



Zizek

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IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID THE INEVITABLE. ATTEMPTING TO SOLVE A SOCIETAL FLAW THROUGH PROGRESSIVE ACTIONS ONLY HURTS THE POSSIBILITY OF A CHANGE AND SLOWS DOWN ITS EVENTUAL DESTINY.

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 2002 [Slavoj, Revolution at the Gates, pg 168-169]/dh

The perspective of the critique of ideology compels us to invert Wittgenstein's "What one cannot speak about, thereof one should be silent" into "What one should not speak about, thereof one cannot remain silent". If you want to speak about a social system, you cannot remain silent about its repressed excess. The point is not to tell the whole Truth but, precisely, to append to the (official) Whole the uneasy supplement which denounces its falsity. As Max Horkheimer put it back in the 1930s: "If you don't want to talk about capitalism, then you should keep silent about Fascism." Fascism is the inherent "symptom" (the return of the repressed) of capitalism, the key to its "truth", not just an external contingent deviation of its "normal" logic. And the same goes for today's situation: those who do not want to subject liberal democracy and the flaws of its multiculturalist tolerance to critical analysis, should keep quiet about the new Rightist violence and intolerance.

If we are to leave the opposition between liberal-democratic universalism and ethnic/religious fundamentalism behind, the first step is to acknowledge the existence of *liberal fundamentalism*: the perverse game of making a big fuss when the rights of a serial killer or a suspected war criminal are violated, while ignoring massive violations of "ordinary" people's rights.

More precisely, the politically correct stance betrays its perverse economy through its oscillation between the two extremes: either fascination with the victimized other (helpless children, raped women . . .), or a focus on the problematic other who, although criminal, and so on, also deserves protection of his human rights, because "today it's him, tomorrow it'll be us" (an excellent example is Noam Chomsky's defence of a French book advocating the revisionist stance on the Holocaust). On a different level, a similar instance of the perversity of Political Correctness occurs in Denmark, where people speak ironically of the "white woman's burden", her ethico-political duty to have sex with immigrant workers from Third World countries – this being the final necessary step in ending their exclusion.

Today, in the era of what Habermas designated as *die neue Unübersichtlichkeit* ('the new opacity'), our everyday experience is more mystifying than ever: modernization generates new obscurantisms; the reduction of freedom is presented to us as the dawn of new freedoms. The perception that we live in a society of free choices, in which we have to choose even our most "natural" features (ethnic or sexual identity), is the form of appearance of its very opposite: of the *absence* of true choices.¹ The recent trend for "alternate reality" films, which present existing reality as one of a multitude of possible outcomes, is symptomatic of a society in which choices no longer really matter, are trivialized. The lesson of the time warp narratives is even bleaker, since it points towards a total closure: the very attempt to avoid the predestined course of things not only leads us back to it, but actually constitutes it – from Oedipus onwards, we want to avoid A, and it is through our very detour that A realizes itself. ▶

Systematic negotiations cannot solve for the identity politics, they only serve to identify groups in the system

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 1999 [Slavoj, The Ticklish Subject, pg. 208-209]

(This is politics proper: the moment in which a particular demand is not simply part of the negotiation of interests but aims at something more, and starts to function as the metaphoric condensation of the global restructuring of the entire social space. There is a clear contrast between this subjectivization and today's proliferation of postmodern 'identity politics' whose goal is the exact opposite, that is, precisely the assertion of one's particular identity, of one's proper place within the social structure. The postmodern identity politics of particular (ethnic, sexual, etc.) life-styles perfectly fits the depoliticized notion of society, in which every particular group is 'accounted for', has its specific status (of victim) acknowledged through affirmative action or other measures destined to guarantee social justice. The fact that this kind of justice meted out to victimized minorities requires an intricate police apparatus (for identify-

ing the group in question, for punishing offenders against its rights – how legally to define sexual harassment or racial injury?, and so on – for providing the preferential treatment which should compensate for the wrong this group has suffered) is deeply significant: what is usually praised as 'postmodern politics' (the pursuit of particular issues whose resolution must be negotiated within the 'rational' global order allocating its particular component its proper place) is thus effectively the end of politics proper. >

Over-Identification is the long-term solution, Christianity is the empirical example.

