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Four Concepts of Politics

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Abstract

Four concepts of politics follow from an attempt to view the established order, its structural workings: actions and inactions, as more or less authentic politics by starting from Slavoj Žižek's theory of authentic Political Act. In short Žižek's theory is viewed from a slightly different angle in an attempt to approach more general theory of politics. When analysing political antagonisms, Žižek has suggested looking for the third term. Viewing an antagonism from both of its viewpoints suggest, however, that instead of one position more, two conceptual positions more may be formulated. These two positions are proposed to be viewed as (in)acts of both corresponding sides. What is called 'Politics of revolution' in the proposed schema suggests 'prefer not to politics' and what is called 'Politics of maintenance' suggests 'prefer to politics'. Furthermore, a proposal to conceptually divide the politics of the established order in two is made in order to clarify the relation of found objects to their origins. Thus two respective conservatisms are identified: conservatism of 'relics old particular all' and conservatism of 'relics of objects which might have saved the world'. In this context any re-Acts of these relics would fit the category of 'Politics of maintenance' and repressing these relics would fit the category of (in)active maintenance through 'prefer to politics'. Another conclusion is that in analysing the political antagonism of two, one could look for, not only for the third but for the fourth term as well.

The “unconscious” is not the passive stuff of inert drives to be used by the creative “synthetic” activity of the conscious Ego; the “unconscious” in its most radical dimension is rather the highest Deed of my self-positing, or (to resort to later “existentialist” terms) the choice of my fundamental “project” which, in order to remain operative, must be “repressed;” kept out of the light of day. (Žižek, 2012a:274)

Introduction

In the following we suggest an approach to understanding the phenomenon of politics with the help of four new concepts of politics. These are to be derived from a reading of Slavoj Žižek’s theory of revolutionary politics. Here we are not so much interested in revolution as such but as the ground of Žižek’s position in our attempt of moving towards a general theory of politics. This is an undertaking acknowledging that the formulation of the question of ‘what politics is’ is already fundamentally connected to the political orientation of the questing subject, as are the possible answers. The answer and the question may also ‘be’ what those ‘always already were’ in a retroactive way, exemplified by the patient who reaches the end of his psychoanalytic session only to find out that he was always already carrying the answer in his symptom. Also the formulation of the question remains open to alternatives other than those proposed in this paper. Despite this conundrum an attempt is made to systematize four concepts of politics from a position interested more in the possibility and limits of knowledge than the philosophy of emancipatory politics.

We attempt to rearrange Žižek’s theory of politics in a new systematic way, taking a different route from the revolutionary one, which he emphasizes. This is done by asking if his theory of revolutionary politics also suggests that there could be more to uncover in the politics of the established order. For the purposes of this endeavour we propose two primary antagonistic concepts in our systemization of the four concepts of politics: firstly, the politics of the established order is named as the ‘Politics of maintenance’ and secondly, the politics Žižek usually labels authentic as the ‘Politics of revolution’. Both of these are capitalized in order to emphasize the primacy of these two in our schema in comparison with the following two concepts of politics.

The second division runs underneath these primary concepts. The formulation of the concepts follows from a semiotic-dialectical analysis of the two primary antagonistic concepts. In what follows under the first pair, these two concepts are also analysed as contrary to each other. Two possible venues of naming the underlying or subordinate concepts are either through the concept of ‘inaction’ versus the primary pair of active politics, or alternatively as a dialectically negative pair of the first pair. So under the Politics of maintenance we will find a new category of ‘prefer to’

politics, and under Politics of revolution we find the 'prefer not' politics, where the latter is already more or less articulated by the revolutionary Žižek himself. Eventually we dare to formulate a generalization of four fundamental concepts of politics that is strongly influenced by Žižek's thought.

Along the way we shall visit the utopian dimension of the revolution in Žižek's thought in the sense of approaching what he is after on the day after when normalcy must be reinstated, as he is not for any kind of 'Trotskyist-Deleuzian permanent revolution' (Žižek, 2012a:966). This will bring us to Žižek's Hegelian reading of both the conservative theologian Gilbert Keith Chesterton and the radical writer Samuel Beckett. Concerning the authentic new in the dialectics of history, we suggest that through a Hegelian success in failure, authentically new pieces of the universal of the Chestertonian 'objects which might have saved the world' are created (Žižek, 2012a:1010).

Yet not to be too hasty, there is another point in Žižek's concept of politics in his insistence on authentic Politics. This already mentioned authenticity points to, for the revolutionary Žižek, the Evental nature of the political Act, on extremely rare occasions – a miracle, an impossible Act. In relation to the social edifice the change should be absorbed into the libidinal economy of the new order as repressed for normality to return into normality. This is where we resort to Žižek's reading of Schelling's *Weltalter* with our proposal that the authentic Act of the revolution would eventually insert 'relics' of New operational as repressed (Žižek, 2012a:273–75). A problem for our line of thought arises with the question of how, then, these mundane looking acts brought forth in the following of the Act of maintenance of particular order could fit the criteria of authenticity? Here we shall visit a different definition of authenticity, also utilized by Žižek, concerning the Acts of what is traditionally labelled as reactionary politics. But, more importantly, we shall also ask what if we could find a complementary set of authentic Acts or Acts at least comparable to those of Political Act of Žižekian revolution in the working of the established order as well? In order to elaborate a possible answer to this last question, a further classification of two types of conservatism with respective re-Actionary Politics and (in)active politics concerning these two types of relics is also presented.

