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THE CONCEPT OF CITIZENSHIP IN POSTMARXIST THEORY. THE RETURN OF THE POLITICAL AND THE ISSUE OF MADNESS

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In this article I attempt to deploy an *aphoría* inherent to our condition of modern citizens: the duplicity of being, simultaneously, object and subject of the Law. To do so, I appeal to postmarxist political theory, psychoanalysis and literature. One of the points I am interested in underlining is the exacerbated dimension that madness has taken in these modern times. Madness is inherent to contemporary subjective positions that cannot resolve the constitutive *aphorética* of the modern political subject through an inventive (sublimatory) leap. In this sense, madness is approached in its political and social dimension, beyond the specificity of clinical categories.

Let us begin by analysing the generic status of the “Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights”. As Elías Palti shows (Palti, 2005: 164), for Lefort this declaration faithfully invokes the fundamental democratic principles in that its generic character does not exclude any particular human configuration.

Here the problem resides in the fact that such universal and generic principles must be embodied effectively by one particular demand (for instance, a claim against the violation of human rights by a particular social sector). Lefort does not accept this point. Whereas he acknowledges the excess of the political-juridical over the interests of the different parts in society, he does not acknowledge the excess of the social over the juridical which implies the act of “taking the right to speak” (to/for oneself), and implementing a specific right in a concrete situation. The political “real” (impossible) answers to this double excess: for one hand, excess of the symbolic of the universal abstract law on the concrete imaginary of its particular representation; and for other hand, excess of the imaginary representation (particular) on the generic (universal) law.

It is in the circumscription of this double excess where the particular - universal dialectics turns out to be modified by a singular nomination.

This is a specifically political issue developed by Rancière in his book *La méésentente* (1995) - *El desacuerdo* (1996)- and by Laclau in *Populist Reason*, 2005, (*La razón populista*, 2007). It refers to the moment when “the part without a part” expresses itself, when the voice of the voiceless is (made to be) heard, that is, when the people understood as a generic concept dislocates the geometrical disposition of social order.

There is here a discontinuity, an immeasurable gap between the universal generic of the Law (the Declaration) and the particular appropriation that someone, a political subject, made of it. It is at this very juncture where the simultaneous necessity-impossibility of a leap, *a step into the limit*, is played out. However, the difficulty or obstacle of such step into the limit does not reside so much in the discontinuity (between the universal and the particular) but rather in the persistent and insidious continuity presented by madness. Later I will develop this idea further.

Postmarxist thinkers insist on thematysing this unbreachable and inhabitable gap as fleeting and ephemeral, that opens itself up right at the centre –hence absent- of all political discourse. It refers to a structural dislocation which has been given and is still given different names: real, event, disagreement, justice, proletariat, democracy, citizen, politics, etc. In this respect, the starting knot from which the different theoretical and political elaborations are interwoven differs in the terms and references used, the inherent logic remains the same nevertheless. In all cases the aim is to conceptualise – or to give name to- the unnameable, to that which resists symbolization, which exceeds the symbolic order and yet persists, returns and dislocates it from within. In other words, what is codified is neither a noumenic beyond nor is it pure immanence; it is

nothing more and nothing less than the very breaking of a given discursive order, its inherent failure and hiatus.

The authors we are referring to do give up or retrieve when facing these paradoxes and aporias. Instead, they try – with more or less fortune- to elaborate and articulate concepts that account for this irreducible, aphoretic core which is the (um)properly political. In this sense, the modern concept of citizen is exemplary because it expresses an unavoidable knot between the position of the *subjectum* (subject) and the *subjectus* (object)) of the Law that all political subjects must assume in order to constitute themselves as such.

I am interested here in delimiting the impossibility of enunciation, the aphoretic logic which Elías Palti, among others, has circumscribed very well in contemporary theoretical and political developments: the simultaneous necessity/impossibility which philosophers we are referring to show when they aim at naming that which exceeds a given normative order, be it justice, truth, democracy, etc. This leads to the necessity of assuming new concepts and new logics that articulate this structural dislocation in an unprecedented way. As Palti states:

The figure of the modern citizen inherits, in reality, the double nature of the medieval monarch, summarised in the antiphrasis *Pater et filius Iustitiae*. In traditional political Law this is resolved with the figure of the King's two bodies (one which dies and the other, his investiture, which does not die) In the case of the citizen, this contradiction is expressed in the double condition of *subjectum* y *subjectus* (subject and object) of the Law. The questions that arises then is: how can one be both *sovereign* and *subject* at the same time? No political theory will be able to answer this question deriving directly from the breaking away with the idea of the transcendence of power (Palti, 2005: 136).