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 1999 [Slavoj, The Ticklish Subject, pg. 229]

(Christianity's entire theological edifice relies on such an excremental identification – on the identification with the poor figure of the suffering Christ dying in pain between the two thieves. The artifice by means of which Christianity became the ruling ideology was to combine this radical excremental identification with full endorsement of the existing hierarchical social order: 'rich and poor, honest men and sinners, masters and slaves, men and women, neighbours and foreigners, we are all united in Christ'. Although this excremental identification imposed compassion and merciful care for the poor (the 'do not forget that they are also God's children' motif) by reminding the rich and powerful that their position is precarious and contingent, it none the less confirmed them in this position, and even proclaimed every open rebellion against the existing power relations a mortal sin. The pathetic assertion 'We are all [Jews, Blacks, gays, residents of Sarajevo . . .]' can thus work in an extremely ambiguous way: it can also induce a hasty claim that our own predicament is in fact the same as that of the true victims, that is, a false metaphoric universalization of the fate of the excluded.)

The Multi-Culturalists approaches fail to change the system

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 1999 [Slavoj, The Ticklish Subject, pg. 219-220]

• On the one hand, it tolerates the Other in so far as it is not the *real* Other, but the aseptic Other of premodern ecological wisdom, fascinating rites, and so on – the moment one is dealing with the *real* Other (say, of clitoridectomy, of women compelled to wear the veil, of torturing enemies to death . . .), with the way the Other regulates the specificity of its *jouissance*, tolerance stops. Significantly, the same multiculturalists who oppose Eurocentrism also, as a rule, oppose the death penalty, dismissing it as a remainder of primitive barbaric customs of vengeance – here, their hidden true Eurocentrism becomes visible (their entire argumentation against the death penalty is strictly 'Eurocentrist', involving the liberal notions of human dignity and penalty, and relying on an evolutionary schema from primitive violent societies to modern tolerant societies able to overcome the principle of vengeance).

• On the other hand, the tolerant multiculturalist liberal sometimes tolerates even the most brutal violations of human rights, or is at least reluctant to condemn them, afraid of being accused of imposing one's own values on to the Other. From my own youth, I recall Maoist students preaching and practising the 'sexual revolution'; when they were reminded that the China of the Maoist Cultural Revolution involved an extremely 'repressive' attitude towards sexuality, they were quick to answer that sexuality plays a totally different role in their life-world, so we should not impose on them our standards of what is 'repressive' – their attitude towards sexuality appears 'repressive' only by our Western standards. . . . Do we not encounter the same stance today when multiculturalists warn us not to impose our Eurocentrist notion of universal human rights on to the Other? Furthermore, is not this kind of false 'tolerance' often evoked by spokesmen for multinational Capital itself, in order to legitimize the fact that 'business comes first'?

The key point is to assert the complementarity of these two excesses, of *too much* and *not enough*: if the first attitude is unable to perceive the specific cultural *jouissance* which even a 'victim' can find in a practice of

another culture that appears cruel and barbaric to us (victims of clitoridectomy often perceive it as the way to regain the properly feminine dignity), the second attitude fails to perceive the fact that the Other is split in itself – that members of another culture, far from simply identifying with their customs, can acquire a distance towards them and revolt against them – in such cases, reference to the 'Western' notion of universal human rights can well serve as the catalyst which sets in motion an authentic protest against the constraints of one's own culture. In other words, there is no happy medium between 'too much' and 'not enough'; so when a multiculturalist replies to our criticism with a desperate plea: 'Whatever I do is wrong – either I am too tolerant towards the injustice the Other suffers, or I am imposing my own values on to the Other – so what do you want me to do?', our answer should be: 'Nothing! As long as you remain stuck in your false presuppositions, you can do nothing!' What the liberal multiculturalist fails to notice is that each of the two cultures engaged in 'communication' is caught in its own antagonism which has prevented it from fully 'becoming itself' – and the only authentic communication is that of 'solidarity in a common struggle', when I discover that the deadlock which hampers me is also the deadlock which hampers the Other. 3

The multi-culturalist approach is far from challenging the system; it is a false transparency that actually paves the way for the capitalist regime

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 1999 [Slavoj, The Ticklish Subject, pg. 221]

