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 REDDELOOS / 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, and 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."