The Dialectics of Politics

In order to approach Žižek's concept of revolutionary Politics, our posited starting point, it is important to note its object of traversal: the constitutive fantasy of social order. This is also the site of its own change where the true change is to be instated with a revolutionary Act of Politics. Important here, for Žižek's concept of revolutionary politics in his radical Hegelian dialectics, is the pure antagonism, 'the absolute between' reflexive political entities as the difference which precedes the terms which are differentiated (Žižek, 2012a:938). According to Žižek, this Hegelian dialectical antagonism is structurally the same with Lacan's formulation that 'both masculine and feminine posi-

tions are ways of avoiding the deadlock of the difference as such' (Žižek, 2012a:612). In the context of Žižek's concept of politics this empty void between the antagonistic positions is the Real of the political struggle, be Real the class struggle or the Real of the antagonism between the sexes. This pure nothingness is not symbolizable as such; it is only discernible through its effects. In Žižek's dialectics of politics this is homologous with another Lacanian maxim, 'there is no sexual relationship' (there is a non-relationship):

Sexual difference is for Lacan not a firm set of 'static' symbolic oppositions and inclusions or exclusions (heterosexual normativity that relegates homosexuality and other 'perversions' to some secondary role), but the name of a deadlock, of a trauma, of an open question, of something that resists every attempt at its symbolization. Every translation of sexual difference into a set of symbolic opposition(s) is doomed to fail, and it is this very 'impossibility' that opens up the terrain of the hegemonic struggle for what 'sexual difference' will mean. And the same goes for political difference (class struggle): the difference between Left and Right is not only the difference between the two terms within a shared field, it is 'real' since a neutral description of it is not possible-the difference between Left and Right appears differently if perceived from the Left or from the Right: for the first, it signals the antagonism which cuts across the entire social field (the antagonism concealed by the Right), while the Right perceives itself as a force of moderation, social stability, and organic unity, with the Left reduced to the position of an intruder disturbing the organic stability of the social body-for the Right, the Left is as such 'extreme': In this precise sense, sexual (or political) difference is the 'dark precursor;' never present, a purely virtual 'pseudo-cause'; the X which always (constitutively) 'lacks at its own place' (all its actualizations already displace it) and, as such, distributes the two actual series (masculine and feminine in sexuality, the Right and the Left in politics). (Žižek, 2012a:612-3)

Here we are shortly visiting the dialectics of the difference that precedes the differentiated terms. The object-name of the third term is 'the object cause of desire', or in Lacan's mathemes: 'object a' (e.g., Žižek, 2008c:104-8). Thus 'in between' two antagonistic terms there emerges a third as the 'constitutive effect of the pair' in a retroactive way, as in Žižek's Hegelian dialectics: where there is two, the excessive third is 'what it always already was' (Žižek, 2012a:468). In other words, the void of the gap that separates the terms is what structurally gives us the third term. For the purposes of this article we also establish here that this third term is different depending on which side of the 'antagonistic gap' of politics it is effective. As to why we have here four terms when the Hegelian dialectics is usually referred to as consisting of two negations between three stages, we acknowledge that 'it all depends on where we start to count... ..already at the abstract-formal level, we

should distinguish four rather than only three stages of a dialectical process' (Žižek, 2012a:314). The question of whether we need three or four concepts in analysing political antagonism is important to our conclusion, where we point towards the importance of the fourth concept also when looking at how the third concept emerges 'twice', depending on which of the two viewpoints the constellation is seen from.

To get closer to what effects the object cause of desire instigates in politics, let us take the revolutionary's perspective as an example. In this context the name of the antagonism is posited as class struggle arching from one historical epoch to another. To illustrate this we can draw it as a line between the terms of the antagonistic relation: of 'established order' and 'revolution', and name the separating gap as 'the class struggle'. The name of the gap is contingent on the side it is observed from and retroactively affects the division of its enunciation as the primordial cut of antagonism as in this case, the class struggle (Žižek, 2006:281).

We have thus reached the position to add the third term, the feminine¹ 'non-all of the established order'. This suggests that the dialectics has already begun to work, bringing into the schema another line as the reflexive 'not all' of the original opposition of the established order to revolution, where the latter was the starting point in our reading of the dialectics of Žižek's revolutionary politics. The dialectical retroactivity of this 'non-all of established order' is interpreted here in such a way that it is also constitutive of the term 'revolution' above it.

The scheme of politics from the viewpoint of the revolutionary left:

established order	revolution
	non-all of established order

From the formulation above we can already see that the square is now missing its fourth and last term. This will be placed eventually with the help of a loosely Greimasian semiotic reading of the square, employed as an analytic schema of dialectical analysis of the primary contrary terms. Here we are utilizing a method from Fredric Jameson's dialectical semiotics of Greimasian square, which Žižek also works with occasionally and which is close to the dialectical formulation of his 'general theory', as we will argue, and which might coincide, as we will suggest, with what we are to propose concerning this missing fourth term (Jameson, 1983:46–7, 82–3, 124–6; Žižek, 2012a:794–802).

We can discern already here in the schema above an additional contradictory pair of 'established order' – 'non-all of established order' added to the contrary pair or 'established order' – 'revolution'. To facilitate the insertion of the fourth term we also put emphasis on the claim that the revolution Žižek refers to should not be yet another direct phallic invasion of the phallic sphere of order that just replaces the chicken with another chicken². This would be tantamount to resolving

the antinomy or antagonism between only the first terms of the primary antagonism. Instead of such replacement of the big Other with just another Žižek aims for a more radical transformation (e.g., Žižek, 2012a:232). In our schema of four concepts of politics we shall locate the site of this more radical transformation where we spot another antagonistic relation underneath the first antagonism: a contrary relation between the third and fourth terms.

