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INC: ZIZEK!

THEIR STRUGGLE TO LIBERATE THE OPPRESSED IS PART OF A LEFTIST "TOTALITARIAN FANTASY" THAT ATTEMPTS TO BE ALL-INCLUSIVE OF THE OTHER'S OPPRESSION. THIS IDEOLOGICAL PROJECT ATTEMPTS TO CHANGE THE SYSTEM FOR EQUALITY—JUST LIKE NAZISM-- BUT INSTEAD RE-CREATES THE SAME FASCIST SYSTEM

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, pg. 184-187)

Our conclusion is thus that the ruling ideology, in order to be operative, has to incorporate a series of features in which the exploited/dominated majority will be able to recognize its authentic longings. In short, even hegemonic universality has to incorporate at least two particular contents: the 'authentic' popular content and its 'distortion' by the relations of domination and exploitation. Of course Fascist ideology 'manipulates' authentic popular longing for a true community and social solidarity against fierce competition and exploitation; of course it 'distorts' the expression of this longing in order to legitimize the continuation of the relations of social domination and exploitation. In order to be able to achieve this effect, however, it none the less has to incorporate authentic popular longing. Ideological hegemony is thus not the case of some particular content directly filling in the void of the empty Universal; rather, the very form of ideological universality bears witness to the struggle between (at least) two particular contents: the 'popular' content expressing the secret longings of the dominated majority, and the specific content expressing the interests of the forces of domination. One is tempted to refer here to the Freudian distinction between the latent dream-thought and the unconscious desire expressed in a dream: the two are not the same, since the unconscious desire articulates itself, inscribes itself, through the very 'working-through', translation, of the latent dream-thought into the explicit text of a dream. In the same way, there is nothing 'Fascist' ('reactionary', etc.) in the 'latent dream-thought' of the Fascist ideology (the longing for authentic community and social solidarity, etc.); what accounts for the properly Fascist character of the Fascist ideology is the way this 'latent dream-thought' is transformed/ elaborated by the ideological 'dream-work' into the explicit ideological text which continues to legitimize social relations of exploitation and domination. And is it not the same with today's right-wing populism? Are not liberal critics too quick in dismissing the very values populism refers to as inherently 'fundamentalist' or 'proto-Fascist'?

Non-ideology (what Fredric Jameson calls the Utopian moment present even in the most atrocious ideology) is thus absolutely indispensable; in a way, ideology is nothing but the form of appearance, the formal distortion/ displacement, of non-ideology. To return to the worst imaginable case — was not Nazi anti-Semitism grounded in the Utopian longing for an authentic community life, in the fully justified rejection of the irrationality of capitalist exploitation, and so on? Our point, again, is that it is theoretically and politically wrong to condemn the longing for authentic community life as such as 'proto-Fascist', to denounce it as a 'totalitarian fantasy' — to search for the possible 'roots' of Fascism in this very longing (the standard mistake of the liberal-individualist critique of Fascism): the non-ideological Utopian character of this longing is to be fully asserted. What makes it 'ideological' is its articulation, the way this longing is functionalized as the legitimization of a very specific notion of capitalist exploitation (the result of Jewish influence, the predominance of financial over 'productive' capital, which tends towards a harmonious 'partnership with workers . . .) and how to overcome it (by getting rid of the Jews, of course).

Crucial for a successful ideology is thus the tension within its particular content between the themes and motifs that belong to the 'oppressed' and those which belong to the 'oppressors': ruling ideas are never directly the ideas of the ruling class. Let us take what is arguably the ultimate example, Christianity - how did it become the ruling ideology? By incorporating a series of motifs and aspirations of the oppressed (truth is on the side of the suffering and humiliated; power corrupts . . .) and rearticulating them in such a way that they became compatible with the existing relations of domination. And the same holds even for Fascism. The fundamental ideological contradiction of Fascism is that between organicism and mechanicism: the corporatist-organic aestheticized vision of the Social Body and the extreme "technologization", mobilization, destruction, wiping-out, of the last vestiges of 'organic' communities (families, universities, local self-management traditions) at the level of the actual 'micro-practices' of the power exercise. In Fascism, the aestheticized organicist corporate ideology is thus the very form of an unprecedented technological mobilization of society which disrupts 'organic' links. If this paradox enables us to avoid the liberal-multiculturalist trap of condemning every call for a return to organic (ethnic, etc.) links as 'proto-Fascist': what defines Fascism is, rather, a specific combination of organicist corporatism and the drive to ruthless modernization. To put it in yet another way: in every actual Fascism, one always encounters elements which make us say: 'This is not yet full-blown Fascism; there are still inconsistent elements of leftist traditions or liberalism in it'; however, this removal from - this distance towards — the phantom of 'pure' Fascism is Fascism tout court. Fascism', in its ideology and practice, is nothing but a certain formal principle of distortion of social antagonism, a certain logic of its displacement by a combination and condensation of inconsistent attitudes. The same distortion is discernible in the fact that, today, the only class which, in its 'subjective' self-perception, explicitly conceives of and presents itself as a class is the notorious 'middle class' which is precisely the 'non-class': the allegedly hard-working middle strata of society which define themselves not only by their allegiance to firm moral and religious standards, but by a double opposition to both 'extremes' of the social space — non-patriotic 'deracinated' rich corporations on the one side; poor excluded immigrants and ghetto-members on the other. The 'mid-dle class' grounds its identity in the exclusion of both extremes which, when they are directly counterposed, give us 'class antagonism' at its purest. The constitutive lie of the very notion of the 'middle class' is thus the same as that of the true Party line between the two extremes of 'right-wing deviation' and 'left-wing deviation' in Stalinism: the 'middle class' is, in its very 'real' existence, the embodied lie, the denial of antagonism - in psychoanalytic terms, the 'middle class' is a fetish, the impossible intersection of Left and Right which, by expelling both poles of the antagonism into the position of antisocial 'extremes' which corrode the healthy social body (multinational corporations and intruding immigrants), presents itself as the neutral common ground of Society. In other words, the 'middle class' is the very form of the disavowal of the fact that 'Society doesn't exist' (Laclau) — in it, Society does exist. Leftists usually bemoan the fact that the line of division in the class struggle is as a rule blurred, displaced, falsified - most blatantly in the case of rightist populism, which presents itself as speaking on behalf of the people, while in fact advocating the interests of those who

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rule. However, this constant displacement and 'falsification' of the line of (class) division is the 'class struggle': a class society in which the ideological perception of the class division was pure and direct would be a harmonious structure with no struggle — or, to put it in Laclau's terms, class antagonism would thereby be fully symbolized; it would no longer be impossible/real, but a simple differential structural feature.

INC: ZIZEK!

THE KRITIK TURNS THE CASE—

THE POSTMODERN POLITICS OF INCLUSIVITY OR MULTICULTURALISM IS ESSENTIALLY THE TOOL OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM TO LEGITIMIZE NEW FORMS OF COLONIZATION—THUS PERPETUATING SUBORDINATION, CULTURAL IMPERIALISM AND RACISM.

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, Pg. 215-217)

How, then, does the universe of Capital relate to the form of nation-state in our era of global capitalism? Perhaps this relationship is best designated as 'autocolonization': with the direct multinational functioning of Capital, we are no longer dealing with the standard opposition between metropolis and colonized countries; a global company, as it were, cuts its umbilical cord with its mother-nation and treats its country of origin as simply another territory to be colonized. This is what is so disturbing to patriotically orientated right-wing populists, from Le Pen to Buchanan: the fact that the new multinationals have exactly the same attitude towards the French or American local population as towards the population of Mexico, Brazil or Taiwan. Is there not a kind of poetic justice in this self-referential turn of today's global capitalism, which functions as a kind of 'negation of negation', after national capitalism and its internationalist/ colonialist phase? At the beginning (ideally, of course), there is capitalism within the confines of a nation-state, and with the accompanying international trade (exchange between sovereign nation-states); what follows is the relationship of colonization, in which the colonizing country subordinates and exploits (economically, politically, culturally) the colonized country; the final moment of this process is the paradox of colonization, in which there are only colonies, no colonizing countries - the colonizing power is no longer a nation-state but the global company itself. In the long term, we shall all not only wear Banana Republic shirts but also live in banana republics.

And, of course, the ideal form of ideology of this global capitalism is multiculturalism, the attitude which, from a kind of empty global position, treats each local culture as the colonizer treats colonized people — as 'natives' whose mores are to be carefully studied and 'respected'. That is to say: the relationship between traditional imperialist colonialism and global capitalist self-colonization is exactly the same as the relationship between Western cultural imperialism and multiculturalism — just as global capitalism involves the paradox of colonization without the colonizing nation-state metropolis, multiculturalism involves a patronizing Eurocentrist distance and/or respect for local cultures without roots in one's own particular culture. In other words, multiculturalism is a disavowed, inverted, self-referential form of racism, a 'racism with a distance' - it 'respects' the Other's identity, conceiving the Other as a self-enclosed 'authentic' community towards which the multiculturalist maintains a distance made possible by his/her privileged universal position. Multiculturalism is a racism which empties its own position of all positive content (the multiculturalist is not a direct racist; he or she does not oppose to the Other the particular values of his or her own culture); none the less he or she retains this position as the privileged empty point of universality from which one is able to appreciate (and deprecate) other particular cultures properly - multiculturalist respect for the Other's specificity is the very form of asserting one's own superiority.

From the standpoint of the post-Marxist anti-essentialist notion of politics as the field of hegemonic struggle with no pre-established rules that would define its parameters in advance, it is easy to reject the very notion of the 'logic of Capital' as precisely the remainder of the old essentialist stance: far from being reducible to an ideologico-cultural effect of the economic process, the passage from standard cultural imperialism to the more tolerant multiculturalism with its openness towards the wealth of hybrid ethnic, sexual, and so on, identities is the result of a long and difficult politico-cultural struggle whose final outcome was in no way guaranteed by the a priori co-ordinates of the 'logic of Capital'. . . . The crucial point, however, is that this struggle for the politicization and assertion of multiple ethnic, sexual, and other identities always took place against the background of an invisible yet all the more forbidding barrier: the global capitalist system was able to incorporate the gains of the postmodern politics of identities to the extent that they did not distribute smooth circulation of Capital - the moment some political intervention poses a serious threat to that, an elaborate set of exclusionary measures quashes it.

INC: ZIZEK!

THUS THE ALTERNATIVE:

WE MUST REJECT IDEOLOGIES BASED ON MULTICULTURALISM AND TOKENISM FOR THEY RECREATE AND LEGITIMIZE THE VERY VIOLENCE THEY AIM TO CONTROL— RACISM AND GLOBAL OPPRESSION—THE ONLY WAY TO BREAK FREE IS BY REJECTING THE TOLERANT POST-POLITICS AND INSTEAD EMBRACE A METAPHORIC UNIVERSALIZATION IN EVERY PARTICULAR DEMAND

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, Pg. 203-205)

Hegel's fundamental rule is that 'objective' excess (the direct reign of abstract universality which imposes its law 'mechanically', with complete disregard for the concerned subject caught in its web) is always supplemented by the 'subjective' excess (the irregular, arbitrary exercise of whims). An excellent illustration of this interdependence is provided by Balibar who distinguishes two opposite but complementary modes of excessive violence: the 'ultra-objective' ('structural') violence that is inherent in the social conditions of global capitalism (the 'automatic' creation of excluded and dispensable individuals, from the homeless to the unemployed), and the 'ultra-subjective' violence of newly emerging ethnic and/ or religious (in short: racist) 'fundamentalisms'. This 'excessive' and 'groundless' violence involves its own mode of knowledge, that of impotent cynical reflection - back to our example of Id-Evil, of a skinhead beating up foreigners: when he is really pressed for the reasons for his violence, and if he is capable of minimal theoretical reflection, he will suddenly start to talk like social workers, sociologists and social psychologists, quoting diminished social mobility, rising insecurity, the disintegration of paternal authority, the lack of maternal love in his early childhood ... in short, he will provide the more or less precise psycho-sociological account of his acts so dear to enlightened liberals eager to 'understand' violent youth as tragic victims of their social and familial conditions.

Here the standard enlightened formula of the efficiency of the 'critique of ideology' from Plato onwards (They're doing it because they don't know what they're doing' - that is, knowledge in itself is liberating; when the erring subject reflects upon what he is doing, he will no longer be doing it) is turned around: the violent skinhead 'knows very well what he's doing, but he's nevertheless doing it'. The symbolically efficient knowledge embedded in the subject's actual social praxis disintegrates into, on the one hand, excessive 'irrational' violence with no ideologico-political foundation and, on the other, impotent external reflection that leaves the subject's acts intact. In the guise of this cynically impotent reflecting skinhead who, with an ironic smile, explains the roots of his senselessly violent behavior to the perplexed journalist, the enlightened tolerant multiculturalist bent on 'understanding' forms of excessive violence gets his own message in its inverted, true form — in short, as Lacan would have put it, at this point the communication between him and the 'object' of his study, the intolerant skinhead, is thoroughly successful.

The distinction between this excessive 'dysfunctional' violence and the obscene violence that serves as the implicit support of a standard ideological universal notion is crucial here (when 'the rights of man' are 'not really universal' but 'in fact the right of white property-owning males', any attempt to disregard this implicit underlying set of unwritten rules that effectively constrain the universality of rights is met by outburst's of violence). Nowhere is this contrast stronger than in the case of the African-Americans: although they were formally entitled to participate- in political life by the mere fact of being American citizens, the old parapolitical democratic racism prevented their actual participation by silently enforcing their exclusion (via verbal and physical threats, etc.). The appropriate answer to this standard exclusion-from-the-Universal was the great Civil Rights movement associated with the name of Martin Luther King: it suspended the implicit obscene supplement that enacted the actual exclusion of Blacks from formal universal equality - of course, it was easy for such a gesture to gain the support of the large majority of the white liberal upper-class establishment, dismissing opponents as dumb low-class Southern rednecks. Today, however', the very terrain of the struggle has changed: the post-political liberal establishment not only fully acknowledges the gap between mere formal equality and its actualization/ implementation, it not only acknowledges the exclusionary logic of 'false' ideological universality, it even actively fights it by applying to it a vast legal-psychological-sociological network of measures, from identifying the specific problems of every group and subgroup (not only homosexuals but African-American lesbians, African-American lesbian mothers, African-American unemployed lesbian mothers ...) up to proposing a set of measures ('affirmative action', etc.) to rectify the wrong.

What such a tolerant procedure precludes is the gesture of politicization proper: although the difficulties of being an African-American unemployed lesbian mother are adequately catalogued right down to its most specific features, the concerned subject none the less somehow 'feels' that there is something 'wrong' and 'frustrating' in this very effort to mete out justice to her specific predicament - what she is deprived of is the possibility of 'metaphoric' elevation of her specific 'wrong' into a stand-in for the universal 'wrong'. The only way to articulate this universality - the fact that I, precisely, am not merely that specific individual exposed to a set of specific injustices - consists, then, in its apparent opposite, in the thoroughly 'irrational' excessive outburst of violence. The old Hegelian rule is again confirmed here: the only way for a universality to come into existence, to 'posit' itself 'as such', is in the guise of its very opposite, of what cannot but appear as an excessive 'irrational' whim. These violent passages a l'acte bear witness to some underlying antagonism that can no longer be formulated-symbolized in properly political terms. The only way to counteract these excessive 'irrational' outbursts is to approach the question of what none the less remains foreclosed in the very all-inclusionary/tolerant post-political logic, and to actualize this foreclosed dimension in some new mode of political subjectivization.

Let us recall the standard example of a popular protest (mass demonstration, strike, boycott) directed at a specific point, that is, focusing on a particular demand ('Abolish that new tax! Justice for the imprisoned! Stop exploiting that natural resource! . . .) - the situation becomes politicized when this particular demand starts to function as a metaphoric condensation of the global opposition against Them, those in power, so that the protest is no longer actually just about that demand, but about the universal dimension that resonates in that particular demand (for this reason, protesters often feel somewhat deceived when those in power against whom their protest was addressed simply accept their demand -as if, in this way, they have somehow frustrated them, depriving them of the true aim of their protest in the very guise of accepting their demand). What post-politics tends to prevent is precisely this metaphoric universalization of particular demands: post-politics mobilizes the vast apparatus of experts, social workers, and so on, to reduce the overall demand (complaint) of a particular group to just this demand, with its particular content - no wonder this suffocating closure gives birth to 'irrational' outbursts of violence as the only way to give expression to the dimension beyond particularity. This argumentation is not to be confused with the point, made by many a conservative critic, according to which violent outbursts signify the return of the repressed of our anaemic liberal Western civilization. Exemplars' here is Mario Vargas Llosa's argumentation that 'the hooligan is no barbarian: he is an exquisite and terrible product of civilization'.¹ Llosa takes as his starting point the observation that the typical violent soccer fan is not an unemployed lumpen proletarian but a comfortably oil middle-class worker, that is, the very epitome of gentle good manners and civilized compassion - his violent outbursts are 'returns of the repressed', the reassertion of the violent orgy increasingly prohibited by our civilized liberal societies. Through a misleading reference to Freud, Llosa mystifies and naturalizes current violent outbursts: as if there is a fixed, irreducible propensity towards violent outbursts in human nature, and when sacred orgies are no longer permitted as its legitimate expression, this propensity has to find another way to express itself. . . In clear contrast to this line of argumentation, my point is much stronger: the neo-Nazi skinheads ethnic violence is not the 'return of the repressed' of the liberal multiculturalist tolerance, but directly generated by it, its own concealed true lace.

