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The Language of Political Agitation in “Red Winter” and “Rolling Classroom”

1 “Red Winter” came about following an invitation by Anne-Gro Erikstad, in 2014, in collaboration with LevArt, a project space for contemporary art in Levanger; see: https://raedle-jeremic.net/pdfs/about_red_winter_web.pdf. “Rolling Classroom” was created for the “Karnevalet” in 2019, in Oslo, upon invitation by the Carnival Union, an artistic collaborative project between Hanan Benammar, Gidsken Braadlie, Camilla Dahl, Marius von der Fehr, Lisa Pacini, Pia Maria Roll and Venke Aure; see: https://raedle-jeremic.net/pdfs/about_rolling_classroom.pdf

With this text I hope to contribute to the understanding of transformative artistic practices. The works discussed here are “Red Winter” and “Rolling Classroom”¹, two connected artistic interventions carried out by Vladan Jeremić and myself in Norway. The relation of art and politics is one of the central issues in our artistic practice and we have gathered substantial experience of how this relation looks like and works in practice. Nevertheless, we are also interested in problematizing it theoretically, so as to generate new impulses for our practice. In my contribution I aim to develop a theoretical framework to discuss the conjunction of politics and art. Both works presented here deal with the language of political agitation, while occupying different places on the “passage” from the artistic to the political field. I will elaborate upon these differences, thus demonstrating under which circumstance artistic language can translate into the language of everyday experience, so that it can contribute to political articulation and practice. In short, the question I will try to answer is: How can artistic practice be transformative beyond the artistic field?

Artistic practices that reach out to the political field evolve along manifold contradictions. This is unavoidable, as in political practice, it is necessary to take sides and to deal with changing situations. Likewise, the analysis and critical evaluation of art that expands into both the aesthetic and political field encounters difficulties in finding adequate categories. One of the inevitable concepts that critics, theorists and other thinkers use when it comes to the analysis of *the political* in art, is the notion of artistic autonomy, with the discussion usually revolving around the axis of the autonomy-heteronomy relation. These disputes arise from contradictory readings of the historical avant-garde’s legacy in Western art theory production. Often they end up defending artistic autonomy in one or the other way, seeing, in the tradition

2 Along these lines, the critic Grant Kester describes the defense of autonomy in the discussions of the curator Nicholas Bourriaud and the critic Claire Bishop as “a reaction to growing anxieties about the vulgar taste of an incipient middle class”. In: Grant H. Kester, *The One and the Many, Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*, Duke University Press, 2011, p.14.

3 This phenomenon of ideological argumentation is concisely termed “the spontaneous ideology of the art field” (alluding to Althusser’s “spontaneous philosophy of the scientists”) by Oliver Marchart, who argues that Ranciere’s theory of political aesthetics delivers the ideological instrument for keeping explicitly political art out of art institutions. In: Oliver Marchart, *Conflictual Aesthetics, Artistic Activism and the Public Sphere*, Sternberg Press, 2019, pp. 12-14.

4 Roughly, we can differentiate two tendencies of critical practice in ‘contemporary art’. There are art practices that, in the tradition of critical theory, claim autonomy within the ideological field of art, and in this way generate a critical distance from where the artist unmasks the truth about human society, the art system, political corruption, etc. And there are practices that emerged in the 1990s, inspired by the work of thinkers such as Deleuze and Guattari, Nancy and Badiou, that attempt to create prefigurations of ideal (communist) communities. The reflection of ‘new communist’ thinking from the 1980s in (post-) relational aesthetics is discussed by John Roberts in: John Roberts, “Introduction: Art, ‘Enclave Theory’ and the Communist Imaginary”, in: *Third Text*, 23:4, 2009, pp. 353-367.

of Adorno, autonomy as a precondition for critique or truth in art.² Above all, these disputes can’t be separated from their structural function in the ideological struggle and are often affected by the “spontaneous ideology of the art field”³.

