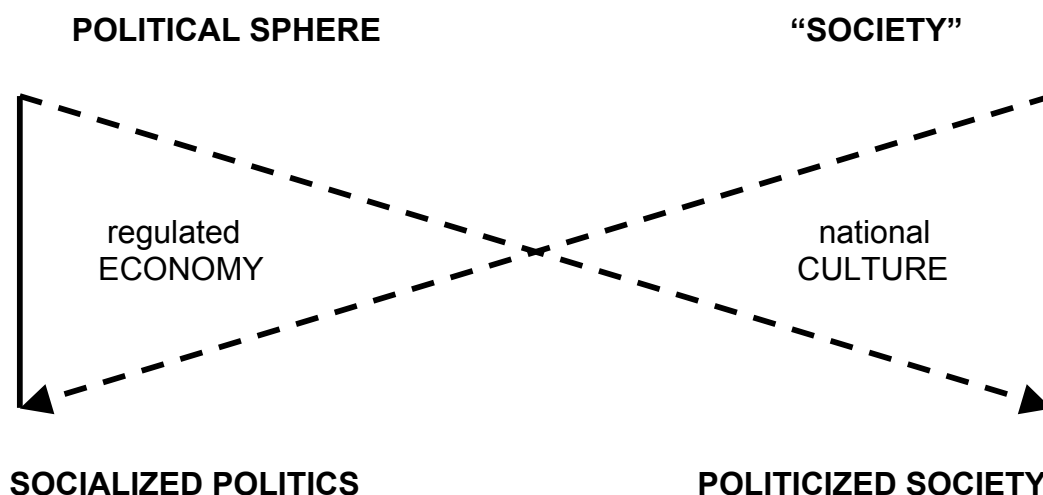
The modernity thus seemed to have brought about its promises and expectations with the two main variants of the modern state: the welfare state in the core, the historical socialisms on the periphery.

Schematically, we can present the "post-revolutionary" modern state in the following way:

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power of the new proto-capitalist classes. Benjamin's dictum that every monument of culture is at the same time a monument of barbarism, cannot therefore be understood in the sense of the "two sides of the coin". Barbarism is not the "flip side of culture". On the contrary, culture *is* barbarism if barbarism is taken to mean the violence of the ruling groups. Modern times, modernity, i.e., capitalism replaced the previous awkward physical oppression with a much more effective symbolic violence that we now call "culture". (See: "La borsa e la cultura" /The purse and the culture/, *Metis. Ricerche di soziologia, psicologia e anthropologia della comunicazione*, Vol. 12, no. 1, 2005, Padova: Cooperativa Libraria Editrice Università di Padova, 2005, pp. 73—98.)

POST REVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL STATE

POLITICAL SPHERE   **"SOCIETY"**

regulated
ECONOMY

national
CULTURE

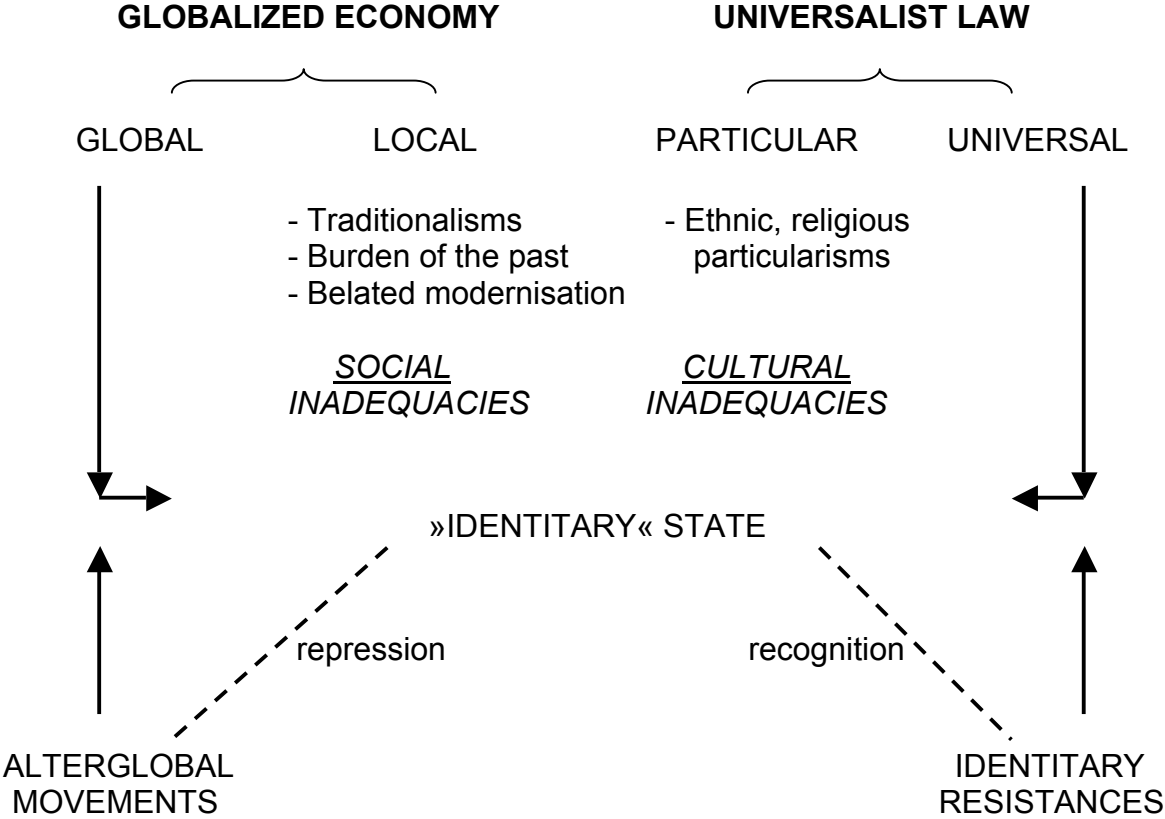**SOCIALIZED POLITICS**   **POLITICIZED SOCIETY**