LINK: Feminism

LINK: THE PROCESS OF FEMINISM REINFORCES RATHER THAN CHALLENGING EXISTING IDENTITY POLITICS

Susan Hekman, 00', Political theories and graduate humanities and University of Texas in Arlington, "Beyond identity: Feminism, identity and identity politics," Sage Publications MNDI MW

Another aspect of the problem of multiplicity has emerged in third-wave feminist writing. Reading the accounts of third-wavers one is struck by the diversity of identities that are proclaimed (Findlen, 1995; Walker, 1995). The celebration of diversity in these accounts, however, does little to resolve the difficult questions raised by this diversity. The author of one of these accounts, Sonja Curry-Johnson, confesses to an 'acute sense of multiplicity' (1995: 222). The multiple identities that she feels define her also divide her. 'Each identity defines me; each is responsible for elements of my character; from each I devise some sustenance for my soul.' But these identities do not peacefully co-exist. The effort to blend them together harmoniously she describes as 'desperate'. Curry-Johnson's article is, in some sense, a cry for help. She feels that women should be able to 'bring our full selves to the table'. But she also does not see how this could be made possible.

A second problem with the fixing of identity occurs in the external political arena. As the participants in identity politics police a certain identity internally (Phelan's 'Lesbian'), this identity also becomes fixed externally in the political arena in which these identities position themselves. This fixing is the result of the complex relationship between difference, identity and power. As June Jordan so aptly puts it, 'There is difference and there is power. And who holds the power decides the meaning of the difference' (1994: 197). The differences that identity politics embraces are the differences that society creates and enforces. Feminist identity politics began as a rebellion against the identity assigned to 'woman' by patriarchal institutions. It has evolved into a rebellion against the general category 'woman' that privileges white, middle-class women. Yet the identities that women have embraced under the rubric of identity politics are not of their own choosing; they are, rather, precisely those imposed by the society they are challenging. Feminism, as an oppositional politics, should be challenging rather than affirming the identities and differences of our polity. The effect of identity politics, however, is to reify rather than redefine those differences.

LINK: FEMINIST MOVEMENTS USE IDENTITY POLITICS

Susan Hekman, 00', Political theories and graduate humanities and University of Texas in Arlington, "Beyond identity: Feminism, identity and identity politics," Sage Publications MNDI MW

My argument with regard to feminist theories of identity, then, is that we require a concept with more substance than the postmodernists have provided. My argument with regard to identity politics will seem, on the face of it, contradictory. I argue that identity politics has too much identity in it and that we should move to a politics beyond identity. This contradiction, however, is only apparent. Both problems have the same source: a misplaced adherence to the modernist subject. The problem with the postmodern concept of identity advocated by Butler and others is that it adopts the polar opposite of the modernist subject and thus is constrained by that concept. Similarly, I will argue that it is the dominance of the modernist subject in the liberal polity that has created the problems surrounding identity politics. Feminists originally embarked on the project of identity politics because they found the political identity available to women to be inadequate. They felt excluded from the liberal polity, despite its claim to include all citizens equally. It was in an effort to reverse this exclusion that women turned first to the identity of 'woman' and later to multiple identities. These efforts to redefine political identity have led to confusions and contradictions and the present impasse over the issue of identity politics

LINK: Humanitarianism/Human Rights

THEIR CALL TO HUMAN RIGHTS JUSTIFIES HUMANITARIAN INTERFERENCE BY WESTERN COUNTRIES WHERE MILITARIZATION AND CAPITALIST EXPANSION IS JUSTIFIED IN THE NAME OF DEMOCRACY—HUMAN RIGHTS ARE PART OF THE LARGER BIOPOLITICAL SYSTEM WHERE ALL THOSE WHO ARE INCLUDED ARE REDUCED TO BARELIFE AND STRIPPED FROM THEIR POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITY

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, "The Obscenity of Human Rights: Violence as Symptom", <http://www.lacan.com/zizviol.htm>)

From this specific insight, one should make the move to the general level and render problematic the very depolitized humanitarian politics of "Human Rights" as the ideology of military interventionism serving specific economico-political purposes. As Wendy Brown develops apropos Michael Ignatieff, such humanitarianism "presents itself as something of an antipolitics - a pure defense of the innocent and the powerless against power, a pure defense of the individual against immense and potentially cruel or despotic machineries of culture, state, war, ethnic conflict, tribalism, patriarchy, and other mobilizations or instantiations of collective power against individuals." 3 However, the question is: "what kind of politicization /those who intervene on behalf of human rights/ set in motion against the powers they oppose. Do they stand for a different formulation of justice or do they stand in opposition to collective justice projects?" 4 Say, it is clear that the US overthrowing of Saddam Hussein, legitimized in the terms of ending the suffering of the Iraqi people, not only was motivated by other politico-economic interests (oil), but also relied on a determinate idea of the political and economic conditions that should open up the perspective of freedom to the Iraqi people (Western liberal democracy, guarantee of private property, the inclusion into the global market economy, etc.). The purely humanitarian anti-political politics of merely preventing suffering thus effectively amounts to the implicit prohibition of elaborating a positive collective project of socio-political transformation.

And, at an even more general level, one should problematize the very opposition between the universal (pre-political) Human Rights which belong to every human being "as such," and specific political rights of a citizen, member of a particular political community; in this sense, Balibar argues for the "reversal of the historical and theoretical relationship between 'man' and 'citizen'" which proceeds by "explaining how man is made by citizenship and not citizenship by man." 5 Balibar refers here to Hannah Arendt's insight apropos the XXth century phenomenon of refugees: The conception of human rights based upon the assumed existence of a human being as such, broke down at the very moment when those who professed to believe in it were for the first time confronted with people who had indeed lost all other qualities and specific relationships - except that they were still human. 6

This line, of course, leads straight to Agamben's notion of homo sacer as a human being reduced to "bare life": in a properly Hegelian paradoxical dialectics of universal and particular, it is precisely when a human being is deprived of his particular socio-political identity which accounts for his determinate citizenship, that he, in one and the same move, is no longer recognized and/or treated as human. In short, the paradox is that one is deprived of human rights precisely when one is effectively, in one's social reality, reduced to a human being "in general," without citizenship, profession, etc., that is to say, precisely when one effectively becomes the ideal BEARER of "universal human rights" (which belong to me "independently of" my profession, sex, citizenship, religion, ethnic identity...).

We thus arrived at a standard "postmodern," "anti-essentialist" position, a kind of political version of Foucault's notion of sex as generated by a multitude of the practices of sexuality: "man," the bearer of Human Rights, is generated by a set of political practices which materialize citizenship - is, however, this enough? Jacques Ranciere 7 proposed a very elegant and precise solution of the antinomy between Human Rights (belonging to "man as such") and the politicization of citizens: while Human Rights cannot be posited as an unhistorical "essentialist" Beyond with regard to the contingent sphere of political struggles, as universal "natural rights of man" exempted from history, they also should not be dismissed as a reified fetish which is a product of concrete historical processes of the politicization of citizens. The gap between the universality of Human Rights and the political rights of citizens is thus not a gap between the universality of man and a specific political sphere; it, rather, "separates the whole of the community from itself," as Ranciere put it in a precise Hegelian way. 8 Far from being pre-political, "universal Human Rights" designate the precise space of politicization proper: what they amount to is the right to universality as such, the right of a political agent to assert its radical non-coincidence with itself (in its particular identity), i.e., to posit itself - precisely insofar as it is the "surplusary" one, the "part with no part," the one without a proper place in the social edifice - as an agent of universality of the Social as such. The paradox is thus a very precise one, and symmetrical to the paradox of universal human rights as the rights of those reduced to inhumanity: at the very moment when we try to conceive political rights of citizens without the reference to universal "meta-political" Human Rights, we lose politics itself, i.e., we reduce politics to a "post-political" play of negotiation of particular interests. - What, then, happens to Human Rights when they are reduced to the rights of homo sacer, of those excluded from the political community, reduced to "bare life" - i.e., when they become of no use, since they are the rights of those who, precisely, have no rights, are treated as inhuman? Ranciere proposes here an extremely salient dialectical reversal:

/.../ when they are of no use, you do the same as charitable persons do with their old clothes. You give them to the poor. Those rights that appear to be useless in their place are sent abroad, along with medicine and clothes, to people deprived of medicine, clothes, and rights. It is in this way, as the result of this process, that the Rights of Man become the rights of those who have no rights, the rights of bare human beings subjected to inhuman repression and inhuman conditions of existence. They become humanitarian rights, the rights of those who cannot enact them, the victims of the absolute denial of right. For all this, they are not void. Political names and political places never become merely void. The void is filled by somebody or something else. /.../ if those who suffer inhuman repression are unable to enact Human Rights that are their last recourse, then somebody else has to inherit their rights in order to enact them in their place. This is what is called the "right to humanitarian interference" - a right that some nations assume to the supposed benefit of victimized populations, and very

often against the advice of the humanitarian organizations themselves. The "right to humanitarian interference" might be described as a sort of "return to sender": the disused rights that had been sent to the rightless are sent back to the senders.⁹

So, to put it in the Leninist way: what today, in the predominant Western discourse, the "Human Rights of the Third World suffering victims" effectively mean is the right of the Western powers themselves to intervene - politically, economically, culturally, militarily - in the Third World countries of their choice on behalf of the defense of Human Rights. The reference to Lacan's formula of communication (in which the sender gets back from the receiver-addressee his own message in its inverted, i.e. true, form) is here up to the point: in the reigning discourse of humanitarian interventionism, the developed West is effectively getting back from the victimized Third World its own message in its true form. And the moment Human Rights are thus depoliticized, the discourse dealing with them has to change to ethics: reference to the pre-political opposition of Good and Evil has to be mobilized. Today's "new reign of Ethics,"¹⁰ clearly discernible in, say, Michael Ignatieff's work, thus relies on a violent gesture of depoliticization, of denying to the victimized other political subjectivization. And, as Ranciere pointed out, liberal humanitarianism a la Ignatieff unexpectedly meets the "radical" position of Foucault or Agamben with regard to this depoliticization: the Foucauldian-Agambenian notion of "biopolitics" as the culmination of the entire Western thought ends up getting caught in a kind of "ontological trap" in which concentration camps appear as a kind of "ontological destiny: each of us would be in the situation of the refugee in a camp. Any difference grows faint between democracy and totalitarianism and any political practice proves to be already ensnared in the biopolitical trap."¹¹

When, in a shift from Foucault, Agamben identifies sovereign power and biopolitics (in today's generalized state of exception, the two overlap), he thus precludes the very possibility of the emergence of political subjectivity. - However, the rise of political subjectivity takes place against the background of a certain limit of the "inhuman," so that one should continue to endorse the paradox of the inhumanity of human being deprived of citizenship, and posit the "inhuman" pure man as a necessary excess of humanity over itself, its "indivisible remainder," a kind of Kantian limit-concept of the phenomenal notion of humanity? So that, in exactly the same way in Kant's philosophy the sublime Noumenal, when we come too close to it, appears as pure horror, man "as such," deprived of all phenomenal qualifications, appears as an inhuman monster, something like Kafka's odradek. The problem with human rights humanism is that it covers up this monstrosity of the "human as such," presenting it as a sublime human essence.

LINK: Multiculturalism

**TURN: MULTICULTURALISM IS THE ROOT OF SOCIAL VIOLENCE—
MULTICULTURALISM DOESN'T SOLVE TENSIONS WITHIN GROUPS, BUT INSTEAD
JUSTIFIES VIOLENCE AMONG THEM—ONLY A UNIVERSAL MOVEMENT TOWARDS
JUSTICE CAN SOLVE**

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, Pg. 200-203)

One of today's common wisdoms is that we are entering a new medieval society in the guise of the New World Order - the grain of truth in this comparison is that the New World Order, as in medieval times, is global, but not universal, since it strives for a new global order with each part in its allocated place. A typical advocate of liberalism today throws together workers' protests against reducing their rights and right-wing insistence on fidelity to the Western cultural heritage: he perceives both as pitiful remainders of the 'age of ideology' which have no relevance in today's post-ideological universe. However, the two resistances to globalization follow totally incompatible logics: the Right insists on a particular communal identity (ethnos or habitat) threatened by the onslaught of globalization; while for the Left, the dimension under threat is that of politicization, of articulating 'impossible' universal demands ('impossible' from within the existing space of World Order).

Here one should oppose globalization and universalization: globalization (not only in the sense of global capitalism, the establishment of a global world market, but also in the sense of the assertion of 'humanity' as the global point of reference for human rights, legitimizing the violation of State sovereignty, from trade restrictions to direct military interventions, in parts of the world where global human rights are violated) is precisely the name for the emerging post-political logic which progressively precludes the dimension of universality that appears in politicization proper. The paradox is that there is no Universal proper without the process of political litigation, of the 'part of no part', of an out-of-joint entity presenting/manifesting itself as the stand-in for the Universal.

One should link Ranciere's notion of post-politics to the notion of excessive, non-functional cruelty as a feature of contemporary life, proposed by Balibar: a cruelty whose manifestations range from 'fundamentalist' racist and/or religious slaughter to the 'senseless' outbursts of violence by adolescents and the homeless in our megalopolises, a violence one is tempted to call Id-Evil, a violence grounded in no utilitarian or ideological reason. All the talk about, foreigners stealing work from us, or the threat they represent to our Western values, should not deceive us: under closer examination, it soon becomes clear that this talk provides a rather superficial secondary rationalization. The answer we ultimately obtain from a skinhead is that it makes him feel good to beat up foreigners, that their presence disturbs him. . . . What we encounter here is indeed Id-Evil, that is, Evil structured and motivated by the most elementary imbalance in the relationship between the Ego and jouissance, by the tension between pleasure and the foreign body of jouissance at the very heart of it. Id-Evil thus stages the most elementary 'short circuit' in the subject's relationship to the primordially missing object-cause of his desire: what 'bothers' us in the 'other' (Jew, Japanese, African, Turk . . .) is that he appears to enjoy a privileged relationship to the object - the other either possesses the object-treasure, having snatched it away from us (which is why we don't have it), or he poses a threat to our possession of the object.

What one should suggest here, again, is the Hegelian 'infinite judgement' asserting the speculative identity of these 'useless' and 'excessive' outbursts of violence, which display nothing but a pure and naked ('non-sublimated') hatred of Otherness, and the post-political multiculturalist universe of tolerance of difference, in which nobody is excluded. Of course, I have just used the term 'non-sublimated' in its usual sense which, in this case, stands for the exact opposite of its strict psychoanalytic meaning - in short, what takes place in the focusing of our hatred on some representative of the (officially tolerated) Other is the very mechanism of sublimation at its most elementary: the all-encompassing nature of the post-political Concrete Universality which accounts for everybody at the level of symbolic inclusion, this multiculturalist vision-and-practice of 'unity in difference' ('all equal, all different'), leaves open, as the only way to mark the Difference, the proto-sublimatory gesture of elevating a contingent Other (of race, sex, religion . . .) into the 'absolute Otherness' of the impossible Thing, the ultimate threat to our identity - this Thing which must be annihilated if we are to survive. Therein lies the properly Hegelian paradox: the final arrival of the truly rational 'concrete universality' - the abolition of antagonisms, the 'mature' universe of the negotiated coexistence of different groups - coincides with its radical opposite, with thoroughly contingent outbursts of violence.

LINK: Identity Politics

INTERNAL LINK: IDENTITY POLITICS IGNORES INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE AND LEADS TO JUSTIFICATION OF TREATMENTS TOWARDS GROUPS

David Palumbo-Liu, 00', Professor of comparative literature at Stanford University, "Assumed Identities," New Literary History MNDI MW

In his study of social "stigma," Goffmann speaks of the ways stigmatized groups (cripples, disfigured people, people from the working class, racial and ethnic minorities, and so on) attempt to manage their stigmatization. Yet, importantly, once a stigma theory has been invented to account for both the justness of stigmatization and the behaviors and characteristics inherent in stigmatized groups, it is tremendously difficult for the stigmatized to respond without confirming his or her stigmatized identity: "We may perceive his defensive response to his situation as a direct expression of his defect, and then see both defect and response as just retribution for something he or his parents or his tribe did, and hence a justification of the way we treat him" (S 6). This produces an unsettling effect: "We normals will find these situations shaky too. We will feel that the stigmatized individual is either too aggressive or too shamefaced, and in either case too ready to read unintended meanings into our actions" (S 18). Isn't this precisely a description of what is called "political correctness"? Here we can come back to the notion that identity politics is an identity in itself, that calling attention to the undemocratic transactivity which undergirds the production of minoritarian identities reflects back on the protester to solidify his or her "difference," and that the narratives that serve to set up in advance "expected behaviors" of such individuals and groups are written under certain ideological and historical conditions. Thus, what Goffmann calls "cognitive recognition," "the perceptual act of 'placing' an individual," assumes a particular misrecognition because it assumes outcomes, behaviors, and so forth, that are based not on individuals, but on types that are fabricated in extrasituational texts (S 18).

