

La caldera



On the Occasion of the Death  
of Yet Another Cultural  
Institution, or "Surprise!" or  
Delirium for La Caldera

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Descripción

On the Occasion of the Death of Yet Another Cultural Institution, or, "Surprise!," or Delirium for La Caldera.

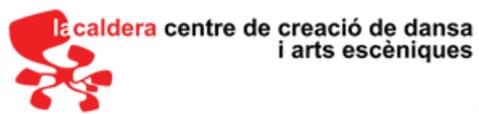
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Text in one paragraph, where the author's pessimism is unleashed as methodical cartography for a history of contemporary destruction in about four thousand characters.

André Lepecki

Surprise!!!! Suddenly it hits: citizens of Western-European nations, realize, for their dismay and generalized disorientation, that they too, despite their supposedly national sovereignties, their supposedly free and enviable education, their supposedly "acquired labor rights," their supposedly enlightened democracies, their exemplary welfare societies, their supposedly advanced grasp of everything economic, their supposedly good-nature and civility, they realize that they too are being slowly yet relentlessly transformed into the object of an old logic of exploitation similar in kind to the one that has always bound together those two parallel, contemporary and co-formative projects: capitalism and colonialism. After the curious decoupling of capitalism from its putative "organic link" (as some political economists like to say) with democracy over the past decade (China, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, etc.), what needs to be acknowledged nowadays is the co-formative coupling between the spirit of capitalism and the project of colonialism as the new economic-political project for Europe, by Europe, and in Europe. What the current neo-liberal financial capitalism does politically is to precisely unveil, shamelessly, its constitutive colonialist impetus. What may be surprising to Western European citizens is to witness how, such a logic of exploitative colonization is now taking place inside Europe, and moreover, it has as its new object of exploitation Europe's own citizens. But, as anyone coming from the so-called New World or Post-Colonial Elsewheres knows, brutal capitalism and brutal colonialization have always coexisted and fed each other's dynamics. And, every colonized subject knows quite well how both capitalism and colonialism have always sought to control only one thing: life itself. Thus, what is surprising is that there is surprise! It is now clear that neo-liberal capitalism's alliance with a mode of governance solidly anchored on the paradigm of the colonial state of exception, on the camp as paradigm of contemporary Western democracies, as Agamben says, turns EVERY LIFE and EVERY BODY (including a vast number of European citizens) into fair game for being lawfully sucked dry, worked to exhaustion if not to death, be left hanging in organized ignorance, see their political and legal rights suspended indefinitely, and be permanently bullied and prodded to participate in consensual and policed living (policed by State secret services as much as by "social networks", by banks as much as by cellular phone companies). Essential in this neo-liberal and "democratic" consensual policed living is that culture, art, thought, and even idleness, have all to be replaced, almost forcibly, by "lots of fun". Fun shopping, fun food, fun spectacles, fun sex, fun words, fun soccer, fun mommy, fun daddy, fun fun fun... In our times many have called "post-fordist", the old colonial logic remains the same, both economically and in terms of monopoly of power: massive accumulation of wealth parallels direct access to governmental functions which are basically functions of defunding the public realm and destroying the commons - including the public life of thought, the public life of art, the public life of buildings, the common life of time, the common life of life. Whoever stands in the way to resist to this shameful extortion is given only one choice: accept or perish. But, in the ruins, it is life itself that stubbornly persists. Project: find from the ruins the art and the joy necessary to disband, disorient, and topple those whose only project is to turn it all (buildings and bodies, subjectivity and objecthood) into bare lives having fun, in conformity, on the bare lands of the New Colonies.

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<http://www.lacaldera.liquidmaps.org>

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