

Date: 28.2.2013

Link: <http://autonomousuniversity.org/content/overidentification>

AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY TACTICAL MEDIA GENERATION

Letter from Luther:

Laibach, or the Myth of the State

Long ago in the deep dark mists of time, subculture must have been a lonely thing. You started out stuck in Whereverville, with a few souvenirs from your trips, a few skipping records and some 'zines that came in the mail. Then you moved to the big city, which had a couple of decent clubs and at least one bookstore that would sink low enough to carry the stuff that interests you. All that changed in a single blow at the dawn of the modern era. In the mid-Nineties you finally went online, and the Whole Weird World was right there at your fingertips. In the wake of 1989, empires and nation-states devolved; but subculture globalized.

I admit it, I'm a Laibach fan. I know the lyrics by heart, I download all the videos. I saw Michael Benson's film on the screen not long after it came out and pirated it from the net as quick as I could. Back in the day I used to read about NSK on that crazy Greek website called The Slovenia of Athens, a fanzine at the highest level. What's more, I'm fascinated with Ljubljana. It's not so much about activism – for that I'd go to Zagreb or Belgrade. It's about a pocket-sized capital city of an Alpine country that has maybe two million people, yet manages to create an entire universe of contemporary art, spreading out from a squatted army barracks called Metelkova. And when I say universe – did you realize the Slovene Space Agency has been launched by a bunch of artists? The suprematism of Malevich, the poetics of Khlebnikov, atavistic memories of Slav cosmology and the ubiquitous image of Yuri Gagarin in a Soviet spacesuit have combined to leave these people star-struck – crazed with disproportionate ambition in a thumbnail republic that reminds any media-freak of the Duchy of Grand Fenwick in that hilarious Peter Sellars film from the depths of the Cold War, *The Mouse that Roared*.

Now, hang on. Think about it a little. For me to admit to being a Laibach fan is not just a detail. Because if there's one thing all we Luther Blissetts share, if we have a credo, a cultural strategy, a one-true-doctrine, it's the Sorelian myth: that power of fiction known only by its effects on reality. Namely, the capacity to spark off a general strike. Remember Sorel from the "Letter to Halevy" (I mean, it's unforgettable):

"Men who are participating in a great social movement always picture their coming action as a battle in which their cause is certain to triumph. These constructions,

knowledge of which is so important for historians, I propose to call myths; the syndicalist "general strike" and Marx's catastrophic revolution are such myths.... As long as there are no myths accepted by the masses, one may go on talking of revolts indefinitely, without ever provoking any revolutionary movement. This is what gives such importance to the general strike."

What else do insurrectionalists desire? How else does the left survive through time as an oppositional force in society? The general strike – which also means “strike anywhere” – is a myth that produces a reality. Such a myth is the only thing worth creating for an artist, and for one good reason: because out on the street the general strike is the only chance for proletarians to express themselves and live for a change, without being told what to do and who to be. Now, Sorel was no fool: way back in the early 1900s he saw that parliamentary socialism would make a deal with the unions and form an immense bureaucratic state. And that has been done everywhere since the Thirties, look around you. Only a disruptive power can shake and maybe throw off that bureaucratic state; and only the myth of that possibility leads to revolution. It’s true for every uprising we’ve ever seen in Europe: 1848, the Commune, 1917, ‘68, not to mention what’s happening right now, the latest news from Greece or Spain. Revolution is the myth of an insurgent force, or better: it’s the force of a myth that’s insurgent in reality.

That’s what fascinates us in the West, and that’s what subculture means to us: an insurgency that is chaotic, uncontrollable and multiple. It’s our communism, aka the multitudes. But Laibach is a subculture from the East, from the mining town of Trbovlje in central Slovenia. And even if you can’t pronounce the name, you can imagine that in 1980, when the group first placed posters of their eerie black supremacist crosses all over the town’s “red district,” the sons and daughters of the miners were pretty well sick of everything the color red could represent. Instead of offering utopian relief, the band doubled down. That first poster action also included the image, etched into black, of an assailant blinding a victim with a knife. The censorship of the concert that was supposed to happen the next day was the truth of the poster action that happened at night. Censorship, or the long knives of myth.