During the 20th century, the model of the modern state was already destroyed whenever the political and the cultural spheres were made to coincide – that is, whenever the political principle of the *majority rule* and the cultural principle of the *minority invention* were confused. This was the case of various fascisms, this was also the case of most historical socialisms that degenerated into bureaucratic authoritarianisms.

Although fascisms had been defeated, and peripheral bureaucratic regimes had been overthrown by their people's revolts, the modern political development has been discontinued at the end of the 20th century under the onslaught of capitalist economy across all dimensions of society. Cultural re-articulation of discharged forms of sociality and cultural articulation of struggles has remained – but now it no more supports, in the form of ideological struggle, political processes and collective actions. Without political outlet, it is now thrown back unto individual psychic processes, and there it takes the form of identitary ideologies – ideologies of ethnicity, post-religion, and the like.

What used to be ancient practices of sociality and their ideological mediations, now appear as individual psychological frustrations and collective identitary juridical claims. What used to be political struggles with the view of social transformation and with the effect of social reforms or revolutions – are now potentially or actually violent confrontations of identitary constructions with the view of social conservation and historical regression, negotiated within

a hegemonic universalist ideological frame or fought out in a war of universalisms. This seems to be the common root of contemporary violence and its complement – the politics of recognition.

RE-ARTICULATION OF THE STATE

GLOBALIZED ECONOMY   **UNIVERSALIST LAW**

GLOBAL   LOCAL   PARTICULAR   UNIVERSAL

- Traditionalisms   - Ethnic, religious
- Burden of the past   particularisms
- Belated modernisation

SOCIAL   *CULTURAL*
INADEQUACIES   *INADEQUACIES*

»IDENTITARY« STATE

repression   recognition

ALTERGLOBAL   IDENTITARY
MOVEMENTS   RESISTANCES

The pressures of the system take two main forms: the economic form and the juridical form. Economic pressures are exercised by international organisations that have been transformed into instruments of liberal domination – World Trade Organisation, International Monetary Fund, World Bank – and European Union. Juridical pressures do not have an authorised agent: they are exercised by whoever has the (military) power – the U.S.A., the NATO.

Economic pressures towards "free economy", i.e., deregulation, privatisation, denationalisation generate the opposition "global *vs.* local" on the field. Malfunctions induced by the homogeneous "global" pressures, their inadequacies in concrete local situations are interpreted as "local insufficiencies" – as traditionalism, burden of the past, belated or unsuccessful modernisation and the like – in short, as *social inadequacies* of the local contexts and agents to enter the global competition.

Juridical pressures generate the opposition "universal *vs*. particular". Malfunctions induced by the homogeneous "universal" approaches, their inadequacies in concrete local situations are interpreted as "local particularisms" – as traditionalism, burden of the past, ethnic fixation, religious self-centredness, absence of the modern culture or of political culture – in short, as *cultural inadequacies* of the local contexts and agents to enter the global competition.