LINK: Politicization/Populism

CALLS TO RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP AND PARTICULAR MOVEMENTS ARE COOPTED THROUGH GLOBAL CAPITALISM—A UNIVERSAL STRUGGLE TO UNITE AGAINST CAPITALISM IS THE ONLY SUCCESSFUL TOOL

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, Pg. 221-222)

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 judgment, 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-worlds. 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.

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-nation-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.

INDIVIDUALS HAVE A FORCED IDENTITY BROUGHT ON BY THE NATION AND POLITICS

Michael Clifford, 01', associate professor of philosophy at Mississippi State University, Political Genealogy After Foucault: Savage Identities, Routledge MNDI MW

The soldier is not to be understood as simply a body trained in the tactics of warfare, but rather as someone who "fights for his country." Through discourses of patriotism and nationalism, which are disseminated through institutional channels to individuals from at least the time they are able to "pledge allegiance," disciplinary power binds the individual to the nation, and in so doing helps to preserve the integrity of the nation itself. ²³ One instrument for this integration, but by no means the only one, is the linking of the nation conceptually with the preservation of the individual's rights and freedoms. Through the notion of the private autonomous individual the state is able to mobilize the masses in the service of its own protection and preservation. ²⁴ Here is precisely where the discourse of rights and freedoms is brought into play and the nation becomes an enunciative modality for the emergence of political subjects. In fact, as we shall see in the next section, much of modern political identity is informed by reference to a national identity, either positively or negatively. ²⁵ Moreover, this identity is structured and animated by the discourse of threat that we saw take shape in Enlightenment political philosophy

POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITY IS AN ISSUE OF POWER OVER THE CONTROL OF RIGHTS

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Political subjectivity is perhaps the most elusive of forms of subjectivity because of its relation to politics in general. Modern political subjects traverse a tenuous space bound at one end by peaceful coexistence, and at the other by war and civil disorder. Where subjects are political is precisely where the exercise of power becomes an issue. The political subject is, in a sense, absent until moments of encounter and confrontation put her political status into question, to which she responds in a political way (which may range from paying taxes to voting to taking up arms). The delimitation of political power, which in Western culture is a delimitation of rights, freedoms, obligations, and force, is definitive of modern political subjectivity. In this section, I want to show how this conception of political subjectivity is

rooted in the discursive regularities of the Enlightenment, and how, more important, these regularities give rise to a "discourse of threat" that animates modern political subjects.

POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITY IS A FORM OF POWER, THROUGH WHICH RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS CAN BE TAKEN

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If, as Hannah Arendt suggests, modern politics is the more or less peaceful, more or less violent struggle for power, then the enunciative modalities of the modern political subject will be modalities animated by this struggle. The various objects of political discourse, in relation to which individuals are identified as political subjects, are understood in terms of this struggle for power, or more precisely, in terms of a threat to the legitimate limits of power. **Rights and freedoms can be taken away**, political obligation can be violated, property can be stolen, power is something that can be abused. It is the possibility of such violations which animates the political subject. This does not mean that political subjects live in constant fear, with guns by their door, but it does suggest that everything they do or say or that is important to them as political subjects presupposes a discourse in which the concepts of rights, freedoms, property, and power have been given meaning-value-by the threat of their loss. Political discourse is a kind of parody of negative theology in that the discursive objects through which it delimits political subjects are precisely those that are defined, or only make sense, in terms of a lack or absence, whether real or potential.

PERSONAL AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES ARE THE ROOT CAUSE OF PERSECUTION AND WAR

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Perhaps all this sounds too playful for the serious business of politics. In fact, this is just the sort of play required to break through, to fracture, the most oppressive forms of political subjection. A whole range of social problems, from limitations on social opportunities to declarations of war, are in part attributable to processes of subjectivization. The constitution of a political identity for ourselves involves the appropriation of values and beliefs that commit us to certain practices-practices that have real political consequences. We alternately lament or praise such consequences with little or no sense that their source lies in part in the arbitrary appropriation or imposition of an identity. We condemn the persecution of minorities, for instance, but how often do we ever really question the endemic processes of differentiation and identification that divides human beings along lines- limits-of race and gender? War is the most tragic of human dramas, we say, even when it is "necessary" to secure our liberty, but to what extent is this necessity tied to an arbitrary drawing of lines-limits-on a map, to the contingency of a national identity that marshals troops for its perpetuation? The bigot and the dictator are micro-and macro-symbols of our political subjection. We raise our opposition against them willingly, enthusiastically, thinking that freedom consists simply of overcoming their petty, or global, tyrannies. We never think to overcome a much finer, more pervasive, less violent but more pernicious, quotidian form of subjection; that is, we never think to overcome ourselves. Political subjectivity is played out every day in struggles of domination and submission. Real freedom, concrete freedom, consists in fracturing the political identities-our liberalism, our conservatism, our patriotism, our individualism-through which we are bound to, limited by, rationalities that make these struggles necessary.

LINK: Victimization

NARRATIVES OF VICTIMIZATION STRIP “VICTIMS” FROM ANY FORM OF EMPOWERMENT JUSTIFYING THE INTERVENTION AND CONTROL OF “BENEVOLENT” POWERS—THIS CREATES A CYCLE WHERE THESE POWERS MUST MAINTAIN VICTIMS IN THEIR STATE OF HELPLESSNESS, BUT AS SOON AS THEY ATTEMPT TO EMPOWER THEMSELVES THEY ARE PERCEIVED AS TERRORIST

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, “Against the Double Blackmail”, <http://www.lacan.com/kosovo.htm>)

The ultimate paradox of the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia is thus not the one about which Western pacifists complain (by bombing Yugoslavia in order to prevent ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, NATO effectively triggered a large-scale cleansing and thus created the very humanitarian catastrophe it wanted to prevent), but a deeper paradox involved in the ideology of victimization: the key aspect to take note of is if NATO's privileging of the now discredited "moderate" Kosovar faction of Ibrahim Rugova against the "radical" Kosovo Liberation Army (not only does KLA get no help, but even its financial assets are blocked, so that they cannot buy the arms and are thus exposed to the onslaught of much better equipped Serb army and slowly decimated). What this means is that NATO is actively blocking the only and obvious alternative to the ground intervention of Western military forces: the full-scale armed resistance of the Albanians themselves. (The moment this option is mentioned, fears start to circulate: KLA is not really an army, just a bunch of untrained fighters; we should not trust KLA, since it is involved in drug trafficking and/or is a Maoist group whose victory would lead to a Khmer Rouge or Taliban regime in Kosovo...) In short, while NATO is intervening in order to protect the Kosovar victims, it is at the same time well taking care that THEY WILL REMAIN VICTIMS, not an active politico-military force capable of defending itself; even if NATO will eventually occupy the entire Kosovo, it will be a devastated country with victimized population, not a strong political subject. What we encounter here is again the paradox of victimization: the Other to be protected is good INSO FAR AS IT REMAINS A VICTIM (which is why we are bombarded with pictures of helpless Kosovar mothers, children and elder people, telling moving stories of their suffering); the moment it no longer behaves as a victim, but wants to strike back on its own, it all of a sudden magically turns into a terrorist/fundamentalist/drug-trafficking Other...

A report by Steven Erlanger on the suffering of the Kosovo Albanians in The New York Times (May 12 1999, page A 13) renders perfectly this logic of victimization. Already its title is tell-tale: "In One Kosovo Woman, An Emblem of Suffering" - the subject to be protected (by the NATO intervention) is from the outset identified as a powerless victim of circumstances, deprived of all political identity, reduced to the bare suffering. Her basic stance is that of excessive suffering, of traumatic experience that blurs all differences: "She's seen too much, Meli said. She wants a rest. She wants it to be over." As such, she is beyond any political recrimination - an independent Kosovo is not on her agenda, she just wants the horror over: "Does she favor an independent Kosovo? You know, I don't care if it's this or that," Meli said. 'I just want all this to end, and to feel good again, to feel good in my place and my house with my friends and family.'" Her support of the foreign (NATO) intervention is grounded in her wish for all this horror to be over: "She wants a settlement that brings foreigners here 'with some force behind them.' She is indifferent about who the foreigners are." Consequently, she sympathizes with all the sides in an all-embracing humanist stance: "There is tragedy enough for everyone, she says. I feel sorry for the Serbs who've been bombed and died, and I feel sorry for my own people. But maybe now there will be a conclusion, a settlement for good. That would be great." - Here we have the ideological construction of the ideal subject-victim to whose aid NATO intervenes: not a political subject with a clear agenda, but a subject of helpless suffering, sympathizing with all suffering sides in the conflict, caught in the madness of a local clash that can only be pacified by the intervention of a benevolent foreign power, a subject whose innermost desire is reduced to the almost animal craving to "feel good again" ...

UNIQUENESS

UNIQUENESS: STRUGGLES WITH IDENTITY ARE INHERENT AND MUST BE DEALT WITH

Grant Farred, 00', Associate Professor of Duke University, "Endgame Identity? Mapping the New Left Roots of Identity Politics,"
New Literary History MNDI MW

Much like early Cultural Studies, especially in its CCCS formation, the New Left remained disturbingly unconcerned with the issue of gender, and it took a long time before the movement concerned itself with a critique of patriarchy. However, in both the United States and Britain the movement reimagined the class struggle and, spurred by the spectacular successes of American and European student movements in the 1960s, it created youth as a serious political category in a decade animated by the populism of anti-Establishment energies. Indeed, the New Left is inconceivable without the "cultural revolution" of the 1960s, without the Beatles or the Paris student revolt of 1968, without Jimi Hendrix or SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), without the riot at the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago or Janis Joplin. The various struggles of the 1960s provided the new social movements—groupings organized around single issues such as gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, issues all too frequently ignored in mainstream politics—with their fundamental ideological building blocks. The diversity of political activity in the 1960s demonstrated to its 1970s and 1980s successors how to mobilize marginalized constituencies, how to "politicize" culture, and how to deploy "difference" as an ideological tool in racially hegemonic societies. Having rejected the Old Left's narrow conception of politics, the New Left expanded it to include—and provide a precedent and a platform for—modes of oppositionality that would, in the 1980s, be construed as struggles over representation and identity. If the New Left was born in the mid-1950s out of the eclipse of the Old Left, identity politics arose in the early 1980s out of the slow erosion of the New Left. With the New Left in decline in the late 1970s, the Reagan-Thatcher New Right of the 1980s was able to disarticulate the premises of the Welfare State and reorganize the ideological landscape in Britain and the United States. Consequently, political identities that had once been imagined, however incorrectly, as "fixed," showed themselves to be more fluid and transient. Minority constituencies could now conduct their struggle under the banner of race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. The same subject could campaign, in different moments, as a black citizen or a gay rights activist, a fracturing in and multiplicity of identity enabled in no small measure by the (hybridized) condition of postmodernity. As a result of the shifts in political, epistemological, and cultural hegemony, the new social movements' struggle for "new rights" and "difference" assumed unprecedented importance in the 1980s and, to a lesser extent, the 1990s.

IMPACT: RESSENMENT

JUSTIFIES SELF-RIGHTEOUS CULTURE OF RESSENMENT

Ien Ang, 2005, University of Western Sydney, Australia, "De-Americanizing the global?: Overcoming fundamentalism in a volatile world," Sage Publications MNDI MW/JW

Indeed, a very common version of fundamentalism is what has become known as 'political correctness', a rampant disposition in all modes of identity politics, both left and right, and in this sense quite endemic in western societies, where diverse instances of identity politics have been constitutive of the enormous social and cultural changes that have taken place in the past few decades. According to Stuart Hall (1994), political correctness is an offshoot of the rise of the new social movements, identity politics and, more generally, the spread of the political from the public to the private arena. In his analysis PC (political correctness) is in fact typical of all post-industrial societies, a product of, in his words, 'the culturing of politics' – politics 'after cultural studies'. This is a politics where the assertion of 'identity' has become a pivot not just of social empowerment and resistance, but also, more damagingly, of selfrighteous justification of resentment, hatred and violence. Thus, the culture of feminism fosters both a progressive commitment to equality and women's rights, and an excuse for unreflexive man-hating. The

culture of ethnic minority politics is characterized both by a redemptive quest for justice and social recognition and by a justification for knee-jerk anti-white feelings and expressions. In the most militant wings of these movements, the absolutist separating out of 'us' and 'them' is a crucial organizing principle – it is a formative aspect of the political habitus.

Of course, this 'culturing of politics' is not just a western, advanced capitalist, postindustrial phenomenon, but a global one. Indeed, it began earlier in the postcolonial and non-western world, where political struggles for independence and self-determination were fought precisely around a fundamentalizing of modernist discourses of 'identity' and varieties of its constituent building blocks: 'nation', 'people', 'race', 'culture', 'God'. In other words, ironically, one of the outcomes and legacies of the 'westernization' of the world – that is, the global imposition of the culture of capitalist modernity – is the cultivation of a culture of antiwesternism, articulated as a form of righteous protest and resistance against western domination. A clear contemporary example is Zimbabwean President Mugabe's policy of forcing rich white farmers out of the country by redistributing the land on their farms to poor blacks, even though it means the decimation of the country's much needed food supply. He justifies this disastrous and violent policy through a righteous reference to the past injustices of British colonialism. As he admonished the British Prime Minister in his address at the World Development Summit in Johannesburg in September 2002: 'Blair, keep your England, let me keep my Zimbabwe'. And, of course, Islamic fundamentalism itself is often presented as a form of resistance across the Middle East. As Danny Postel (2002) has observed, referring to the work of Indian-born scholar Emran Qureshi, although Islamic fundamentalism is deeply authoritarian, in recent years many of its adherents have adopted the leftist rhetoric of anti-imperialism. As a result, Islamic militants become identified sympathetically with the politics of protest and opposition against US dominance.

AT: PERM

THE AFF'S POSTMODERNIST POLITICS TO REFORM SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRUCTURES THROUGH MULTICULTURALIST IDEOLOGIES FAILS TO DISTURB/TRAVERSE THE FANTASY OF CAPITALISM—INEVITABLY ACTING A FASCIST REVOLUTION WHERE SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION ARE EXPOSED BUT SIMULTANEOUSLY SUSTAINED

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, pg. 198-200)

Today, however, we are dealing with another form of the denegation of the political, postmodern post-politics, which no longer merely 'represses' the political, trying to contain it and pacify the 'returns of the repressed', but much more effectively 'forecloses' it, so that the postmodern forms of ethnic violence, with their 'irrational' excessive character, are no longer simple "returns of the repressed" but, rather, represent a case of the foreclosed (from the Symbolic) which, as we know from Lacan, returns in the Real. In post-politics, the conflict of global ideological visions embodied in different parties which compete for power is replaced by the collaboration of enlightened technocrats (economists, public opinion specialists ...) and liberal multiculturalists; via the process of negotiation of interests, a compromise is reached in the guise of a more or less universal consensus. Post-politics thus emphasizes the need to leave old ideological divisions behind and confront new issues, armed with the necessary expert knowledge and free deliberation that takes people's concrete needs and demands into account.

The best formula that expresses the paradox of post-politics is perhaps Tony Blair's characterization of New Labour as the 'Radical Centre': in the old days of 'ideological' political division, the qualification 'radical' was reserved either for the extreme Left or for the extreme Right. The Centre was, by definition, moderate: measured by the old standards, the term 'Radical Centre' is the same nonsense as 'radical moderation'. What makes New Labour (or Bill Clinton's politics in the USA) 'radical' is its radical abandonment of the 'old ideological divides', usually formulated in the guise of a paraphrase of Deng Xiaoping's motto from the 1960s: 'It doesn't matter if a cat is red or white; what matters is that it actually catches mice': in the same vein, advocates of New Labour- like to emphasize that one should take good ideas without any prejudice and apply them, whatever their (ideological) origins. And what are these 'good ideas'? The answer is, of course, ideas that work. It is here that we encounter the gap that separates a political act proper from the 'administration of social matters' which remains within the framework of existing sociopolitical relations: the political act (intervention) proper is not simply something that works well within the framework of the existing relations, but something that changes the very framework that determines how things work. To say that good ideas are 'ideas that work' means that one accepts in advance the (global capitalist) constellation that determines what works (if, for example, one spends too much money on education or healthcare, that 'doesn't work', since it infringes too much on the conditions of capitalist profitability). One can also put it in terms of the well-known definition of politics as the 'art of the possible': authentic politics is, rather, the exact opposite, that is, the art of the impossible- it changes the very parameters of what is considered 'possible' in the existing constellation.

When this dimension of the impossible is effectively precluded, the political (the space of litigation in which the excluded can protest the wrong/injustice done to them) foreclosed from the symbolic returns in the Real, in the guise of new forms of racism, this 'postmodern racism' emerges as the ultimate consequence of the post-political suspension of the political, the reduction of the State to a mere police-agent servicing the (consensually established) needs of market forces and multiculturalist tolerant humanitarianism: the 'foreigner' whose status is never properly 'regulated' is the indivisible remainder of the transformation of the democratic political struggle into the post-political procedure of negotiation and multiculturalist policing. Instead of the political subject 'working class' demanding its universal rights, we get, on the one hand, the multiplicity of particular social strata or groups, each with its problems (the dwindling need for manual workers, etc.) and, on the other, the immigrant, ever more prevented from politicizing his predicament of exclusion."