Laibach and all of NSK have a different relationship to myth-making than the insurrectionalists of Western Europe. They speak the truth of power, that is to say, they mime the myth of the state, in order to reveal its hold over supposedly free and enlightened human beings. In terms of performance, they come out of the same Zeitgeist as Throbbing Gristle, which is Genesis P-Orridge’s band, the guy who appears in Decoder in that incredible fire-breathing cult-scene leading to the William Burroughs-inspired tape-recorder revolution. Watch out though: in the East, this kind of performance has a completely opposite meaning. The thing is, Laibach also believes in the Sorelian myth, but for them, the myth of revolution was incarnate in Mussolini, in Stalin, in Hitler, and in the third-way Communist regime of former Yugoslavia. And for them, this myth of the state has been reborn in the transnational corporate capitalism of today’s so-called democracies.

Art Is Totalitarianism

Obviously Laibach is all about tactical media, if tactics means exploiting contexts, playing the right cards the right way even when the deck is stacked against you. In '83 they raised a scandal at a concert in Zagreb by projecting pornography alongside a "revolutionary" propaganda film, and then they accepted to be interviewed about it on Slovenian TV. The result is an endlessly debated performance, which claimed to put Laibach "on trial by television." In fact the band laid a trap for their viewers: their condition for accepting was to be allowed to stage the event and script their own responses. When confronted with a humanist platitude about the diversity of civil society coming from Kardelj, the theorist of self-management, their answer was devastating: "Not State, not Party, not God, not the Devil. Happiness lies in the total negation of one's identity, deliberate rejection of personal tastes and beliefs, in depersonalization, sacrifice, in identification with a higher system, the mass, collective, ideology." For the audience it was a shocking self-denunciation, yet who could ignore that it was couched in the disavowed, yet still sanctified language of the collectivist state? They were showing that the artist-mythologist has always been behind the creation of the totalitarian state, something the Nazis were crystal clear about. Ideology, or the basic issue of belief in a social system, was put on the table. The "Laibach phenomenon" pierced through the little screen, becoming a subversive question for an entire population of spectators. As they said in the interview, "We are the first TV generation."

In the Big Brother year of 1984 they partnered with the painting group Irwin and Dragan Živadinov's Sisters of Scipion Nasice Theater to form Neue Slowenische Kunt, or NSK. There were other sections too: Novi kolektivizem (the graphics guys) and the Department of Pure and Applied Philosophy. Together they formed an academy, or better, a state within a state, which Irwin would later reconfigure as a "state in the time." You gotta understand that the sole fact of speaking or writing German, in a country with a communist partisan mythology, was already a scandal, itself enough for repression. Yet the gathering of all that artistic strength, plus the popularity of their music that was banned in Yugoslavia but high on the charts in Europe, was finally enough to break the censorship.

In 1987 all of the NSK departments working together were able to stage the massive production of Baptism under Triglav, which played in official theaters. The title refers to the national mountain and it's probably full of all kinds of forest-sprite symbolism that nobody from outside is ever gonna understand. What you can see in the pictures are the awesome fire-breathing deer-antlered neoprimitive supremacist decors, an operatic riot of color and nationalist weirdness. If I got it straight it's basically about the Christianization of the country, and the whole Germanic and European overlay that formed the Slovene nation. You can see some of the sets in the video of Geburt einer Nation, but the music there is totally unrelated, it's a kind of EuroGothPop. In fact the music of Baptism is electro-classical, it's a continuous sampling, remix and distortion of the whole range of lyrical themes from which a so-

called “national identity” is constructed. And they were supposedly celebrating that national identity! That was the official excuse, obviously, that's how they got it into the theater. I got a pretty cool book called *Interrogation Machine* by Alexei Monroe, who quotes someone named Alenka Barber-Keršovan. If you wanna understand the uses of plagiarism, check it out:

“Laibach interprets, Laibach quotes, Laibach appropriates pieces of existing compositions in the sense of the Duchampian ready-made and puts them into new relations. The group unscrupulously plunders a treasury of the most diverse musical styles, and assembles whatever comes into their hands in their songs, as for instance in ‘Baptism under Triglav.’ In this ‘sampling’ opera we can hear folk tunes for zither and ‘Ohm Sweet Ohm’ by Kraftwerk, pieces of Wagner, Bruckner, Orff, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, a well-known waltz from the operetta ‘The Blood of Vienna,’ and the introductory motif of ‘Dante’s Symphony’ by Franz Liszt through which the partisan song ‘Počiva jezero v tihoti’ (A Lake Resting in Calmness) is projected.”