The problem is not that a given political subject, as *subjectum* and *subjectus*, can or cannot answer. The problem is that the political subject *must* answer (to constitute itself as subject) but cannot do so in the existing symbolic order. Therefore it is *impossible* in that sense because it is *that* place of enunciation which must be invented. Politics is invention and invention implies responsibility, which is not the ability to respond for what exists already (what is already instituted) but for the consequences of the act and what it then occurs, that is to say, what *is not* yet but *insists*: the event and the truth of the situation. I will come back to these concepts later.

The sovereign's paradoxical position

Other than entertaining, resorting to literature within this context may help clarifying some problematic points in relation to the subjective position of the citizen we are attempting to analyse. To do so I am to revert to the historical moment preceding the rise of the modern political subject. Occasionally I will also follow the reading of *Richard II* by Shakespeare which psychoanalyst Guy Le Gaufey also offers all be it with other ends. As he states:

From this play, well known to English people, Shakespeare produced his most politically minded work. In it the subjective drama is scenified which may derive from the separation of the mortal body and the royal body in someone invested of a sacramental function intransmissible by the sole will of his redeptor (Le Gaufey, 1994: 153).

This distinction between *mortal body* and *royal body* refers to the juridical theory of the King's two bodies (Mentioned by Palti). According to this theory, on the one hand we have the immortal body of the King, including both the Crown's properties as well as the direct line of power transmission, whereas on the other hand, we have the mortal body of the king who is the actual being on his flesh, the person who is born and then dies, and can be an idiot, a madman or a genius.

The most interesting scene for comment refers to the moment of Richard's dethronement (destitution) by his cousin Bolingbroke (Henry of Lancaster). Following a period of extreme bad governance (irrational wars, extremely high taxes etc.), and after placing himself against his own people as well as the aristocracy and the parliament, Richard is alone and lacking any political support whatsoever. As a consequence Bolingbroke will replace him with the political backing of all these sectors. However, this is not enough and Richard will be ordered to hand the crown in by his own will and accord as well as assuming his ineptitude to exert as king before the crown's assembly of representatives. This situation, magisterially written by Shakespeare, shows the simultaneous necessity/impossibility of giving an answer to the position in which a subject finds himself at the very moment of being deposed (when there is much more at stake than a mere position: being). Moreover, this situation can be considered to be, to a certain extent, the legacy that the modern political subject, understood as *sovereign/subject* inherits from the *ancient regime*

Le Gaufey reminds us that to appreciate the following play on words one must take into account that *yes* is said *ay* in that period, which produces a surprising game

of homophonies. To the question “*Do you consent renouncing the Crown?*” Richard responds:

*Ay, no; no ay, for I must nothing be
Therefore no “no”, for I resign to thee...*”ⁱⁱ

Le Gaufey clarifies the meaning of this answer:

The yes that Bolingbroke seeks, and the *I* who could utter it are suddenly equivalent by homophony and also by the evidence according to which they both *cannot be but nothing*. For if *I* is the King, then, in the name of what presumption could Bolingbroke ask such an impious question? But if on the contrary *I* is not, then he is no King any longer and therefore, what is then this very Bolingbroke asking and to whom? Impossible encounter, impossible exchange between the *no-yet* and the *no-any longer*. (Le Gaufey, 1994: 155)

The impossibility of enunciation before which Richard is placed, as presented genially by Shakespeare, may seem trivial to us. From our modern perspective, our understanding is that a given individual simply fulfils a function and can easily be replaced by another. As Le Gaufey shows, however, this was not the case in that period:

When the King is conceived not as an individual who wears a crown and hence naturally holds the function deriving from wearing it, but is conceived instead as *being* this crown which is his by birth, it is obvious that the question *do you consent to abdicate?* is instantly heard as *do you consent to not being I any longer?* to not being Richard the born-King. If he is no King any longer he is literally nothing. In any case he is certainly not that nondescript individual *x* who would held a royal position for sometime, and now lives performing the little tasks of a retired pensioner. (Le Gaufey, 1994: 156)

Having said this, however, we could still be asked the following question: leaving aside how magisterially is shown to us in literature, what has this extreme situation, in which a King is deposed, to do with the figure of the citizen understood as modern political subject?