The obvious counter-argument here is that today it is the (political) Right that is accomplishing the acts, boldly changing the very rules of what is considered acceptable-admissible in the sphere of public discourse: from the way Reaganism and Thatcherism legitimized the debate about curtailing workers' rights and social benefits, up to the gradual legitimization of the 'open debate' about Nazism in revisionist historiography a la Nolte (was it really so bad? Was not Communism worse, that is, cannot Nazism be understood as a reaction to Leninism-Stalinism?). Here, however, it is crucial to introduce a further distinction: for Lacan, a true act does not only retroactively change the rules of the symbolic space; it also disturbs the underlying fantasy - and here, concerning this crucial dimension, Fascism emphatically does not pass the criterion of the act. Fascist 'Revolution' is, on the contrary, the paradigmatic case of a pseudo-Event, of a spectacular turmoil destined to conceal the fact that, on the most fundamental level (that of the relations of production), nothing really changes. The Fascist Revolution is thus the answer to the question: what do we have to change so that, ultimately, nothing will really change? or -to put it in terms of the libidinal economy of the ideological space - far from disturbing/traversing' the fantasy that underlies and sustains the capitalist social edifice. Fascist ideological revolution merely brings to the light the phantasmic 'inherent transgression' of the 'normal' bourgeois ideological situation (the set of implicit racist, sexist, etc., 'prejudices' that effectively determine the activity of individuals in it, although they are not publicly recognized).

AT: PERM

THE STRUGGLE FOR MULTICULTURALIST TOLERANCE IS A DIRECT TRADEOFF WITH THE UNIVERSAL FIGHT AGAINST CAPITALISM—THE IDEA THAT INCLUSIVITY CAN REFORM THE SYSTEM IS FALSE—CAPITALISM HAS ALREADY COOPTED AND USED SUCH HOMOGENIZATION TO MAKE ITS SYSTEM MORE HUMANE

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, Pg. 217-218)

What about the rather obvious counter-argument that the multiculturalist's neutrality is false, since his or her position silently privileges Eurocentrist content? This line of reasoning is right, but for the wrong reason. The particular cultural background or roots which always support the universal multiculturalist position are not its 'truth', hidden beneath the mask of universality ('multiculturalist universalism is really Eurocentrist . . .') but, rather, the opposite: the stain of particular roots is the phantasmic screen which conceals the fact that the subject is already thoroughly 'rootless', that his true position is the void of universality. Let me recall Darian Leader's example of the man in a restaurant with his female companion, who, when asking the waiter for a table, says: 'Bedroom for two, please!' instead of 'Table for two, please!'. One should reverse the standard Freudian explanation ('Of course, his mind was already on the night of sex he planned after the meal!'): this intervention of the subterranean sexual fantasy is, rather, the screen which serves as the defense against the oral drive which actually matters to him more than sex.³

In his analysis of the French Revolution of 1848 (in *The Class Struggles in France*), Marx provides a similar example of such a double deception: the Part 1 of Order which took over after the Revolution publicly supported the Republic, yet secretly it believed in Restoration - members used even opportunity to mock Republican rituals and to signal in every possible way where 'their heart was'. The paradox, however, was that the truth of their activity lay in the external form they privately mocked and despised: this Republican form was not a mere semblance beneath which the Royalist desire lurked - rather, it was the secret clinging to Royalism which enabled them to fulfil their actual historical function: to implement bourgeois Republican law and order. Marx himself mentions how members of the Party of Order derived immense pleasure from their occasional Royalist 'slips of the tongue' against the Republic (referring to France as a Kingdom in their parliamentary debates, etc.); these slips of the tongue articulated their phantasmic illusions which served as the screen enabling them to blind themselves to the social reality of what was going on on the surface.

And, mutatis mutandis, the same goes for today's capitalist, who still clings to some particular cultural heritage, identifying it as the secret source of his success (Japanese executives following tea ceremonies or Bushido code, etc.), or for the reverse case of the Western journalist in search of the particular secret of Japanese success: this very reference to a particular cultural formula is a screen for the universal anonymity of Capital. The true horror lies not in the particular content hidden beneath the universality of global Capital but, rather, in the fact that Capital is effectively an anonymous global machine blindly running its course; that there is in fact no particular Secret Agent animating it. The horror is not the (particular living) ghost in the (dead universal) machine, but the (dead universal) machine in the very heart, of each (particular- living) ghost. The conclusion to be drawn is thus that the problematic of multiculturalism (the hybrid coexistence of diverse cultural life-worlds) which imposes itself today is the form of appearance of its opposite, of the massive presence of capitalism as global world system: it bears witness to the unprecedented homogenization of today's world.

It is in fact as if, since the horizon of social imagination no longer allows us to entertain the idea of an eventual demise of capitalism — since, as we might put it, everybody tacitly accepts that capitalism is here to stay -critical energy has found a substitute outlet in fighting for cultural differences which leave the basic homogeneity of the capitalist world-system intact. So we are fighting our PC battles for the rights of ethnic minorities, of gays and lesbians, of different lifestyles, and so forth, while capitalism pursues its triumphant march - and today's critical theory, in the guise of 'cultural studies', is performing the ultimate service for the unrestrained development of capitalism by actively participating in the ideological effort to render its massive presence invisible: in the predominant form of postmodern 'cultural criticism', the very mention of capitalism as a world system tends to give rise to accusations of 'essentialism', 'fundamentalism', and so on. The price of this depoliticization of the economy is that the domain of politics itself is in a way depoliticized: political struggle proper is transformed into the cultural struggle for the recognition of marginal identities and the tolerance of differences.⁴"

AT: PERM

THE LEFTIST UNIVERSAL POLITICAL VISION OF BEING ALL-INCLUSIVE IS INSUFFICIENT IN COMBATING CAPITALISM—THERE IS ONLY A RISK THAT LEFTIST POLITICS WILL END UP CORRUPT AND LEGITIMIZE EXISTING STRUCTURES—ONLY A UNIVERSAL STANCE FOR HUMANITY WHERE HYBRIDITY'S BECOME THE SITE OF THE UNIVERSAL CAN SOLVE

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, Pg. 222-225)

Of course, both Left and Right involve their own mode of suspension of the Law on behalf of some higher or more fundamental interest.

The rightist suspension, from anti-Dreyfussards to Oliver North, acknowledges its violation of the letter of the Law, but justifies it by reference to some higher national interest; it presents its violation as a painful self-sacrifice for the good of the Nation. As for the leftist suspension, it is enough to mention two films, Under Fire and Watch on the Rhine. The first takes place during the Nicaraguan revolution, when an American photo-journalist faces a troublesome dilemma: just before the victory of the revolution, Somozistas kill a charismatic Sandinista leader, so the Sandinistas ask the journalist to take a photo of their dead leader, presenting him as still alive and thus belying the Somozistas' claims about his death - in this way, he would contribute to a swift victory for the revolution and shorten the agony of prolonged bloodshed. Professional ethics, of course, strictly prohibit such an act, since it violates the unbiased objectivity of reporting and makes the journalist an instrument of the political fight; the journalist nevertheless chooses the 'leftist' option and fakes the photo. ... In Watch on the Rhine, based on a play by Lillian Hellman, this dilemma is even more acute: in the late 1930s, a fugitive family of German political emigres involved in the anti-Nazi struggle comes to stay with their distant relatives, an idyllic all-American small-town middle-class family; soon, however, the Germans face an unexpected threat in the form of an acquaintance of the American family, a Rightist who blackmails the emigrants and, through his contacts with the German Embassy, endangers members of the Underground in Germany itself. The father of the emigrant family decides to kill him, and thereby puts the American family in a difficult moral dilemma: their empty moralizing solidarity with the victims of Nazism is over; now they actually have to take sides and dirty their hands covering up the killing. ... Here also, the family decides on the 'leftist' option. 'Left' is defined by this readiness to suspend tin-abstract moral frame - or, to paraphrase Kierkegaard, to accomplish a kind of political suspension of the Ethical. ..."

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 cliche 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.

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 egaliberle 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, is the only point of true universality.

It is easy to show that, say, the subdivision of the people who live in a country into 'full' citizens and temporary immigrant workers privileges 'full' citizens and excludes immigrants from the public space proper (just as man and woman are not two species of a neutral universal genus of humanity, since the content of the genus as such involves some mode of "repression" of the feminine); much more productive, theoretically as well as politically (since it opens up the way for the "progressive" subverting of hegemony), is the opposite operation of identifying universality with, the point of exclusion - in our case, of saying 'we are all immigrant workers'. In a hierarchically structured society, the measure of true universality lies in the way parts relate to those 'at the bottom', excluded by and from all others (in ex-Yugoslavia, for example, universality was represented by-Albanian and Bosnian Muslims, looked down on by all other nations). The recent pathetic statement of solidarity 'Sarajevo is the capital of Europe' was also an exemplary case of such a notion of exception as embodying universality: the way enlightened liberal Europe related to Sarajevo bore witness to the way it related to itself, to its universal notion.

The examples we have evoked make it clear that leftist universalism proper does not involve any kind of return to some neutral universal content (a common notion of humanity, etc.); rather, it refers to a universal which comes to exist (which becomes 'for itself, to put it in Hegel's) only in a particular element which is structurally displaced, 'out of joint': within a given social Whole, it is precisely the element which is prevented from actualizing its full particular identity that stands for its universal dimension. The Greek demos stood for universality not because it covered the majority of the population, nor because it occupied the lowest place within the social hierarchy, but because it had no proper place within this hierarchy, but was a site of conflicting, self-cancelling determinations - or, to put it in contemporary terms, a site of performative contradictions (they were addressed as equals - participating in the community of logos - in order to be informed that they were excluded from this community...). To take Marx's classic example, 'proletariat' stands for universal humanity not because it is the lowest, most exploited class, but because its very existence is a 'living contradiction' — that is, it gives body to the fundamental imbalance and inconsistency of the capitalist social Whole. We can see, now, in what precise way the dimension of the Universal is opposed to globalism: the universal dimension 'shines through' the symptomatic displaced element which belongs to the Whole without being properly its part. For this reason, criticism of the possible ideological functioning of the notion of hybridity should in no way advocate the return to substantial identities - the point is precisely to assert hybridity as the site of the Universal.

AT: PERM

IDENTITY POLITICS IS MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE WITH THE CONCEPT OF A UNIVERSAL MOVEMENT—IDENTITY POLITICS IS OVERLY FIXATED WITH ETHNIC GROUPS THAT THERE IS NO SPACE FOR LARGER MOBILIZATION
Said Adejumobi, 01', Professor of Political Science at Lagos State University, "Citizenship, Rights, and the Problem of Conflicts and Civil Wars in Africa," The John Hopkins University Press MNDI MW

Also, at the national level, the logic of difference of an ethnic nature is factored into the rules and norms of political interactions and the state system, especially with regard to social rights. Ethnic identity, as opposed to citizenship identity, determines who gets what, when, how, and how much in the state. Issues of employment, public appointments, education grants, scholarships, etc., are subjected to ethnic arithmetic by the central state. In some countries, this practice has a constitutional basis, while in others it is one of state norms and conventions. In Nigeria, there is a key constitutional provision known as the “federal character principle.”⁴⁹ It is an ethnic formula for the allocation of public goods. Although this constitutional provision was designed as a political technique for managing Nigeria’s federal system and for giving equal opportunities to all ethnic groups, it is a policy that has proved to be largely counterproductive. It uses ethnic identity as the primary identity for state entitlements and social rights. It deindividualizes citizenship and makes it more of a group phenomenon. As a result, in gaining access to state institutions, the individual does not relate to the state directly as a citizen, but relates to it as a member or representative of an ethnic group. The result is that the central state becomes an arena of ethnic contest with the more powerful ethnic groups excluding and submerging the lesser ones and denying their people the benefits of citizenship. This tendency undermines the integrity and cohesion of the fragile African state and supplements the principle of territorial loyalty and citizenship with that of ethnic and community loyalty.

ALTERNATIVE: UNIVERSAL STRUGGLE

ONLY A UNIVERSAL STRUGGLE AGAINST DOMINANT CAPITALIST FORCES CAN CREATE AN EFFICIENT FIGHT AGAINST OPPRESSION. MULTICULTURALISM FAILS BY EITHER BEING TOO TOLERANT AND JUSTIFYING VIOLENCE AND VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS OR CREATES A FALSE SOLIDARITY WITH THE 'OTHER'.

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, Pg. 218-221)

The falsity of elitist multiculturalist liberalism lies in the tension between content and form which already characterized the first great ideological project of tolerant universalism, that of Freemasonry: the doctrine of Freemasonry (the universal brotherhood of all men based on the light of Reason) clearly clashes with its form of expression and organization (a secret society with its initiation rituals); that is, it is the very form of expression and articulation of Freemasonry- which belies its positive doctrine. In a strictly homologous way, the contemporary 'politically correct' liberal attitude which perceives itself as surpassing the limitations of its ethnic identity ('citizen of the world' without anchors in any particular ethnic community) functions, within its own society, as a narrow elitist upper-middle-class circle clearly opposing itself to the majority of common people, despised for being caught in their narrow ethnic or community confines. No wonder liberal multiculturalist tolerance is caught in the vicious cycle of simultaneously conceding too much and not enough to the particularity of the Other's culture:

- 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 practicing 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.

ALTERNATIVE EXTENSIONS

ALTERNATIVE: THE ONLY SOLUTION IS TO REMOVE THE CONCEPT OF IDENTITY FROM POLITICS COMPLETELY
Susan Hekman, 00', Political theories and graduate humanities and University of Texas in Arlington, "Beyond identity: Feminism, identity and identity politics," Sage Publications MNDI MW

As a counter to identity politics I am suggesting a politics beyond identity in a radical sense: removing identity requirements from politics entirely. This feminist politics beyond identity contains two elements. First, it entails contesting a politics that requires a singular identity for full citizenship. The neutral, disembodied citizen of liberalism concealed the hegemony of a particular subject, effectively marginalizing other subjects.

We must eschew this identity and any attempt to impose an identity that excludes certain categories of individuals from political participation. The second element of my suggestion is that political participation should not be predicated on any conception of identity, even if a diverse array of identities is available. The old politics of liberalism/modernism was, despite its protestations to the contrary, about identity; the new politics of feminism should not be. As the experience of identity politics has shown, there is no viable way to define identity in political terms; doing so inevitably entails fixing identities. Defining identities is a slippery slope; any definition will erase differences within the category that is constructed; ultimately, each has a unique identity. The political conclusion for feminism must be a nonidentity politics that defines politics in terms of pragmatic political action and accomplishing concrete political goals.

AT: Butler/Queer Movements Solve

TRANSGRESSIONS OF GENDER AND SEXUAL IDENTITIES FAIL TO SUBVERT THE CAPITALIST STRUCTURE—THROUGH MULTICULTURALISM THEIR TRANSGRESSION BECOMES EASILY COOPTED AND BEING USED AS A TOOL FOR CAPITALISM

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, Pg. 225-226)

In so far as normative heterosexuality stands for the global Order within which each sex is assigned its proper place, queer demands are not simply demands that their sexual practice and lifestyle be recognized in their specificity, alongside other practices, but something that unsettles the very global order and its exclusionary hierarchical logic; precisely as such, as 'out of joint' with regard to the existing order, queers stand for the dimension of Universality (or, rather, can stand for it, since politicization is never directly inscribed into one's objective social position, but involves the gesture of subjectivation). Judith Butler¹ develops a powerful argument against the abstract and politically regressive opposition between economic struggle and the 'merely cultural' queer struggle for recognition: far from being merely 'cultural', the social form of sexual reproduction inhabits the very core of the social relations of production; that is, the nuclear heterosexual family is a key component and condition of the capitalist relations of ownership, exchange, and so on; for that reason, the way queer political practice questions and undermines normative heterosexuality poses a potential threat to the capitalist mode of production itself. . . . My reaction to this thesis is twofold: I fully endorse queer politics in so far as it 'metaphorizes' its specific struggle as something that - if its objectives were to be realized - undermines the very potentials of capitalism. However, I tend to think that, in the course of the ongoing transformation into the 'post-political' tolerant multiculturalist regime, today's capitalist system is able to neutralize queer demands, to absorb them as a specific 'way of life'. Is not the history of capitalism a long history of how the predominant ideologico-political framework was able to accommodate (and soften the subversive edge of) the movements and demands that seemed to threaten its very survival? For a long time, sexual libertarians thought that monogamous sexual repression was necessary for the survival of capitalism - now we know that capitalism can not only tolerate, but even actively incite and exploit, forms of 'perverse' sexuality, not to mention promiscuous indulgence in sexual pleasures. What if the same destiny awaits queer demands? The recent proliferation of different sexual practices and identities (from sadomasochism to bisexuality and drag performances), far from posing a threat to the present regime of biopower (to use the Foucauldian terms), is precisely the form of sexuality that is generated by the present conditions of global capitalism, which clearly favour the mode of subjectivity characterized by multiple shifting identifications. The key component of the 'leftist' position is thus the equation of the assertion of (universalism with a militant, divisive position of one engaged in a struggle: true universalists are not those who preach global tolerance of differences and all-encompassing unity, but those who engage in a passionate fight for the assertion of the Truth that enthuses them. Theoretical, religious and political examples abound here: from St Paul, whose unconditional Christian universalism (everyone can be redeemed, since, in the eyes of Christ, there are no Jews and Greeks, no men and women . . .) made him into a proto-Leninist militant fighting different 'deviations', through Marx (whose notion of class struggle is the necessary obverse of the universalism of his theory which aims at the 'redemption' of the whole of humanity) and Freud, up to great political figures — say, when De Gaulle, almost alone in England in 1940, launched his call for resistance to German occupation, he was at the same time presuming to speak on behalf of the universality of France, and, for this very reason, introducing a radical split, a fissure, between those who followed him and those who preferred the collaborationist 'Egyptian fleshpots'.

