

“It Ain’t Over ’til It’s Over”

Colonialism – Modernity - Racism – Art

It seems we are to believe that so-called “post-colonial” artists, whose lives were, and often still are influenced by, if not actually suffering from, the trials and tribulations of acts originating in words and deeds of once unashamed zealous champions of Eurocentric modernity, should now be free from the urgency and necessity to shackle social and political responsibility to their work, and that they should be able “to go forth and multiply” their creations, without worries, enjoying these - to coin Paul Feyerabend’s and Arthur C. Danto’s famously misunderstood phrase - “anything goes” times, to express themselves. The term post-colonialism is generally interpreted in two main ways. Firstly it is a de facto historical period, which starts after the departure of the old colonists and the inauguration of a new government, whose members of parliament are primarily from the indigenous population. Secondly, it is an intellectual movement which attempts to engage and eek out understanding from colonialism’s various political, social and cultural institutions, and to interpret and put into perspective the distribution of power and the rights of the individual within it, as well as to deal with the narratives, discourses and structures that it produces. Neither of these definitions have been as yet, nor it seems can be transposed into art, since artists working under the banner of the first premise are doomed to fudging the object of their endeavors, as the lands which were colonised, are still colonised, in more or less the same way they were, before their “liberations” - through surrogates and Trojan horses - and on the second front - the intellectual philosophical front - most artists who fall into this category limit themselves, if at all, to naïve “shock and awe” tactics, neither involving themselves with the intricacies of histories, systems, philosophies and politics of such subjugated territories nor with possible utopias of what they could become. Our view is that contemporary so-called “post-colonial” artists, live in times that are as fraught with injustices of a colonial nature as any of those experienced by previous generations, and such persons involved in artistic and aesthetic pursuits, (on whatever side of the colonial fence he or she, may perchance have been born) should still, and perhaps more than ever, keep these obvious truths firmly to the fore when pursuing the realisation of their art.

It is perfectly understandable that artists who personally experienced the horrors of colonialism may now be experiencing a prolonged genuine joy at being apparently free at last, no longer harnessed to the yolk of foreign exploitation or subjected to daily legally sanctioned racism. The realisation of a previously hoped for, but for decades if not centuries long, undreamable state may have clouded some faculties and could be responsible for an often lack of political

understanding and engagement in many walks of life including the arts – a type of post-traumatic euphoria, at least for the moment; but for those who benefited regally from the injustices of colonialism, and who are perhaps suffering from post-euphoric trauma, there seem to be other forces at play; many from this second group are attempting to re-write history through their art, with retrospectives romanticising the struggles of the past which they it is now revealed were tacitly supporting (or not!). This latter artistic category is through their misleading utterances giving cover to new hegemonic adventures through deliberate subterfuge or ignorance. A proper response to the ongoing situation would be varying degrees of anti-colonialism, whatever that might be, and although some artists do have the framework and freedom to attempt such work, most are so occupied with themselves, and dependent on the very viruses for which they are vaguely seeking antidotes, that their attempts end invariably in embarrassing failure. We find ourselves, in fact, not in a post-colonial, but a neo-colonial era. Trying to extricate oneself from the gory past, (and present too!) is either hedonism, ignorance or stupidity. Looking over one's shoulder, admiring the sunset, many seem to be unaware that severe storms are already upon us.

For the millions that have had to brave the slings and arrows of others (unfounded) claims to outrageous fortunes, the mixture of modernity and colonialism - famous partners in crime and unashamed acts of avarice, pride, lust and envy - whether under the banners of Christianity or Islam, has been a potent and often lethal cocktail. The quality of life for the victims of colonialism, whether one speaks in terms of health, education or human rights has since the invasions and pillage of these territories, gone from bad to worse. The Messiah did not arrive, only disease, murder, rape and enslavement, and the stashes of pilfered and extorted gold and diamonds, from Africa and the "New World" in palaces and museums across Europe, from Lisbon to London, from Berlin to Barcelona, humped and carted by slaves and forced laborers even 'til today, vouch for this hegemonic criminality. The way of life that has emerged during the cultural and political developments of the final decades of the 20th century is tinged by euphoric feelings of repressed relief, and guilt.