How, then, do Leftists who are aware of this falsity of multiculturalist postmodernism react to it? Their reaction assumes the form of the Hegelian *infinite judgement*, which posits the speculative identity of two thoroughly incompatible terms: 'Adorno (the most sophisticated "elitist" critical theorist) is Buchanan (the lowest point of American rightist populism).'⁴⁷ That is to say: these critics of postmodern multiculturalist elitism (from Christopher Lasch to Paul Piccone) take the risk of endorsing neo-conservative populism, with its notions of the reassertion of community, local democracy and active citizenship, as the only politically relevant answer to the all-pervasive predominance of 'instrumental Reason', of the bureaucratization and instrumentalization of our life-world.⁴⁸ Of course, it is easy to dismiss today's populism as a nostalgic reactive formation against the process of modernization, and as such inherently *paranoiac*, in search of an external cause of malignancy, of a secret agent who pulls the strings and is thus responsible for the woes of modernization (Jews, international Capital, non-patriotic multiculturalist managers, state bureaucracy . . .); the problem is, rather, to conceive of this new populism as a new form of 'false transparency' which, far from presenting a serious obstacle to capitalist modernization, paves the way for it. What these leftist advocates of populism fail to perceive is thus the fact that today's populism, far from presenting a threat to global capitalism, remains its inherent product. }

IDENTIFYING A SPECIFIC OBJECT CREATES A GAP IN THE REAL, THIS YIELDS ANTAGONISTIC TENSION.

Stavrakakis, 1999 (Yannis, PhD, University Research Fellow, Lacan and the political, pg 35-38)/TH

What is most important here is that in the mirror stage, the first jubilant moment is anticipating its own failure. Any imaginary unity based on the mirror stage is founded on an irreducible gap: 'the human being has a special relation with his own image—a relation of gap, of alienating tension' (II:323). Unity in the imaginary is a result of captivation, of a power relation between the infant and its image. But this captivation, the anticipation of synthesis, can never eliminate the real uncoordination of the body of the infant, it can never erase the external and alienating character of its own foundation. This ambiguity is never resolved. One important consequence of this is that narcissism starts appearing in a different light, as constituting the basis of aggressive tension: the imaginary is clearly the prime source of aggressivity in human affairs. What characterises every narcissistic relation is its deep 'ambiguity' (III:92-3). The ambiguity of the imaginary is primarily due to the need to identify with something external, other, different, in order to acquire the basis of a self-unified identity. The implication is that the 'reflecting specular image' in imaginary relations, 'always contains within itself an element of difference': what is supposed to be 'ours' is itself a source of 'alienation'. In that sense, 'every purely imaginary equilibrium or balance with the other is always marked by a fundamental instability' (Lacan in Wilden, 1968:481). This alienating dimension of the ego, the constitutive dependence of every imaginary identity on the alienating exteriority of a never fully internalised mirror image, subverts the whole idea of a stable reconciled subjectivity based on the conception of the autonomous ego. It is not surprising then that when Lacan discusses the idea of the autonomous ego in the 'Freudian Thing' it is enough for him to say 'It is autonomous! That's a good one!' (E: 132).

THE MULTI-CULTURAL LIBERAL'S LACK OF INDIFFERENCE TO THE CULTURE OF OTHERS ONLY EMPHASIZES HIS/HER'S DESIRE TO RETAIN OR EXPAND THE SOCIAL DISTANCE BETWEEN THE TWO.
Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 2002 [Slavoj, Revolution at the Gates, pg 174-175]//dh

the substance of its otherness. . . .