In order to approach the missing concept occupying this dreamlike site of the established order, we shall make a detour through an example of the kind of a dream we are speaking of here. An example of this can be found in cinematography, operational in fantasy formation which thus teaches us to desire, "...since objet petit a is (also) the object of fantasy, the catch lies in what I am tempted to call, with Kant, the role of, 'transcendental scheme' played by objet petit a – a fantasy constitutes our desire, provides its coordinates; that is to say, it literally 'teaches us how to desire'" (Žižek, 2006:40). What is, then, the object cause of desire the revolutionary wants to change, so that the subjects could stop dreaming of the threatening chicken (big Other)? As the object cause cannot be directly approached, what is its symptom as 'dream to be changed'? One such expression of this dream to be changed might be found with approaching the figure of "...a kind of 'master of enjoyment', a paternal figure which comes closest to the impossible representation of what Kant called 'radical evil', evilness *qua* ethical attitude, *qua* pure spirituality." This 'primordial father' is filled with the obscene excess of enjoyment of the paternal authority, which in Lacanian addition to Freud of *Totem and Taboo*, 'is not a primitive figure of pure, presymbolic, brute force, but a father who knows' (Žižek, 1992:158–9). This figure is mainly emphasized by the earlier 'radical democratic Žižek' of the early 1990s, but as we are aiming, instead of a theory of politics of revolution, for a more generalized theory of politics, we might not need to reject this fantasy example outright in favour of one more agreeable with the later revolutionary Žižek³.

Kurtz and the Obscene *Jouissance* of the Law

With the following fantasy example we try to delineate what might be at stake in the enjoyment of the established phallic order, the 'Kant with Sade' in Lacanian (Žižek, 1992:189–91). This would be central for the politics of maintaining the established order as seen from the perspective of the universal⁴. Our first figure is Colonel Kurtz from the 2001 edition of the film *Apocalypse Now* (*Apocalypse Now Redux*, 2001). The film is based on the novel *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. The figure of Kurtz represents a character from the side of the established order in all its excess. The second figure in our example is the other colonel in the same film: Kilgore who remains 'sane' and thus operates his hidden excesses within the law, and who by so doing teaches his soldiers efficient methods of repressing the forbidden which was embraced by Kurtz in his 'insanity'. Kurtz depicts open and Kilgore more subtle way of representing what Žižek locates in Kurtz and describes

as 'the unwritten code (which) is sustained by the spectral supplement of the Name of the Father, the obscene spectre of Freudian "primordial father"' (Žižek, 2006:174–5).

Kurtz provides us with an exemplary figure of the obscene 'father who knows'. But what does Kurtz know? For the purposes of our argument we propose that Kurtz has gone through an Event which eventually shattered his world. We propose that this kind of Event is homologous to the miraculous Political Act shattering the established order, as it may be encountered on the other side of the gap in the authentic Act of revolution (cf. e.g., Žižek, 2000:93–4). Kurtz's perversely direct fidelity to the Event is different from having the more or less same Event repressed, which would be the case with the figure of the other colonel, the 'I love the smell of napalm in the morning' colonel Kilgore. What is also crucial here, in comparison to Žižek's revolutionary Event, is that the Event of Kurtz is not against but for the established order. Kurtz undergoes his transformative Event precisely in order to become the perfect instrument of the established phallic Order embracing to the end the obscene underside of the law. By revealing, or even elevating into a sublime thing, what cannot be acknowledged in public, the law's impossible *jouissance*, he thus becomes an enemy of the law and must be covertly erased by his peers in order to publicly deny the very excess of the machine revealed by its cog. Kurtz must be eradicated, not for being mad or for lacking military efficiency, but because he is threatening to reveal the master discourses hidden heart of darkness.

The Event of Kurtz becoming the perfect instrument of the law of the established order through embracing the obscene underside of this phallic order happens in a narrative of the Vietnam War – in the jungle⁵. The antagonist of the film, Kurtz, encountered something which was for Freud a reason to develop the concept of 'death drive' (e.g., Caruth, 2001). The name for this psychic co-ordinates changing experience would be war trauma, at least if it was repressed. This is the site of conversion for the fictitious Kurtz: to publicly embrace what the real world United States army moved towards when it altered its doctrine from the 'attrition warfare' of impersonal shelling and bombing from distance into what was called 'manoeuvre warfare' in the 1990s, instilling fear of close and personal violence behind fixed lines⁶. In the film the figure of Kurtz converts when he learns to 'know' the utter horror of the enemy aroused in the group he was with when they witnessed that the enemy had hacked off arms of Vietnamese children whom the same American detachment of soldiers had inoculated against polio a while earlier. With this revelation Kurtz embraces in turn the same 'close and personal atrocity' as a truly 'cost effective' tool in his war. The film depicts how he assumes the phallus of mythic violence and he himself becomes emptied in doing so⁷. This role leads him deep into the jungle where he escalates the war through establishing a private force to invoke 'horror, horror' in the enemy, as he utters his last words in the film after having recited parts of T. S. Eliot's poem '*The Hollow Men; Mistah Kurtz-he dead...*'. The poem portrays now the utterly desolate inner wasteland of this spent tool of war. The obscene enjoyment

of paternal authority is sucked dry in its revelation and only a husk around the empty void pleads for the protagonist to end it – but not to judge him, as it would not be right.⁸

The other paternal figure in our example is Colonel Kilgore who represents the fantasy of a caring father – caring for his soldiers and connoting ‘the other enjoyment’ of life, we dare to say, also on this side of the ‘pleasure principle’, of which he is a master as well. Beyond the pleasure principle Kilgore manages and actually teaches how to avoid confronting what would amount to a personal cost of killing in war, with plentiful tricks of dehumanizing the enemy from a mythical card game to the fact that his soldiers are firing from distance from helicopters without having to see the guilt-inducing eyes of their victims at close range⁹.