As I have already pointed out, what is important here is the ability to circumscribe the enuntiative *impossibility* situated in a given symbolic order. As such, this already implies a certain *necessity* of giving an answer in order to think afterwards as to the

nature of how that answer escapes the coordinates of such order, although never without it.

What we can then state, without any shadow of a doubt, is that the problem to which we are confronted in our condition of modern subjects is, nothing more and nothing less, than the responsibility we hold before the invention of the political. This is what we can extract from Shakespeare's tale: to a certain extent we all are like King Richard at the moment of his destitution (dethronement). Before all instituted or naturalised situation in which we all take part (whether we want it or not), the sovereign act (as *subjectum*) implies the simultaneous dismissal of a fixed locus (as *subjectus*) in order to invent a new one. This radical demand imposed upon us by our modern condition, with no support from any transcendental principle (God, Nature, Man), produces a whole series of answers ranging from the most archaic regression as in religious fundamentalisms to postmodern nihilism and the search of new identities based in eccentric (compulsive) modalities of consumption. It is at this point where our responsibility as citizens may seriously disrupt our subjective positions and become madness.

Madness

In one of his first writings, Lacan defines very simply what he understands as madness ("On psychic causality", "*Acerca de la causalidad psíquica*" Lacan, 2003: 142). Instead of referring to complex clinical structures such as neurosis, psychosis or perversion, madness defines the subjective position in which the subject believes to be *one*, that is to say, the subject fully identifies with his "I" (like King Richard). This leads Lacan to say that the madman is not him who believes to be a King, for instance (or Napoleon, which is how madmen used to be represented), but him who *believes himself*. Given the circumstances, therefore, a king can also be mad if he believes that he is so independently of the social and symbolic relationships which have placed him in that position.

A madman is a subject who adheres blindly to his imaginary identification, to a specular relation with the other without any symbolic mediation. If the mirror breaks (if he is destituted of that position) then he believes that he himself disappears. Within such a context, any circumstance that shows him the contingency and precariousness

leading to the place he now occupies may result in all kinds of violent responses both towards himself as well as others.

This kind of violence is flourishing in our times: senseless violence with no ideological coherence; groundless violence lacking of any symbolic encoring as could be the case, for instance, in the 60s and 70s. This, however, does not mean that there is no hegemonic ideological framework. The problem is that (un)justly, capitalism today offers the only framework offering legibility to social transaction/relations. The symptoms of violence only respond to this state of the situation. Increasingly in our everyday lives we meet all kinds of violent people. As symbolic grounding/anchorage fades out, or becomes increasingly contingent, so do subjective positions fail, implode or burst into incomprehensible reactionsⁱⁱⁱ.

We can say that, as modern citizens, we have inherited the imminent, even pressing possibility of having to face the paradoxical situation exemplified by Richard II in Hamlet. This calls for accepting a subjective destitution in the political act as effect of the very division between the *subjectum* and the *subjectus* of the Law, that demands us not to be –or playing- mad. This paradox derives from the *necessity* of having to act and the *impossibility* of carrying out a meaningful act under the present circumstances; such inter-position can only be resolved by and within the very subjective division. As a result, we have the subject on the one hand, and the object, on the other, but neither do they oppose one another nor is one placed before the other since the split affects the very subject in its double status (*sovereign/subject*). In this verification (the active/passive position of the subject) the object transforms *itself* through the invention of another position in the symbolically situated place.

What our period confronts us to, perhaps more than any other, is to the radical *contingency* in which subjective identities constitute themselves into changing (social and symbolic) discursive orders, and therefore to the *necessity* of answering for acts which continuously exceed any capacity for anticipation, control or prediction. This demand of our times compels us to equip ourselves with the theoretical and methodological tools that match the situation, that is, those which allow us to follow the contingency and the abrupt changes which take place without renouncing to certain guiding rationality.

The concept of *event* may offer a key to understand this logic of the subjective split and overlapping.