Transformative artistic practice claims to go further than establishing autonomy or critical distance *within the ideological field*. These practices have moved away from criticality and other ideological models⁴ formed by institutional art discourses and the art market. Their socialization and distribution takes place under terms that are extrinsic to the art field. In order to scrutinize such practice, a concept is needed that allows us to comprehend relations between the ideological field and other fields of social production. In order to think the relations that determine artistic practice, I rely on Rastko Močnik’s theory of artistic practice as ideological practice and ‘secondary elaboration’ of socially determined ideological formations.⁵ To conceptualize transformation and political practice, a dynamic model is needed. For that I propose Nicos Poulantzas’ concept of the *economic, political and ideological* class struggle that figures as the motor of social transformation.⁶ These concepts have in common their description of society as a ‘complex social whole’ (Althusser), where the production of social reality is not exclusively a historical necessity, but also the effect of the ‘relative autonomy’ of ideological operations and political practices. As such, they can help us illuminate the structural place and agency of artistic practice in relation to politics, which is the central subject of this text.

Before going into the details of “Red Winter” and “Rolling Classroom”, let’s look at the language of political agitation, which is a central aspect of both works. The most condensed form of political language are slogans. One of the insights political activists shared with us in discussion was that a political message is more likely to be understood if it is written down as a slogan rather than symbolized in an artistic manner. This conclusion came from their experience with designing agitation material and involving artists in the development of it. This is certainly true insofar as it would be easier to get someone to repeat the slogan and message if it was written as a simple phrase. Whereas they might not be able to reproduce the message contained in a com-

plex artistic representation of, let's say, the struggle against the privatization of common goods. Anyhow, the way in which people relate to a given repeated slogan, whether they identify with it or not, will depend on their personal mood, ideas and values, the circumstances they are living in and their political interest at that moment.

Let's take for example a slogan from our work "Red Winter", written on one of the banners put up around Levanger's main square, "Stop oil drilling in the Arctic!". A hypothetical art critic reading the slogan might agree with the message, but could say: "This is bad art, there is no critical reflection, true political art is never explicitly political". Maybe she feels the lack of a metaphysical dimension, or she wants to defend the autonomy of art as the last refuge of critique. The actual reaction of a citizen of Levanger, on the other hand, was quite straight forward. When we handed the Red Winter newspaper over to him, he said: "What do you want here? Go away, you are sponsored by Putin." As a member of a political party (as we learned later on), he understood that the slogan undermines Norwegian interest in oil drilling and therefore serves Russian interests.

With these examples I want to sketch the problem of political articulation in the art field, or through artistic processes. In the first example, the political activists expected of art that it would enhance their political message, only to realize that artistic representations are too complex for this purpose. This is because they (as Močnik argues) represent refracted images of reality, which means they don't reflect a social problem as a mirror, but work upon already existing ideas of that problem. When, in the second example, the artistic representation was reduced to a slogan, it was understood as a political message by the politician and the art critic, even though the installation of this slogan on the public square was nevertheless part of a concrete artistic operation. Let's say then, the effect of the slogan here was a kind of an ideological confusion.

From these examples we could add that the effects of artistic practice are confined to the symbolic field. But we have to take into account that artistic practice itself is "re-worked", or even

5 Rastko Močnik, drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin and Pavel N. Medvedev, develops his concept of artistic practice on the premise that artistic practice takes place in the sphere of ideology. Every ideological system is conceived as a system of signs that are modified by class interests. Both, sign and system are products of the class struggle, and represent a refraction of the social conditions. Hence, artistic practices do not mirror social reality in the form of a simple representation, but work on existing ideological representations, creating a 'secondary elaboration' (Medvedev) of ideologically refracted reality. Močnik further shows, through a model combining Medvedev's 'secondary elaboration' with Levi Strauss' concept of the 'total social fact' (which comprises the object and the subject, or the 'thing' and 'native representation', see: Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1987), how the structural place of artistic practice changes during the course of history, in pre-capitalist, bourgeois, socialist and late-capitalist societies. See: Rastko Močnik, "Teorija umetničkih praksi", in *Teorija sa ideologijom*, FKM, Belgrade 2019, pp. 211-243.

6 Nicos Poulantzas developed a concept of class that tackles the discrepancies between class practice, class consciousness and class determination. Taking up Althusser's concept of overdetermination, he sees class practice as primarily determined by its place in the dominant mode of production, but also by the ideological and political forces in a specific moment. More precisely, according to Poulantzas it is the *ideological, political and economic* class struggle that forms and reproduces social classes and institutions. See: Nicos Poulantzas, *Classes in contemporary Capitalism*, NLB, 1975, pp. 15,16, pp. 29-30.

