

REPUBLIC OF THE OTHER

We are *others*. We are others outside our community, our family, our hometown, our circle – but sometimes even within those. We bond together with other *others* to feel understood. The closeness we feel towards them creates relationships, a chosen family, a new community. But it also others us from those who do not share this with us.

Identity politics is a coin with two sides: On one side, it empowers individuals identifying with those who share common grounds by forming groups, and on the other, those very groups segregate, by definition. We stand close and gaze in suspicion at those who are different; we as majority and we as minority. Some see ourselves as standing alone, confronting all the others.

We are who we are mostly by birth, somewhat by luck, and less by choice. The acknowledgement of this notion, which we have to remind ourselves constantly against the perception of meritocracy, should make us aware of how immensely our provenance accounts for our opportunities.

We ROTO believe in the advancement of societal norms. We, as society, need to get out of our comfort zone to advance. We ROTO raise consciousness and reframe thinking, going against the instinct of holding onto the known and the familiar.

We ROTO strive for a society that strengthens all as individuals, which makes us all others, and renders *othering* obsolete. We strive to feel foreign everywhere and to claim it as a positive state.

We ROTO endeavour to tolerate everything other, as others would have to, until differences become less and less meaningful, to the point where no labels are necessary to protect minorities from majority. We could then trust ourselves to make decisions for the good of *others*, which will have become equivalent to *ourselves*.

With full knowledge that this utopian future is unachievable, we ROTO envision the process towards that future is where the positive changes lie.