As a consequence, I am going to refer to the concepts of event and truth in order to conclude by claiming that these concepts contribute to our thinking of the paradoxical logic behind the modern concept of the citizen.

Here the ideas of rupture/break, breach/split, discontinuity, eventful supplement are analysed in relation to the concept of event. Simultaneously, the correlative ideas of partial suture, *step to the limit*, illegal tie or connexion are analysed around the notion of truth as a generic procedure.

How do inter-position (overlap) and invention relate to one another?

In a double movement which indicates not only a break or discontinuity in the intra-systemic correspondences and correlations (the idea of truth as correspondence between representation and object) but also as an unprecedented, illegal, unthought-of of connexion between two positive terms (neither directed towards a savage/wild exterior nor towards another system). This demonstrates the constitutive incompleteness of such system of knowledge-power, its intrinsic failure. Hence the notion of connection as 'inter-position': position(ed) between two, location of a supplementary third position. Regarding the Law, thereby, this is how it can be shown that in addition to the positions of subject and object there is another position which is neither transcendental nor immanent: is the very division of the positive terms – no place of the place, non-existing or not counted being in the situation. It is this third position (supplementary), *impossible* under the terms of the situation which is *necessary* to invent in order to situate the de-localised space in-between-two in its right place. Therefore, we are not dealing with a transcendental position fixed in *another scene*. It is within the very situation, albeit in rupture with its mode of ordering where invention takes place. On the other hand, this third position is not dependent on pure spontaneous immanence, on capricious creation. As already said, there is a clear subjection to the law and it is this subjection which, in the very point of its intrinsic failure, allows inventing.

The necessity to invent new concepts, on the limit of inherited discursive positions, is the very task of philosophers understood as political subjects. This requires a future elucidation on the role of the division of labour, which would also solicit a split on each of us according to the desire we invest *in* the work we carry out beyond the rational and programmatic assignment of tasks.

Events

Why the event and not instead nothingness? Recognisable in this question is the transmutation of the classical metaphysical interrogation: why Being and not Nothingness?

It so happens that in our times, qualified as post-metaphysical, Being is equivalent to Nothingness. Therefore, it becomes pertinent to set out possible departures from this void without returning to essentialist (or fundamentalist) positions. To do so one must rethink the Event. Among the possible answers to the first question a series of positions open up ranging from postmodern nihilism to a politics of emancipation. Having said this, before examining any particular answer it is convenient to understand the concept of Event and the difference, which in regards to this concept, is pointed out in some discursive regimes. It is obvious that Heidegger aimed at producing the event within the very core of philosophical discourse. This becomes clear at the end of the lecture *Time and Being (Tiempo y ser*^{iv} (2000)), and is stated in a more complex way in *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, 1999, (*Aportes a la filosofía: Acerca del evento*^v, 2006).

Thinking Being without the entity means thinking Being without reference to metaphysics. However, such reference remains also dominant in the intent of overcoming metaphysics. Hence the convenience of desisting from such overcoming and abandoning metaphysics to itself.

If overcoming remains necessary, then this concerns such thinking which is properly committed in, from and towards the Event, to say it.

It is convenient persevering in the overcoming of the impediments which make such saying easily insufficient.

An impediment of such sort is also talking on the Event on a lecture. This is only spoken via enunciative propositions (Heidegger, 2000)

Heidegger confesses his impotence to produce an event under the mode of enunciation of a lecture. For Badiou, on the contrary, philosophy can only think about the concept of event as a supplementary statement of a situation but cannot produce it (it's not about impotence but impossibility) for in its own terms the event is undecidable: *"If there is an Event, its membership relation to the situation of a site is undecidable from the point of view of the situation as such. In effect, the signifier of the Event (our ax) is necessarily supernumerary in respect of the site."* (Badiou, 1999: 204)

Philosophy cannot guarantee that the event takes place but can provide the multiplicities (the situations) for such hazardous encounter. The task of philosophy is circulating and posibilitating; thus Badiou even formulates a neologism to specify such

task: “to compositate” (compose/make possible) the different generic procedures, to think of/about them together, etc. There is call here for a more humble position that philosophy should take in regards of what occurs although this does not imply it is less committed.