Sampling? Remix? Postmodernism? They call it retrogardism, or sometimes, retro-avantgardism, and the point is to link aesthetic pleasure to a knife-edged warning that artists are “engineers of human souls,” as they say, plagiarizing Zhdanov and Stalin. Almost all of Irwin’s painting is based on this retro-avantgardist juxtaposition of different visual elements. It’s a lyrical analysis, like the music, bringing together images from different contexts and epochs, often within heavy outdated frames. None of these paintings are individually signed; instead of original products of inspiration, they're conceived as acts of historical and ideological analysis. Man, what a head-trip!

The amazing thing is that in ‘87, amidst all the uneasy success of *Baptism under Triglav*, with Laibach now the country’s most popular band, another state organization solicited *Novi kolektivizem* to enter a poster contest for Youth Day. They did it, and they won the contest with a very retro-looking figure holding some sort of torch or shining light in one hand and a flag in the other. Trouble was, a few months later a gentleman from Belgrade discovered that the image was lifted from a 1936 painting – an allegory of the Third Reich! This caused an even more tremendous scandal than the TV interview, and not all against NSK, because after all, the judges had picked that particular entry... It also led to police investigations of the authors of the poster, but as usual in these kinds of cases they came to nothing, since more publicity would have just made it worse for the authorities. All this was part of the build-up to the “Slovenian Spring” of 1988 – a cycle of civil-society critiques and massive demonstrations, foreshadowing the collapse of the Soviet Bloc and predating the break-up of Yugoslavia by around two years.

I think Michael Benson made a good choice to end his film where he does, with the concert in Belgrade in ‘89 where Peter Mlakar, who basically is the Department of Pure and Applied Philosophy, mimics Milosevic on stage. He directly appropriates some of the leader’s own words, then inserts some German phrases. The meaning was obvious. It must have been dangerous: some pistol-packing fascist in the crowd

could've killed him. Benson goes back to the '83 TV interview and makes into a kind of premonition of the role that television would play in Serbia's turn to fascism. He quotes a declaration that actually wasn't on the TV that day, but instead come from an interview shortly after, when the Yugoslav magazine Rock asks them why they did it. As usual, the answer is pretty intense:

“Television is, within the industry of consciousness (in addition to the school system) the leading moulder of uniform thought processes. The television program is fundamentally centralized, with one broadcaster and a mass of receivers/consumers, while communication between them is disabled. The television message by its nature demands a thorough involvement of all senses, which causes supersaturation. Such an overload of the sensory paths (complete focusing on the perceptual region) successfully produces defense reactions of the organism: hypnotic apathy, lack of critical awareness... LAIBACH, through television perception, by provoking collective emotions and automatic associations, serves as a reorganizational spiritual principle and as a means of work incentive: by destroying every trace of individuality (critical judgment) it blends individuals into a mass and the mass into a single humble collective, responsible to its own status in the system of production.”

The central message is there, with all its provocation and ambiguity. What sounds at first like a denunciation of TV turns out to be an identification with it. And it's worse than that, because the identification isn't just fictional. Think about it: a rock concert is exactly like TV as they describe it, it's centralized, it's a broadcast, you can't hear the people next to you, it puts you in a hypnotic trance. So in fact, they do just what they say. They constantly overstep the border of ordinary fascism. But at the same time, it's the intensity, the nakedness of the ideological message and the affective overload that makes some people question it, all the way to their own lives and their own experience of music, not to mention politics. Only some people, of course... go to one of the concerts and see for yourself!

I just found the text of Predictions of Fire on Benson's website ('cause I'm really too lazy to go searching through the film again). In that closing part on the concert in '89, the narrator says: “Laibach's provocation in Belgrade that day was as precise as a chemical formula. It seemed to crystallize the exact moment of transition between Yugoslav socialist speech and Serbia's emerging ethnic nationalist rhetoric. The first had always stressed brotherhood and unity among the Southern Slavs. The cadences of the second had not been heard in Europe since the dark days of the thirties.” Benson goes so far as to suggest, between the lines, that if Slovenia didn't go through an authoritarian phase it's because they had NSK. They had the chemical solvent, the viral inoculation. Of course it doesn't work like that, and he knows it, he's careful with his phrases. But he's saying that NSK was part of a cultural climate, an irreducible concatenation of ideas and actions that could and did resist the authoritarian and militarist myths that overtook, not just Serbia, but Croatia too, under Tudjman. The incredible thing with NSK is that they didn't resist by refusal or critique, but by extreme affirmation. By embodying and expressing the fascist perversion of the Sorelian myth.