In other words, the problem with the liberal multiculturalist is that he or she is unable to maintain a true indifference towards the Other's *jouissance* – this *jouissance* bothers them, which is why their entire strategy is to keep it at a proper distance. This indifference towards the Other's *jouissance*, the thorough absence of envy, is the key component of what Lacan calls the subjective position of a "saint". Like the authentic "fundamentalists" (say, the Amish) who are indifferent, not bothered by the secret enjoyment of Others, true believers in a (universal) Cause, like Saint Paul, are pointedly indifferent to local customs and mores which simply do *not matter*. In contrast, the multiculturalist liberal is a Rortyan "ironist", always keeping his or her distance, always displacing belief on to Others – Others believe for them, in their place. And although they may appear ("for themselves") to reproach the believing Other for the particular content of his or her belief, what actually ("in itself") bothers them is *the form of belief as such*. Intolerance is intolerance towards the Real of a belief. These people in fact behave like the proverbial husband who concedes in principle that his wife may have a lover, only not *that* guy – that is to say, every particular lover is unacceptable: the tolerant liberal concedes the right to believe in principle, while rejecting every determinate belief as "fundamentalist".¹¹ The ultimate joke of multiculturalist tolerance is, of course, the way class distinction is inscribed into it: adding (ideological) insult to (politico-economic) injury,

upper-class Politically Correct individuals use it to berate the lower classes for their redneck "fundamentalism".¹²

One of the most refined forms of racist (or sexist) oppression is to deny the other the right to define their identity – we do it for them; we tell them who and what they really are. This practice is expanded with Politically Correct multiculturalism: when members of an old ethnic group, for example, make clear their desire to taste the pleasures of the "consumerist society", patronizing multiculturalists try to convince them that they are victims of Western capitalist ideology, and that they should resist it. This patronizing attitude can go right up to direct interference in naming itself: at a TV round-table discussion in Minnesota a couple of years ago, the enlightened white liberals tried to convince their partners to refer to themselves as "Native Americans", although they insisted that they unequivocally preferred the old term "Indians".

This is . . .

POST COLONIAL ACTIVISTS HIDE THEIR INTENTIONS IN RETAINING THE STATUES QUO BY ARGUING HUMAN RIGHTS. THEIR ATTEMPTS AT RADICALISM ARE ONLY EMPTY GESTURES WHICH AVOID DEFINITE ACTION.

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 2002 [Slavoj, Revolution at the Gates, pg 171-172]//dh

Let us take one of the hottest topics in today's "radical" American academia: postcolonial studies. The problem of postcolonialism is undoubtedly crucial; however, postcolonial studies tend to translate it into the multiculturalist problematic of the colonized minorities' "right to narrate" their victimizing experience, of the power mechanisms which repress "otherness", so that, at the end of the day, we learn that the root of postcolonial exploitation is our intolerance towards the Other, and, furthermore, that this intolerance itself is rooted in our intolerance towards the "Stranger in Ourselves", in our inability to confront what we have repressed in and of ourselves – the politico-economic struggle is thus imperceptibly transformed into a pseudo-psychanalytic drama of the subject unable to confront its inner traumas. . . . (Why pseudo-psychanalytic? Because the true lesson of psychoanalysis is not that the external events which fascinate and/or disturb us are just projections of our inner repressed impulses. The unbearable fact of life is that there really are disturbing events out there: there are other human beings who experience intense sexual enjoyment while we are half-impatient; there are people submitted to terrifying torture. . . . Again, the ultimate truth of psychoanalysis is not that of discovering our true Self, but that of the traumatic encounter with an unbearable Real.) The true corruption of American academia is not primarily financial, it is not only that universities are able to buy many European critical intellectuals (myself included – up to a point), but conceptual: notions of "European" critical theory are imperceptibly translated into the benign universe of Cultural Studies chic. At a certain point, this chic becomes indistinguishable from the famous Citibank commercial in which scenes of East Asian, European, Black and American children playing is accompanied by the voice-over: "People who were once divided by a continent . . . are now united by an economy" – at this concluding highpoint, of course, the children are replaced by the Citibank logo."

The great majority of today's "radical" academics silently count on the long-term stability of the American capitalist model, with a secure tenured position as their ultimate professional goal (a surprising number of them even play the stock market). If there is one thing they are genuinely afraid of, it is a radical shattering of the (relatively) safe life-environment of the "symbolic classes" in developed Western societies. Their excessive Politically Correct zeal when they are dealing with sexism, racism, Third World

sweatshops, and so on, is thus ultimately a defence against their own innermost identification, a kind of compulsive ritual whose hidden logic is: "Let's talk as much as possible about the necessity of a radical change, to make sure that nothing will really change!" The journal *October* is typical of this: when you ask one of the editors what the title refers to, they half-confidentially indicate that it is, of course, *that October* – in this way, you can indulge in jargonistic analyses of modern art, with the secret assurance that you are somehow retaining a link with the radical revolutionary past. . . . With regard to this radical chic, our first gesture towards Third Way ideologists and practitioners should be one of praise: at least they play their game straight, and are honest in their acceptance of the global capitalist co-ordinates – unlike pseudo-radical academic Leftists who adopt an attitude of utter disdain towards the Third Way, while their own radicalism ultimately amounts to an empty gesture which obliges no one to do anything definite.)