AT: Class = Identity Politics

CLASS STRUGGLE VS. A PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION ARE DISTINCT—OUR ALTERNATIVE DOESN'T VIEW CLASS AS AN OBJECTIVE-MATERIALIST STRUGGLE—THIS ONLY RISK DIVISIONS AMONG THE CLASSES—OUR ALTERNATIVE RELIES ON THE SUBJECTIVE TRANSFORMATION AND UNITY OF A PROLETARIAT REVOLUTION WHERE ANYONE—REGARDLESS OF THEIR SOCIAL STATUS CAN JOIN

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, Pg. 226-229)

To put it in Bacliu's words, it is crucial here not to translate the terms of this struggle (set in motion by the violent and contingent assertion of the new universal Truth) into the terms of the order of Being, with its groups and subgroups, conceiving it as the struggle between two social entities defined by a series of positive characteristics; that was the 'mistake' of Stalinism, which reduced the class struggle to a struggle between 'classes' defined as social groups with a set of positive features (place in the mode of production, etc.). From a truly radical Marxist perspective, although there is a link between 'working class' as a social group and 'proletariat' as the position of the militant fighting for universal Truth, this link is not a determining causal connection, and the two levels must be strictly distinguished: to be a 'proletarian' involves assuming a certain subjective stance (of class struggle destined to achieve the Redemption through Revolution) which, in principle, can be adopted by any individual - to put it in religious terms, irrespective of his (good) works, any individual can be 'touched by Grace' and interpellated as a proletarian subject. The line that separates the two opposing sides in the class struggle is therefore not 'objective', it is not the line separating two positive social groups, but ultimately radically subjective - it involves the position individuals assume towards the Truth-Event. Subjectivity and universalism are thus not only not exclusive, but two sides of the same coin: it is precisely because class struggle' interpellates individuals to adopt the subjective stance of a 'proletarian' that its appeal is universal, aiming at everyone without exception. The division it mobilizes is not the division between two well-defined social groups, but the division, which runs "diagonally" to the social division in the Order of Being, between those who recognize themselves in the call of the Truth-Event, becoming its followers, and those who deny or ignore it. In Hegel's, the existence of the true Universal (as opposed to the false 'concrete' Universality of the all-encompassing global Order of Being) is that of an endless and incessantly divisive struggle; it is ultimately the division between the two notions (and material practices) of Universality: those who advocate the positivity of the Order of Being as the ultimate horizon of knowledge and action, and those who accept the efficiency of the dimension of Truth-Event irreducible to (and unaccountable in the terms of) the Order of Being.

AT: Particulars key to Universals

THE ATTEMPT TO CREATE INDIVIDUAL IDENTIFICATIONS AMONG METAPHORIC UNIVERSALS CREATES A SITUATION WHERE PARTICULAR GROUPS HAVE TO COMPROMISE AND SUBMIT TO CURRENT OPPRESSIVE STRUCTURES

Zizek 2004 (Slavoj, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies in Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology, Pg. 229-232)

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 even 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.

Soon after the publication of Solzhenitsyn's Gulag trilogy in the West, it became fashionable in some 'radical' leftist circles to emphasize how 'our entire consumerist Western society is also one gigantic Gulag, in which we are imprisoned by the chains of the ruling ideology - and our position is even worse, since we are unaware of our true predicament'. In a recent discussion about clitoridectomy, a 'radical' feminist pathetically claimed that Western women are in a way also thoroughly circumcised, having to undergo stressful diets, rigorous body training and painful breast- or face lifting operations in order to remain attractive to men. . . . Although, of course, there is in both cases, an element of truth in the claims made, there is none the less something fundamentally faked in the pathetic statement of a radical upper-middle-class student that 'the Berkeley campus is also a gigantic Gulag'. Is it not deeply significant that the best-known example of such a pathetic identification with the outcast/victim is J.F. Kennedy's 'Teh bin ein Berliner' from 1963 - a statement which is definitely not what Ranciere had in mind (and, incidentally, a statement which, because of a grammatical error, means, when retranslated into English, 'I am a doughnut')?

The way out of this predicament seems easy enough: the measure of the authenticity of the pathetic identification lies in its sociopolitical efficiency. To what effective measures does it amount? In short, how does this political stance of singulier universel affect what Ranciere calls the police structure? Is there a legitimate distinction between two 'polices (orders of being)': the one which is (or tends to be) self-contained, and the one which is more open to the incorporation of properly political demands? Is there something like a 'police of polities'? Of course, the Kantian answer (shared even by Badiou) would be that any direct identification of police (the Order of Being) with politics (the Truth-Event), any procedure by means of which the Truth posits itself directly as the constitutive structuring principle of the sociopolitical Order of Being, leads to its opposite, to the 'politics of the police', to revolutionary Terror, whose exemplary case is the Stalinist de'sastre. The problem is that the moment we try to provide the pathetic identification with the symptom, the assertion of the universel singulier, with a determinate content (What do protesters who pathetically claim 'We are all immigrant workers!' actually want? What is their demand to the Police Power?), the old contrast between the radical universalism of egaliberte and the 'postmodern' assertion of particular identities reappears with a vengeance, as is clear from the deadlock of gay politics, which fears losing its specificity when gays are acknowledged by the public discourse: do you want equal rights or specific rights to safeguard your particular way of life? The answer, of course, is that the pathetic gesture of singulier universel, effectively functions as a hysterical gesture made to avoid the decision by postponing in satisfaction indefinitely. That is to say: the gesture of singulier universel flourishes on bombarding the Police/Power edifice with impossible demands, with demands which are 'made to be rejected'; its logic is that of 'In demanding that you do this, I am actually demanding that you do not do it because that's not it.' The situation here is properly undecidable: not only is a radical political project often 'betrayed' by a compromise with the Police Order (the eternal complaint of revolutionary radicals: once the reformists take over, they change only the form and accommodate themselves to the old masters), there can also be the opposite case of pseudo-radicalization, which fits the existing power relations much better than a modest reformist proposal.

CASE TURNS

IDENTITY POLITICS IS AT THE ROOT CAUSE OF INTERNAL CONFLICTS IN AFRICA

Crawford Young, July 02', Professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, "DECIPHERING DISORDERIN AFRICA, Is Identity the Key?" John Hopkins University Press MNDI MW

Rather than ending, however, civil strife multiplied in the 1990s, forming the two vast, entangled arcs of conflict. More than a quarter of the African community of states were faced with armed insurgency during all or part of this period, and almost as many others were directly engaged in these internal wars, either through peacekeeping operations or via armed support to governments or rebels. In very different ways, the books under review tackle the analytical challenge that this widespread disorder poses. Three of the authors—Steven Ellis, Mahmood Mamdani, and Luis Martinez—examine critical cases of civil conflict, in Liberia, Rwanda, and Algeria, respectively. The other two scholars, Ted Gurr and Donald Horowitz, propose broad comparative frameworks—quantitative and qualitative, respectively—to achieve conceptual purchase over internal violence.

A core problematic taken up by all five volumes is the impact of communal identity—ethnic, racial, or religious. Does identity politics provide the key to deciphering African disorder? The works under review identify patterns of rationality in violence that at times appear to the external world as simply atavistic—along the lines of the “new barbarism” thesis of Robert Kaplan⁶ or the “ancient tribal hatreds” explanation often presented in the media. The differences in the authors’ conceptual premises, methods of inquiry, and conclusions illuminate the daunting complexity of the conflict phenomenon.

IDENTITY POLITICS AND RACIALIZATION WERE THE ROOT CAUSE OF GENOCIDE IN RWANDA, SOLVING THIS IS A PREREQUISITE TO AFF PLAN

Crawford Young, July 02', Professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, "DECIPHERING DISORDERIN AFRICA, Is Identity the Key?" John Hopkins University Press MNDI MW

The key question of the book—how genocide became “thinkable” for the large numbers of Hutu who participated—is answered through an extensive and often astute reading of the colonial and postcolonial history; the events of the genocide itself receive only a few pages. In perhaps the most valuable part of the book, Mamdani situates his analysis in a regional context, demonstrating the interpenetration of identity conflicts in Uganda and Congo-Kinshasa with the Rwandan events. There is much to commend the Mamdani argument that the ethnic categories in Rwanda should be understood as “political identities that changed with the changing nature of the Rwandan state” (p. 73). The kingdom, believed to have originated at the end of the seventeenth century, became increasingly militarized and centralized, violently extending its rule over long-established cultivating and pastoral populations in the region. The most compelling explanation of the origins of the ethnic categories is provided by Jan Vansina; the ethnonym “Tutsi,” which by the early nineteenth century was in use by a court elite, became by extension a label applying to all warriors serving the king as militarism developed, and was subsequently attached to cattle owners more generally. “Hutu” was originally a term of disdain, applied to court servants; during the decades preceding colonial rule, it became generally applied to subject agricultural populations, who continued to have important regional and local identities.²⁷ Although the insistence on the purely political nature of Hutu and Tutsi identities may elide some cultural dimensions of ethnic evolution, Mamdani is on firm ground in privileging a constructivist reading and the central role of the precolonial and colonial states.

During the colonial regime, ethnic difference was codified and systematized, particularly during the Belgian period, when chieftaincy became a Tutsi monopoly. The colonial state, he argues, adds a lethal second categorization of difference by overlaying a racial theory to the Tutsi-Hutu distinction through the application of the now-discredited “Hamitic” myth. The Tutsi, by this doctrine, were a racially distinct set of immigrant conquerors originating in Ethiopia, and were physically, intellectually, and culturally superior to the Hutu mass. Racialization, Mamdani adds, was central to the genocide; mere ethnicity did not supply the metaphors of difference making mass killing “thinkable.” The catalog of “deadly ethnic riots” provided by Horowitz casts doubt on the thesis that racialization is a prerequisite for genocidal outbursts. Nonetheless, many Tutsi elites in colonial times found the theory of their racial superiority appealing. After independence, and especially as appeals to hatred multiplied in the early 1990s, Hutu extremists latched onto the doctrine of racialization, inverting the message to justify a murderous assault upon those considered to be a race of oppressors who had entered as alien conquerors. There is certainly merit in distinguishing between ethnicity and race as forms of identity. They draw upon different discourses and historical narratives and conceive of “the other” in divergent ways. Race as historically constituted is tightly joined to notions of a hierarchy of status and worth, and is intimately linked to racism, which has no analog in ethnicity. However, the concept of racialization as used by Mamdani has problematic aspects, particularly his effort to join Rwandan Tutsi and Ugandan Asians in a single category, that of “settlers” of an intermediate racial category subject to the white colonial rulers but superior to the indigenous mass. Furthermore, there is some question as to how deeply the “Hamitic myth” notions of Tutsi as a racial caste had penetrated the rural Hutu mass. Mamdani does argue that in the relatively prosperous years of the “second republic” under Juvenal Habyarimana from 1973 until the late 1980s, Tutsi within the country became ethnicized as a minority accorded some economic space and subordinate participation, rather than as a race of former oppressors. The 1990 invasion from Uganda of the Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), however, launched a civil war in which escalating mutual fears and animosities established a polarizing dynamic, reviving the racial theses. One should doubt, however, whether the 1994 holocaust was essentially a “racial” cleansing, “a genocide by those who saw themselves as sons—and daughters—of the soil, and their mission as one of clearing the soil of a threatening alien

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presence" (p. 14); the atrocities were more likely the result of a raw and violent struggle for political control—with claims expressed in the language of ethnic conflict.

ETHNIC MOVEMENTS ARE ONLY PERPETUATIONS OF IDENTITY POLITICS BY DOMINANT POWERS

Susan Hekman, 00', Political theories and graduate humanities and University of Texas in Arlington, "Beyond identity: Feminism, identity and identity politics," Sage Publications MNDI MW

Another aspect of this problem is illustrated by the experience of panethnic political movements in the USA. Ethnic groups are, in theory, voluntary collectives defined by national origin, whose members share a distinctive, integrated culture. In practice, however, ethnic politics in the USA is something quite different. Political necessity has thrown together ethnic groups who, at best, have little in common and, at worst, have a history of ethnic hatred. Groups categorized as, for example, 'Asian' or 'Hispanic' are made up of diverse peoples; their designation is a result of the dominant group's inability or unwillingness to recognize their differences. The 'ethnic' movement that results is thus a product of the necessities of liberal politics and the legal categories created by that politics. It unites individuals with little or no 'natural' ethnic similarities and forces them to ignore their differences for political and legal purposes. Such a politics emphasizes the constructed, political character of ethnic categories and the constitutive role of dominant institutions.

IDENTITY POLITICS JUSTIFIES AND LEADS TO GENOCIDE.

Gudrun-Axeli Knapp, 2005, University of Hanover, "Race, Class, Gender: Reclaiming Baggage in Fast Travelling Theories," European Journal of Women's Studies; Sage Publications MNDI MW

It is obvious that the impossibility of the notion of Rasse relates back to the history of the racist identity politics of National Socialism. It was modern scientific systems of racial distinctions and hierarchies, along with the modern mania of unrestricted practicability that legitimated industrialized genocide of millions of 'others', predominantly Jews, from all over Europe, and warfare legitimated by ethnic (translated as völkisch) nationalism that aimed at changing the map of the continent.

THE DESIRE TO PROTECT IDENTITY POLITICS DOES NOT CREATE A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY—INSTEAD IT CREATES INAUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS WHERE SURVIVAL OF THE GROUP INSTEAD OF UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER BECOMES THE MAIN CONCERN

Marlon B. Ross, 00', Professor of English and Associate Director of the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies at the University of Michigan, "Commentary: Pleasuring Identity, or the Delicious Politics of Belonging," New Literary History MNDI MW

For Professor Michaels, who has a fondness for commonsense rationalism, the notion of what constitutes a legitimate argument cuts the world bilaterally into either (1) a substantive difference of opinion (the proper forum of ideology and the only true procedure for politics), or (2) a mere difference in perspective (a flimsy and false "subject position" articulated in "identity politics" theory). Thus, he further segregates universal conflicts spawned by disagreements in ideology from the merely local "conflicts of interest" spawned by the "false consciousness" (my phrase) of "identity politics." In his argument, Professor Michaels skillfully reduces "identity politics" to merely a difference in point of view, as though groups struggling over political power are so many characters vying for our attention in a realistic novel. It strikes me that Professor Michaels's often stunning argumentation is suffused with a curious nostalgia and preference for the stark bilateral ideology of Cold War politics over the rather multilateral pincers movements of "identity politics," when in fact, as Grant reminds us, the Cold War, the old Left, New Left, and "identity politics" are all messily overlapped in a political and cultural history that is anything but simply bilateral. Cultural differences, according to Professor Michaels, are not ideological differences, because ideology is about the truth value (the universalizable rightness or wrongness) of a stance, whereas cultural identity is about "the politics of survival": "Because the transformation of ideological differences into cultural differences makes the differences themselves valuable, the politics of a world divided into cultures (a world where difference is understood as cultural) must be the politics of survival—a politics, in other words, where the worst thing that can happen will be a culture's death." Professor Michaels is on to something here, for we do sometimes talk about groups as though they are endangered species. There's a viciously long tradition of this in regard to the Indian groups of the Americas—whereby their nativity as Americans is constantly confused with and predicates a need to save them from extinction. Environmentalists sometimes become zealous mimics of what they think are Native American spiritual practices, allowing their desire to preserve Native American culture stand in the place of any participatory struggle along with American Indians for a fair share of political and economic power. In this disturbing logic, Native Americans peoples are confused with the wildlife and habitats that environmentalists seek to preserve from extinction. More recently, we have heard a lot of talk about saving Black men from extinction. Nonetheless, Professor Michaels seems to overlook the realities feeding such language: the actual endangerment of individuals within these groups because the groups themselves have, in one way or another, been subject to policies of dispossession, humiliation, and outright genocide as cultural groups. I don't mean this to be hyperbole. Alarm on the left over disappearing cultural practices is driven largely by concern for disappeared people, as individuals and as groups, whose lives have been systematically brutalized in the hope of diminishing their numbers and thus their ability to put their bodies, synecdochically speaking, on the line in opposition to various imperialist and racist agendas. By substituting the idea of the culture for the people who practice the culture, Professor Michaels makes it seem as though interventions by and for people experiencing corporate state brutalities are merely actions to preserve the cultures that they practice, and that come to represent their presence as a collective identity.

