

ALTERED VIEWS

Voluspa Jarpa has presented her project for the Chilean Pavilion of the 58th Venice Biennale under the title "Altered Views." The project originates in a question the artist seeks to answer: how is the modernist, Eurocentric and colonial gaze configured? The gaze that later expands from Europe to the USA and constructs a symbolic contempt that is imposed as political, cultural and economic subjugation in non-hegemonic regions?

This is the beginning of a new research project which takes as its starting point the crossover between different cases in European history from the 17th to the 20th Century, based on the activity of seeing, observing and analyzing as a construction of the gaze. To do so, the work seeks to rescue concepts coined from a Eurocentric perspective that shed light on the violence with which the world is reduced to an expansionist, developmentalist and hegemonic model; and to verify this through specific historical cases from which she builds a structure and conceptualization derived from scientific and cultural discourses. Thus, the project is divided into three parts, starting with The Hegemonic Museum, followed by The Subaltern Portrait Gallery, and finishing with the final space by The Emancipatory Opera.

The whole journey is presented as a process in which the gaze is de-colonized. At the same time it questions cultural constructions, since the historical narrative, centralized in Europe and manufactured since the time of absolutist monarchies, transformed all other cultural histories into peripheral histories, and also banished the internal contradictions of these models from its own identity and narrative, reflecting them towards peripheral cultures.

The six case studies presented at The Hegemonic Museum bring together concepts with which the colonies were defined: from cannibalism as a taboo, race and miscegenation, subaltern masculinities and gender conceptions, to civilization and barbarism, and the conflict between monarchy and republic. Using the same hegemonic cultural and scientific forms, the museum serves to study and analyse the behavior of the white, heterosexual, patriarchal, and

hegemonic male, which in turn triggered the start of the project.

As an outcome of the process of decolonization itself, the forms that were adopted locally in the colonies are questioned as new forms of hegemony that erase other know-how, forms and knowledge that were supplanted or forgotten in the hegemonic colonial legacy. Therefore, it could be hypothesized that the concepts imposed on the other are products of the rejection and projection of one's own; in this sense, the project seeks to make the counterpoint between hegemony and subalternity perceptible, thereby tracing the paths to contemporary emancipation.

The project is an invitation to reflect on issues that prevail and are still visible in our contemporary society, such as racism, patriarchy, economic interests and diverse hegemonic forms, contemporary vestiges of the colonial mentality.

Agustín Pérez Rubio
Curator

I. THE HEGEMONIC MUSEUM

Welcome to The Hegemonic Museum

Presented for the 58th Venice Biennale, this research, analysis, and conservation space presents different case-studies of European hegemony from the 17th to the 20th Century. A hegemony expressed in the domination that was inherent in a modernist, Eurocentric and colonial worldview, later to be transmitted and radiated to the rest of the hegemonic countries successively to this day.

The Museum presents this hegemony in six case studies of the European male, white, heterosexual, patriarchal, monarchical, culturally and economically "superior," and present in the very concepts with which the colonies were coined and conceived. European ways of doing, looking and analyzing are submitted to the public for study, in order to understand how the hegemonic psyche developed a whole series of complex mechanisms of oppression that emerged in concepts like race and miscegenation, subaltern male subjects, cannibalism, imperialism, gender conceptions, civilization and barbarism, and the conflictive relations between monarchy and republic.

In order to materialize this journey across time and through the history of Western Europe, we will review six historical events and the symbolic representations they contain through documents, paintings, cartoons, documentaries, photographs, and others. The Hegemonic Museum will expose the counterpoints to the notions of civilization with which the European discourse, subsequently exported to the United States and other countries—including the colonies through some of their hegemonic elites—upheld the centralization of its expansionist power, based on concepts of race, barbarism and colonialism.

In conceptual terms, the different temporalities of the events, as well as the various places where they occurred, aim to redefine the notion of civilization through taboos that are part of European and Christian culture. Timeless repressed contradictions are emphasized, such as the conflict over the subsistence of the monarchical system in the 21st Century, the relations between Cold War and monarchy, the relations between contemporary capitalism and colonialism, the similarities of subalternity between race and gender.

The spectator can follow the cases, numbered from 1 to 6, chronologically. We invite you to see and study the complexity of the European hegemonic psyche and mirroring yourself; as Aníbal Quijano noted: the Eurocentric perspective of knowledge operates like a mirror that distorts what it reflects.

That is to say, the image we find in that mirror is not entirely an illusion.

We hope you enjoy your visit and that it generates new reflections and new questions about our own visions, viewpoints and contemporary thoughts.

Thank you for your visit.