Since the fall of Byzantine, modernity's advances coupled with Eurocentric supremest expansionism (colonialism) – (it had several flavours, the English, French, Belgian, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and German) - did not contribute among the colonised to any feeling that a new world order of freedom and equality was rapidly approaching; quite the contrary, the champions of modernity and colonialism, in direct opposition to the noble philosophical and political ideals enunciated by their intellectual and spiritual masters, rode rough shod over hordes of populations, subjugating men, women and children to unimaginable degradations, dehumanisations and humiliations. Languages were forbidden, lands illegally confiscated, hands amputated, histories were eradicated or declared null and void, all this done to satisfy an insatiable lust for gold, power and sex; to find Eldorado and the source of the Nile. The more modernity developed its sciences and technologies, the more the colonists were able to contain the masses, at home and abroad. Guns, canons, locomotives, the guillotine,

the bomb, the Internet, all tools to implement modernity's inexorable "will to power". This drive toward domination of peoples and lands persists up till today. Recent side effects of this colonialism/modernity cocktail, such as wars and bouts of ethnic cleansing enabled by some of modernity's most hideous inventions have meant death, destruction and despair for millions. Industrial disasters where the desire to make profit exceeded the will to implement adequate safety measures, should also not be forgotten. Some peoples (and species), never recovered from the twin assault of modernity and colonialism, and have been simply obliterated from the face of the earth. Tasmanians, Taino, Arawak along with the Dodo to mention but a few unfortunates! One of the most recent and significant bouts of colonial activity started with Columbus' expeditions to the Americas and ended with the ANC's and Nelson Mandela's stand against apartheid in South Africa. Although wrongs seem to have been righted, lands given back, restitutions sometimes paid, and even truth and reconciliation apparently achieved, observers can easily see that the real problems of the world have in no way been appeased. Those who had in the sixties and seventies visions of a fast approaching Utopia, where human rights would be observed, differences of gender, race or religion tolerated, and where a fairer distribution of resources would be the norm, have had their hopes ignominiously dashed. The struggle has actually become more difficult to define, since the enemy, if you will, has become embedded in us. Art under post modernity does its best to gloss over all possibility for serious discourse, by which is meant that it tampers with the symptoms but leaves the root causes untouched. The king is dead, god save the king. On the other hand however, it is an undeniable fact that since the Renaissance and the rediscovery of the works of Greek and Roman philosophers, mathematicians, poets and historians, which led to an explosion of scientific inventions and developments, that the lot of a great many inhabitants of the planet, and particularly, initially, those of the "Old World", has considerably improved. The filth, ignorance, pest and squalor that were the norm in Europe for aeons, have become distant memories. The "New World" also benefited from modernity's advances, and soon followed suit. The second and particularly the third worlds are still scrambling to catch up. Although as mentioned above a great orbit of colonialism came to an end with Mandela, other forms of colonialism have sprung up, like the projects now underway in Iraq, Libya and Syria, or have been ever present, but on the back burner such as the ongoing brutal colonisations and re-colonisations in Sudan by raiders from the north, of lands that historically (for thousands of years, one could say since before time began!) belong to black Africans, with it seems, the tacit consent of the international community. Cycles of colonialism are neither concentric nor finite, talk of post-colonialism, however one wishes to interpret it, is premature and naïve. The king is dead, long live the king.

As far as modernity is concerned, some have already said their good-byes to the movement, but for most of us, its basic attributes, rationality, progress and hard work, individualism, human rights and a secular society are still the order of the day. Attempts have been made to divide modernity into grande and petit depending on where it is occurring and who or what is driving it; these analyses

shed valuable theoretical light onto modernity's multi-faceted persona, but they neither address the problem of its de facto position and its imminent or actual closure, nor in the event of its survival, where one might or could best go, from where we now find ourselves. Modernity is an incomplete project (Habermas) and remains in tact for those who have an optimistic view of the future based on the successes of the past, and who overlook or disassociate themselves from the crude and often criminal implementations of some of its high profile failures. (Hiroshima, Holocaust, Chernobyl, Bhopal, Shell in Nigeria, WW1 & WW2).