IDENTITY POLITICS IS AN EXPANSIONIST TOOL OF COLONIALISM TO DIVIDE GROUPS BASED ON THEIR IDENTITY SO THAT THEY CAN LATER BE POSITED AGAINST EACH OTHER

Said Adejumobi, 01', Professor of Political Science at Lagos State University, "Citizenship, Rights, and the Problem of Conflicts and Civil Wars in Africa," The John Hopkins University Press MNDI MW

However, the import of native authority rule was not only in the denial of citizenship and its bundle of rights to the natives. It had two other important aspects. First, colonialism through the native authority system radically transformed the social structures in Africa, including the chieftaincy institution.⁴⁰ The sphere of control, sources and the nature of power, and those who exercised it at the local level changed dramatically under colonial rule. Native authority rule and customary law under the colonial regime meant the reinvention and bastardization of what were traditional political institutions and what may be called customary laws in most precolonial societies in Africa. Although modes of political governance differed in many pre-colonial African societies from the acephalous and highly democratic age-grade system in Iboland, the dispersed and regulated monarchical system of the Yoruba kingdoms, to the fairly centralized Fulani empire and the Zulu kingdom, hardly was there a society in which all power was absolutely fused in a single authority.⁴¹ Contrarily, the colonial state ensured that there was no local regulatory check on the chief, who invented and reinvented what constitutes "customary laws" in line with the wishes of the colonial authorities. Also, the selection of chiefs under colonial rule was not based on any tradition or customs of the local people, but on the whims and caprices of the colonial regime. As Michael Crowder and Obaro Ikime observed, "in a very real sense, none of the chiefs who 'ruled' under the French and British were legitimate."⁴² In other words, there was nothing traditional or customary about "customary laws" and the native authority system in the colonial era. Second, and perhaps more important, is that the colonial regime, by fragmenting the local people into "native authorities" with different sets of "customary or tribal laws," constructed and fermented ethnic identities which were later to plague the state and polity in most African states during the nationalist struggle and in the post-colonial era.

THEIR LIBERATION STRUGGLES ARE JUST A RUSE—IDENTITY POLITICS RECREATES COLONIALISM BY PREVENTING A UNIVERSAL FIGHT AGAINST OPPRESSION—COLONIALISM USED IDENTITY POLITICS IN ORDER TO PREOCUPPY GROUPS BY POSITING THEMSELVES AGAINST EACH OTHER

Said Adejumobi, 01', Professor of Political Science at Lagos State University, "Citizenship, Rights, and the Problem of Conflicts and Civil Wars in Africa," The John Hopkins University Press MNDI MW

However, the entrenched institutional structures of colonialism engendered contradictions and tension-ridden tendencies in the anticolonial struggles, and influenced the nature and pattern of the political movements. The sharp division between the rural and the urban, the native and the settler, and the horizontal fragmentation of the natives into ethnic entities and identities through the native authority system placed severe limitations on the ability of the emergent indigenous political elite to have a broad national base. In most countries in Africa, the majority of nationalist movements and resultant political parties were ethnically defined, drawing their support base from the fragmented ethnic social structures of the colonial era. For example, in Nigeria, the three major political parties in the decolonization era—the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC), the Action Group (AG), and the National Council for Nigerian Citizens (NCNC)—reflected ethnic configurations in their origin and character. In the case of South Africa, the semi-industrialization of the country facilitated a high level of urbanization and a concentrated labor force, which made possible the formation of largely urban-based political movements against apartheid. However, as those movements sought to mobilize the rural population in the liberation struggle, ethnic expressions gained meaning. The liberation movements were confronted with the power of the chiefs, whom they had to incorporate into the nationalist struggle. The fragmentation that ethnic expressions unleashed defines the status of a party like the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) in South Africa. The points being emphasized are basically three. First, that the bifurcated nature of the colonial state produced and encouraged ethnic-based political identities in the decolonization period and beyond. As Mamdani aptly puts it, "every movement of resistance was shaped by the very structure of power against which it rebelled."⁴⁶ Second, the logic of dualism germane to the institutional structure of colonialism created divisions between the rural and the urban, the native and settler, and the subject and the citizen. This was to produce profound problems in the post-colonial era in the discourse and politics on citizenship in most Southern and Eastern African countries where "settler colonialism" was the norm. Up until now, a raging debate exists in most of those countries as to who is a citizen and who is not, between the "settler" and the "native." Third, colonial structures affected the nature of anti-colonial politics and the character of the postcolonial state.

IDENTITY POLITICS IS AT THE ROOT OF CONFLICT ZONES IN AFRICA—IDENTITY EMPOWERMENT IS A TOOL OF COLONIALISM TO CONTINUE INTERNAL STRIFE IN POST-COLONIAL TIMES—RWANDA PROVES

Said Adejumobi, 01', Professor of Political Science at Lagos State University, "Citizenship, Rights, and the Problem of Conflicts and Civil Wars in Africa," The John Hopkins University Press MNDI MW

In social composition and identity, Rwanda is a fairly homogenous country. Its three ethnic categories—the Tutsi, the Hutu, and the Twa—share the same language, type of social organization, and often the same lifestyles, and have lived together peacefully for centuries while sharing the same collective commitment to monarchical symbols.⁵³ Colonialism radically transformed the social structures and identity formation of this society. It created rigid identity differentiation and sharp social distinction among those groups. The background to this was the colonial cultural mythology and historiography of the Rwandan people, which sought to reconstruct social reality and identity in Rwanda. Colonial historians and anthropologists were the precursor of this historical reconstruction. Using differences in physical traits, they claimed that the groups in Rwanda were of different historical origins. The Tutsi were classified as being of Hamitic

origin, the Hutu as Bantu, and the Twa as pygmies. A logic of racial superiority was therefore injected into these scholars' analysis with the claim that the Tutsi were superior homo sapiens than others. This dubious historical reconstruction, as Gerald Prunier noted, became a kind of "unquestioned 'scientific canon' which actually governed the decisions made by the Germans and even more so later by the Belgian colonial authorities."⁵⁴ For the colonial regimes (both the Germans and the Belgians)⁵⁵, the Tutsi were considered to be the white man in black skin in Rwanda. As such, they were formally designated as the first class natives to whom decentralized local power and resources were to be devolved. The Hutu, though more numerous, were conferred with the identity of second-class natives, with the Twa completely relegated to the background.⁵⁶ This identity reconstruction by the colonial state underwent the three processes of social influence which Herbert Kelman identifies as being central to identity formation and consolidation. These are compliance, identification, and internalization.⁵⁷ All the social groups complied with the new identities, acquiesced to them (with an initial threat of force) and internalized them through a socialization and generational cycle. In addition, those identities were codified with the colonial policy of separate identity cards for the groups.

THE GIVING OF HUMAN RIGHTS DOES NOT EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS, BUT CREATES A RELATIONSHIP OF DEPENDENCY

Wendy Brown, 04', Professor of Political Science at UC Berkeley, "The Most We Can Hope For . . .": Human Rights and the Politics of Fatalism," *South Atlantic Quarterly* MDNI MW

As such, the promise of rights to enable the individual's capacity to choose what one wishes to live and die for does not address the historical, political, and economic constraints in which this choice occurs—agency is defined as choice within these constraints and thus largely codifies these constraints. Finally, if rights promise a shield around individuals, the "right to choose the life they see fit to lead" (57), this shield constitutes a juridical limit on regimes without empowering individuals as political actors; rather, it is an instance of what Isaiah Berlin called and Ignatief endorses as "negative liberty," the right to be let alone to do as one wishes (57). As human rights discourse draws a line between the space of the individual to choose how she or he wants to live and the space of politics, what Ignatief calls "empowerment" is located in the former. In his framing, human rights discourse thus not only aspires to be beyond politics (notwithstanding his own insistence that it is a politics), but carries implicitly antipolitical aspirations for its subjects—that is, casts subjects as yearning to be free of politics and, indeed, of all collective determinations of ends.⁶ Thus, the moral valence of human rights, as well as its positioning of morality outside of and above politics, inflects and positions in its image the individual human that rights would empower and thereby produce.

THE GIVING OF RIGHTS DISEMPOWER AND CREATES A NECESSITY FOR PROTECTION BY PRODUCING POLITICAL SUBJECTS NEEDING SUCH

Wendy Brown, 04', Professor of Political Science at UC Berkeley, "The Most We Can Hope For . . .": Human Rights and the Politics of Fatalism," *South Atlantic Quarterly* MDNI MW

To appreciate further how rights can simultaneously shield subjects from certain abuses and become tactics in their disempowerment, we might return to a point mentioned in passing above, namely that rights are not simply attached to Kantian subjects, but rather produce and regulate the subjects to whom they are assigned.⁸ Thus, in its very promise to protect the individual against suffering and permit choice for individuals, human rights

discourse produces a certain kind of subject in need of a certain kind of protection. Of course, suffering and abuse also produce subjects, often traumatically so and I am by no means suggesting that leaving individuals vulnerable to such things is amorally or politically superior production to that of human rights discourse. Nor, again, am I contesting the extent to which human rights campaigns may actually limit certain kinds of abuse and alter certain policies. Rather, the point is that there is no such thing as mere reduction of suffering or protection from abuse—the nature of the reduction or protection is itself productive of political subjects and political possibilities. Just as abuse itself is never generic but always has particular social and subjective content, so the matter of how it is relieved is consequential. Yes, the abuse must be stopped but by whom, with what techniques, with what unintended effects, and above all, unfolding what possible futures? The pragmatist, moral, and antipolitical mantle of human rights discourse tends to eschew, even repel, rather than invite or address these questions.

AFF: CLASS MOVEMENTS FAIL

CLASS BASED STRUGGLES WILL INEVITABLY BE COOPTED BY THE POSTMODERNIST LEFT

**Grant Farred, 00', Associate Professor of Duke University, "Endgame Identity? Mapping the New Left Roots of Identity Politics,"
New Literary History MNDI MW**

The Labour Party's chief failure was its inability to transform the Welfare State, to adapt its 1950s–60s formation to the demands of changing socioeconomic and ideological conditions of the late 1970s, and thereby give adequate (or articulate) voice to the new political constituencies that had arisen out of its final two decades. The New Left was disavowed, rather than outrightly rejected, by those who had constituted it but were never recognized as central to its functioning. As a movement, identity politics empowered where the New Left had only (barely) acknowledged, often condescendingly so. Unable to mobilize around class, demoralized and intensely affected by the successive Tory and GOP victories, ethnic and gay communities and environmental groups recognized the need to borrow a leaf from the New Left strategy book: reduce, popularize, "specialize," and localize the scope of the political movements. The "struggle" was never abandoned; it was simply refashioned by the "new social movements" for women's and minority rights through their unexpected "liberation" from the New Left stranglehold on radical politics. Constructed as the historic retooling of the New Left, identity politics can be read less as the rejection of that struggle for freedom from oppression, exploitation, and degradation than as rearticulation of that ideological agenda. Instead of the New Left conducting this struggle under the banner and direction of "class," identity politics demonstrated the fractured, contradictory nature of that project. It is precisely because the New Left did not address the tensions at its core that it was superceded by a younger, more fluid, and mobile manifestation of itself. Identity politics marks the splitting of the New Left into its constituent parts rather than the invalidation of the post-1956 movement.

CLASS STRUGGLES EXCLUDE AND SILENCE MARGINILIZED GROUPS

**Grant Farred, 00', Associate Professor of Duke University, "Endgame Identity? Mapping the New Left Roots of Identity Politics,"
New Literary History MNDI MW**

One of the signal accomplishments of the New Left, and a key reason for its subsequent (slow) dissolution, was its capacity to house within it a number of distinct constituencies and include in its ranks a number of agendas, not all of them commensurate with each other or even potentially cohesive. Marxist (and anticommunist) in its formation, the movement prioritized and organized itself around the politics of "class"—often, as the previous section suggested, at the expense of other struggles for public self-representation. Steeped in its radical history, the New Left appeared unaware of the ways in which it was preventing—either explicitly or implicitly—its varied constituents from establishing their own political traditions. Women, blacks, and gays wanted to create a history that would be independent of, but not necessarily antagonistic to (though ideological tensions were certainly possible), the movement itself. Pivotal to the process of marking themselves as autonomous political constituencies was the issue of self-definition. In this regard, both the New Left and the New Right were, in their different ways, equally—and sometimes willfully—blind to the need of minority constituencies to speak their own public presences. As Susan Bickford argues in her feminist defense of identity politics, both the Left and the Right restricted women's—or gays' or black communities'—capacity to define their own political profile or trajectory: "identities imposed upon us do not necessarily neatly mesh with what we want to reclaim."¹³ Selfdefinition, the power to name, is crucial to minority constituencies because it enables them to express not only who they are but precisely what it is they "want to reclaim"; or to claim for the very first time. As much as anything, self-definition is a struggle for and about a history—a past and a present that has been misrepresented, silenced, muted, mutilated, or even obliterated, a past that has to be reclaimed and reconstituted in the present.

THE NEG'S UNIVERSAL MOVEMENT IS IMPOSSIBLE—THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A UNIVERSAL IDENTITY THAT CAN EMPOWER ALL MARGINILIZED GROUPS—YOUR ALTERNATIVE WOULD LEAVE MARGINILIZED GROUPS DISEMPowered

**Robin D. G. Kelley, 97', Professor of History and Africana Studies at NYU, "Identity Politics & Class Struggle," New Politics
MNDI MW**

Besides assuming that the "universal" is truly "self-evident," the neo-Enlightenment Left cannot conceive of movements led by African Americans, women, Latinos, gays and lesbians, speaking for the whole or even embracing radical humanism. The implications are frightening: the only people who can speak the language of universalism are white men (since they have no investment in identity politics beyond renewed ethnic movements arising here and there) and women and colored people who have transcended or rejected the politics of identity. Moreover, they either don't understand or refuse to acknowledge that class is lived through race and gender. There is no universal class identity, just as there is no universal racial or gender or sexual identity. The idea that race, gender, and sexuality are particular whereas class is universal not only presumes that class struggle is some sort of race and gender-neutral terrain but takes for granted that movements focused on race, gender, or sexuality necessarily undermine class unity and, by definition, cannot be emancipatory for the whole.

IDENTITY POLITICS ENCOURAGES OTHER POLITICAL MOVEMENTS TO ARISE—THIS IS THE ONLY POSSIBILITY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Robin D. G. Kelley, 97', Professor of History and Africana Studies at NYU, "Identity Politics & Class Struggle," New Politics MNDI MW

One could see this vision in the writings of many black feminists, including June Jordan, Barbara Christian, Angela Davis, Elsa Barkley Brown, Pearl Cleage, Audre Lorde, Pat Parker, Barbara Smith, Cheryl Clarke, Julianne Malveaux, bell hooks, Margaret Simms, and Filomina Steady, to name a few. Of course, had Tomasky and Gitlin actually read this stuff, they might jump up in agreement and dismiss these statements as exceptions to the rule. (Whatever the rule is, however, always goes unnamed.) But a close reading reveals that they are not saying the same thing. "If all human rights are indivisible," then why privilege majoritarian concerns over all others and ridicule movements organized around sex, race, and gender? Why presume that such movements are necessarily narrow simply because black women and their concerns are central to them? Nothing could be further from the truth. One vital outgrowth of radical black feminism has been the black women's healthcare movement, its most notable manifestation being the National Black Women's Health Project. Among other things, they have sought to create a healthier environment for poor and working-class women and reduce women's dependence on a health care system structured by capitalism and run primarily by men. If they succeed, imagine how such a transformation might benefit all of us, irrespective of race or gender?

UNFORTUNATELY, THESE NEO-ENLIGHTENMENT LEFTISTS ARE BLIND TO the radical humanist traditions that have undergirded black feminist movements, and this blindness has kept them from seeing how black feminism could contribute to their own emancipation. Similarly, they don't see how gay and lesbian movements might also contribute to our collective emancipation -- a criticism made eloquently by Martin Duberman in his review of Tomasky's book in *The Nation*. Some things are obvious: the continuing struggle of gays and lesbians against discrimination in public and private life have important implications for national civil rights law; the work of ACT UP and other movements have made AIDS visible -- a disease that's killing many heterosexual people, especially poor black women. Less obvious is the role of scholarship coming out of Gay and Lesbian Studies programs as well as Women's Studies programs -- grist for the anti-identity politics mill. Queer theory, for example, begins with the premise that sexuality is a vital part of human existence, and that the way sexual identities are defined (and policed) has to do with social relations of power, the role of the state, public institutions, and social movements. The best work understands that sexual identities and practices are lived through race and class and can only be understood historically. What does this scholarship have to do with the rest of us? What are the implications for the "universal"? For one, we know now that there is no universal masculinity or femininity. The idea of "normal" behavior is a social construction, which means that there is nothing natural or inevitable about male dominance, the overrepresentation of men in positions of power, or the tendency of men to use violence to resolve conflict. These are all obvious points, to be sure. But how many heterosexual men and women stop to think about the emancipatory potential of a more flexible sexual and gender identity for all of us? Besides reducing homophobic anxieties, freeing up self-expression, and enabling us to reconstruct our relationships to one another (isn't that what revolution is all about?), I believe a less rigid definition of masculinity may actually reduce violence -- from police brutality to domestic abuse.