Don't Hate the Corporation....

I could on and on about Slovenian art after independence: the East Art Map, Zivadinov's unbelievable Noordung Cosmokinetic theater project, and other folks beyond NSK, like Marko Peljhan – who has done one of the best tactical media projects, namely Makrolab, and is now going further, with polar explorations linked to an attempt at producing autonomous geostationary communications satellites... It's too interesting. But I gotta mention just one thing, which comes very close to some Italian autonomist ideas, despite this completely different stance toward myth. It's the NSK State in Time, which Irwin launched in '92.

Just imagine it: your society breaks away from communist Yugoslavia and forms a new state, a tiny, bordered, racialized, spatialized state in the era of the world market that deals exclusively in the logic of mobile goods, treats people like commodities and is destined to dissolve every tradition, every identity, even while provoking vicious national reaction-formations that remain bootless and vain, shoddy simulacra, exactly like the right-wing parties everywhere. So what do you do? You create an autonomous state on a totally different basis: a state in time. You open up embassies to question rather than negotiate. You create passports to liberate rather than control. In one of the founding texts on the NSK State in Time, written by Eda Čufer and Irwin, you can see exactly the problematic of the multitude, which is post-communist in the sense that it does not deny communism but tries to go further:

“The question of collectivism, i.e. the question of how to organize communication and enable the coexistence of various autonomous individuals in a community, can be solved in two different ways. Modern states continue to be preoccupied with the question of how to collectivize and socialize the individual, whereas avant-garde movements tried to solve the question of how to individualize the collective. Avant-garde movements tried to develop autonomous social organisms in which the characteristics, needs and values of individualism, which cannot be comprised in the systems of a formal state, could be freely developed and defined. The collectivism of avant-garde movements had an experimental value. With the collapse of the avant-garde movements, social constructive views in art fell into disgrace, which caused the social escapism of orthodox modernism and consequently led to a crisis in basic values in the period of postmodernism.”

Maybe this is what we should be doing, but what would it look like? Paolo Virno talks about a non-state public sphere, but how does it work? Nobody asks the question. Instead, around the early 2000s, people started to notice some kind of link between the Laibach aesthetic and a plethora of tactical media projects that involved mimicking and embodying the corporate PR look, the neoliberal business ideology and the power-grabbing drive behind it. But how could this work become something interesting like NSK? It's four in the morning, I'm on a roll, I wanna think this thing through.

The thing we know is what Zizek said: overidentification. And for sure, there were some cool things, some spectacular stunts, like the Nikeground hoax by Eva and Franco Mattes, aka 0100101110101101.org, who worked with Public Netbase to illegally set up an architectural “infobox” on the Karlsplatz in Vienna, with the Nike logo splashed all over it. The graphics, the fliers, the website, the fake sales reps and the leaked press information, everything claimed this was just one part of a vast campaign to rename and re-brand public spaces along the lines of the already existing Niketowns: so you would have Nike Street, Nike Square, Nikeplatz and so on. Plus in Vienna there would be a huge swoosh sculpture to replace that outdated Baroque stuff! As they said in a press release later on: “For this work, we wanted to use the entire city as a stage for a huge urban performance, a sort of theatre show for an unaware audience/cast. We wanted to produce a collective hallucination capable of altering people’s perception of the city in this total, immersive way.”

Behind that, around 2001-2002, you had more activist versions of the same aesthetic, like Deportation Class by the No Border Network, which included websites and all kinds of swag announcing a specially seating class for immigrants being forcibly ejected from their lives in Europe: basically, a sadistic jab through the veneer of the corporate state. As they put it: “We at Deportation Class prefer to speak plain text. We don’t conceal what is really happening in the last rows of an airplane, when people are suffocated, tranquillized and fettered, in order to deport them to countries they were once fleeing. We don’t care what it must be like for other passengers to see someone bound and gagged in the seat next to them. And overall, we won’t bore you with endless idle talk about global villages, new nomadism and freedom of movement. In the Deportation Class only one value counts: you have to have the wrong passport and then we will treat you with services you have never dreamed about. There are no round-trips and the only way out is manifest resistance.” In fact that resistance was going on at the time, sometimes spontaneously by people who couldn’t stomach what they saw in the plane, or by No Border activists. And the website was also a class in the sense of a place to learn about campaigns you could participate in, protest events, news items, criticism of the deportation programs, and so on.