CASE 1. RAMPJAAR - A CASE OF EUROPEAN CANNIBALISM

In the 17th Century Holland had opted for a republican form of government. The regents conceived the State as "true freedom" and as the product of collective leadership. Johan de Witt, leader of the regents, backed the idea that a state without a centralized authority was more beneficial than a monarchy. The Republic no longer abided by the canons of monarchies. The vulnerability perceived in this difference caused Louis XIV to annex Dutch lands, undermine Holland's diplomatic defenses then invade accompanied by English and Bavarian troops. This was called the year of the 1672 disaster, or Rampjaar, and meant panic, massacres and desolation for the citizens of the Republic.

Looking for a scapegoat for the disaster, in a climate of indignation and terror, Johan de Witt's brother, Cornelius, was ambushed in The Hague. On August 20, 1672, Johan and Cornelius de Witt were lynched, murdered, and horribly mutilated. The symbolism of these mutilations was described by the Spiegel author, van Staet, who equated the abuse of their bodies with the mutilated Republic. The Witts were skinned and partly eaten by the crowd, including their genitals.

The Rampjaar or year of national shame, is captured in a popular saying that is both a riddle and an equation of disaster:
HET VOLK REDELOOS, REGERING RADELOOS IN HET LAND REDELOOS / THE FORMULA FOR DISASTER: AN IRRATIONAL PEOPLE, A DESPERATE GOVERNMENT AND A COUNTRY BEYOND RESCUE.

CASE 2. VIENNA'S FIRST ASSOCIATION OF DEMOCRATIC WOMEN: HOW THE EPHEMERAL WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTY WAS RIDICULED

In Vienna in 1848, after two months of a republican constitution, an uprising allowed the Liberals to get a Constituent Assembly elected. On August 21, 1848, a drastic reduction in the salaries of women workers in the public sector led to demonstrations in which 18 people died and 282 were injured. On August 28, 1848, Baroness Karoline von Perin founded the First Vienna Democratic Women's Association.

On October 17 of that year the women's association organized a demonstration in front of the Reichstag, attended by 300 women who –with a thousand signatures of support– proposed that a plebiscite be held for women's labour rights, more equality and education. The petition and the women's association were dismissed as an absurd venture and publicly attacked in pamphlets and cartoons in the press. Acid criticism mocked the idea of the new world proposed by women, using cartoons of a sexual nature with humiliating scenes of submission, and others depicting females taking their revenge on men both in the public and private (family and sexual)

spheres, evoking a future in which female freedoms would imply disaster for male society. Lacking social support, the movement was dissolved. Denial of women's right to political association was sealed in the Associations Law of 1867. For women, political participation was restricted to charitable and children's associations.

CASE 3. HUMAN ZOOS: THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF COLONIALISM AND THE POPULARIZATION OF SCIENTIFIC RACISM

The phenomenon of human zoos as exhibited in Europe served to affirm the principles of economic expansionism by constructing the notions of savages, the exotic, and the "other." From 1815 to 1958 they signified the popularization of European racism and the legitimation of the territorial conquest of non-European sites. After 1874, and with Germany taking the lead, the creator of human zoos was the animal trader Karl Hagenbeck. He mounted shows exhibiting individuals from "exotic" peoples. In the first year these shows received a million visits. On May 6, 1889, the Universal Exhibition was held in Paris. In the context of the celebration of the Revolution and its slogan of Equality, Fraternity and Liberty, individuals from the Selk'nam indigenous people kidnapped from Tierra del Fuego were exhibited as savages, along with other aborigines. The Lumière brothers made films of the exhibition, recording their massive attendance and the public's delight in these human spectacles. The Acclimatization Garden in Paris was one of the places built as sets for exhibiting animals, plants and "savages." The "scientific viewing" also served to emphasize the cultural differences between Western and non-European nations, giving a "scientific" purpose for the scrutiny of these bodies. In Darwin's travel journals we read that he regarded the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego as "the most abject and miserable creatures." Darwin arrived at the erroneous conviction that the natives practiced cannibalism. These "scientific" conclusions were popularized from 1850. Those were the years in which the Essay on the inequality of the human races (1853) by the French writer Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, a precursor of racist philosophy, made its first appearance.

CASE 4. CHARCOT'S HYSTERICAL WOMEN: THAT OTHER WOMAN

Jean Martin Charcot (1825-1893) is considered by many to be the founder of modern neurology. In 1862, he started working at the La Salpêtrière hospital in Paris, where there were 5,000 women considered to be insane including beggars, delinquents, epileptics, or people with unclassifiable symptoms. There he founded a photographic workshop which he aimed to use for investigating neurological diseases, a task he recorded in his book *Iconographie Photographique de La Salpêtrière* (1876-1880).