YOUR CRITICISM IS UNREALISTIC—SOCIAL CHANGE IS ONLY POSSIBLE THROUGH SPECIFIC SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
Robin D. G. Kelley, 97', Professor of History and Africana Studies at NYU, "Identity Politics & Class Struggle," New Politics MNDI MW

While Gitlin tends to be slightly more sympathetic to feminism and gay and lesbian movements than Tomasky, they both view them as prime examples of dead-end identity politics. On the other hand, when they proclaim a movement or issue "universal," they don't stop to analyze how race and gender shape various responses to issues. For example, Tomasky believes he hit on a common value/agenda when he writes: "Working people in this country need a movement that will put their interests and livelihoods first." Fair enough. But without an analysis that takes racism, sexism, and homophobia seriously, or considers deep historical differences, we won't know what "interests" mean. Let's take crime and the issue of neighborhood safety, an issue on which many people across race, gender, and even class lines can find common ground. Yet, racism -- not narrow identity politics -- persuaded many African Americans to oppose Clinton's \$22 billion Crime Bill, and the majority of white voters to support it. For many black people, the issue of neighborhood safety is not just about more police but the kind of police -- where they live, how they relate to the community. Indeed, no matter what we might think of the Nation of Islam (NOI), many non-Muslims see its fight against drug dealers in black communities as more effective than the police.

AFF: Identity Politics Good

IDENTITY POLITICS HAS PROVED PRODUCTIVE AND THE SOURCE OF POWER AND EMPOWERMENT FOR MARGINILIZED GROUPS

Grant Farred, 00', Associate Professor of Duke University, "Endgame Identity? Mapping the New Left Roots of Identity Politics," New Literary History MNDI MW

From its New Left origin to the present, the struggle for identity has often turned on the capacity of marginalized groups to set their own political agenda, simultaneously acknowledge, reject, and reinscribe the disjuncture between the "identities imposed" and those desired—those deemed more representative of these various green or feminist selves. By allowing them to disarticulate—or, at the very least, challenge—the "public" understanding of who they were, identity politics enabled minority groups to replace those perceptions with—and to address it in—their own language; identity politics allowed marginal communities to experiment with discourses that might more appropriately name them, to reject naming as a rite/right of repression. Identity politics enabled the re-creation of minority histories in a public sphere that had long been hostile or indifferent to narratives of that self and community. Identity politics thus represents not only the marginal subject speaking back, but a more engaging philosophical project: the oppressed not only resisting but also negotiating the limitations of its agency. Identification, the ways in which minority constituencies are positioned by the dominant public, is seldom voluntary. (By the same token, however, neither is it totally enforced from without.)

IDENTITY POLITICS MAY HAVE A FIXED MEANING, BUT IT PROVIDES SPACE FOR MARGINILIZED GROUPS TO EMPOWER THEMSELVES AND TRANSFORM THE SUBJUGATED CLASSIFICATIONS DETERMINED BY OPPRESIVE GROUPS.

Grant Farred, 00', Associate Professor of Duke University, "Endgame Identity? Mapping the New Left Roots of Identity Politics," New Literary History MNDI MW

Oppressed groups consistently confront the resilience and the power of their marginalization, unable to alter dominant representations of themselves. These communities have to negotiate ways in which negative public perception reinforces their compromised capacity to effect the world, to change how they are understood and received; their "disenfranchised" status derives, it would appear, completely from their ontological existence as racialized, sexualized, and gendered subjects. As a response to this diminution of agency, identity politics transformed essential(ist) profiles into radically politicized ones; the movement empowered oppressed constituencies to resist their public representations rather than simply experience them as, to phrase it awkwardly, pejorative dominant appellations. Minority constituencies, as this explication makes clear, experience their "group identity" as a complicated phenomenon because it is "implicated in power in multiple ways—ways that both perpetuate inequality and provide the means to resist—and group identity is therefore relevant to who we are as citizens" (AA 124). The hegemonic imposition of "group identity" is so unrelenting that it might, precisely because of its intensity, implicitly mark the limitations of this mode of political struggle. In other words, because of the difficulty of public self-definition, identity politics is always likely to be focused on the struggle to articulate the minority experience in the dominant public sphere; identity politics will be primarily, if not exclusively, about the right to self-definition. As a political strategy and a mode of oppositionality, identity politics has a stable, if not fixed, "identity." In its most confrontational mode, identity politics is a rejection of interpellation and an insistence upon public re-identification; it represents the political effort to increase minority agency, to challenge and reconfigure the ways in which the dominant group positions and "sees" (publicly understands) its marginal constituents. Identity politics marks the politicization of otherwise essentialized and (often) all-too-easily co-optable modes of self or group representation. The "native" or the "dyke" in Wendy Brown's critique of liberal discourse comes to stand for both something more and less than its pejorative intention: it is evacuated of its dominant meaning and reinscribed from within, remade into an identity with a new public resonance. Because "faggot" or "nigger" or "doubla" (as the black-Indian hybrid subject is designated in the Caribbean) is so openly claimed, its meaning, application, and reception is unsettled and power is relocated. This rhetorical and political maneuver allows for the transformation of the pejorative into a dialectic: it enables the interplay between derogation and affirmation, between oppression and resistance, the aggressive or sly reinscription of the marginal transcript in the dominant sphere. As the pervasive use of the term "nigger" in hip-hop culture demonstrates, those who have been historically "injured," to borrow Brown's term, have wrested the authority for themselves: they now police the use of the historically pejorative, determining who can use it, where it can be applied, and, most importantly, who is prevented from invoking it. Because of identity politics, the power to name and rename the marginal self also includes the power to censor or curtail. As the widespread popularity and consumption of hip-hop culture in white suburbia demonstrates, the claiming and rewriting of the pejorative, that which has now been rendered taboo, transforms it into the desirable.¹⁵ (The biggest consumers of hip-hop culture, white kids cannot—generally speaking—use the term "nigger"—or "nigga"—as a designation for their black counterparts. At best, they can employ the term self-consciously, aware of the liberties they are taking and the temporary license they are being granted. White youth know that they are being culturally policed by their black counterparts and by the culture as a whole. This does not mean, of course, that the pejorative articulation is censored in whites only spaces, behind that "other" veil. The publicly unutterable is not privately silenced or policed as vigorously.)

WITHOUT REPRESENTATIONS DEMOCRACY CANNOT EXIST

Marlon B. Ross, 00', Professor of English and Associate Director of the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies at the University of Michigan, "Commentary: Pleasuring Identity, or the Delicious Politics of Belonging," New Literary History MNDI MW

For Ken, "identity politics" is suspect because it fails not only a test of rational argumentation but also a test of effective political strategy. Ken perceptively points out the nonrational aspects of numbering and representation in "identity politics," how numbering and representation are so easily turned against those seeking a fair hearing in the courts, assemblies, corporate offices, and factory floors where power is arbitrated. As he demonstrates, what "counts for" blackness or some other identity is malleable not only to the disempowered but also to the powerful, who can manipulate everything from census data to racial profiling as a form of "community policing." Numbering and representation, however, were not invented by "identity politics." They were the rules of the game in politics long before such a term could have even been imagined. The question of how to count enslaved persons for the purposes of determining the Congressional representation of the states was a Constitutional dilemma because numbering and representation were grounding principles of liberal republicanism. As Patricia Williams has so eloquently pointed out, we are still attempting to overturn the chain reactions put into place when the Founding Fathers decided their compromise by fractioning each captive person into three-fifths of a human body.⁸ "Identity politics" endeavors to make the rules of the game work for the dispossessed, rather than against them. It may be the case that the Founding Fathers' rules can never dismantle the Fathers' house, but perhaps they can be used to partition the rooms of the house fairly. More to the point, numbering and representation are not just some set of arbitrary game rules rigged by a select group of elite men, although they have operated as such for a very long time. They are, more fundamentally, the only rules that we currently have for attempting to construct governance, society, and economics on democratic principles.

There can be no concept of democracy without some method of representation, and there can be no representation without counting populations and finding ways to make representatives accountable to them. Unless we have visions of stateless bodies dancing in our heads, the body politic, if it is to be radically democratized, must be made radically accountable to the people currently at the margins and bottoms of power by helping to place those very people in the halls of power. If socialism and other Marxist-influenced agendas are forms of radical democratization, and I'd argue that they are, they necessarily must rely on principles of numbering and representation, even if these principles are transformed by a revolutionary practice not yet materialized.

To underplay this, as Soviet Communism certainly did, is to flirt with the very modes of tyranny—an old-fashioned word that needs to be resuscitated—that radical democratization sets out to topple. The struggle for a radically democratized society, governance, and economy dictates that numbering and representation, the hallmarks of "identity politics," will always be a part of our politics because, as far as we can see any future, numbering and representation are an intrinsic and thus necessary practice constituting democratization itself.

THROUGH THE USE OF IDENTITY POLITICS, IDENTITY CONFLICTS HAVE BEEN LESSENED, EMPIRICALLY PROVEN
Robin D. G. Kelley, 97', Professor of History and Africana Studies at NYU, "Identity Politics & Class Struggle," New Politics MNDI MW

So, how might people build class solidarity without suppressing or ignoring differences? How can we build on differences -- by which I mean different kinds of oppression as well as different identities -- rather than in spite of them? One way to conceive of alliances across race and gender is as a set of "affiliations," of building unity by supporting and perhaps even participating in other peoples struggles for social justice. Basically, that old fashioned IWW slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all!" After all, contrary to the neo-Enlightenment narratives, African-American social movements have been practicing the principle of "an injury to one is an injury to all" for a very long time: black male abolitionists supported women's suffrage when few white men would; black radicals throughout the early part of the century supported the Irish struggle for self-determination; black soldiers and journalists shed tears at the sight of Nazi death camps; and since Roosevelt, we have been mainstays in the Democratic Party even to our own detriment. Black trade unions were never exclusionary; black labor leaders did not implement Jim Crow locals. And when the Chinese Exclusion Act seemed to have universal support among non-Asian workers, it was a black man, James Ferrell of the Knights of Labor, who told his comrades that they ought to organize the Chinese rather than attack them.

The good news is that most elements of the labor movement understand this, unlike many academics who apparently find the idea of multiple identities too complicated to deal with. Despite their uncritical support of the Democratic Party, the current leadership of the AFL-CIO seems to understand that the labor movement is not about transcending these other social movements derisively labelled "identity politics," but about building alliances and affiliations and learning from them. Across the country, for example, unions have embraced cultural diversity education to reduce white racism, ethnic conflicts, sexism, and homophobia. They've sought assistance from dozens of university-based programs, including those at Indiana University, Division of Labor; University of Iowa's, Labor Center; University of Michigan, Labor Studies Center; University of Minnesota, Labor Education Service.

IDENTITY POLITICS IS THE KEY TO MOVEMENTS WHICH WILL INEVITABLY WORK TOWARDS THE COMMON GOOD
Robin D. G. Kelley, 97', Professor of History and Africana Studies at NYU, "Identity Politics & Class Struggle," New Politics
MNDI MW

Although identity politics sometimes act as a fetter on genuine multiracial/multicultural alliances, I believe it has also enriched our conception of class. Indeed, there are many serious scholars -- I count myself among them -- trying to understand how various forms of fellowship, racial solidarity, communion, the creation of sexual communities, and nationalism shape class politics and cross-racial alliances. We are grappling with how self-love and solidarity in a hostile context of white supremacy, the embrace of certain vernaculars, can be expressions of racial and class solidarity, and the way class and racial solidarity are gendered. Not to recognize this is to wonder why more West Indian workers participate in Carnival than in the Labor Day Parade, or why District 1199 had the foresight and vision to maintain an 1199 float and/or banner in the West Indian Day parade. Those who pine for the good old days before identity politics, when class struggle meant rough guys who understood that simply fighting the bosses united us, forget that Yiddish was a source of solidarity within the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, to the point where union leaders were offering courses in Yiddish for black and Puerto Rican workers in the late 1950s, to their dismay. Identity politics, in other words, has always been central to working class movements, from minstrelsy on up.

More important, a careful examination of the movements dismissed as particularistic are often "radical humanist" at their core and potentially emancipatory for all of us. We need to seriously re-think some of these movements, shifting our perspective from the margins to the center. We must look beyond wedge issues or "minority issues" and begin to pay attention to what these movements are advocating, imagining, building. After all, the analyses, theories, visions emerging from the black liberation movements, the Chicano and Asian American movements, the gay and lesbian movements, the women's movements, may just free us all. We simply can't afford to abandon the subway, with all of its multicultural messiness to jump on board the Enlightenment train of pure, simple, color- and gender-blind class struggle. Neither Locke nor Jefferson offer a truly emancipatory vision -- not then and certainly not now. Attempts to "transcend" (read: outgrow) our race and sex does not make for a unified working class. What does is recognition of the multiplicity of experiences and perspectives and a willingness to struggle on all fronts -- irrespective of what "the majority" thinks. Recognizing the importance of environmental justice for the inner city; the critical role of antiracism for white workers' own survival; the necessity for men to fight for women's rights and heterosexuals to raise their voices against homophobia. It's in struggle that one learns about power and how it operates, and that one can imagine a different world. And it's in struggle, not in the resurrection of ideas that have also provided the intellectual justification for modern racism, imperialism, and the traffic of human beings, that we must begin to develop a new vision.

AFF: Zizek Indicts

ZIZEK'S CONTRADICTORY NATURE ALLOWS FOR NO ANSWER TO ALTERNATIVES

Robinson and Tormey, 05', School of Politics at the University of Nottingham, UK, "A ticklish Subject? Zizek and the future of left radicalism" Sage Publications MW

Enter Zizek. Zizek offers an alternative to traditional left radicalisms and 'postmodern' anti-essentialist approaches, especially identity politics. For Zizek, 'radical democracy' accepts the liberal-capitalist horizon, and so is never 'radical' enough. Against this alleged pseudo-radicalism, Zizek revives traditional leftist concepts such as 'class struggle'. He ignores, however, the 'orthodox' left meaning of such terms, rearticulating them in a sophisticated Hegelian and Lacanian vocabulary.⁴ Yet problems remain: Zizek's version of 'class struggle' does not map on to traditional conceptions of an empirical working class, and Zizek's 'proletariat' is avowedly 'mythical'.⁵ He also rejects newer forms of struggle such as the anti-capitalist movement and the 1968 uprisings, thereby reproducing a problem common in radical theory: his theory has no link to *radical* politics in an immediate sense.⁶ Nevertheless, he has a theory of how such a politics should look, which he uses to judge existing political radicalisms. So how does Zizek see radical politics emerging? Zizek does not offer much by way of a positive social agenda. He does not have anything approximating to a 'programme', nor a model of the kind of society he seeks, nor a theory of the construction of alternatives in the present. Indeed, the more one looks at the matter, the more difficult it becomes to pin Zizek down to any 'line' or 'position'. He seems at first sight to regard social transformation not as something 'possible' to be theorized and advanced, but as a fundamental 'impossibility' because the influence of the dominant symbolic system is so great that it makes alternatives unthinkable.⁷ A fundamental transformation, however, is clearly the only answer to the otherwise compelling vision of contemporary crisis Zizek offers. Can he escape this contradiction? His attempt to do so revolves around a reclassification of 'impossibility' as an active element in generating action. Asserting or pursuing the impossible becomes in Zizek's account not only possible but desirable. So how then can the left advance its 'impossible' politics? How is a now 'impossible' model of class struggle to be transformed into a politics relevant to the present period?

ZIZEK'S ALTERNATIVE IS ANTI-POLITICAL—ITS RADICAL BREAK FROM REALITY CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH SELF-DESTRUCTION AND VIOLENCE

Robinson and Tormey, 05', School of Politics at the University of Nottingham, UK, "A ticklish Subject? Zizek and the future of left radicalism" Sage Publications MW

As useful as such a reading is, this is not, we would argue, the Zizek who emerges on closer examination. Regarding where radicals should proceed from 'here and now', his work offers little to celebrate. The relevance of a politics based on formal structural categories instead of lived historical processes, which measures 'radicalism' not by concrete achievements but by how abruptly one rejects the existing symbolic order, is questionable. The concept of the Act is, we think, metaphysical, not political, leading to a rejection of most forms of resistance. For Zizek, objections to official ideologies which stop short of an Act are '*the very form of ideology*' (Zizek, 1997a: 21), and the gap between 'complaint' and Acts is 'insurmountable' (Zizek, 1999: 361). So protest politics 'fits the existing power relations' and carnivals are 'a false transgression which stabilizes the power edifice' (Zizek, 1999: 230; 1997a: 73). This position misreads past revolutionary movements – including the decades-long revolutionary process in Russia – and offers little for the development of left strategies aiming to challenge the existing system. What Zizek establishes, we would argue, is a radical break between his own theory and any effective left politics, much of which – as we have shown – he peremptorily dismisses. The concept of the Act is a recipe for creating a desert around oneself while sitting in judgement on actual political movements which always fall short of one's ideal criteria.