Art has been at the heart of the dissemination and propagation of the ideas and views of ruling regimes, whichever they were. Artists have played and still play an important role in the process of understanding and remembering particular events and personages, and if necessary in distorting our memories and our natural sense of decency and humanity to fit the stringent precepts of those that benefit from mass ignorance, those whose often far-fetched projects require the participation of ordinary folk, (workers, soldiers) for their realisation. The practice of the glorification of the status quo by many artists, coupled with official policies of producing and promoting uncritical, pacifying artworks, has had a numbing and excluding effect upon non-mainstream narratives, contributing to the repression of views that do not corroborate generally accepted societal norms; alternative perceptions, particularly those relating to questions of ethics, race, women, religion and sexual orientation have been studiously neglected. Minority views are often just not exhibited, printed or played. Apart from that, it is quite alarming to realise just how many painters, video artists, sculptors, installation artists, classical, rock and jazz musicians, are just oiling the cogs of the dilapidated and outdated social and economic machinery, which ironically, temporarily at least, provides the framework, for their survival and potential triumphs. Artists of former ages, were generally employed to corroborate the policies and affirm the popularity of persons who were prominent and powerful in their day. Portraits of "important people", gods and saints as well as religious icons and monuments were commissioned by rulers, aristocrats, the church and the well-to-do. These artisans, we might say bounty-painters, were not employed to think, comment, criticise or express their personal views about anything, but rather to follow briefs and generally, flatter their patrons. It is true that some artists did develop arcane personal languages, enabling them to express their true feelings on certain matters within the framework of their art, but this was not desired, it was not their function, nor was it the norm. The potential contemporary critical function of art, as a counterbalance to the status quo, was until at least the advent of the camera, practically unknown. It has been said that the camera, and other means of accurately reproducing images and plastics, has freed the artist to express what he formerly was not allowed to express. Regrettably however, a brief perusal of the contemporary art scene cannot confirm this theory. Pretty palatable pictures, sculptures or installations, with individualistic expressions and "strong colours" are in ever increasing demand. Critical aporias less so. The fundamentals of the western way of life, are continually being confirmed, rubber stamped, taken for granted. Artists who now have the freedom to create alternatives and utopias, unfortu-

nately often just keep on doing the same ol' thing. Ricoeur expresses this very clearly and eloquently in *Time and Narrative*. While one camp of politically disinterested artists, has been busy painting flowers and landscapes, taking "cool" photos, making distorted portraits of themselves and their friends, slapping paint on canvass with wild abandon, the other camp has been preoccupied with displaying their personal phobias, psychological problems and hang-ups through their pictures, plastics and installations. Yet another camp tries to keep things light hearted, with smirky "do you get it?" art(?). The opportunity to redirect art, to let art lead the way, rather than follow the trend, to let art shoulder a responsibility and open up human understanding to alternative, usually repressed meanings; to establish between artist and viewer a dialogue of enigmatic suggestions and metaphoric connotations, in which points of equivocation and undecidability would betray stable, known meanings, is being continually lost. There is much material that could be used as a springboard, to propel us toward a new way of doing and understanding art and life. Let us for a moment take a look at three regularly recurring phenomena, which at the moment seem to instigate very little criticism and almost never from artists.

1. In the popular Western film genre, especially those made by the big Hollywood studios in the mid-decades of the 20th century, we often see sequences where First Nations representatives are employed by the US cavalry to track their own, apparently, errant warriors. Such acts of subterfuge and espionage, which have contributed to the decimation of indigenous populations not only in the Americas, but everywhere where colonialist interventions have occurred, are oftentimes interpreted by screenplay authors and directors, as acts of heroism and patriotism, simply because these acts are perpetrated in the interests of the US' inexorable march to modernity. In such depictions most consumers gulp down a very unpleasant cocktail of racism, colonialism, and the unquestionable superiority of the white man's way of life without so much as realizing that they are being brain-washed. By extension of course, one is led to believe that we – (the viewer) "defenders of the free world" - have the right to decimate lets not say destroy, the lives of all those who do not think and live as we do. Many artists do just the same, they loyally create their oeuvre innocently defending a society which does not really want to have anything to do with them; they work against their own and all artists longterm interests – like lemmings with their misplaced sense of survival jumping to their death, they do this for the simple reason that they have been reliably informed that it is the way to endure, to sustain peace and tranquility, and lets not forget democracy, in the society in which they live. (The preservation of the status quo is apparently of paramount importance, otherwise all chaos would break out and god knows, coca cola shares might fall, or the distribution of wealth in Saudi Arabia might suddenly be more equitable!)

2. Wars are breaking out all the time, and on both sides, armies, soldiers, men and women are killing and abusing each other. The common (extraordinary!) soldier often does not understand the true reasons for the fight he finds himself in, and his adversaries in arms, (not the generals and the planners) just like him are equally perplexed and in the dark. A few propaganda slogans are

enough to get such victims of society onto the battle field, and after that, they are fighting to defend other's interests, from whom they will gain no advantage should they have the luck to survive the military campaigns. Soldiers' pointless sanctioned murder of innocent people, the destruction of homes and crops continues unabated and to all intents and purposes, uncriticized.