I think you could go a lot further back. Take a performance piece like Critical Art Ensemble’s totally deadpan Shareholders’ Briefing in 1996, which they describe like this: “A mock performative meeting in which attendees are briefed on the latest advancements in information, communication, military and bio technology and what it will mean for better control of the body, of personal and public expression, and of macro populations ‘of interest.’ The performance ends with the projected profits from the control industry. Charts and reports are provided.” The difference with this one, obviously, is that it’s an art piece, it’s staged in a gallery or other marked space and does not insert itself into the everyday neoliberal environment. But of course, CAE’s later history shows that might not be so important. It’s the intensity of the identification that produces the reaction, and sometimes unleashes the repression.

All this was pretty well theorized around the turn of the century, using the examples of Laibach and Zizek and also – Luther Blissett, Neoism, Monty Cantsin, Karen Eliot! Check out the Republicart issue on Art Sabotage – Disrupting the Currents of Power. A text by the autonome a.f.r.i.k.a. gruppe is particularly good. They situate all this in a post-'89 atmosphere where leftist politics has lost its historic geopolitical orientations and has to come to grips with a brand-new everyday environment: “The activists adapt the language of power, the plausible over-identification is implemented through precise and reflected observation, an eye for aesthetic details and a professional way of dealing with materials.” What they’re saying is, you have to leave the cultural frame and enter this world of sleek professionalism in order to touch the plastic people who live there, i.e. your contemporaries and yourself for that matter.

Overidentification in the West was above all an art of intervention, a form of invisible theater where the audience does not know you are acting. It was carried on extensively on the Web as well, but usually with the hope that it would lead to real effects and encounters. It was possible to do this in the Nineties because of the novelty of the technologies, the giddiness of expanding economy, the openness of a world where borders were going down – but that was also what gave the new system its veneer of legitimacy. The multiple-name tactic came naturally into the discussion because it revealed the flexibility and plasticity of identity: you could freely adopt another name, but it could also adopt you. The corporate order – or what I think should really be called the corporate state – does nothing else but propagate highly normalized models of identity, algorithmic functions of identity that don’t all look the same, but respond instantly to the same underlying operating system.

The Yes Men reveal what inhabits us all when they don the mask and perform the script so flawlessly that everyone thinks the grotesque exaggerations must be real. It’s like an uncanny twist on the Indymedia slogan: don’t hate the corporation, be the corporation. The best thing is not their movies, where they explain everything and ham it up, but instead, the raw videos that come out just after the actions, where all you can see are the efforts they make to get it just right, to fit in and stick out at the same time. At their best they approach an NSK-type position – although I don’t think this is very widely understood in the United States.

For example, when they appeared at a conference of globalist businessmen in Tampere, Finland, sporting the “Employee Visualization Appendage” – aka the famous Golden Phallus – they literally brought to daylight the “obscene supplement” that Zizek analyzes as the “nightly law” of the superego, or the power principle within the individual. The point is that a hidden, transgressive practice of unspoken, illegitimate excess is what cements your adhesion to the normal bureaucratic rationality, the simulacrum of law, and so on. But the obscene supplement is not just sexual, more often its deadly, it’s the pleasure of aggression and outright murder. That’s why the strongest of the Yes Men’s stunts are about death, when they feed people shit (or claim to) and offer them candles supposedly made out of dead

bodies. The one I found really amazing was in London when they went to some risk management conference and said that as a corporation, you might have some skeletons in the closet – that is, ecological disasters, chemical spills or whatever – but if you managed to make a profit off the products involved, those skeletons are golden! Andy, who delivers all this wisdom, is wearing a hidden webcam in his glasses. Afterwards, some corporate dude comes up to him laughing, to explain that he thought the presentation was “refreshing, actually!”