Charcot's contemporaries accused him of stimulating hysteria rather than curing it. Records of the "Tuesday Lessons" show that he sometimes asked the public to participate so that they could testify that his efforts at hypnosis were not a trick, thus turning them into a spectacle rather than being a scientifically rigorous procedure. The clinical device of the Tuesday Lessons is disturbing. They are stage-managed, with a beginning and an ending. Certain indications are written in the style of theatrical conventions: "the patient exits". It has been shown how in late nineteenth century France the staging of the pathological body is constructed as a direct relationship between the gesticulation of the hysterical person and that of café-concert burlesque artists and Fine Arts poses.

CASE 5. JUAN JACOBO ÁRBENZ: FOUNDATION OF THE BANANA REPUBLIC

The term "banana republic" is used to describe a country that is considered politically unstable, backward, corrupt, and whose economy depends on a few products of little value, symbolized by bananas. It was coined by the American writer William Sidney Porter -aka O. Henry- to refer to Honduras, and was later used to describe Guatemala, where the United Fruit Company controlled the country.

For decades, in alliance with U.S. intelligence services, the United Fruit Company established a policy for the extraction of primary products involving the corruption, installment and removal of governments in the countries where it operated. In 1954, Guatemalan President Jacobo Árbenz was overthrown in a coup d'état after being accused of being a communist. Arbenz had nationalized more than 80,000 hectares of idle land owned by the United Fruit Company and backed agrarian reform for the indigenous peasants of Guatemala. The coup operation was given the name PBSUCCESS by the CIA. Its declassified documents reveal the dirty war strategy waged in the media to be an efficient strategy for deposing governments in banana republics.

CASE 6. STAY-BEHIND: THE SECRET ARMIES OF THEIR MAJESTIES AGAINST THEMSELVES

A series of secret documents leaked to the public in the mid-1990s revealed the existence of secret armies created by the CIA and NATO to halt the advance of the left in post-war Europe at all costs. The "Stay-Behind" armies involved most European countries, creating a historical connection between the Nazi SS, particularly the Gestapo, the CIA and NATO, which were involved in false-flag attacks to produce terror. The case of Operation Gladio (1956), whose essential elements were revealed in 1990 by the Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, is emblematic in understanding the post-war evolution of Europe. 'Gladio' was the name of the intelligence operations in

Italy, but it became the name of the entire network of intelligence centers in Western Europe, also known as the Stay-Behind armies.

In 1972, after the Peteano bombing in Italy, it was suggested that the extreme-left Red Brigades were responsible. On reopening the case twelve years later, however, Judge Felice Casson discovered a secret Italian military intelligence network (Gladio) that was linked to the right-wing terrorist, Vincenzo Vinciguerra. This secret service provided right-wing terrorists with explosives to carry out attacks against the Italian population in several cities, and Western intelligence was suspected of involvement in the murder of Aldo Moro in 1978.

In 1990, an Italian parliamentary commission investigated Gladio and the attacks perpetrated in the country and concluded: "Those massacres, those bombs, those military operations were organized, instigated or supported by people working for Italian institutions and, as discovered more recently, by individuals linked to the structures of U.S. intelligence."

II. THE SUBALTERN PORTRAITS GALLERY

This gallery was born from the idea of inverting the original dynamic of the portrait gallery of monarchs or heroes of hegemonic and imperial history. Taking into account the ways in which non-hegemonic people were represented for their analysis, classification and exoticization, how they were negated and rendered invisible, this gallery displays large-scale oil paintings of archival images, assuming the standardization of bodies and representations, in the same proud way in which insults and racist, sexist terms have been used to catalogue, ridicule and subjugate individuals. These images of subjects have a subaltern appearance, but at the same time they are preparing for a choral chant as a way of confronting contemporary discourse.

Proudly, individual examples of each of the archetypes that were oppressed—extracted from the documents, images and archives of the six case studies—are now honored individually but adopting the way subalterns are represented. From the broken bodies of the de Witt brothers, to the pornographic cartoons of the women of Vienna, the anthropological photography of the indigenous and aboriginal people of the human zoos, to the voyeurism of the photographs of Charcot and his scientific audience, and the press images of Juan Jacobo Árbenz as well as the inhabitants of the banana republics, or the victims of false-flag attacks during the Cold War in Europe.

These individuals accept their subaltern reality while staring back at us with an epic look of resistance, questioning our present between the ancient document and the subversion of the large format oil painting. That is why they challenge us in our reality about what we have previously seen: How do we build new ways of looking? How can we understand the formation of other bodies and other realities? How can we overcome the past? How can we transcend subalternity without forgetting, in order to build new forms of relationship? How can we face what is subaltern in oneself?

III. THE EMANCIPATING OPERA

The third and final cultural sphere is defined by opera, rather aptly in a city like Venice with its cultural and political history, where the first operatic performance took place in 1637, a symbol of the climate of freedom then experienced by the Republic. A contemporary composition in the form of a cantata is presented. This is a musical form that was born in the 17th Century at the same time as opera and the baroque style and is, in turn, the first case study of our Hegemonic Museum. This more narrative musical form presents alternations of hegemonic and subaltern voices singing in a chorus. It takes the idea of the transfiguration of these discourses through the emancipation of other bodies which embody the exercise of a de-colonial narrative, establishing the closure of this conflict through this videographic opera.