7 The title “Red Winter” was inspired by the dramatic play “Raud Vinter” by Thorvald Sund, based on the Levanger riots in 1851, and performed in Levanger for the first time in 2006.

replaced by other dynamics of social production. In the following text I will try to show how a “passage” from the artistic, ideological field to the political field occurred in “Red Winter” and “Rolling Classroom” while elaborating upon the transformative aspects of these works.

Red Winter

For “Red Winter”, we researched the historical and contemporary emancipatory struggles in Levanger and the surrounding region with the aim to generate figures of political agitators that would deliver speeches on the main square of the city. The idea was that these agitators, equipped with the arguments and worldview of their time and their struggles, would meet today and deliver speeches commenting on the contemporary situation. The point of departure was the three-day-long workers’ uprising that took place in 1851 on Levanger Square, which was noticed internationally and covered by the news in Paris and London at that time. It was triggered by the arrest of Carl Johan Michelsen, who agitated for the first Norwegian labor movement led by Marcus Thrane. The figures of the agitators represented the first Norwegian labor movement, the antifascist struggle during WW2, emancipatory movements of the Roma and Sami in the last decades and current environmental movements. For the action, banners with slogans were put up all around the square, situated in the center of Levanger, at the historical location of the uprising. The four speeches that we had earlier recorded with actors from the local theater group were emitted through loudspeakers from the square’s speakers’ pavilion. The newspaper “Red Winter”, containing the speeches, drawings and slogans, was installed at the pavilion’s speaker’s desk and was distributed to passersby.

Although the work drew on a local tradition of historical folk theater⁷, there was barely any similarity with reenactments of historical events. There were neither costumes nor actors, only the voices of agitators resounding across the square from the empty pavilion. From their historical positions - but also aware of the present day situation - the speeches referred to the experience of their struggles and analyzed mechanisms of exploitation from

then and now. In their speeches, they defended their demands, claimed political, social and economic equality, and called for radical change and revolution.

Here, the transformative aspect of the artistic method lies in the re-articulation of historically existing conceptions of radical change, which were reactualized in the context of contemporary social struggles. In a kind of experimental setting, principles or concepts were elaborated and their operability tested within a wider social context, here on the public square, where the historical uprising started. Herein transformative artistic practice differs from both traditional reenactments and typical methods of contemporary art. A transformative approach doesn't take historically documented speeches or other non-art material and transfer them as a *ready-made* to the art field, but rather reworks the material (here the demands) into tools for an ideological intervention into ongoing struggles. A new constellation occurred that made space for the imagination of a new, contemporary, political subject.

Talking about language, it's worth considering the comment of playwright and author of the historical reenactment "Red Winter", Thorvald Sund, during the public discussion about our intervention. In order to be truly political, he proposed, we should have written the speeches in the local dialect instead of using Bokmål, the written language that, in his view, was imposed by the Danish occupiers. Without going into the details of the Norwegian language conflict, his comment hints at the general difficulty of politics to integrate local particularities, here expressed in different dialects and in the particular histories of oppression and struggle.

With this critique he, consciously or not, targeted the problem of political representation, which was touched upon, though not concretized in "Red Winter". The agitators remained an abstraction within the work. As there was nobody up there in the speakers' pavilion, the place of the political subject was left empty, which was, at the same time, an invitation to anybody and everybody to occupy this position.

We can say that there is a transformative quality in the speeches of “Red Winter” as they formulate a new political agenda. However, there was no connection made with political forces that could take it up. When we developed the next steps, based on the intervention in Levanger, we tried to get closer towards the political dynamic. In the context of the “Karnevalet” in Oslo, we organized the workshop “Red Winter Oslo” to prepare speeches that would be delivered at the carnival parade. The idea was to involve interested people, addressing issues of importance to them during the parade, in this way politicizing the manifestation.

The Rolling Classroom of Love and Resistance

The carnivalization of protest is a much discussed phenomenon, with social movements sometimes using carnivalesque tactics during protests in order to confuse power relations and try to protect themselves from police repression. The “Karnevalet” in Oslo was not initiated by a social movement, rather it was the joint effort of Oslo’s art and cultural scene to reclaim the cultural sphere in a time when the far right rules the parliament and to make a statement for an intercultural society, against racism and discrimination. Our workshops were attended mostly by artists and random visitors of the Intercultural Museum of Oslo, and we discussed how the “Karnivalet” could become a more outspoken political manifestation, identifying issues that should be addressed. In those days we went through a process of learning from and listening to one another, with people expressing feelings of loneliness and alienation in regard to their relations with others and “society”, and addressing a sense of injustice and of relentlessness of the political system. While for some, this exchange, in what we came to call the “Collective Classroom of Love and Resistance”, was at the core of the process, others formulated speeches, reached out to other interested groups and organizations, and prepared actions that were to be performed in the streets. For that, we designed the “Rolling Classroom”, a mobile tribune that speakers could talk from, whenever they felt that it was the right moment and place.