I guess the point is not whether the overidentification tactic somehow “comes from the East” (although Inke Arns really seems to make that claim). The point is that after ‘89, the corporate-liberal norm of the US capitalist class globalized, meaning it became omnipresent both technologically and organizationally – and therefore it became invisible, despite real obscenities like the trumped-up Iraq war. When something saturates the entire field of visibility then you no longer see it, there’s nothing to focus on, except maybe the obscene, unseen supplement (Abu Ghraib). And this same condition drones on today, despite whatever happens to the level of the stock market or the face of the US president.

What would be really compelling – and no one has done it right – is to send a historical probe into the formation of that corporate-liberal norm, going all the way back to elation of WWII when the US took over the project of global hegemony from the Germans. Let’s go all the way and find out how a turbocharged multi-theater war machine became the universal image of fair play and good government. There is a film that begins to do that, with amazing footage and analysis: it’s the Lutz Dambeck film, *Das Netz*. It shows how the hardcore military science of cybernetics, born in the air wars of the early Forties, was later naturalized in the hippie era and became a positive, friendly utopia for the crushing new social order of the Nineties. It’s a great film, I probably watched it five times. Holmes has written a decent article about it, with some spot-on research – but as usual, he totally misses the point. The point is that Dambeck’s film is doomed to remain marginal and ineffective, because it stages the whole investigation from the viewpoint of Ted Kaczynsky, the Unabomber. OK, I get the need for a radically exterior viewpoint, when you’re doing the research. But if it were possible to use that research to get under the skin of the most friendly, ordinary, warm-blooded algorithmic super-calculator from the skyscrapers of finance or the dens and dungeons of the military-entertainment complex, then we’d finally be face-to-face with the contemporary myth of the state.

So finally, what about Sorel? What about the general strike? And what about subculture? Does it all add up to something?

An endless text like this should have several endings. The first comes from a hilarious film made in Finland and released in 2012, called *Iron Sky*, which is a send-up of the Bush presidency and everything that followed. It’s an unusual production, because it’s the first successful full-length feature to be made with the Wreck-A-Movie platform, which basically functions as a variation on the development strategy of free software. Wreck-A-Movie allows enthusiasts to contribute visual

concepts, dialogues, special effects and other elements to collaboratively produced films. Laibach contributed the music of *Iron Sky*. The film is about an American president who decides that nothing would be so good for campaign publicity as sending astronauts to the moon again, this time to the dark side. But when they get there, what our courageous space-travelers find are sci-fi Nazis who escaped the Second World War and laid low to plot their revenge. They destroy the moon lander and take one astronaut captive. He has a cell-phone computer so powerful it would allow them to complete their ultimate flying weapon, the *Gotterdammerung*. So the would-be Hitler of the first moon-born generation decides he must go to Earth to get a better computer, and his girlfriend, an idealistic blond-haired and blue-eyed kindergarten teacher, stows away on the saucer with him. They kidnap the PR consultant who was behind the now-failed exploit of going back to the moon, and she suddenly sees publicity material in the blond bombshell Nazi with her total-hunk boyfriend. You've just gotta watch what happens when they finally make it to meet the president..

OK, you heard those crashing chords when they entered the Oval Office? That's the opening of a track from the Laibach concept-album *Volk*, which redoes the national anthems of around a dozen countries. I have a weakness for the American one – which is used for the grand finale of the movie. I guess it tries to do affectively what Dambeck tries to do intellectually. There is a fully produced DVD version of this tune, but as a true Laibach fan I prefer the concert versions, you know, it's more dirty and raw and wild. This one's from St Petersburg, Russia. Just crank it up, check it out.

Thirty years later, Laibach still takes the world apart. Mina Spiler's ethereal voice samples the most tender emotions of anyone who grew up singing the *Star Spangled Banner* in school. Milan Fras forces the rumble of war right into the space of willingness created by our illusions. The retro-avantgarde strategy reveals the inherent links between art and the myth of the state. But it does so through the contradictory diversity of subculture: as an experimental rock band that found a home in squatted military barracks, as a sophisticated artistic practice that constantly struggles with its own continuity. It's like a deviant tattoo stung into the skin of civilization. What Laibach retains of the Sorelian myth is the energy of refusal. And they have propagated it everywhere, as a global subculture. The state in time as an endless process of resistance.

"Divided we stand, united we fall," they said to the crowds on their American tour in the election year of 2004. And that was already the truth of the Yugoslav experience in the Nineties. It's a credo for whoever has believed too much. Overidentification as the general strike of the aesthetic.

by Luther Blissett