Another model of a non-hegemonic and emancipatory narrative and psyche of subalternity is established and exemplified here in two different stories and bodies that are the protagonists of this epilogue. The first is provided by the *arrieros* (muleteers) of the Andes, figures that typify perspectives of the non-European "other." The figure of the *arriero* becomes a metaphorical and mestizo character, whose origins are in the history of the Conquest and the Colony of Chile, yet still subsists as a nomadic practice in the Andes today, where the environment is a non-hegemonic space that reveals the untamed nature and culture of so many non-European countries. This natural world that surrounds their existence—the Cajón del Calabozo, at an altitude of 4,000 meters in the Andes mountain range — but also the history and culture of the original communities carved in stone that remain as material and cultural traces, alternate with the hegemony built and fed by science, history, philosophy, psychology, politics, etc., through the academic volumes that supported the discourses of the Hegemonic Museum's case studies, and the dominant forms of power of the printed word from the Enlightenment to the present day.

The second protagonist is converted into another transcended metaphorical and social body, even though her presence is individual. Daniela Vega, the Chilean trans singer and actress, gives her final interpretation—one that serves to provide the counterpoint to the muleteer's—of the alienation of her subaltern condition imposed by application of the categories and classifications of hegemonic power. Recorded in the National Library of Chile, one of the country's 19th Century republican symbols, the closing of the work seeks to transcend both psyches—that of the dominated and the dominator—and is presented as a

stage of de-colonial thought, which, without lowering its guard, is considered to be distant from the hegemonic power which it declares to be insufficient and therefore impertinent.

The Arriero and his Shadow

Chorus of the dominant Men

Blessed be the tinsel
Cakes rather than loaves of bread
The capital flows
Banks and their talents

The Western Indian corporations
As well as Eastern ones
Blessed be the high heavens
The immunity of my blood
The whiteness of my skin
For my voice speaks for all
Even when I talk to myself

Chorus of the subaltern Children Men Women

Cursed be he who craved my gold
Cursed be every emblem
The Venus and the araucaria tree
The cosmos and all its planets
The earth and all its rifts
For I'm attended by devastation
The sorrow of the dominated
And also of the classified
Of course of the submissive woman
Not to mention of the subjugated
In the doorway of my community
An ode was written
To fifty white stars
And then to a white house
Museum of the white man

Chorus of the dominant Men

I cannot own slaves
And love them too
That boy, that slave
Cost us a button
His price is reasonable

But his hatred is senseless
And to cure his hatred
You will drink my white blood
You will eat my white body
And one fine day I'll tell you
That you must commit a murder
And you shall eat the conquered
The spoils of victories
The most exalted goods
The most refreshing blood
The most nutritious meat
The whole earth is my empire
And I your emperor

Arriero:

What boon can come from a murderer with no passion to speak of? Do you have faith? Faith in measuring the conquered land, the faith of a defender of the dollar, faith of the oil accumulator. Listen here white man, naked king of my wonder: there will come a day when we declare you impertinent, offspring of ruins, dead snake skin. And that day approaches, for on high sound material trumpets.

Subaltern Chorus Children Men Women

A question assails me
What is it that you can establish
White marble museum
And your starry ally?
The march of horror?
The symphony of my destruction?
I, banana republic
I, every military coup
I, sexually stifled
I, sainted and pure woman
My battle made of hysteria
I, unclassifiable insect
I, re-established native
I, all of you
In your image
In your semblance
Animal reflection of your humanity

Chorus of the dominant Men

And what the fuck is poetry
The riches of nations
The soul of development
And cheap colonies
Each commanded of course
By a puppet leader
And legislative slave
That's what I offer you
And I call that Peace
And I could call it Love

Arriero

I declare myself sovereign
Of power I choose its impertinence
Of the abused, I salvage their awareness
But I declare myself impertinent
And, as such, independent

From my mountains to the end of the world
I hear the blood as it clamors from the earth
And demands an unpronounceable gesture
Here independence started
Down a path that doesn't exist
All roads lead to Rome.
But we're not going to Rome.
We don't want masks at the ball
Or celestial beauty in Europe's salon
We will never invent another victimizer
Apologies
We are bar-bar
Bar-bar-barians
Barbarians
And when we kill
We show our faces

A woman (Daniela Vega):

I can control the world like you, man

From my silence and my outburst

I will not be your mother, I will not be your wife

I will be the monster you didn't see in war

I can do it like a woman

But, what is a woman?

What does it mean to be a woman?

...

And what to be a man?