The Inact of Bartleby

With the fantasy figures of Kurtz and Kilgore we have established a possible example of a dream of the paternal order to be changed from the perspective of the universal left. In our structural scheme we suggest that what is contradictory to the established order and contrary to its obscene dreamlike supplement would be the non-all (‘non-all’ not included in the ‘particular all’ of the established order). This non-all is the unfathomable X of the antagonistic gap from the universal perspective in our dialectical schema. The function of the previous chapter was to point at a general direction and not to capture Žižek’s politics as revolutionary as such. However, the general direction of the paternal Order with its obscene underside as the object to be overthrown is found in his *agape* ‘...the ‘miracle’ of the retroactive ‘undoing’ of sins through the suspension of the law’ (Žižek, 2001a:144). Here ‘sin’ would be the proper Pauline name for the obscene underside supplement to the law of the paternal authority (Žižek, 2003:116). The law to be suspended is what is supplemented with the dream of the two figures of Kurtz and Kilgore in our example. This is why both figures are deemed rightist in their assertion of the enemy (Viet Cong) as not belonging to the all of the particular social order of our example. We will return to examples of Kurtz and Kilgore when analysing what might not be rightist in these figures of care also when we consider the distinction between two types of conservatisms. But before this we will focus on dreams to replace the dreams of the established order. What does the revolutionary Žižek call for to replace this object of fantasy that is as impossible to symbolize as such as was the one of those figures on the other side of the antagonist gap? To represent the role induced by the ‘object a’ of a Žižekian revolutionary there are plenty of figures to be found in his books. Arguably the foremost of these is the much discussed Bartleby the scrivener from Herman Melville’s short story (Melville, 2004).

His ‘I would prefer not to’ is to be taken literally: it says ‘I would prefer not to,’ not ‘I don’t prefer (or care) to’. ...In his refusal of the Master’s order, Bartleby does not negate the predicate; rather, he affirms a nonpredicate: he does not say that he doesn’t

want to do it; he says that he prefers (wants) not to do it. This is how we pass from the politics of 'resistance' or 'protestation,' which parasitizes upon what it negates, to a politics which opens up a new space outside the hegemonic position and its negation.

(Žižek, 2006:381–2)

Žižek rejects the reading of Bartleby's 'I would prefer not to' as a starting point of a revolutionary movement as he reads Hardt and Negri doing in the *Empire*. This is because, for Žižek, Bartleby's utterance does not signify a position to embody but operates instead in indexing what cannot be symbolized. Here we encounter feminine *jouissance* at the core of authentic social change in his theory. It is also possible to go further and read Bartleby in this context as a symptomatic fantasy figure of the revolutionary dialectician. His Bartleby is an act of pure denial which is in touch with the Real instead of the symbolic: '(t)here is a clear holophrastic quality to "I would prefer not to": it is a signifier-turned-object, a signifier reduced to an inert stain that stands for the collapse of the symbolic order' (Žižek, 2006:381–5).

For a revolutionary the third term (which we introduced as a structural negation of a negation) of a political antagonism functions now as '...a symptom: a particular, 'pathological', signifying formation, a binding of enjoyment, an inert stain resisting communication and interpretation, a stain which cannot be included in the circuit of discourse, of social bond network, but is at the same time a positive condition of it' (Žižek, 2008c:81–2). The function of the suggested 'object a' of the revolutionary subject is to provide enjoyment beyond the pleasure principle by subtraction of all which is established in the order and eventually enabling the new social to emerge from the standpoint of the revolutionary left (Žižek, 2012a:1007). This is not, however, the whole story of Žižek's Bartleby.

Bartleby, for Žižek, is also fantasized with a small finishing touch, which perhaps subtly changes the viewpoint from a revolutionary to the viewpoint of the actually existing established order. Seen from this perspective the revolutionary must appear as an abomination. This is because, for Žižek, a revolution to happen there is a need for agents to bring about the change as all activism and movement is inefficient for if it does not, to put it bluntly, eventually organize It (also with all of its uneasiness) (Žižek, 2012a:964). To understand Žižek's stance on how to achieve this radical cut of the established order it is telling to read also the last page of Žižek's another major book *Parallax View* from 2006. Here he conjures up, in a personal flash, his 'hope' that Anthony Perkins, the actor playing Norman Bates in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*, would have played the role of Bartleby in a movie adaptation of the novel. In this fantasy an obscene maternal super-ego talks through this new Bartleby: "We can imagine Bartleby's smile, as he delivers his 'I would prefer not to,' being that of Norman Bates in the very last shot of *Psycho*, when he looks into the camera, his (mother's) voice saying: 'I couldn't even hurt a fly.'"¹⁰ (Žižek, 2006:385)

So in the heart of the non-all, we find a revolutionary Bartleby alluding to uneasiness (at least) from the viewpoint of the established order. Above the third term in our schema, in the site of masculine Act of revolution, we find a similar vein of reframing in Žižek's reading of Pauline *agape*, with Christ Actively bringing a sword to end the established order in the name of the universal (Žižek, 2012b:43–4). If what is most startling in Žižek's reading of the inactive figure of Bartleby is twisting him with the obscene maternal superego injunction, it is evident from the active, masculine and universal figure of Christ with a sword that, for Žižek, the 'diabolic' agents of dialectics of revolution are the harbingers of the new order.