3. The depiction of non white races, particularly negroes has until recently been invariably of a derogatory nature. Hitler and co. in their propaganda films instigated a media based vitriol against what they called "der Untermensch", that is what he considered to be non-Aryans. (It seems that he did not know what an Aryan really is!). As is well known, Gypsies and Jews were the main targets of his campaigns although black people were also in his sights. These days the main bogey-man, if you will is the black man. He is dangerous, he is wild and uncontrollable a hinderance apparently to modernity – although the economic might of many a country has been forged through his endeavors, forced or otherwise - and as such needs to be treated with suspicion and of course he must be contained. This perception is being pounded into all and sundry, black, white, brown yellow and apparently even into dogs. (A story was in the newspapers a while ago, about a dog which allegedly did not like black people, it was propounded that this dumb animal could smell the difference between blacks and whites, and always barked and even tried to bite people from the African Diaspora whenever he came into contact with them – if this is true, then the poor animal must have lapped up the overflowing racism of his owner, and taken on the mantle of his owner's persona!). Amadou Diallo, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Rodney King and Christopher Adler are just a few examples of this trend to mistreat the black man. There is a failure to bring perpetrators of human rights violations against these members of society to justice. Actually Christopher Adler fits into both the second and the third categories above, having served in the British forces, only to die under suspicious circumstances later, as a civilian in police custody. The above three examples are just the tip one of one of the iceberg of the myriad icebergs, floating around in the uncharted and unreflected philosophical waters, of our subconsciouses. There have been attempts to be fair, some more successful than others, to develop alternative narratives within the arts, that somewhat deferred from the role that so much art has inherited or had thrust upon it; these attempts a bit like circus tricks performed by tigers with drawn teeth, have had exhilarating moments, when it seemed that something really new was in the air, - a hope, a new direction, a change - but in retrospect, these isolated events were almost always ruses, designed to stimulate the interest of the ticket buying public, little more. This is especially so in countries where the arts finds most sponsorship yet ironically, where the general public's perception and understanding of the day to day survival struggles of others, less fortunate often victims of all kinds of officially approved atrocities (invasions, ethnic cleansings, internationally orchestrated starvation programs etc.), is limited. The political debate amongst art lovers in the free world, concerning the plight of populations which have suffered repeated ignominious assaults, including policies of apartheid and ethnic cleansing up 'til today, is muted, at best superficial. The consciences of this elite Eurocentric

culturally interested class, regarding raped and plundered, “strange people and lands”, are cleared with smiles of compassion and a little charity.

The framework within which practically all contemporary art operates is that of the capital state. This means that artists create not necessarily only to make money, although there are many who are primarily motivated by dollar signs, but that their creations, commercial or otherwise, are made for a society which acts upon the principle of “Lets make money”, which is as inherent to our globalised society today as it was in more insular artistic environments, twenty or fifty years ago. In this sense it seems once again, nothing has changed. Between the acknowledgement, that modernity and colonialism are ever present, and the reality that artists generally work within the framework of a society based upon the principles of capitalism, we must ask ourselves, by what criteria should artists these days make works, and what is their changing role within the grande bourgeois scheme? What is certain is that the societal position of artists has changed, whether they like it or not. They work in an bewildering environment, shimmering between (neo) colonialism and (post) modernity, with capitalist ideology the over-riding principle. The artist should no longer be a phony historian, repeating the “known”; (as it would please main stream history book writers and policy makers to see it) spoon fed utterances from sources of dubious, yet curiously enough, unquestioned ; this is after all what artists did for millenia, and it instigated no significant societal or political changes – nor should she keep an elaborate note book full of personal, often irrelevant disconnected experiences of love and sadness, of gain and loss, of humour, but rather the artist should be a distorter of known views, a re-evaluer, a creator of aporias, which chastise and tease the viewer, who herself then champs and chaffs at the bit of her harness of misinformation – her formal education. To make progress the viewer must throw overboard much, she ever learned or knew. As the Eurocentric, phalocentric view of the world, which has studiously looked down, morally and ethically upon other cultures loses confidence and slowly dies, alternatives will spring up from the most unexpected sources. Words operate lineally, over time, but an object of artistic expression makes more of an immediate impact – fuller understanding of visual art of course, also takes time, but that deepened understanding comes from the viewers contemplations and re-evaluations vis a vis signs and signifiers within the piece. What one sees is not what a work of art was at its moment of completion, but what it has become in the time in between its originary moment, (if there ever really was one) and the forever changing now. In this sense, the perception of an art work is continually changing, moving on, taking on new meanings at every viewing, and at each twist and turn of each life that looks upon it. The metaphoric nature of art, its very presence is continually evolving; one is continually seeing with new eyes, feeling with different hearts. The viewer becomes a surrogate shaman, sensing, seeing and hearing that which causes friction within her. The whole of the interpretation of literature and the arts is balanced upon this precarious construction. The rewriting of art is not a new variation on an old theme, but a brand new start, a novel de-sedimentatory approach, a de-construction a priori of apparently known premises; a new presentation that should not be