THE FANTASY THAT IS THE 1AC WILL NEVER SOLVE, IT IS ONLY A MEAN ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN THE REAL, WHICH CANNOT BE EXPLAINED, RESULTING IN ANTAGONISTIC TENSION .

Stavrakakis, 1999 (Yannis, PhD, University Research Fellow, Lacan and the political, pg 30-32)//TH

In other words, any identity resulting from identification is always an unstable identity, a split or even non-identity, since every identification is marked by an alienating dimension. As argued earlier, although imaginary identification offers the subject a sense of identity it also entails a radical ambiguity, it introduces a certain antagonistic tension. The same alienation is characterising symbolic identification: in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, Lacan refers to a lack which 'emerges from the invasion of the symbolic, by the fact that the subject depends on the signifier but the signifier is first of all in the field of the Other' (XI:204-5). Here we are confronted with an ambivalence similar to the one that led to the failure of imaginary identification. What belongs to the socio-symbolic Other can never become totally ours: it can never become us; it will always be a source of ambivalence and alienation and this gap can never be bridged. The ultimate result of symbolic identification is a further alienation in language, in the social world: 'The paradox of the Word is therefore that its emergence resolves the tension of the pre-symbolic antagonism, but at a price: the Word...involves an irretrievable externalization-alienation' (Žizek, 1997a: 42). To recapitulate our argument so far, both imaginary and symbolic identification fail to provide us with a stable identity. A lack is continuously re-emerging where identity should be consolidated. All our attempts to cover over this lack of the subject through identifications that promise to offer us a stable identity fail, this failure brings to the fore the irreducible character of this lack which in turn reinforces our attempts to fill it. This is the circular play between lack and identification which is marking the human condition; a play that makes possible the emergence of a whole politics of the subject.

In this regard we have to be very clear, assuming at the same time the risk of a certain repetition: the politics of the subject, the politics of identity formation, can only be understood as a politics of impossibility. If the ego is based on the imaginary misrecognition of the impossibility of fullness and closure, it also entails a constitutive alienation, making visible a certain lack. This lack also constitutes an irreducible element of the symbolic order in which the subject turns for its representation: here lack is elevated to the position of a precondition for symbolic representation. In the symbolic, the subject is properly constituted but as the subject of lack; something is again missing. Identification is thus revealed as, by constitution, alienating (Laclau and Zac, 1994:14). It can never realise its aim, it can never achieve full identity, it can never bring back our lost fullness since it was its own institution that introduced this loss. Identification is always an identification doomed to fail. One has to agree with Laclau and Zac that the

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ANY ONE PROMOTING "TOLERANCE" IS ONLY EXEMPLIFYING THE INTOLERANCE THEY THEMSELVES CONTAIN.

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 2002 [Slavoj, Revolution at the Gates, pg 175-176]//dh

(and, in the same time, an inadequate answer to it). The ultimate problem with the "right to narrate" is that it uses a unique particular experience as a political argument: "Only a gay black woman can experience and tell what it means to be a gay black woman", and so on. Such recourse to a particular experience which cannot be universalized is always, and by definition, a conservative political gesture: ultimately, everyone can evoke his or her unique experience in order to justify their reprehensible acts.¹⁴ Is it not possible for a Nazi executioner to claim that his victims did not really understand the inner vision which motivated him?