And it is the function of the figures of the Devil (and Judas) to enable, to bring about, this "revelation." Not only is the figure of the Devil specific to Judeo-Christian tradition; insofar as diabolos (to separate, to tear apart the One into Two) is the opposite of symbolos (to gather and unify), Christ himself is the ultimate diabolic figure, insofar as he brings 'the sword, not peace', disturbing the existing harmonious unity: 'if anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and his mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters – yes even his own life – he cannot be my disciple' (Luke 14: 26). Christ himself is thus the 'diabolic' founding gesture of the Holy Spirit as the properly 'symbolic' community, the gathering of the believers. (Žižek, 2006:101)

We have now visited the non-all of Bartleby indicating a threat visible from the viewpoint of the established symbolic order. Occupying the space above the third term in our schema, we also have a messianic universal figure bringing the sword to cut the old ties to the 'particular all' of an established symbolic order. We still have the fourth term missing, which would also be the last term in our schema for a dialectics of politics. In order to find it we will shift our perspective from the revolutionary left to the established 'right' of the 'particular all'.

The Subject as the Hysteric Subordinate to the Established Order

From the viewpoint of the other side of the gap we now take a look at two characters of traumatic Event with different strategies of either openly embracing or repressing their Event. Out of these two we now concentrate on the paradoxical notion of Fidelity through repressing the Event of the New of revolution. This happens for instance in Žižek's example of the traumatic core of Judaism that has been miraculously operational for thousands of years (Žižek, 2001b:98). So, in contrast to Alain Badiou's theory of Fidelity to Truth-Event, Fidelity, to put it bluntly, operates in this case as repressing the core of its Event (e.g., repression; Žižek, 2008a:320–1, e.g., Event; 2012a:815–27). In the context of revolution this would mean the necessity of a creative emergence of the New, of

Truth in Fidelity, as what is soon to be repressed during the foundational phase of the new social order on the 'day after' a revolution.

With an impossible visit to the other side of the political antagonism the whole field changes. Now what is dialectically happening from the viewpoint of the established order (particular all) is that its contrary pair of revolution (universal) is also negated for a second time. This produces what would be labelled as the last term of our schema under the master discourse of politics of maintenance. The missing term is contradictory to revolution: 'non-revolution'.

This emerging fourth term can also be spotted in our example of Kurtz. We recall from the film what Kurtz was doing just before his Event. He was on normal patrol with his comrades in arms inoculating Vietnamese children against polio. Crucial to our argument is that the Vietnamese 'whose children are inoculated' are not included in the all of the particular order of being but who yet are included in it at the same time¹¹. The latter behaviour can be explained with objects that function in the established order so that, in our example, the 'excluded enemy can also be simultaneously included', in contrast to the Schmittian dichotomy of exclusion and inclusion as the basis of politics¹². This subject position is, we argue, the structural position of the hysteric. This could be described as what is effectively an injection of 'the universal within the particular all of the established order'. The act of inoculating even the enemy resonates here with the enjoyment of the remains of the *agape* of an earlier revolutionary politics of the universal. Contextually, the hysterical position in this example does not imply that Kurtz embraced the universal at all in his decision of how to deal with his Event. We recall that he discarded these objects, remains of earlier revolutions of the universal, which he had previously appreciated and which were symbolized as injections against polio administered even to the enemy. With assuming the impossible role of the 'subject to know and to reveal It', his eventual choice was the radical choice of rejecting these 'universal' objects within the particular all for the sole purpose of conducting the war with utmost efficiency.

We argue that the missing fourth term in our presentation of the four concepts of politics is the place where a hysterical subject resides, as exemplified by the pre-Evental Kurtz. Thus we propose that the structure of the dialectical movement of politics is closed with this last term: in its function as 'the normal' feminine subject, perpetually hysterically questioning the master discourse of the established order she/he is subordinate to as a subject. Speculatively speaking, this figure occupying the hysterics' site could again turn from the post-Evental Kurtz, and the 'sane' obverse of his 'insane' phase exemplified by Kilgore (both figures of the paternal order of particular all), to figures like Bartleby (the feminine non-all of the particular all) and Christ (the masculine sword of the universal), out of which the latter two exemplify the other side of the political antagonism. Isn't the ordinary hysteric so the only figure 'free'¹³ to turn also towards the other formal structural positions presented? Also maybe he/she is dreamed by the politicians of the established order as turning towards them (or what they themselves assume to represent), as wanting the es-

tablished order through 'no to the revolution' or maybe it is the revolutionaries as well who dream of her/him as wanting the revolution through 'no to the established order'. With the ordinary hysteric, history stirs.

From the general viewpoint of the universal of the left these valuable pieces of the symbolic injection, represented in the film as the act of the inoculation of the enemy, would be examples of what was achieved previously in the dialectical movement of the history of the universal – in earlier revolutions. These are in their mundane decency that characterizes 'all of the particular order' 'relics' of earlier causes of the universal. These are precisely those that 'might have saved the world', as Žižek approvingly quotes the catholic conservative G.K. Chesterton in the concluding remark to his *magnum opus*, *Less than Nothing*. In below we cite this passage, which we believe to be the key to understanding what Žižek's revolutionary politics as dialectics is about in the context of the dialectics of history.