easily understandable, where the metaphoric nature of the artistic language, - the visual-sound – inspires complexity, divergence, doubt and sometimes bewilderment in its interpretation, and where the various levels and perspectives innately prefabricated in such artworks, create Gordian knots of uncertainty and undecidability, which not only defy norms of hitherto accepted formal education and social conditioning, but also probe cracks in the veracity of tacitly accepted rules of life, that have remained generally unquestioned, without interpretation, have been overlooked or have been superficially pasted over. Artists involved in this new understanding of their work, will also have to come to terms with the myriad lies of omission, which have moulded us into what we are. Derrida speaking of Rousseau writes, “On the one hand, representative, fallen, secondary, instituted writing (for us art) in the literal and strict sense, is condemned”, “on the other hand . . . writing (for us art) in the metaphoric sense, natural, divine and living writing, (art) is venerated; it is equal in dignity to the origin of value, to the voice of conscience as divine law, to the heart”. (Derrida – Of Grammatology P.17) Most individuals however never seek much more than a mirror, to appease their vanity, a narcissistic echo, and for this reason, much art has become little more than a futile exercise in self gratification on the part of the viewer and the doer! Playing to the gallery was almost certainly not what most artists had in mind as they idealistically embarked upon their careers, but it is that which has been forced upon them, especially that select band of “successful” artists, in the name of survival. The king is dead. Let him lay. Over time, the names of artists and agents have changed of course, but the fundamental art world script has to all intents and purposes remained the same, and actually through the development of new tools of transportation, trade and production, the undertaking of schemes and adventures in the art world, for those privileged enough to have access to these technologies has become particularly lucrative.

Art today should be in direct confrontation with the established order. One could take inspiration from Queen Candace’s military success against a certain Alexander of Macedonia, at the first cataract in BC 332. Against all the odds she an African woman, and her army faced down a force led by one of the apparent geniuses of western civilisation. As Camus, mentions art should follow an anti-Alexander way (speech 1957). Artists who persist with their uncritical appeasement of the status quo are simply servants of the enlightenment. A Candacist fearlessly faces down “...ism”, “...ology”, “...ity” et al, and perceives the world with new eyes, new ears and a new understanding. She should try to make art the pathway to a better way of life, one hitherto unseen on the planet, and she should remain steadfast when the inevitable criticisms and onslaughts marshalled by well armed, intellectuals arrive; those who fearing for their own petty lifestyles do and say everything possible to destroy really new ideas which provoke change, and thereby put in jeopardy their own oft ill gotten privileges. Art created in the spirit of Candace is a starting point for utopias not dogged by the repetitive failures of previous generations, it is not influenceable by impressive presentations of Eurocentric, phalocentric, histories, religions, philosophies with which so many have been indoctrinated. Between artist and viewer flows a dialogue of enigmatic suggestions and connotations, in which the viewer must

invent her language to understand the art. She must stop, look, and listen, and be prepared to learn and believe much that she was never taught, and to negate much that she has received as unimpeachable truth. The impossible becomes possible, accolades and past glories, become shameful embarrassments, truth becomes lie, and lies truth. The art of Candace innately combats racism, classism and sexism. It is often said that artists repeat themselves, but put more precisely it must be said that all artists not only naïvely repeat the knowledge and experiences that they have internalised due to their cultural and social conditioning, which originate in the thoughts and ideas of others, (education and experience) but also unconsciously repeat the ethereal echo of their inner world over which they have no firm control; this latter is present in all that is thought, said and done. The personal voice, the “sign and divinity have the same place and time of birth”. (Deridda, *Of Grammatology* P. 14)