In the debate between Žižek and Laclau (2004) one can clearly observe this tension when describing the possibility or not of an event (a change of “hegemonic articulation” in Laclau’s terms). Žižek criticises Laclau for holding certain neutrality which does not question its own presuppositions and is ultimately functional to capitalism. Laclau, on the other hand, criticises Žižek of returning to a certain Marxist essentialism in sustaining that class struggle (*the economy in the last instance*) overdetermines the horizon of possibility of other struggles and social claims. Needless to say, both coincide in the impossibility of any systemic totality and the need of a partial suture able to articulate the dissemination of positions in the symbolic order (a position embodied by multiculturalism). However, Laclau advances his position at a neutral theoretical level without deciding which can be, in this historical moment, the particularity assuming the place of the empty universal, whereas Žižek returns to the old Marxist (scientific/normative) postulate, according to which the proletariat *must be*. This makes us think of a deduction leading to an objective knowledge which in turn contradicts his anti-essentialist postulates. Although Žižek affirms that: “...*the postmodern emergence of new multiple political subjectivities does not certainly reach this radical level of the political act proper*” (Butler, Laclau, Žižek, 2004: 106), it is also obvious that such act exceeds intellectual debates due to the very definition of the subject upon which both Žižek and Laclau agree: the moment of decision over the background of structural indecidability, which, obviously, presupposes a suspension of previous knowledge and the prevailing theoretical categories. This concept of the subject cannot take exception of themselves unless they think, anachronically, of a neutral and objective position, positivist style. This means that one must decide and that such decision cannot be based on any presupposition or derivative deduction. For an act to be so it must be an unprecedented, unforeseen nomination. The problem is that such a “choice without a concept” escapes the exclusively theoretical sphere, both in their descriptive and prescriptive dimensions.

According to Badiou, events occur in art, science, politics and love, all of these being generic procedures, that is, *conditions* of philosophy which decide in an anonymous and illegal way how the event –multiple supernumerary- belongs to the situation with no concept (or at most with an empty concept, mathematised, which is

Badiou's option). On the other hand, ontological discourse (mathematics) forbids the event. Therefore, we have here three different positions regarding the Event, which also allows us better circumscribe that paradoxical multiple and its importance to thinking in this period with no ultimate/final certitudes.

Firstly, the Event is a multiple which presents itself in the presentation of what it is, which is mathematically impossible due to the paradoxes taking place when formulating sets that belong to themselves (Russell paradoxes) or theories showing their validity from within their own axioms (Gödel theorems).

On the other hand, we have philosophy which constitutes the concept of event from within the above restriction/impossibility and this sense philosophy is allowed to think what occurs in other discursive spheres (art, science, politics, love) where the formation of paradoxical multiples is neither reflected upon nor self-justified but is decided without a concept, that is to say, within the (four) regimes of truth already mentioned. It goes without saying that such thesis which sustains the discursive heterogeneity between ontology, philosophy and the regimes of truth is properly philosophical. The key point here is not to know whether this is valid in itself –which would be meaningless- but knowing instead that possibilities of articulation and thinking that such way opens.

Historically, philosophical discourse has attempted to reduce –or has reduced itself- to other discursive spheres: either to science or to theology, love, art or politics. The outcome of all these reductions, taken to the limit, has been disaster, or the impoverishment of thought. Well known are the most recent identifications between philosophy and politics, and even science, in the case of self-proclaimed socialist totalitarianisms. Albeit under other philosophemes, we can discern the same kind of alliance nowadays in what Foucault explained lucidly under the nomination of *biopolitics*. If philosophy were to fulfil a more modest role in this period, linked to the possibility of establishing connexions between different disciplines through concepts emptied of meaning, *disaster* could perhaps be avoided...

The meta-ontological definition of the Event, which is unthinkable for (mathematic) ontology, is an ungrounded multiple, that is, it belongs to itself. The problem with this definition is that its only value reduces to the framework circumscribed by the relation philosophy/mathematics, but how can an even be recognised in other ontic situations? Here we find the true problematic of this concept which is, therefore, the target of criticism: Laclau's in relation to the too formal idea of Event as subtraction (Laclau, 2004: 120); Palti's on the circularity of intervention and

the event (Palti, 2005: 187). This is why one must underline the idea of the ultra-one of the event: the forcing of counting-as-one or structure (in addition to logic temporality) and the idea of inter-position between (overlap) the proper name and the void.

