



state, and thus proposes a historiography that bypasses the state paradigm all together.

You defined 'limitless democracy' as "when radically different voices meet on egalitarian grounds", adding that art should 'perform' democracy. Do you think then that the only possible way to realize a limitless democracy is through art, or that art-specific forms of communication can instigate social processes to produce radical forms of government?

I think art does not hold political power, but it most certainly has the power of imagination. If we cannot imagine a different future, it is impossible to enact it. But without an alliance with actual political power art's imagination remains powerless. So, there must be an alliance between emancipatory politics and emancipatory art. To come back to my previous example. Abdul's work before the liberation of Rojava was heavily repressed if not banned all together under the Assad regime. Through the liberation of the region, Abdul's imagination in some sense was liberated as well: his work now takes a central place in imagining what a stateless culture and a stateless art was, is, and could be. For me, democracy is less a structure of governance than a form of practice. Sometimes, democracy might mean one kicks in the door of parliament to take over power from a corrupt or violent regime. In other cases, democracy might mean that we need to vote. Democracy is nothing but the demand for the redistribution of power on egalitarian grounds. But the means to get there differ

depending on context. Through my work – the New World Summit in particular – I have indeed attempted to re-imagine the parliament as a space of democratic experiment. As a space where new alliances between the stateless and the stated can take place. A space in which we re-imagine the collective performance of democracy. And as such, yes, one could say it is a project that could be interpreted as an exercise in an alternative form of propaganda. I would call it a "popular" or "emancipatory" propaganda art, which is not aimed at a singular representation of power, but at propagating a variety of different simultaneously existing realities. For me, an emancipatory democracy must be the world of "many worlds", as Subcomandante Marcos articulated so beautifully.

Most manipulative characteristics of propaganda seem to be correlated to language and its power to shape the social imaginary. In your research did you notice specific language-related strategies based on pure manipulation? And what kind of role do you think social media play in this context?

What is crucial when studying propaganda is that the term never relates to a singular expression. There is not one linguistic construction or one image or artwork that we can term "propaganda". Rather, a linguistic construction, image or artwork can be part of the performative operation of a larger construction of power which we can define as a propaganda. Propaganda's aim is to construct

reality. And reality can only be constructed by employing an interdisciplinary series of instruments, from politics to the economy, media, and art. To come back to the previous example of the troll armies of the alt-right. Their importance is directly related to the Trump campaign and his presidency. Their power is interrelated with his. Without Trump, their role would be far less relevant if not completely marginal, but as the foot soldiers of Trump's empire, they can make the difference. It goes the same for linguistic constructions. Whether it is the "alternative facts" or the notion of "fake news", without massive circulation – without control over the larger structures of power that construct reality – such terms would be doomed to the corners of conspiracy theorists in the deep web. In other words, I propose that when we study propagandas – whether it is the propaganda of the Trump regime or of the revolutionary Kurds – we should always approach a specific object of study based on an interdisciplinary approach. Words matter if they have the capacity to circulate to the point where they are tied in with a larger construct of power capable of altering the reality we live in. As isolated gestures, they can teach us little to nothing in the domain of propaganda studies.

You affirmed to be inspired by Upton Sinclair's 'Mammonart' book where he analyses artists over history and the univocal consequence of their work to reinforce power, summarized then in his sentence: "all art is propaganda". In which way has it inspired your work? And do you try to prove this statement false (or true) through your projects?

Sinclair proposed to rewrite the history of art from a perspective of class struggle, and concluded that "all art is propaganda," because all art has always stood in a subservient relation to power – whether it is church, state, or the upper bourgeoisie. But that statement is a bit crude when reading his book. Sinclair's descriptions of the Russian poet Nikolai Gogol are very nuanced for example, as Sinclair writes how on one hand Gogol was valued by the czar, but simultaneously attempted to use his position