The parade departed from the immigrants' neighborhood, Grønland, and stopped from time to time at buildings and squares marking different social struggles, where dance, music and theater performances took place. To keep the "Rolling Classroom" moving within the overall dramaturgy of the Karnevalet was a task in itself, and many helped to make it happen, contributing their energy and giving support in all possible ways.⁸

In a kind of prayer to the gods, artist Anita Hillestad, whose speech was performed by Rachel Dagnall, addressed the situation of artists in Norway, living on the edge of poverty in a society designed for the super-rich and called for wages and healthcare for creative workers. Indigenous studies researcher Amanda Fayant formulated a response from the Thunderbird Women to the Indian act of 1857 in Canada, exposing how the implementation of colonial patriarchal law affects the position of women in indigenous communities. Speeches we had written before for "Red Winter" were delivered, and Shahzad Ah and other people with special needs from the UngMetro Fredagsklubben, spontaneously spoke up for their cause, from the tribune. Several inspired passersby climbed up and shouted out their message to the people, one of them calling on people to "take their masks off and show their real faces", while the carnival parade moved on. Lagging behind the great parade, the "Rolling Classroom" had to take a shortcut to the Parliament, one of the stops of the carnival. When the procession with its loud and meanwhile ecstatic expression disappeared, Eshraq Jah, a survivor of the war in Syria waiting for her request for asylum in Norway to be accepted, started singing without words. Radicalizing her contribution to the workshop, which she had condensed into the slogan "Love is not a feeling but an action", with this gesture she fundamentally questioned the concept of verbal articulation as a means of making change.

In front of the National Parliament, the last speech was performed by Lina Alvarez Reyes with activists of the "Peace in Colombia" support group. The recording of the speech was shared on the social media page of the group.⁹ It was the testimony of a character called Ursula about the ongoing killings of Colombian indigenous social leaders, three years after the signing of the peace treaty in Oslo, written by Katharina Barbosa Blad and Il-

8 Our special thanks goes to Madeleine Park and Shahzad Ah, Rachel Dagnall, Joana Gelažytė and Tim Kliukoit, Camilla Dahl and Lisa Pacini, the artists from Nesodden - Land of the Free, the activists of Fred i Colombia, the group from UngMetro Fredagsklubben and Halvor Valle.

9 The recording was shared over 1500 times and had more than 27000 views. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/FredIColombia/2190378337958563/>

eana Alvarez Reyes. This testimony generated a rupture within the flow and creative chaos of the parade. The music and dancing stopped and the carnival crowd and everybody else on the square listened to Lina's voice calling for an end to bloodshed.

A double rupture

What happened was something that could be described as a double rupture. If we understand (with Bakhtin) the carnival as a suspension of imposed norms, where people come together as equals, stripped off their socially determined roles and behaviors, the intervention of the "Peace in Colombia" group could be seen as a rupture exposing the very reality of life experiences and struggle of the indigenous communities in Colombia. In this moment, the dramaturgy of the carnival as a celebration of a kind of pre-social condition of unity appeared to be a far away utopia. But it also brought about a real moment of strength, where it was possible to open space for political articulation.

While the political subject was abstract in "Red Winter", it emerged with Lina's speech and the activists of "Peace in Colombia". They transformed the "Rolling Classroom" into a stage for political articulation that reached beyond the folklorist expression of the carnival parade. Artistic practice can bring about concepts, methods (here the workshop that involved activists) and tools (here the rolling tribune) that might be used in political struggles, and here is the very moment, when art expands the political. When the transformative artistic act takes place in a politically charged situation, and its method and practical potential is recognized by political actors as a means of struggle, a new quality emerges, which can be expressed in political terms. The institution of art as ideological apparatus is losing importance and institutions in the political field are becoming dominant, with their forms of organizing agency, creating meaning, and distribution of value. These social movements will continue to evaluate the utility of artistic means, and negotiate whether an artistic form or method should enter into circulation, for example to serve educational or propagandist aims.¹⁰

10 To put it in Poulantzas' words, at a certain conjuncture, as part of a greater strategy, artistic methods can be integrated into political struggles.