The event is a multiple which belongs to itself, a signifier which is equal to its signification. Thereby, the event binds together the unnamed multiplicity of the situation and avoids pure dispersal (as for instance in the infinite comptabilisation of events by an external historian). It does so through the articulation of an internal logic (operator of a loyal connexion- fidelity to the event) which specifies and filters the multiple connected of the event.

Whereas the totalitarian (metaphysic) perspective tends towards the One, that is, towards reducing the multiplicity to a unique representative, a key word, an idea, a leader, a nation, etc, which are formulated a priori, *necessarily*, the event is a one (ultra-one) which finds and names itself in the *contingency* and thus opens new encounters with an infinite multiplicity which belongs to any situation. It is a one which opens and closes, that is, which allows to move from multiplicity to the one (closure) and from the one to multiplicity (opening).

Truths

For Badiou truths are generic procedures, is to say: inventions. However, to invent is not an easy task as the general tendency is towards repetition. How can we escape from this incessant repetition of the same, from the order of instituted language, from the discernment and classification of the multiple which this order of language operates?

Badiou recurs to Paul Cohen's mathematical elaborations, in which Cohen shows that it is factible to form a set in *conditions* that belong to the (generic) indiscernible of any situation (Badiou, 1999: 393). There is a rigorous procedure within the ambit/sphere of set theory to conform a multiple generic following an operation of *forcing*. It is up to philosophy to articulate conceptually the implications opened by the possibility of such operation. Taking into account the rigid sentence by Leibniz "what is *not a being* is not a being" which places emphasis on that one of the discernible as a determining property of being in general, we can affirm that we now have the resources to say no, to say that, effectively, being is (any) multiple generic of the situation, whose truth can be circumscribed through rigorous and inventive procedures which *force*

language to account for the uncounted/unaccounted. What is left to analyse is how this operation can be singularly specified in particular ontic situations.

The particular ontic situation where truth is specified as a multiple generic procedure are: science, politics, art and love.

If we follow the main political problematic we are studying, we can observe certain convergences and divergences – already alluded to in part – between authors such as Laclau y Žižek, whose theoretical and practical proposals are very close to one another. For instance, from the “theory of hegemony” (Mouffe, Laclau, 1987) we can observe how Laclau deploys the field of politics beyond the boundaries within which it was traditionally circumscribed. With Laclau the field of politics encompasses a wide diversity of struggles and social demands the identity of which is in tension between the logic of differences (intra-systemic) and the logic of equivalences (in relation to the constitutive outside). From the diversity of collective identities (sexual, ecological, ethnic, labour, etc) which enter the struggle for hegemony any can come to occupy the empty place of the universal so long it establishes a chain of equivalences with the others without completely losing its particularity. The working class is no longer the main representative, the constitutive gap in the social order (antagonism) nor is the economic instance the main determinant to understand it, as claimed by traditional Marxism. In this way, Laclau also draws on the generic role of the representative (of representation) in radical democracy on the very site where its constitutive gap is accounted for, that is, the ultimate impossibility to suture (or fix) collective political identities. The problem resides in the difficulty to identify those social struggles which truly contribute new terms to the language of the situation (non-literal/exchangeable terms, as Laclau would say), or nominations of identities which do not repeat old representative schemes. For if we know well that, potentially, any demand from any group or sector may become a *locus* with universalising effects, one will be the *necessary* in a given moment (a cut of space-time). The constitution of the chain of equivalences will/must begin in some nodal point. Hence the following relevant point from Žižek to Laclau, namely that ‘there must be a struggle which overdetermines the horizon of intelligibility of the others’

In general terms, my disagreement with Laclau here is that I don't accept that all elements entering into the hegemonic struggle are equal in principle: in a series of struggles (economic, politics, feminist, ecological, ethnic, etc) there is always *one* which although part of the chain secretly overdetermines its very horizon. (Buttler, Laclau, Žižek, 2004: 320)

Žižek's mistake is to privilege, arbitrarily, the struggle of the working class as understood by traditional Marxism, which is inconsistent with his anti-essentialist theoretical positions. To avoid bringing this dispute between the One and the multiple to a standstill it is necessary to account for the originary Two (or ultra-one), that is, to account for the event and its nomination, which show the structural disjunction of the situation in/as act.