The communist horizon is peopled by two millennia of failed radicallegalitarian rebellions from Spartacus onwards – yes, they were all lost causes, but, as G. K. Chesterton put it in his *What's Wrong with the World*, 'the lost causes are exactly those which might have saved the world'. (Žižek, 2012a:1010)

Four Fundamental Concepts of Politics¹⁴

Here we again attempt the impossible: to distantiate ourselves from the antagonistic gap that was the founding of the original constellation, originally viewed, as we recall, from the engaged position of the revolutionary left represented by Žižek. In the field of politics, as seen from the side of the established order, the active authentic opposition it recognizes in the new objects of the universal must appear as terrifying as truly new under the sun. It is threatening to shatter the very foundations – for example, for an agent of the established order looking the Jacobin Politics in the eye, should have amounted to the unfathomable aspect of terror staring back. We propose also that Jacobin Politics is terror, perhaps a bit surprisingly, also to those in *fides* of its historical precursors – the traces of universal within the particular all, to recall Chesterton's objects 'which might have saved the world'. Here we suggest that the conservative politics should be further analysed in relation to these two different kinds of relics: the political relics of the earlier particular all and the political relics of the earlier universal. The subjective threat may be basically the same for both forms of the conservatives, to the conservatives of the particular all and also to the conservatives of the relics of the universal of earlier lost causes, which might have saved the world.

To elaborate this less obvious threat to the conservatives of the earlier lost causes, it is worth pointing out that the result of the revolution is undecidable beforehand. In the context of *realpolitik* also the reactionary danger, manifesting what is symptomatic in the figures of those who

are in everyday discourse labelled as the conservatives (symptomatic of the objects of the old particular all), asserts itself here in full. All this, as well as the proper fear from the perspective of the maintainers of the repressed relics of the earlier lost causes, amounts to the horror of encountering their inner core of what is operational as their repressed. An obvious example of this last fear, as it could be for a community of believers or maintainers of a particular set of relics of the earlier lost cause in repression, would be Christ truly appearing in their everyday church which is an example of horror which, we believe, Žižek has elaborated in his publications.

In terms of the structure of the dialects of politics the last term is the result of a negation of a negation of what follows when the Politics of maintenance faces its contrary pair (or determinate negation) in the Politics of revolution. Due to the second negation we arrive to what is, in our semiotic-dialectical reading, in a contradictory relation to the Politics of Revolution, the 'not-revolution'. This formation (instead of contradicting the established order as was the case with the 'prefer not' politics represented by the figure of Bartleby) works for the Politics of maintenance of the established order (of the particular all) as a hidden supplement or object cause of desire represented by actual subjects in structural position of a hysteric.

From the viewpoint of the revolutionary left what was seen as the constitutive exception to the particular all is what threatens and intrudes into the established order. Žižek offers many examples, ranging from the Jew to the unemployed single mother on dole (Žižek, 2006:43, 1994:48–9). From the viewpoint of the established order, is this implication of threat aroused by these burglars of enjoyment basically the same which Žižek arouses in expressing the wish to use the smile of Norman Bates to revolutionize Bartleby in order to visualize an example of his effectual mediators of history (in order to subsequently vanish on 'the day after' of the revolution when normalcy is re-established)? And what if, with a shift to the viewpoint of the established order there were to be, in addition to the mentioned obstacle, also a kind of a structural place for another 'object a' with its effects contrary to this impossible Other of the established order? Thus we approach the possibility that the dreams on both sides of the antagonistic gap already function 'in tandem' and ultimately even 'coincide'. An example pointing towards this direction can be found in what Žižek tells of what he would prefer to do personally 'the day after' the revolution when the situation is normalized again and 'the plumbing' and all that is maintained again. He often points out that he is not for sitting in perpetual revolutionary meetings and trying to decide this and that with his neighbours. He mocks something like this as the outcome of the 'Trotskyist-Deleuzian' position of 'permanent revolution' (Žižek, 2012a:966). Instead, traces of what he would prefer can occasionally be found in his lectures, where the possible dreams enjoyed when the revolutionary utopia has been established, resulting in the return of new normalcy, should not come as a surprise to us:

...and this is my big obsession! The true problem of the revolution is the morning after. ...What interests me, and that's for me the only serious measure of a revolt or social chance, when after a month or two, things return to normal... I want to live in a society where an invisible network makes things function. I want to have peace to watch my shitty movies, to read books and so on. This is the true challenge: 'everyday revolution'.¹⁵

Now we are finally in a position to insert the missing term as the 'prefer to' politics of the established order. Furthermore, is not this position exactly the same kind as the obstacle-repressed version of the 'prefer not to' politics invoking horror to be experienced, but this time from the viewpoint of the revolutionary left, the reverse of the function of the psychotic Bartleby as the horrifying obstacle to the established order of the particular all, as its constitutive exception? This fear would mean, for example, something like the fear underneath its defiant rhetorical re-inscriptions, which are its effects, as in the case of the paradigmatic Jacobin revolutionary Louis Saint-Just commenting on those preferring to not revolt. Saint-Just, quoted by Žižek, mocks of opposition to the revolution with a mirror-like accusation: those preferring to not revolt are portrayed as the (constitutive) exception, as 'corruptions' of the revolutionaries themselves, '...as Saint-Just asked: "What do those who want neither Virtue nor Terror want?" His answer is well known: they want corruption — another name for the subject's defeat.' (Žižek, 2008a:160)¹⁶

To propose the fourth term and complete our four concepts of politics:

Politics of maintenance	Politics of revolution
'prefer to' politics	'prefer not to' politics

In the proposed schema of four concepts of politics above we have already unified the naming to indicate the aspect of politics in what was discussed earlier. The terms of the first axis, consisting of 'Politics of maintenance' and 'Politics of revolution', are capitalized in order to portray the primary antagonism between them and also to convey these as concepts of political Act. The axis of the negative of the active side (as the axis of the inactive) consists of 'prefer to' politics and 'prefer not to' politics. From the revolutionary perspective, only the Acts of the revolutionary position could be authentic Politics with capital P, if the following qualification of authenticity is taken as the criterion: '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' (Žižek, 2000:199). Similarly, as we shall propose next, seen from the viewpoint of the established order, the miracu-

lously rare Acts of the conservatives of both kinds (of particular all and of lost causes, which might have saved the world) may also be able to change the parameters of what is considered as possible.