Politics versus Art

The new dynamic that seizes the artwork now, emancipates the artistic method or object from its artist-creator and the ideological field of art, which comes to have hardly any control over its use or misuse. Distributed under new, now non-artistic terms, the political artwork depends on the relations of the political field, and might be subject to modification by it. The moment of “creative expansion” and playfulness has ended and artistic practice is being replaced by political practice. In a worst case scenario, the work could be censored, the artist arrested, black-listed or even persecuted. Here we arrive at the contradiction of “political art”. Art and politics can not be conflated, but rather, as I have attempted to demonstrate, they exclude each other. In the introduction, I used the image of the passage of artistic practice from the field of ideology to the field of politics. When moving to the political field, the critical distance, artistic practice established within the field of ideology (through the ‘secondary elaboration’ of ideological formations), can only be realized by establishing a critical distance *within the political field*, and therefore the arena of struggle shifts towards art *versus* politics.

Conclusion

Coming back to the question I posed in the beginning, how then can artistic practice be transformative in the political field? If artistic practice wants to expand the political, it needs to participate in politics, establishing a critical distance within the political field. This struggle of ‘art versus politics’ can bring about new concepts and approaches in political practice. To be transformative, artistic interventions need to be created with political consciousness and be explicit about what kind of politics an artistic practice advocates, here and now, and with which political forces it is affiliated. To creatively apply Poulantzas here, this consciousness arises from the struggle of antagonistic dynamics of political, ideological and economic practices. Obviously, artistic practices (as other cultural practices) play a role in the formation of class consciousness, but my point is here that they can contribute to a change of consciousness only if they have effects in the political

field. That means that artists and other cultural workers need to get rid of the idea of expanding the institution of art and need to understand that it is political practice and the way of political organization that needs to be “expanded” and transformed. And, as social practices, artistic practices can be strong and meaningful only if they emerge out of an ongoing process of mutual learning, consultation, solidarity, and building alliances with others. A particular capacity of artistic techniques in this context might be the translation between languages of subjective and collective experience and the operationalization of abstract knowledge systems in concrete situations. Nevertheless, when it comes to “The Rolling Classroom of Love and Resistance”, it was mostly the non-artistic, non-specialized, apparently unrelated activities and engagements, and the emotional work of all who were involved, that brought about a process of collective knowledge production and mutual education in political articulation.

Red Winter



Speakers' pavilion and banner "Away with private security companies and mercenary armies!" Photos: Rena Rädle.



Speakers' pavilion and banner "Day labourers, harvest workers, domestic servants, nannies, elder care workers, sex workers, become organized!" Photos: Rena Rädle.



Speakers' pavilion and banner "Stop oil production in the Arctic!" Photos: Rena Rädle.



Discussion at Levanger municipality and on the square. Photos: LevArt.

The Rolling Classroom



Rachel and Rena perform speeches. Photos: Rädle & Jeremić.



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Lina Alvarez Reyes and the “Peace in Colombia” support group perform a speech in front of the Norwegian Parliament. Photos: Sébastien Dahl.

The Speeches

Response to Treaty 4 from the Thunderbird Women

“To the Crown representatives: You did not negotiate with us. The leaders and mothers of our communities. We were not included in your treaties. They are not valid without our consent.

To the Crown, You did not receive the necessary approvals to proceed with your treaties. You did not include us.

Indian Act Canada 1867: “an Indian (i)s legislatively de ned as a male Indian, the child of a male Indian or the wife of a male Indian”

You gave authority where there should have been acknowledgment. You made deals with the wrong representatives. You had no authority to negotiate without the matriarchs.

We are the life givers. The grandmothers, mothers, aunts, sisters, daughters. We give life and support life, we speak for the moon, the water and for life.

Kikâwy Your mother, Kôhkom Your grandmother, Kitânis Your daughter, Matriarchs and leaders. The future is thunderbird women.”¹

1 Response to Treaty 4 and Pictographs: Inspired by and a response to Chief Paskwa’s pictograph of the treaty. The speech was written by Amanda Fayant to be held at the “Rolling Classroom” during the Karnivalet, March 3rd, 2019, Oslo.