Although political struggles for hegemony display continuities and discontinuities, equivalences and differences, *not all* the struggles access to articulate, through new nominations, the constitutive gap that splits them from within; that is: the tension generated between state identity (in intra-systemic reference) and its para-state equivalence (in reference to its constitutive outside) If we homologate the logic of equivalence with the presentation of the multiples in the situation, and the logic of difference with the re-presentation of multiples by the state of the situation, what remains (still) left is the non-presented as 'antagonism', the irreducible excess between both logics or modalities of count(ing).

So far we have a certain description, or conceptual apparatus, which allows explaining the tropological (rhetorical) movements produced in the political and social field(s). For instance, we can understand that the Communist Party of Argentina, regardless of how it represents itself, that is, of how it differentiates from other sectors of society, in given historical moments has established unthinkable equivalences with the most fascist sectors of this very society; - much the same as Zionists did with the Nazi leaders during the formation of the state of Israel (as Žižek has pointed out). Opposing ideologies thus coincide (or play along as it is commonly said) in the logical articulations of their ideological positions of intolerance towards the impresentable, the constitutive antagonism of the social field, often embodying the most vulnerable political positions. It is here where we can make the difference in the game of the logics of equivalence and difference; in such "precarious" identities (though strong in the innovative sense) which, starting from new nominations of the Real, the constitutive gap on which they are grounded without renouncing it. What is unbearable for established political positions such as in the examples given above is assumed in an eventual way by new collective identities. In this sense they give name to the social symptom, they do not renounce it by allocating it to the other. It is here that Žižek's signalling of the 'the identification of the symptom' fits as a singular subversion of the dialectics between the particular and the universal. This is what Lacan calls *sinthome* in the clinical field, that is, that which is invented from the symptom (from the falling into

the symptom) in order to deal with the irreducible real which returns, unavoidably, as the structural split of the symbolic order. There is no way of getting rid of the symptomatic real but there is ways of dealing with it in an inventive manner rather than living in the perverse denial which does not want to know anything about it, or the simple neurosis impinged upon oneself by the love to the father (or to the inherited, unquestioned nominations of the established/instituted language).

It so happens that radical democracy, as understood by Laclau, requires support/sustain the constituted antagonism of the entire social order in the disjunction opened between two opposed logics: the logic of differences and the logic of equivalences. The *aphoria* that the constitution of a political subject as modern citizen must confront resides in the necessity of deciding his *place* from a particular-differential position in relation to a constituted outside (*non-place*) which simultaneously places differential positions in a relation of equivalence. As a consequence, this brings a break from the normative-objective order of the situation and, by correlation, a subjective destitution. Such is, properly, the structural *undecidability* before the Law in which the political subject finds himself -with others- and by which constitutes himself in deciding without guarantees. It is thus necessary to produce a subjective division/split, as effect of the very Law, which implies not being mad, that is, not believing oneself to be an indivisible, irreplaceable One.

To conclude, however, with the concepts of Event and Truth we have seen that there are diverse modes to articulate an unprecedented/unknown position in a given discursive order: a diversity of logics and procedures which do not exclude their possible (or com-possible) articulation in the split and open space offered by philosophical discourse. One should therefore take into account that a certain generalisation of politics as *sinthome* is necessary to break away from rigid hierarchies and distinctions of language of the situations (such as the classic individual/society) to establish what act is *properly* political.

ⁱ W.Shakespeare, *Obras completas*, Vol. I, Aguilar (Trad. Astrana Marin), p.432 (quoted Le Gaufey in *La depuesta del analista*, Revista el Litoral).

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ I am not referring here to processes which are clearly political such as the “criminalisation of social protest” not even to what is commonly referred to as “the problem of insecurity” but to those outbursts of irrational violence (suicides and killings) which find no possible alternative in any type of symbolic mediation. While I’m writing this article I heard in the news the case of a construction worker who killed his lawyer and another person mediating on his behalf, then he committed suicide).

^{iv} M. Heidegger, *Tiempo y ser* (translated into Spanish by Manuel Garrido), Tecnos, Madrid, 2000.

^v M. Heidegger, *Aportes a la filosofía: Acerca del evento* (translation into Spanish by Dina Picotti), Buenos Aires, Biblos, 2006.

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