The *post-national state*, locally legitimised by identitary ideology, is there to mediate between the universal-global pressures and the local-particular resistances. Its task is to mend local social and cultural deficiencies. It attempts to achieve a compromise that would enable its territory to integrate into the global system and to be "competitive". Identitary state is mainly confronting two types of resistance: identitary resistance against the conquest by the powers of the world system – and resistance against the global system itself. Identitary resistance challenges identitary state on its own ground: the state cannot oppose its identitary principle lest it undermines its own legitimacy. As a consequence, identitary state is forced to compromise with identitary resistances: the most frequent outcome is that the contemporary state abandons the modern principle of the separation of the state and the churches and accords important privileges especially to the prevailing church on its territory; follow the concessions regarding the freedom of consciousness, freedom of expression etc. The paradox of the identity construction is that it violates the modern human rights principles upon which it is construed.

Identitary state compensates for its defensive posture towards identitary resistances by its aggressiveness against the resistances that challenge the contemporary world system. On this front, the paradox reverses itself: identitary state represses the movements that fight against the pressures that undermine the identitary ideological fantasy of the state itself.

Identity and the arts

Identitary state uses the arts mostly within its search for external recognition, and much less within its internal endeavours to secure social cohesion under the existing conditions. For the internal use within identitary groups, the arts may mostly be functional within the rituals of reproduction of the elites, of their conspicuous spending and parade. In this respect, not much has changed during the last half of millennium. Maecenate and sponsorship may play the role of symbolic compensation for the parasitism of the elites – and yet, the products made possible by the patronage are mostly consumed within the elites themselves.

The external or international aspect is much more important. States are launching their artists upon the international scene – and hope to get in exchange recognition, prestige and international standing or just some identifiable presence (e.g., they hope to solve the problem of the distinction between Slovakia and Slovenia). Despite the unclear goals and uncertain

results, identitary states spend much for what they call their "promotion", and the arts, together with folklore and tourist attractions, are an eminent part of their endeavours. The greater the success of the launched artist, the greater the recognition gained by the state: this, at least, is the calculation. This reasoning entails a paradox: the greater the success of an artist, the more the artist gets individualised, and the less her or his "origins" matter. An internationally successful artist is appropriated by the international scene – this, after all, is one of the definitions of success. The "origins" may even become a burden, an obstacvle to individualisation – a dead weight hindering the launching of the artist's individual "brand". The paradox resides in the "exchange" between the state and the international arts-scene: the more successful an artist gets, the more she or he becomes dissociated from the initial launching by the state; and yet, the more distant from the state they get, the more recognition are they supposed to bring back to their state-patron. This is a paradox, but it works.

Identity in the arts

We have so far discussed identity as part of extra-artistic operations that take artistic practices and artefacts as their objects and use them for extra-artistic purposes. As any other ideological component, however, identity can also be taken as an "object" of elaboration by specifically artistic practices.

While investigating the specific artistic elaboration of identities, we should keep in mind that identity is not a process, but an effect – it is the result of the psychic process of identification. Identity can become an ideological mechanism only in modern individualistic societies where it further atomises the social field. As ideological mechanism, identity de-politicises social relations, tensions and conflicts – and shifts both social cohesion and social conflicts into the cultural dimension. There, it may trigger processes that come close to the Freudian mass-psychology[5]. On the other side, it opens the social field to social management in the form of "identity-entrepreneurship", "cultural-lobbying", cultural clash, negotiation and compromise. In both cases, identity combines individual atomisation with internally oppressive and externally aggressive group collectivism. In both cases, it articulates individual psychological processes *directly* upon social processes and relations, and by-passes what has been the typically *modern* articulation of individual attitudes upon social relations – the *political* articulation. In this way, identity as ideological mechanism blocks or even destroys the political articulation of social processes and relations. As the artistic treatment of identities necessarily de-constructs identities and their mechanisms, it brings back the excluded political dimension. In this case, as probably in many others, the presumed contemporary "politicisation" of artistic

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[5] As developed in: Sigmund Freud (1921), "Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse" /Group psychology and the analysis of the Ego/, in: *Standard Edition XVIII*.

practices results from their consequent performance of specifically aesthetic operations of "secondary elaboration" upon the ideological material. For all that, artistic politicisation has real effects – and we can only hope that in the future, it succeeds to increasingly percolate out of the artistic ghetto. The pacifying "Apollonian" impact of the artefact, to use the anachronistic Nietzschean expression, will nowadays be achieved by the "Dionysian" breaking down of the cultural mystification and by the ensuing exposure of conflict, tension and struggle.