Dear Gods of small and large things!

“Dear politicians from all parties. Dear those of you who can decide over life and death, house prices, fuel prices, food prices and everything we, here in Norway, are dependent on to survive, down here on earth.

You are sitting warmly and comfortably up there, somewhere. You have forgotten that down here where we normal people live, it’s cold, wet and lonely. The food we eat has to be bought with money in shops. We need to have a roof over our heads and warmth so that we don’t freeze to death.

You must have also forgotten this somewhere along the way dear Gods. Forgotten about us normal and unusual people who have given our lives to art and culture, to create and improve.

Why dear Gods?

Why can't those who are creative get paid for their work? Those who create art can't live any longer in the city where their art is appreciated. They don't have any place to work either, as work-spaces are too expensive.

The Gods up there decide that places to house the art will be built. Museum after museum. Large and impressive cultural buildings. But who will produce the art and culture? Under what working conditions? The people who build the museum get paid. A janitor at a museum will get paid. The driver who transports the art gets paid. And so on and so on. This is all good, dears.

But dear Gods, dear dearest Gods: Give the artists also a proper wage. Liberate Art and Culture.

And, we should not forget: What about those who have suffered illnesses and injuries and are unable to work as much as you want? Or maybe not at all? How can those who are sick be well again without any money? Can you be well again by freezing and eating even less food? Is that a recommended diet? Can you be stronger and healthier by being worried? Can you be well and recover from an illness that even doctors say can't be cured? What is it that you know that doctors don't know? Is it a secret? Something only God knows? The Gods of all Gods.

Dear Gods, you are the rich. The rest of us, who have to pay for your wealth, are becoming poorer and poorer. If you do not know this, then we will tell you now: this is not fair. The poor will soon be unable to be robbed of anything more, because there is nothing left. This is robbery, my dears. And it is illegal. Down here. You should not steal. Especially not from the poorest. This, we learned as children, us others. Is this not something that the Gods learn? Then we say this to you, dear Gods of small and large things – and now you know. This isn't working! You can do something about it! You have to do something now!"²

2 Speech written by Anita Hill-estad to be held at the "Rolling Classroom" during the Karnivalet, March 3 2019, Oslo.

Speech by Ursula

"My name is Ursula. I am an indigenous Colombian woman of the Wayuu ethnic group from La Guajira, the northeast region in Colombia.

When I was younger, I lived happily and in peace with my family and friends. The place where I am from is very rich in natural resources. I grew up one with the nature that surrounded me; the sea, the sand and the animals. I was taught that our territory gives us life, and therefore we must learn to live in harmony with it. And we did, for many years. Sadly, that territory is also an area of entry and exit of contraband merchandise, drugs and weapons.

I had to flee my home when the paramilitary forces entered our territory with a list of names of friends and family whom they wanted to kill. They arrived one morning while my brothers and father were out working. The attack was directed towards us women. When they got closer to our home, I managed to run in the other direction with my family and neighbors. There were so many people running with us, I suddenly lost my family. I never saw them again. The group and I hid in the bushes for three days without water or food. I still remember the screams, the cries for help and I saw how they took little girls and women in their cars with hate and torture. When it was safe to go back, I saw many dead people along the way. I lost everything that day, my family and my home.

Many people think that now that the peace agreement has been signed, the war has ended. I am here to confirm that this is far from the truth. They are killing us.

The war affects us because there are armed actors and we're stuck in the middle of them; guerrillas, paramilitaries, drug traffickers and the government. The attack against us is daily, and we, as women, are being attacked for our role in the society. Our bodies are targets of sexual violence.

I was at the negotiation tables while the peace agreement was signed because even the victims had the opportunity to give their opinion and tell their stories. At last, the peace treaty was signed, and we believed in a future country, where peace would allow us to live in the Colombia that we had dreamt of. But now, they are still killing us.

The situation is worse now. The areas where the guerrillas were are now populated by the paramilitaries, and for them there is no law, only that of hatred. I am now a social leader, and my message

is a message of peace - that makes me the enemy. That's why they want to kill us. The extermination of people like me, who fight for stable and lasting peace, is systematic. History repeats itself, and the owners of our country are killing us again.