Now it is not being said that all artists are non-political, or even apolitical, and on the other side of the coin, it is quite likely that most consider themselves to be absolutely political, however this rarely shows itself in their works. A plump denial or reversal of obvious incongruities, or a sensational photo does not amount to political work. “Art does not reproduce what we see; rather, it makes us see.” (Klee) Actually the work of the artist in the twenty first century should not be related anymore to what it has been over the centuries, but totally rethought, and re-evaluated. The artist should not be a simple reflector of some aspect of her or other’s inner or outer being, she should be able to get far enough away from her own self interest to initiate narratives of a deeply deconstructed nature. A priori desedimented, so that it is not that the viewer takes the picture apart, but that she rather puts it together again. (unlike Humpty Dumpty!) The answer or solution to such works is always eluding the viewer, but is leading and beckoning her to make decisions that will have an effect upon her local, and ultimately her supra-local environments. The signs of the artist should be of a metaphoric nature, non- demonstrative, ambiguous. Her work should not appease, eulogise or make simple explosive statements and protests. The rules for an artist will become more defined, and ironically the scope of her canvass(es) for expression enormously expanded. As the importance of an artist’s technical prowess wanes in significance, so will her image-sound rise in relevance, become of superior importance, at the expense of even the actual individual “notes” of her works. This will not necessarily lead to more abstract pieces, but to works that require a little more time and thought to decipher; to find the traces within them. “Abstract artists” and others, unable, or not wishing to get involved in any historical, philosophical or political discourses, at least not in public, will continue to plunge into orgies of shapes and colors, but these works, as has always been the case, will neither shed illuminating interpretations to disturb the apparent solid foundations of many historical “facts”, nor will they attempt to ignite fires of discontent. These abstract artists of yester-year rather douse suggestions of political fire and agitation, with post-modernity; they sit, smoking or drinking their favorite drug. For at least a thousand years the conflict between church/ mosque and state was one of the main issues causing strife within and between states; in previous times, (which in some places are still with us) both

of these institutions had a direct influence on the freedom, mobility and ideal moral conduct of the people under their auspices. Today, modern, western governments are no longer so concerned with these matters, since power and control lie elsewhere. Subjects no longer live within national boundaries, but are “world citizens” in the worst sense of the phrase. The Internet, (a monolithic machine), is perhaps the best example of this tendency to blur boundaries, leaves no stone unturned in efforts to gain attention, brainwash, control and influence individuals. This opaque apparatus, ironically however, wields a relentless sword of transparency over all who use it. Absolute power in the “hands” of an unknowable henchmachine fueled by the most valuable of raw resources – human endeavor and software programs. Artists have cottoned on to this new tool and apparently have greatly increased their ability to create, and perhaps more importantly to sell their art. Be that as it may, one must add, that this instrument of modernity’s empowerment, which can colonise and control with ease and is perhaps the best method for the dissemination of information ever devised, is only as efficacious as its users. With the Internet, perhaps more than with any other yet invented device, post-modernity’s smoke screens can give cover to neo-colonial sins under the flag of post-colonialism. (Apparently the least of most evils)! Many of the “Kunst” genres that are currently in vogue, (photography, abstract expressionism, primitive, formalistic, minimalistic, serial, and various cocktails of the above) mark similar artistic terrain to that occupied by artists and artistic movements which thrived say before 1945. The artistic offspring of these artists, a resilient class progeny, has weathered the inconveniences of the post war diminishing of their colonial influence, by grasping at various straws to maintain their gender, class and racial stranglehold on art and its market. Apparently now art is post-modern and post-colonial, (terms invented conveniently on cue by their intellectual class comrades) which endows such artists with the right to ignore history and camouflage clandestine neo-colonial intentions. They have regrouped and changed their uniforms, but their influence and their stories remain to all intents and purposes unchanged. We can observe a parallel phenomenon in the business world; corporations, colonise, corrupt and cause mayhem in similar ways to their buccaneer & privateer forefathers. These ventures, just like in days gone by, are embarked upon with the backing of governments, which generally do everything in their power to make sure that their class brothers in economic arms come to no harm, protected by the press, the media, and if need be human lives ie. soldiers. Between Queen Isabella I of Castile’s support for Christopher Columbus, and President George W. Bush’s carte blanche to Blackwater lies more than five hundred years, but the policies themselves it seems are virtually identical, unlawful intervention undertaken under the banner of the inexorable march of European modernity.

We are talking about cows that never lay on a meadow, chickens that never saw the sun, and human-beings who have also been so treated; man’s irrational behavior towards his own kind, towards nature, towards art.

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