Artistic intervention into identity

What a force the effects of an artistic intervention into the complex of identity may develop and how far they may reach, has been demonstrated by Sanja Iveković's contribution to the exhibition *Luxembourg, les Luxembourgeois*[6]. Iveković produced a replica of the national monument popularly called *The Golden Lady*, the central Luxembourg "place of memory".[7] To the national identity symbol, Sanja Iveković *added* a supplementary feature: her replica lady is pregnant; she *changed* the text on the socle[8]; and she *called* the sculpture *Lady Rosa of Luxembourg*.[9] With these minimal interventions – an addition, a change, and a name –, and with the major gesture of replication, Iveković triggered repercussions that reach well beyond the challenge to dominant ideologies, the deconstruction of identitary montages, the confrontation with the gender issue … beyond the exposure of the contradictions of the 20th

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[6] The complete title of the exhibition was: *Luxembourg – les Luxembourgeois. Consensus et passions bridées* [Luxembourg – the Luxembourgians. Consensus and restrained passions]. It was organised by the Staadter Geschichtsmuseum [The Museum of History of the City of Luxembourg] in 2001. To this exhibition, Casino – Forum d'Art Contemporain, under the artistic direction of Enrico Lunghi, joined itself by inviting three artists (Sylvie Blocher, Sanja Iveković and Silvio Wolf) to execute "*des projets dans l'espace public en relation avec des aspects sensibles du contexte historico-culturel luxembourgeois*" [projects located in the public-space and related to the sensible aspects of the Luxembourgian historical-cultural context].

[7] The *Golden Lady*, or *Gëlle Fra* in Luxembourgian, is a historical monument that itself has a history. It originally commemorated the Luxembourg soldiers who volunteered for service in the armed forces of the Allies in World War I. Upon the sides of its socle, the names of 3.000 volunteers and of 2.500 those who died are inscribed. The monument is the work of the Luxembourg artist Claus Cito and was erected in 1923. In 1940, the Nazi occupants dismounted the monument. This provoked demonstrations that were harshly repressed by the Gestapo. The monument, hidden and preserved by Luxembourg workers, was rediscovered in 1980. It was erected again in 1985. The monument is now the national symbol of freedom and resistance of the Luxembourg people. It commemorates the Luxembourgian who fell in the World Wars I and II, and also the fallen in the Korean War.

[8] Upon the sides of the socle, Iveković wrote in capital letters: "La Liberté. L'Indépendance. La Justice. La Résistance." – "Kunst. Kapital. Kultur. Kitsch." – "Virgin. Madonna. Bitch. Whore."

[9] Iveković's artefact has an entry in the Wikipedia. See also:
Guy Wagner, "Le scandale n'est pas là où on le dit", *Tageblatt*, 18.04.2001
http://www.guywagner.net/gellefra2-1.htm
Georg Schöllhammer, "Rosa von Luxemburg", *Die Springerin*, no. 2, vol. 2001
http://www.springerin.at/dyn/heft_text.php?textid=180&lang=de

century, beyond the memorial to the struggles of a people, beyond the reminder how ambivalent the exploits of a nation may have been.
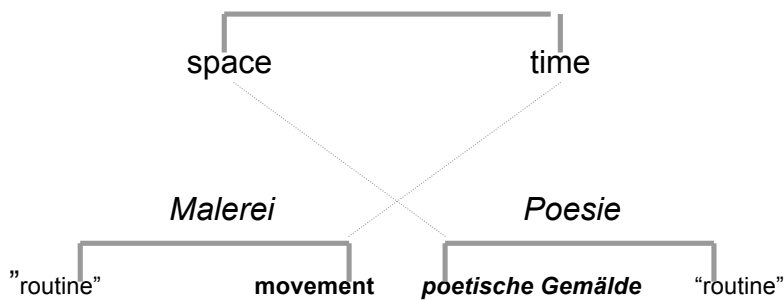
Iveković takes the "material" she is working upon within a certain perspective – the perspective of the modern artistic practices as it has been explicitly cultivated since romanticism. Or, better, she works upon her material under the particular angle of the modern ("bourgeois") artistic practice: she replicates the material, she supplements and transforms it, she names it within the horizon that the modern visual arts have established over the past two centuries and a half. In this way, Iveković's *practical procedure* itself "*replicates*" the historical trajectory of modern artistic practices. *What* she "does" to the material of her elaboration, is itself a reduplication, a "replica" of the way *how* she does it. The *effect* of her artistic practice, the replication of the historical sculptural complex of the *Golden Lady,* replicates the *procedure* that has produced it. Practical process of artistic work is "inscribed", is made sensibly present in the product itself. This, of course, is the most desired achievement of every radical modernist artistic practice. However, contrary to the modernist artefact which would stop at this point, Iveković continues and *historicises* the artistic practice she is "inscribing" into the product. In radical modernist formulations, the process of production is *abstractly* presented within the artistic product (this is why radical modernism is ultimately "abstract"). Here, the process reflexively practices, and in this way practically criticises, its own historical determination: the emancipatory project of modernism can *concretely*, and thus effectively, be carried through only beyond the modernist horizon. In a kind of Bataille-style transgression: by pushing the modernist project beyond the limits of modernism.