We must declare peace to war. We shall not be defeated. We owe it to the social leaders, their life, we owe it to our country, I owe it to my family and friends. When they attack us with hate, we must respond with strength, with power and with resistance.

3 Speech written by Katharina Barbosa Blad and Ileana Alvarez Reyes to be held at the "Rolling Classroom" during the Karnivalet, March 3 2019, Oslo.

Look to yesterday with its shadows and lights of hope, transform with courage today the dignity of life, and tomorrow you will reap the fruits of justice."³

Speech by the member of the Thrane movement

"Citizens! Some one hundred and fifty years ago, they sent Carl Johan Michelsen and our comrades to jail. Why were they thrown into the dungeon?

Because they were hungry! Because they had no work! Because they wanted to send their children to school, but didn't have the money for it!

Because they no longer wanted to send their children to war as cannon fodder for the gentlemen in power! Because they wanted to have a say in matters concerning them.

Ha! They had to use soldiers to defeat our rebellion; we have given these mighty gentlemen quite a fright! There would be plenty for everyone, if only things were distributed fairly:

Down with the landowners!

Now, one hundred and fifty years later, I stand on this square once again. I hear that you have fought for the right to vote and the right to education, and even military service for women. I hear that Norway is a rich country now. I also hear that begging was banned in some communes in Norway? Is it really necessary for anyone to beg?

The more I enquire, the more I realize that you have not achieved the kind of social justice for which we fought in 1851. You have fought for political equality and equality before the law;

Do not stop there! Fight for economic equality as well!

Only by fighting against the propertied class can we pave the way for a just society.

I call on you to sow the seed of revolution – transfer our power into the 21st century!

Let the revolution start from this place in Oslo.

Let it spread to the south from the periphery of northern Europe, and ignite the heart of Europe that is weakened by the poison of neo-liberalism and neo-colonialism!

Europe, with all its riches, will have to change its relationship to the world. The wars for resources, the exploitation and plundering of the periphery, the expropriation of land, the internment of the displaced and dispossessed, all this needs to be brought to a halt.

That is what we are fighting for, at this moment, at this place!

But before I return to the past, I want to tell you one more thing: As modern socialists, you must not look backwards.

Do not leave the development of technological progress to the capitalists!

Your so-called Facebook and Twitter revolutions will not endure as long as modern technology remains a resource in the hands of the capitalists.

You, yourselves, must take control of technological progress!

Increase the speed of social transformation!

For economic democracy!⁴

4 Speech written by Rena Rädle and Vladan Jeremić for the piece “Red Winter”, developed for the Deep sites art festival organized in 2014 by LevArt in Levanger, adapted to the “Rolling Classroom” during the Karnivalet, March 3 2019, Oslo.

Speech by the Roma activist

“Citizens! The comrade from the Thrane movement has stepped out of the past and calls on us to continue the fight. I can report to you that our mothers put up resistance!

They ran away when they were to be interned at Svanviken, the labour colony set up by the Astrup family and their pastors for

us, Roma, a hundred years ago. As punishment, my mother was sterilized by the mission. I was put into an orphanage at Rostad on Inderøy. They took away our families, our language and our songs. They taught us that something was wrong with us, that we are a mistake for which we can only blame ourselves. As an adult, I have fought against forced sterilization.

To this day, I fight for the truth about the Roma people in Norway and Europe. For centuries we have lived at the fringes of society, as pariahs, as slaves and servants.

The capitalists of the 19th century, like the Astrup family in this case, the big farmers, the manufacturers, they all needed cheap labour. As an «inferior race» that was to be brought up to become useful members of society, they did not have to pay us, Roma.

The Parliament passed laws against us. We were destined for extinction. Until the eighties, the Church and the so-called “welfare system” systematically legitimized and institutionalized the racist and sexist biopolitics against us Roma, aided by science and special laws.

Today, those of us who are left are guaranteed cultural rights. A museum, a music festival, a biotope of cultures. But behind the colourful backdrop, the logic of inequality forges ahead!

Competition and exclusion are what keep capitalism alive. By stigmatizing certain groups, capitalists force down the price of labour.

Let us not spin around in the circle of cultural autonomies!

We need a coalition of all those who are marginalized, of migrants and refugees!

Day labourers, harvest workers, domestic servants, nannies, elder care workers, sex workers, organize!

For solidarity with the precarious class! Get out of the camps!