Along these same lines, Veit Harlan, the Nazi film director, spoke despairingly in the 1950s about the fact that Jews in the USA did not show any comprehension of his defence for making *The Jew Süss*, claiming that no American Jew could really understand his situation in Nazi Germany – far from exonerating him, this obscene (factual) truth is the ultimate lie. Furthermore, the fact that the greatest plea for tolerance in the history of cinema was made in a defence against "intolerant" attacks on an advocate for the Ku Klux Klan tells a lot about the extent to which – to use today's terms – the signifier "tolerance" is very much a "floating" one. For D. W. Griffith, *Intolerance* was not a way to exculpate himself for the aggressive racist message of *The Birth of a Nation*: quite the contrary, he was smarting at what he considered "intolerance" on the part of groups which attempted to have *The Birth of a Nation* banned because of its anti-Black thrust. In short, when Griffith complains about "intolerance", he is much closer to today's fundamentalists decrying the "Politically Correct" defence of the universal rights of women as "intolerant" towards their specific way of life than to today's multiculturalist assertion of differences. ▶

The attempt by the affirmative team to promote human rights is a perpetuation of the status quo social hierarchy. The alternative is to recognize exclusion as the only absolute truth and identify directly with the system.

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 1999 [Slavoj, The Ticklish Subject, pg. 223-224]

{How are we to comprehend this paradox? It can be conceived only if *the antagonism is inherent to universality itself*, that is, if universality itself is split into the 'false' concrete universality that legitimizes the existing division of the Whole into functional parts, and the impossible/real

demand of 'abstract' universality (Balibar's *égaliberté* again). The leftist political gesture *par excellence* (in contrast to the rightist slogan 'to each his or her own place') is thus to question the concrete existing universal order on behalf of its symptom, of the part which, although inherent to the existing universal order, has no 'proper place' within it (say, illegal immigrants or the homeless in our societies). This procedure of *identifying with the symptom* is the exact and necessary obverse of the standard critico-ideological move of recognizing a particular content behind some abstract universal notion, that is, of denouncing neutral universality as false ('the "man" of human rights is actually the white male property-owner . . .'): one pathetically asserts (and identifies with) *the point of inherent exception/exclusion, the 'abject', of the concrete positive order, as the only point of true universality.*}

POLITICAL ACTIONS ONLY SLOW DOWN PROGRESS OF MOVEMENTS, AND ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO SOLVE WITH.

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 2002 [Slavoj, Revolution at the Gates, pg 10-11]//dh

Is this line of argumentation, this fundamental stance, not more apposite than ever today? Do not we, also, live in an era when the state and its apparatuses, including its political agents, are simply less and less able to articulate the key issues - as none other than John le Carré put it recently:

"Politicians are ignoring the real problems of the world" - by which he meant ecology, deteriorating healthcare, poverty, the role of multinationals, etc.). Le Carré was not simply making a point about the shortsightedness of some politicians - if we take what he said seriously, the only logical conclusion is that we urgently need a new *form of politicization* which will directly "socialize" these crucial issues. The illusion of 1917 that the pressing problems which faced Russia (peace, land distribution, etc.) could be solved through "legal" parliamentary means is the same as today's illusion that the ecological threat, for instance, could be avoided by expanding the market logic to ecology (making polluters pay for the damage they cause).

NEUTRALITY IS AN ILLUSION even the neutral stance takes a side, accepting the necessity of taking sides is the only way to be universal

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 1999 [Slavoj, The Ticklish Subject, pg. 223]

(The lesson of all this, which gained actuality apropos of the Western reaction to the Bosnian war, is thus that there is no way to avoid being partial, since the neutral stance itself involves taking sides (in the case of the Bosnian war, the 'balanced' talk about Balkan ethnic 'tribal warfare' already endorses the Serbian standpoint): humanitarian liberal equidistance can easily slip into or coincide with its opposite and in effect tolerate the most violent 'ethnic cleansing'. In short, the Leftist does not simply violate the Liberal's impartial neutrality; what he claims is that *there is no such neutrality*: that the Liberal's impartiality is always-already biased. The cliché of the liberal Centre, of course, is that both suspensions, the rightist and the leftist, ultimately amount to the same: to a totalitarian threat to the rule of law. The entire consistency of the Left hinges on proving that, on the contrary, each of the two suspensions follows a different logic. While the Right legitimizes its suspension of the Ethical by its anti-universalist stance – that is, by a reference to its particular (religious, patriotic) identity which overrules any universal moral or legal standards – the Left legitimizes its suspension of the Ethical precisely by means of a reference to the true Universality to come. Or – to put it another way – the Left simultaneously accepts the antagonistic character of society (there is no neutral position, struggle is constitutive) *and* remains universalist (speaking on behalf of universal emancipation): in the leftist perspective, accepting the radically antagonistic – that is, *political* – character of social life, accepting the necessity of 'taking sides', is the only way to be effectively *universal*.)