Two conservatisms

To explain why we propose to name as Politics also the conservative re-Acts of the established order we take Žižek's version of the criterion of authentic politics as our starting point as well, but now adopting the viewpoint of the established order. Can something similar to these Acts of the authentic art of the impossible be found in political 'Events' on 'this side', the side of the established order, of the antagonistic gap as well? Here we propose that perhaps in what was seemingly the 'same old' from the revolutionary viewpoint, there nevertheless occurs change in how the relics of old are operational; whether they are operative as repressed or resurface as re-Acts truly changing what is possible. Is, for example, the rehabilitation of torture from its repressed past as an acknowledged 'fact of life' not one such occasion in the Politics of maintenance of the established order? Here we note that Žižek soon also spotted this example of torture re-surfacing (as openly acknowledged) as in what was considered possible (Žižek, 2002:105). What was just yesterday impossible was now possible and thus an authentic political Event had to have taken place, even if not in the sense of the revolutionary Žižek of universal negation but in the sense of the authentic 'art of the impossible'. This exemplary Event concerning torture happened soon after the War on Terror had started raging and the torture of prisoners re-surfaced all the way to the global (U.S.) popular culture as a normalized thing to do occasionally. Is it not the same with the onslaughts of the neoliberal and fascist initiatives that were regarded as impossible just a short while ago? In these Political re-Acts of maintenance, the presented examples of torture and initiatives of old, even if they are labelled authentically political Acts¹⁷, remain Acts of reactionary Politics or more precisely: Politics of reactionary Acts openly facilitating the return of what was formerly repressed in the particular all. This means that Political re-Acts also might threaten the other relics operational as repressed, for example in the case like 'torture versus human rights'. We propose these re-Acts to be read as results of reactionary Political Acts of maintenance, comparable to the undoing of revolutionary Events, as for example, might be the case with the open revelry around the *jouissance* of the Indonesian atrocities as depicted in a documentary film, *Act of Killing*, that Žižek refers to (cf. Žižek, 2014:161–78).

Should this not also hold for the other conservatism of earlier repressed relics of the universal already present in the established order? These would be found, for example, in rare agapeistic re-Activations of the Christ-Event socially sublimating a given repressed object of the universal into equally open forms of conservative re-Acts of the other conservatism and thus truly changing what is possible in the existing constellation. These objects of earlier universal revolu-

tions, if again authentically changing the co-ordinates of what is possible, would be relics re-Activated, encore 'exactly those which might have saved the world' (Žižek, 2012a:1010).

Concerning the crux of revolutionary Politics we dare to present one last question: what would happen with the injection of a new universal if the dreams of the particular all were confronted with their opposition in the dreams of the revolution of the universal? Furthermore, we dare to propose that the 'prefer not to' is to be seen here as something to be reconciled with 'prefer to'. Quiet utopian life of 'left in peace' would mean, in this context, a life no longer troubled by the fear that the chicken of master discourse will deem the 'normal hysteric' as a grain of seed even if he very well knows that he is not a seed but a person. This would mean a move towards getting rid of the fear which is found, for example, in the Agambenian reading of the contemporary condition of also the 'normal' human being a potential terrorist: unemployed, vilified by new political parties, perhaps arrested one night or dislocated by war, and thus thrown out to embody the figure of the threatening non-all of a particular established order (e.g., Žižek, 2012a:986). This utopian dream would enable life also without arousing the need to point fingers at anyone – externalizing this threat felt personally to the ones to be excluded today of the particular all as in the function of sacrifice, avoiding the miserable destiny of becoming the sacrifice personally. And thus we arrive in reconciliation through failure between the dreams of 'prefer to' and 'prefer not to'. In other words, in 'overcoming' the antagonism between these structural positions, or perhaps in reconciliation with the antagonism itself, even if doomed to success in failure, in failing better next time (e.g., failing again; Žižek, 2008a:361, reconciliation; 2012a:478).

Conclusions

We have now visited the other side of the antagonistic gap of politics, embarking from the viewpoint of the revolutionary Žižek advocating historical dialectical change. In so doing, we attempted to view the constellation from both sides to present a generalized structure of the four concepts of politics. Through a dialectical reading of the antagonistic gap from both sides of the established order (of particular all) and the revolution (of universal) as the constitutive opposition of this structure, we have proposed that both positions have their contradictory pair that arises from the negation of a negation of their opposing terms. These are also arranged as contrary to each other under the positive terms as negative terms, also suggesting a division of active (Act with capital letters) and inactive (prefer to and prefer not to) politics.

In visiting Žižek's 'unified theory' we have found out that in general our four concepts of politics seem to fit the equations when taking into account the parallax shift between the viewpoints. So the position of feminine normal hysteric known for its effects of 'ordinary life'; going to work every day etc. would be located as the impossible obstacle 'small a' of the masculine Politics of revolutionary Act. Similarly, the feminine 'not-all' is established as the impossible obstacle

cause for the masculine Politics of maintenance. Also both third and fourth positions in our schema point to the positions above also as being negations of their contrary masculine positions.