We need a Romanistan that breaks down all the barriers!

A Romanistan without limits!

A Romanistan in which land, water and air belong to all!”⁵

5 Speech written by Rena Rädle and Vladan Jeremić for the piece “Red Winter”, developed for the Deep sites art festival organized 2014 by LevArt in Levanger, adapted to the “Rolling Classroom” during the Karnivalet, March 3 2019, Oslo.

Speech by the anti-fascist resistance fighter

“Citizens! I stood up against the Nazis because I did not want their racist ideology to continue determining our lives.

I fought for liberation!

Like many of us working people from Lademoen, I joined the communists in Trondheim. Some of us gave their lives in the fight against fascism in Spain!

When the German fascists occupied Norway, we carried out sabotage missions against their labour camps.

We succeeded in helping several Yugoslavs and Russians escape across the border to Sweden. Many of us, Sami from the Verdal mountains, were involved. I was tortured at the Gestapo camp in Falstad to reveal the names of other resistance fighters and their supporters among the population. I almost did not survive.

After the war, our resistance was buried in silence. Many were arrested as spies. Not until last year did some of our fighters receive official honours.

The doctrine of superiority of the Norwegian culture and a Christian education, have continued to justify the assimilationist policy against us, Sami.

Its goal has always been entirely mundane: to prevent us from raising any territorial claims to our land!

In a long, drawn-out process we have fought for our political rights ever since Alta.

But what can the Sami Parliament do against the interests of international oil, mining and fishing corporations? When one per cent have all the wealth, what good is democracy?

We demand that everyone have a say in the use of natural resources!

But the new logic scoffs at the human rights of the poor and the weak: It touts «all against all» as a fight for freedom!

Be vigilant: new fascism is prospering under the guise of anti-terrorism. Put an end to total surveillance!

6 Speech written by Rena Rådle and Vladan Jeremić for the piece “Red Winter”, developed for the Deep sites art festival organized 2014 by LevArt in Levanger, adapted to the “Rolling Classroom” during the Karnivalet, March 3 2019, Oslo.

Away with private security companies and mercenary armies!
Stop the drone war!”⁶

Speech by the activist for a radical ecological turnaround

“I greet you, my dear friends, in the language of the people of this northern landscape.

Inaudibly for you, I greet the stones under our feet and the distant mountains from which they were hewn. My inner self receives the screeching answers of birds that mingle with the roar of the wind.

Fossil capitalism has forged an alliance with death!

Using ever more destructive methods, it forces out all natural wealth from our planet. We human inhabitants of Norway are among the infinitely small percentage of living things that immediately and directly profit from the destruction of the earth. With oil drilling planned in the Arctic, the Barents Sea and off the coast of Lofoten, we endanger our last untouched marine regions.

Do we really believe that quick profits such as these will enable our descendants to survive the collapse of the ecosystem? Last year, we achieved an important victory in the fight for the Lofoten Islands. But we demand more:

Stop all oil production in the Arctic!

I agree with the comrade from the Thrane movement of the 19th century: we need a revolution, and we are the ones who must spark it off!

I agree with the Romanistan activist that we must not simply retreat into our own biotope, but need to enter into coalitions that rise above homo sapiens as a species! The resistance fighter from World War II is right when he says that fascism is on its way back. We can see it right in the midst of society: in the racist campaign slogans of so-called patriotic parties, in the pamphlets of young people filled with hate, in the neo-Nazi attacks on migrants and Roma throughout Europe.

If the struggles of the past are not to be in vain, we need to adopt a new and far more radical position!

The old logic that places the individual at the centre of the world is too limited.

We need a radical, a truly revolutionary change in perspective!

Away with anthropocentrism!

The inhabitants of the seas, the skies and the earth are our allies.

The plants and the minerals are our comrades!

Let us regard the revolution from the perspective of the sand!

Let us write our slogans in the language of the ocean's depth!

Let us proclaim the revolution with the sounds of all animate and inanimate matter!"⁷

7 Speech written by Rena Rädle and Vladan Jeremić for the piece "Red Winter", developed for the Deep sites art festival organized 2014 by LevArt in Levanger, adapted to the "Rolling Classroom" during the Karnivalet, March 3 2019, Oslo.

Rena Rädle, The Language of Political Agitation in “Red Winter” and “Rolling Classroom”

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