Let us present this singular transgression and its effects in more detail. Transgression was defined as the distinctive feature of artistic procedure at the very dawn of the modern notion of "the arts". In his pioneering *Laokoon*[10], Lessing assigned *Poesie*, literary arts, to the dimension of time, and *Mahlerei*, visual arts, to the dimension of space. The "art of the art", then, consisted, according to Lessing, in depicting space within the temporary arts, and in suggesting movement, i.e., time, within the spatial arts. Iveković's artistic practice works upon its "material" within this Lessingian horizon. This means that it understands its object *and* itself within the opposition "visual arts *vs.* literary arts" and that it interprets this opposition as the opposition "space *vs.* time". The limit of the visual arts of space is their impossibility to present time.[11] Artistic bravura then consists in conveying "time in space", i.e., in representing the movement by spatial means. Schematically:

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[10] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laokoon, oder über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie*, 1766.
[11] Correlatively, the limit of the literary arts of time is their incapacity to present space. The literary bravura then consists in conveying space within the dimension of time, in depicting spatial scenery by the means of the temporal flow of language. Lessing calls these scenic depictions *poetische Gemälde*, "poetic paintings".

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            ┌────────────────────┐
         space                time

              Malerei              Poesie
      ┌──────────────┐        ┌──────────────┐
  "routine"        movement   poetische Gemälde   "routine"
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Working upon the *Golden Lady no. 1* within this perspective, Iveković re-interprets the *Gëlle Fra* as a spatial rendering of time – of the time ideologically constructed as national history. This, in turn, re-articulates space into national territory: so that the *Golden Lady no. 1* starts to function as a privileged location upon the national territory presenting, in space, the time of national history. It starts to function as what it actually is: but now, together with the statue we also see *what* we see while looking at it. Or, better: while looking at the statue, we now also see *how* we are seeing it:

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        TIME                    SPACE

   national history        national territory

                              Gëlle Fra
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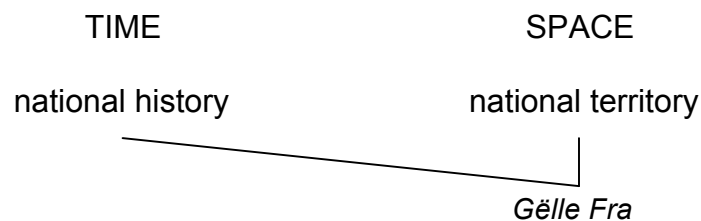
Naming the *Golden Lady no. 2* in counterpoint to the allegory, Iveković introduces a disruption into the totalised time-space of the nation. Upon what is now the centre of Europe, the name imprints what in the past was its periphery; upon an idyllic and pacifying vision of the national past, the name brings the understanding of history as class struggle. Into the abstract modern opposition of space and time, elaborated into an ideological time-space totality, Iveković's intervention introduces the concrete concept of a plurality of antagonistic historical processes and the notion of a concrete hierarchy of space.