In our view, Zizek is justified in advocating a transformative stance given the structural causes of many of the issues he confronts, but he is wrong to posit such a stance as a radical break constituted *ex nihilo*. Far from being the disavowed supplement of capitalism, the space for thinking the not-real which is opened by imaginaries and 'petty resistances' is, we think, a prerequisite to building a more active resistance and, ultimately, any substantial social transformation. As the cultural anthropologist James Scott shows in a series of case studies, political revolutions tend to emerge through the radicalization of existing demands and resistances – not as pure Acts occurring out of nothing. Even when they are incomprehensible from the standpoint of 'normal', conformist bystanders, they are a product of the development of subterranean resistances and counterhegemonies among subaltern groups (see, for example, Scott, 1990: 179–82). This is to say that social change does not come from nothing, but rather requires the pre-existence of a counter-culture involving nonconformist ideas and practices. As

Gramsci puts it, before coming into existence a new society must be 'ideally active' in the minds of those struggling for change (Gramsci, 1985: 39). The history of resistance thus gives little reason to support Zizek's politics of the Act.

The ability to Act in the manner described by Zizek is largely absent from the subaltern strata. Mary Kay Letourneau (let us recall) did not transform society; rather, her 'Act' was repressed and she was jailed. In another case discussed by Zizek (2001b: 74–5), a group of Siberian miners is said to accomplish an Act – by getting massacred. Since Acts are not even on Zizek's terms socially effective, they

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cannot help the worst-off, let alone transform society. Zizek's assumption of the effectiveness of Acts thus rests on a confusion between individual and social levels of analysis and between clinical therapy and political action. Vaneigem eerily foresees Zizek's 'Act' when he argues against 'active nihilism'. The transition from this 'wasteland of the suicide and the solitary killer' to revolutionary politics requires the repetition of negation in a different register, connected to a positive project to change the world and relying on the imaginaries Zizek denounces, the carnival spirit and the ability to dream (Vaneigem, 1967 [1994]: 111).

Zizek's politics are not merely impossible but, as we have shown, potentially despotic, and also – between support for a Master, acceptance of pain and alienation, militarism and the restoration of order – tendentially conservative. Such a politics, if adopted in practice, could only discredit progressive movements and further alienate those they seek to mobilize. We would argue that a transformative politics should be theorized instead as a process of transformation, an a-linear, rhizomatic, multiform plurality of resistances, initiatives and, indeed, acts which are sometimes spectacular and carnivalesque, sometimes prefigurative, sometimes subterranean, sometimes rooted in institutional change and reform and, under certain circumstances, directly transformative.

Moreover, we would take issue with Zizek's model of the pledged group bound together by the One who Acts as a step backwards from the decentred character of current left-radical politics. Nor need this decentring be seen as a weakness, as Zizek insists it should. It can be seen as a strength, protecting radical politics from self-appointed elites, transformism, infiltration, defeat through the 'neutralization' of leaders, and betrayal. In contrast with Zizek's stress on subordination, exclusivity, hierarchy and violence, the current emphasis on the adoption of anti-authoritarian, heterogeneous, inclusive and multiform types of activity offer a better chance of effectively overcoming the homogenizing logic of capitalism and of winning support among wider circles of those dissatisfied with it. Similarly, the stress on the centrality of direct action – which includes ludic, carnivalesque and a variety of non-violent actions – generates the possibility of empowerment through involvement in and support for the myriad causes which make up the anticapitalist resistance. This resistance stands in stark contrast to the desert of 'heroic' isolation advocated by Zizek which, as Laclau puts it, is 'a prescription for political quietism and sterility' (Butler et al., 2000: 293).

ZIZEK'S ALTERNATIVE ARE UNCLEAR AND CALL FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE, WHICH DOESN'T HELP CURRENT POLICY OPTIONS

Robinson and Tormey, 04', School of Politics at Nottingham University, "Zizek is not a Radical," MNDI MW

Zizek does not offer much by way of a positive social agenda. He does not have anything approximating to a 'programme', nor a model of the kind of society he seeks, nor a theory of the construction of alternatives in the present. Indeed, the more one looks at the matter, the more difficult it becomes to pin Zizek down to any 'line' or 'position'. He seems at first sight to regard social transformation, not as something 'possible' to be theorised and advanced, but as a fundamental 'impossibility' because the influence of the dominant symbolic system is so great that it makes alternatives unthinkable.¹⁵ A fundamental transformation, however, is clearly the only answer to the vision of contemporary crisis Zizek offers. Can he escape this contradiction? His attempt to do so revolves around a reclassification of 'impossibility' as an active element in generating action. Asserting or pursuing the impossible becomes in Zizek's account not only possible but desirable. So how then can the left advance its 'impossible' politics? How is a now 'impossible' model of class struggle be transformed into a politics relevant to the present period?

ZIZEK'S VIEWS ARE NOT REALISTIC AND HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH POLITICS

Robinson and Tormey, 04', School of Politics at Nottingham University, "Zizek is not a Radical," MNDI MW

Zizek. Zizek offers an alternative to traditional left radicalisms and 'postmodern' anti-essentialist approaches, especially identity politics. For Zizek, 'radical democracy' accepts the liberal-capitalist horizon, and so is never 'radical' enough.⁶ Against this alleged pseudo-radicalism, Zizek revives traditional leftist concepts such as 'class struggle'.⁷ However, he ignores the 'orthodox' left meaning of such terms, rearticulating them in a sophisticated Hegelian and Lacanian vocabulary. His dramatic impact on radical theory is therefore unsurprising. To take one example, Sean Homer's praise for Zizek is based on this supposed reinvigoration of radicalism and Marxism.⁸ Though Homer is sceptical about Zizek's 'Lacanianism', he declares that 'Marxism ... has always been much more to the fore of Zizek's work than many of his commentators have cared to acknowledge'.⁹ Zizek, he claims, is reopening the repressed issue of the Marxian and Althusserian legacy, and calling for '[u]topian imaginaries which allow us to think beyond the limits of capitalism'.¹⁰ For Homer's Zizek 'the point is to be anti-capitalist, whatever form that might take'.¹¹ And though he attacks 'the problem' of Zizek's Lacanian categories, especially the Real, Homer clearly sees Zizek's work as a step towards the revitalised Marxist radicalism he advocates.¹² Problems remain, however. Zizek's version of 'class struggle' does not map on to traditional conceptions of an empirical working-class, and Zizek's 'proletariat' is avowedly 'mythical'.¹³ He also rejects newer forms of struggle such as the anti-capitalist movement and the 1968 uprisings thereby reproducing a problem common in radical theory: his theory has no link to radical politics in an immediate sense.¹⁴ Nevertheless, he has a theory of how such a politics should look which he uses to judge existing political radicalisms. So how does Zizek see radical politics emerging?

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ZIZEK DOESN'T CARE ABOUT REAL PROBLEMS, HE ADVOCATES AGAINST ANYTHING THAT ACTUALLY HELPS REAL PEOPLE

Robinson and Tormey, 04', School of Politics at Nottingham University, "Zizek is not a Radical," MNDI MW

Thus Zizek mercilessly rejects the present state of the world. On the one hand, he is very aware of problems of great significance for the left: the privatisation of everything from telecommunications to genes, the invisible exploitation of workers in sweatshops, the growing ecological crisis, and the weight of the forces lined up to make these attacks, and the crisis they generate, seem 'normal'.³¹ And yet on the other, he launches conservative attacks on liberalism and reflexivity,³² bemoaning the lack of a Master,³³ denouncing campaigns against sexual violence,³⁴ railing against 'permissiveness' and 'decadence' and calling for a conformist 'normal mature subject' prepared to submit to authority on trust and to identify authentically with social roles.³⁵ Though it is not clear that the changes he demands are unproblematically progressive, he clearly wants a comprehensive transformation. Indeed, he dismisses others' concerns for human rights, moderation and toleration as 'humanist hysterical shirking of the act' and announces that he doesn't care if 'bleeding-heart liberals' accuse him of 'linksfaschismus'.³⁶ Zizek's theory thus sacrifices everything to a core orientation. Yet the question remains, how can he reconcile such a stance with the impossibility of imagining a radical alternative?

WITH ZIZEK, NO RADICAL CHANGE EVER OCCURS, THE SYSTEM IS ONLY REPLACED WITH ONE THAT IS EQUALLY PROBLEMATIC

Robinson and Tormey, 04', School of Politics at Nottingham University, "Zizek is not a Radical," MNDI MW

The choice of the term 'suspension' is revealing, for although in Zizek's account the surface structure of the social system is changed during such a 'suspension', the deep structure of the social system as set out in Lacanian theory is not (and cannot be) changed in the slightest. So an Act shatters capitalism, but it leaves intact many of its most objectionable features, including social exclusion,⁵⁶ violence,⁵⁷ naturalisation,⁵⁸ reification and myths,⁵⁹ all of which are for Zizek primordial, ever-present and necessary in any society. Further, since the Act involves submission to a Cause and a Leader, it cannot destroy the authoritarian structure of capitalism: 'often, one does need a leader in order to be able to "do the impossible"... subordination to [the leader] is the highest act of freedom'.⁶⁰ So, while an Act may destroy the specific articulations of oppression within the present system (e.g. the identification of the Real with illegal immigrants), it necessarily produces a system which is equally oppressive.

ZIZEK'S WAY OF THINKING MAKES LIFE UNLIVABLE AND WORTHLESS

Robinson and Tormey, 04', School of Politics at Nottingham University, "Zizek is not a Radical," MNDI MW

The Act thus reproduces in the socio-political field the Lacanian concept of traversing the fantasy. Traversing the fantasy involves 'accepting' that there is no way one can be satisfied, and therefore a 'full acceptance of the pain ... as inherent to the excess of pleasure which is jouissance', as well as a rejection of every conception of radical difference.⁶⁸ It means, contra Nietzsche, 'an acceptance of the fact that there is no secret treasure in me',⁶⁹ and a transition from being the 'nothing' we are today to being 'a Nothing humbly aware of itself, a Nothing paradoxically made rich through the very awareness of its lack'.⁷⁰ It involves being reduced to a zero-point or 'ultimate level' similar to that seen in the most broken concentration camp inmates,⁷¹ so the role of analysis is 'to throw out the baby... in order to confront the patient with his "dirty bathwater",⁷² inducing, not an improvement, but a transition "from Bad to Worse", which is "inherently terroristic".⁷³ It is also not freedom in the usual sense, but prostration before the call of the truth-event,⁷⁴ 'something violently imposed on me from the Outside through a traumatic encounter that shatters the very foundation of my being'.⁷⁵ In true Orwellian fashion, Zizek claims that in the Act, freedom equals slavery; the Act involves 'the highest freedom and also the utmost passivity with a reduction to a lifeless automaton who blindly performs its gestures'.⁷⁶

ZIZEK'S ALTERNATIVE ONLY REPLACES THE EXISTING PROBLEM WITH ANOTHER ONE, SOLVING NOTHING
Robinson and Tormey, 04', School of Politics at Nottingham University, "Zizek is not a Radical," MNDI MW

So the Act is a rebirth - but a rebirth as what? The parallel with Lacan's concept of 'traversing the fantasy' is crucial, because, for Lacan, there is no escape from the symbolic order or the Law of the Master. We are trapped in the existing world, complete with its dislocation, lack, alienation and antagonism, and no transcendence can overcome the deep structure of this world, which is fixed at the level of subject-formation; the most we can hope for is to go from incapable neurosis to mere alienated subjectivity. In Zizek's politics, therefore, a fundamental social transformation is impossible. After the break initiated by an Act, a system similar to the present one is restored; the subject undergoes identification with a Cause,⁷⁷ leading to a new 'proper symbolic Prohibition' revitalised by the process of rebirth,⁷⁸ enabling one 'effectively to realize the necessary pragmatic measures',⁷⁹ which may be the same ones as today, e.g. structural adjustment policies.⁸⁰ It is possible to start a new life by replacing one symbolic fiction with another.⁸¹ As a Lacanian, Zizek is opposed to any idea of realising utopian fullness. Any change in the basic structure of existence, whereby one may overcome dislocation and disorientation, is out of the question. However, he also rejects practical solutions to problems as a mere displacement.⁸² So an Act neither solves concrete problems nor achieves drastic improvements; it merely removes blockages to existing modes of thought and action. It transforms the 'constellation which generates social symptoms',⁸³ shifting exclusion from one group to another, but it does not achieve either drastic or

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moderate concrete changes. It ‘means that we accept the vicious circle of revolving around the object [the Real] and find jouissance in it, renouncing the myth that jouissance is amassed somewhere else’.⁸⁴ It also offers those who take part in it a ‘dimension of Otherness, that moment when the absolute appears in all its fragility’, a ‘brief apparition of a future utopian Otherness to which every authentic revolutionary stance should cling’.⁸⁵ This absolute, however, can only be glimpsed. The leader, Act and Cause must be betrayed so the social order can be refounded. The leader, or ‘mediator’, ‘must erase himself [sic] from the picture’,⁸⁶ retreating to the horizon of the social to haunt history as spectre or phantasy.⁸⁷ Every Great Man must be betrayed so he can assume his fame and thereby become compatible with the status quo;⁸⁸ once one glimpses the sublime Universal, therefore, one must commit suicide - as Zizek claims the Bolshevik Party did, via the Stalinist purges (‘When the Party Commits Suicide’).

ZIZEK BELIEVES IN STATE VIOLENCE, HIS PHILOSOPHIES ARE A MEANS TO THIS END

Robinson and Tormey, 04’, School of Politics at Nottingham University, ““Zizek is not a Radical,”” MNDI MW

Secondly, Zizek implies that Lenin must in some sense have ‘understood’ that the revolution would necessarily betray itself, and that all revolutions are structurally doomed to fall short of whatever ideals and principles motivate them. He also implies that the success or failure of a revolution has nothing to do with whether the modes of thought and action, social relations and institutions which follow are at all related to the original revolutionary ideals and principles. What matters is that power is held by those who ‘identify with the symptom’, who call themselves ‘Proletarian’. Zizek therefore endorses the conservative claim that Lenin’s utopian moments were Machiavellian manoeuvres or at best confused delusions, veiling his true intentions to seize power for himself or a small elite: Lenin was the ‘ultimate political strategist’.¹²¹ That Zizek endorses the ‘Lenin’ figure despite endorsing nearly every accusation against Lenin serves to underline the degree to which Zizek’s politics are wedded to conservative assumptions that repression, brutality and terror are ‘always with us’. Rejecting the claim that politics could be otherwise, Zizek wishes to grasp, embrace and even revel in the grubbiness and violence of modern politics. The moment of utopia in Russia was for Zizek realised when the Red Guards succumbed to a destructive hedonism in moments of Bataillean excess.¹²² The only difference for Zizek between leftist ethics and the standpoint of Oliver North, the Taleban, the anti-Dreyfusards and even the Nazis is that such ‘rightists’ legitimate their acts in reference to some higher good, whereas leftists also suspend the higher good in a truly authentic gesture of suspension.¹²³ The Soviet Terror is a good terror whereas the Nazi one is not, only because the Soviet terror was allegedly more total, with everyone being potentially at risk, not only out-groups.¹²⁴ Zizek goes well beyond advocating violence as a means to an end; for Zizek, violence is part of the end itself, the utopian excess of the Act. The closest parallel is the nihilism of Nechaev’s Catechism of a Revolution which proclaims that ‘everything is moral that contributes to the triumph of the revolution; everything that hinders it is immoral and criminal’.¹²⁵ As Peter Marshall comments in his digest of anarchist writings and movements, the Catechism is ‘one of the most repulsive documents in the history of terrorism’. One can only speculate what he would have made of ‘Repeating Lenin’.¹²⁶

ZIZEK POLICY HAS NO CONCERN FOR PEOPLE AND THREATENS THEM WITH HIS ‘SOCIALIZATION’

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What Zizek is telling left radicals, therefore, is to abandon the notion of the state as a source of violence and to see it as part of the solution to, rather than the problem of, reordering social life. Zizek sees the state as a useful ally, and an instrument through which to impose the good terror. He denounces anti-statism as idealist and hypocritical,¹²⁹ and attacks the anticapitalist movement for lacking political centralisation.¹³⁰ Zizek does not offer an alternative to statist violence; in Zizek’s world (to misquote an anarchist slogan), ‘whoever you fight for, the state always wins’. Opponents of the war in Afghanistan and the arms trade, of police racism and repression against demonstrators, will find no alternative in Zizek - only a new militarism, a ‘good terror’ and yet another Cheka.

Zizek’s concept of ‘socialisation’, virtually his only concrete proposal for social change, further confirms his authoritarianism. Since he applies it in areas such as gene patenting, cyberspace, CCTV and scientific knowledge,¹³¹ it cannot mean workers’ control, let alone workers’ management. Presumably, therefore, it must mean control by the state, i.e.

‘socialisation’ by the big Other under the control of the master-signifier, a conclusion confirmed by Zizek’s use of the terms ‘socialisation’ and ‘state control’ as interchangeable.¹³² If so, its extension to these areas is threatening, not liberating: Zizek is giving a green light to eugenicists, Internet censors and Lysenkoites. Zizek admits that his approach reduces privacy and openly advocates academic censorship and secret police.¹³³ Gene patenting and CCTV should be eliminated, not socialised, while science and the Internet are potential areas of freedom in which only the production process should be collective. Zizek’s approach is closer to what Marx attacks as ‘barracks communism’ than to the Marxist idea of socialisation of the means of production. Zizek also defends the Stalinist view that social issues should be dealt with in reference to their effect on production, not their human dimension.¹³⁴