The notion of challenging the post-modern capital regime must be rejected. This attempt to establish neutrality of law allows for Capital to remain as the real lurking in the background.

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 1999 [Slavoj, The Ticklish Subject, pg. 221-222]

¶ Paradoxically, today's true conservatives are, rather, leftist 'critical theorists' who reject both liberal multiculturalism and fundamentalist populism – who clearly perceive the complicity between global capitalism and ethnic fundamentalism. They point towards a third domain, which belongs neither to the global market society nor to the new forms of ethnic fundamentalism: the domain of the *political*, the public space of civil society, of active responsible citizenship (the fight for human rights, ecology, etc.). However, the problem is that this very form of the political space is increasingly threatened by the onslaught of globalization; consequently, one cannot simply return to it or revitalize it: the post-national-state logic of Capital remains the *Real* which lurks in the background, while all three main leftist reactions to the process of globalization (liberal multiculturalism; the attempt to embrace populism by discerning, beneath its fundamentalist appearance, resistance to 'instrumental reason'; the attempt to keep open the space of the political) seem inappropriate. Although the last approach is based on an accurate insight into the complicity between multiculturalism and fundamentalism, it avoids the crucial question: *how are we to reinvent the political space in today's conditions of globalization?* The politicization of the series of particular struggles which leaves the global process of Capital intact is clearly not sufficient. This means that one should reject the opposition which, within the frame of late capitalist liberal democracy, imposes itself as the main axis of ideological struggle: the tension between 'open' post-ideological universalist liberal tolerance and the particularist 'new fundamentalisms'. Against the liberal Centre which presents itself as neutral, post-ideological, relying on the rule of Law, one should reassert the old leftist motif of the necessity to suspend the neutral space of Law.)

WE OFFER THE ALTERNATIVE OF REJECTION, REJECT THE AFFIRMATIVE AND THEIR IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM IN ORDER TO FRACTURE THE SYMBOLIC REALM

Stavrakakis, 1999 (Yannis, PhD, University Research Fellow, Lacan and the political, pg 18-20)/TH

Such a standpoint seems to be at the antipodes of Whitebook's view, according to which 'without the input of the imaginary, any such debate [on achieving a better society]...is in danger of being empty' (Whitebook, 1995:89). What Whitebook cannot realise is that it is exactly the emptiness of the Lacanian lack in the Other, the emptiness in the *locus* of democratic power in Lefort, that becomes the point of reference for the articulation of such a new political vision. a vision beyond imaginary lures. ¹²

By identifying with the system the victim can escape the subjectivity of the status quo, where as any refusal of the system leads only to perpetuation of there victimization

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 1999 [Slavoj, The Ticklish Subject, pg 227-228]

(That is the ultimate gap that separates Nazism from Communism: in Nazism, a Jew is ultimately guilty simply because he is a Jew, because of his direct natural properties, because of what he is; while even in the darkest days of Stalinism a member of the bourgeoisie or aristocracy is not guilty *per se*, that is, directly because of his social status – there is always a minimum of subjectivization involved; participation in the class struggle relies on the subjective act of decision. In a perverted way, the very function of confession in the Stalinist show trial attests to this difference: for the guilt of the traitor to be effective, the accused must confess, that is, subjectively assume his guilt, in clear contrast to Nazism, where an analogous confession by a Jew that he was participating in a plot against Germany would be meaningless. It is at this point that the revisionist historians' argumentation according to which the Nazi Holocaust was already foreshadowed by the Leninist liquidation of the ex-ruling classes (in both cases people were killed simply because of what they were, not because of their deeds) misses the point.