The effect is that, while looking at the statue, we now also see the *different modes* of how we are looking at it: the naïve totalising mode and the conceptual agonistic mode. The two modes contradict each other, they cannot be reconciled, the open a gap in the artefact:

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        TIME                    SPACE

    national history        national territory
                                        |
                                 Gëlle Fra

    Rosa Luxemburg
            |
   history as class-struggle    space as hierarchy
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What we see is generally determined by *how* we look at what we are looking at, i.e., by how we look at what we are eventually seeing. In most everyday situations, i.e., in the context of ordinary ideological interpellation, the determination of "what (we see)" by "how (we look)" passes unperceived. The unperceived common-sense automatism is actually the condition of ideological interpellation. Here, however, *what* we see is presented in such a way that we cannot avoid becoming aware of the way *how* we are looking at it: the gap between the two irreconcilable modes of looking forces us to move out of the common-sense automatism – or, better, it liberates us and enables us to free ourselves of the ideological automatism. The artistic procedure here consists precisely in this *inversion* of the relation between "what" and "how": for what we actually see, is the *gap* itself. At a first glance, we only experience the impossibility of the naïve automatic and common-sense way of looking (it is undermined by artistic interventions of replication, addition, change and naming). Together with this discontinuation of the everyday regime of looking comes the urge to find the "proper" way of looking at what is offered to be seen. But there is no "proper" way. The effect that the artefact initially produces upon the viewer is thus an oscillation between the discounted "naïve" and "automatic" (i.e., ideological) way of looking and the not yet discovered alternative mode.[12] Waking up out of the ideological "self-evidence" of seeing may be painful: many viewers in Luxembourg did not like it, and documented their discontent upon the socle of the *Golden Lady no. 2* itself.

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[12] There is an old European tradition that understands the arts as a gnoseological practice: according to this tradition, the arts are supposed to produce an effect of "knowledge". Here, such a gnoseological effect definitely is produced: only that the knowledge the artefact here produces it is a reflexive knowledge – the viewer, liberated from the false spontaneity of seeing, first learns that s/he is "looking".

The alternative way of looking never comes as *another* way which would replace the naïve one and affirm itself as the only right and proper mode, supposed to replace the old inadequate and discounted mode. Such a replacement would be just another ideological operation: one way of looking would replace another way, a new ideology would oust the old one. What is here actually offered to the reflexive view, to the viewer who is willing to pause and to reflect, is the conditional character of spontaneity, are the dimensions that have to be repressed, forgotten, in order for the "naïve and self-evident" ideological totalisation to occur at all.

At this point of analysis[13], we have to introduce the feature that the *Golden Lady no. 2* is pregnant. To the contradiction between the allegory and the real historical person another element is added. Associative adduction of the real historical person, Rosa Luxemburg, dismantled the idyllic allegory by introducing class struggle against the national historical narrative and hierarchy of spaces against the homogeneity of the national territory. This is the negative (the modernist) side; the positive ("trans-modern") side is introduced by the feature of pregnancy: to the axis of *contradiction* ("allegory / real historical person") it adds an axis of *complementariness*. If the class struggle establishes (and challenges and transforms – and will, perhaps, one day abolish) relations of exploitation, i.e., the relations of production, of the "production of things"[14] – then the *complement* to the sphere of the *production of things* is the sphere of the *production of humans*.

The *structural matrix* of the national society (and its paraphernalia: national history, national territory) is the production of things under antagonistic relations of exploitation, i.e., under the conditions of class struggle. The *structural condition*, however, of any "production of things", is the "production of the humans". The pregnancy reminds us that human existence and history do not limit themselves to the "production of things" and what goes together with it: consumption of things, exploitation of humans etc. There would be no social life of things without the production of society and its absolute condition: the generation of humans. To the monument to the dead, the replica counterposes a monument of the living. To an incitement to mourning – a reminder of joy.

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[13] The perception itself proceeds "holistically". It is only in the didactic presentation of the analysis that we construct the "steps" of interpretation. The pregnancy here figures as the feature that introduces the last phase of exposition, while in the actual perception, it comes as one of the first apperceptions and as the one that most likely creates the need of interpretation.

[14] We will here introduce the dichotomy "production of things / production of humans": it is a free paraphrase of the distinction made by Friedrich Engels in the preface to his *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats* [The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, 1884]. Engels states that, according to the materialist understanding, the course of history is, in the last instance, determined by the "production and reproduction of immediate life. These [production and reproduction] again are double. On one side the production of life necessities …; on the other side, the production of humans themselves … Both kinds of production condition [historical] social institutions: the stage of development of labour on one side, of family on the other."

TIME   SPACE

national history   national territory

Gëlle Fra

structural matrix:
PRODUCTION OF THINGS ●   ALLEGORY

axis of contradiction→

axis of complementation→

● **structural condition:**
PRODUCTION OF PEOPLE

REAL HISTORICAL PERSON
Rosa Luxemburg

history as class-struggle   space as hierarchy