For that reason, the anti-Communist revisionist historian's thesis according to which the Nazi Holocaust did not only follow in time the Communist purges of the enemies of the revolution in the Soviet Union, but was also causally conditioned by them (conceived as a reaction or, rather, a preventive strike against them) misses the point. The revisionists are quite right to stress that the Nazi struggle against the Jewish plot was a repetition/copy of the Communist class struggle – however, far from excusing the Nazis, this fact brings home all the more the difference between Nazism and Communism: what for the Communists was the antagonism that dwells in the very kernel of the social edifice was, in Nazi ideology, 'naturalized' into the biological property of a specific race (the Jews). So instead of the notion of society as divided/traversed by the class struggle, in which everybody is compelled to take sides, we get the notion of society as a corporate body threatened by an external enemy: the Jew as the foreign intruder. Consequently, it is totally misguided to conceive the Communist revolutionary terror and the Nazi Holocaust as the two modes of the same totalitarian violence (in the first case the gap between Us and Them, the enemy, and the enemy's annihilation, were justified in terms of class difference – it is legitimate to destroy members of the opposing class – and in the second, in terms of racial difference – it is legitimate to kill Jews): the true horror of Nazism lies in the very way it displaced/naturalized social antagonism into racial difference, making the Jews guilty because of the simple fact that they were Jews, independently of what they did, of how they subjectivized their condition.)

Over Identification Solves for Capitalism

Capitalism won't change unless identified groups ~~start~~ identifying themselves with a cultural identity

Zizek, Senior Researcher at the University of Ljubljana, 1999 [Slavoj, The Ticklish Subject, pg. 209-210]

So while everyone seems to agree that today's post-political liberal-democratic global capitalist regime is the regime of the non-event (in Nietzsche's terms, of the Last Man), the question of where we are to look for the Event remains open. The obvious solution is: in so far as we experience contemporary postmodern social life as 'non-substantial' the proper answer is the multitude of passionate, often violent returns to 'roots', to different forms of ethnic and/or religious 'substance'. What is 'substance' in social experience? It is the violent emotional moment of 'recognition', when one becomes aware of one's 'roots', of one's 'true belonging', the moment in the face of which liberal reflexive distance is utterly impotent – all of a sudden, adrift in the world, one finds oneself in the grip of a kind of absolute longing for 'home', and everything else, everyday common concerns, becomes unimportant. . . .³⁸

Here, however, one must fully endorse Badiou's point that these 'returns to the Substance' are themselves impotent in the face of the global march of Capital: they are its inherent supplement, the limit/condition of its functioning, since – as Deleuze emphasized years ago – capitalist 'deterritorialization' is always accompanied by re-emerging 'reterritorializations'. More precisely, there is an inherent split in the field of particular identities themselves caused by the onslaught of capitalist globalization: on the one hand, the so-called 'fundamentalisms', whose basic formula is that of the Identity of one's own group, implying the practice of excluding the threatening Other(s): France for the French (against Algerian immigrants), America for Americans (against the Hispanic invasion), Slovenia for Slovenians (against the excessive presence of 'Southerners', immigrants from the ex-Yugoslav republics);³⁹ on the other hand, there is postmodern multiculturalist 'identity politics', aiming at the tolerant coexistence of ever-shifting, 'hybrid' lifestyle groups, divided into endless subgroups (Hispanic women, black gays, white male AIDS patients, lesbian mothers . . .).

This ever-growing flowering of groups and subgroups in their hybrid and fluid, shifting identities, each insisting on the right to assert its

specific way of life and/or culture, this incessant diversification, is possible and thinkable only against the background of capitalist globalization; it is the very way capitalist globalization affects our sense of ethnic and other forms of community belonging: the only link connecting these multiple groups is the link of Capital itself, always ready to satisfy the specific demands of each group and subgroup (gay tourism, Hispanic music . . .). Furthermore, the opposition between fundamentalism and postmodern pluralist identity politics is ultimately a fake, concealing a deeper solidarity (or, to put it in Hegelese, speculative identity): a multiculturalist can easily find even the most 'fundamentalist' ethnic identity attractive, but only in so far as it is the identity of the supposedly authentic Other (say, in the USA, Native American tribal identity); a fundamentalist group can easily adopt, in its social functioning, the postmodern strategies of identity politics, presenting itself as one of the threatened minorities, simply striving to maintain its specific way of life and cultural identity. The line of separation between multiculturalist identity politics and fundamentalism is thus purely formal; it often depends merely on the different perspective from which the observer views a movement for maintaining a group identity.)