The Politics of maintenance is further divided, with the help of Žižek's Chestertonian insight about the dialectics of history, into two categories depending on what is maintained. More or less authentic re-Acts of Politics of maintenance of old particular all indicates open symbolic affirmation of what was earlier a repressed relic of the particular all. Also similar re-Act of Politics of maintenance of old universal indicates open symbolic affirmation of what was a repressed relic of the old universal 'which might have saved the world'. Thus we propose that an open and effectively everything changing re-Act of the established order could be somewhat comparable, as politics, to the historical Act of dialectical negation of revolution advocated by Žižek. This would be the case even if the Re-Act would essentially be maintaining through this open affirmation of repressed old.

In addition, analysing the conservative politics of established order, politics of (in)acts with 'small p', we propose a further similar difference between the conservative political (in)acts of relics of both 'earlier particular all' and 'earlier universal'. For example, are these both types of politics not evident in the actual hysterical encounters of the neighbour during the European refugee crisis, where the neighbour is met with all kinds of behaviours ranging between contrary positions: from hospitality to hostility? Also it should not be sufficient to stop with noting the evident pathologies concerning the repressed of these respective behaviours, but note the truth located in the materiality of the acts themselves. At this level it is pretty clear which of these political (in)acts represent the conservatism of relics of old universal and which in turn the relics of old particular all.

The other feminine position, the position of non-all of particular order, 'of defiant "No"', is located under the phallic Act of Politics of the universal to negate the dreams of the established order. By doing so in a revolution, it would establish itself also retroactively by changing the very co-ordinates it posits itself in. The utopian moment, or the promise of the revolution of the universal, is in asserting that this time the law would be written right, bringing with it the 'promised land': without its constitutive exception, which was foundational for the previous order, as the non-all of the particular all. Here we note, in Žižek's emancipatory dialectics of Politics, his affirmation of the eventuality that the revolution would fail again (hopefully better). In so doing it would succeed at the same time in inserting new object(s) of a lost cause into the established order, to emerge when normalcy has been reinstated. These objects should thus become 'relics of lost causes of the universal'. These objects are those that in the established order 'might have saved the world' in their inclusion as the repressed of the established particular all.

In a short structural reading, the triangular negation of negation produces the concepts under each of the masculine forms of Politics depending on the parallax side of the antagonism posited as a starting point: 'prefer to' is the inactive of Politics of maintenance while the 'prefer not to' is the inactive of Politics of Revolution. However, as we might have noted, we used these

third and fourth concepts under the primary antagonism also in an overlapping way indicating a certain difficulty in their formulation. We recall that we embarked on an impossible journey of visiting both sides of the antagonism. This means of shifting the viewpoint between opposite positions divided by the gap of the antagonism. We suggested, furthermore, that the third and fourth concept ultimately coincide or will be reconciled in due course of dialectical movement. Hegelian metaphysics offers here a further complication and an occasion to further reflect why we have four concepts in our presentation instead of a lesser number. Is this not because the two sides of the antagonistic gap belong to the One of the totality in process of encountering itself with 'two' sets of symptoms eventually to be reconciled. So, in a way, we have posited the third and fourth term without '...realizing that reconciliation is already accomplished in what we (mis)perceived as alienation.' (Žižek, 2012a:522–3). Doesn't the paradoxical immediacy of reconciliation 'already accomplished' point however at the same time towards the possibility of the authentically new to emerge through the dialectical process of history through not three but four moments (Žižek, 2012a:294–5, 662)? Furthermore, does this not imply for our argument, that if we could utilize some kind neutral of metalanguage, we could posit both the third and the fourth concept of politics as one object cause of the antagonism referring to one concept underneath, without utilizing the analytical help of parallax shifts and complicating our presentation with four concepts where there is only One with its inner antagonism of Two and the excessive third underneath which had already always given birth to Two?

Concerning the repressed objects of proposed 'relics of particular all' and 'relics of universal' we also proposed a conceptual separation of two conservatisms, of 'conservatism of reactionary repressed' on the one hand and the 'conservatism of repressed relics of earlier lost causes which might have saved the world' on the other. In these latter relics, we propose, can be found the precursors of what Žižek might be after in articulating the need for yet another cause to fail. In analysing political antagonism Žižek advises to look for the third term (e.g., Žižek, 2012a:801); we can conclude with a proposal of looking for the fourth as well.

Notes

¹ Interestingly enough, we will find that Žižek's Essex School critic Yannis Stavrakakis might miss a bit of his mark when he criticizes Žižek's theory of revolution as 'bypass[ing] the whole theorisation of another (feminine) *jouissance*' in Lacanian theory concerning the social order (Stavrakakis, 2013:144).

² The reference here is to a joke demonstrating the essential if surprising coincidence of, to put it bluntly, the subjective fantasy and the big Other of the social order for Žižek: "For decades, a classic joke has been circulating among Lacanians to exemplify the key role of the Other's knowledge: a man who believes himself to be a grain of seed is taken to a mental institution where the doctors do their best to convince him that he is not a grain of seed but a man; however, when he is cured (convinced that he is not a grain of seed but a

man) and allowed to leave the hospital, he immediately comes back, trembling and very scared—there is a chicken outside the door, and he is afraid it will eat him. ‘My dear fellow,’ says his doctor, ‘you know very well that you are not a grain of seed but a man.’ ‘Of course I know,’ replies the patient, ‘but does the chicken?’ That is the true stake of psychoanalytic treatment: it is not enough to convince the patient of the unconscious truth of his symptoms; the Unconscious itself must be induced to accept this truth.” (Žižek, 2006:351)

³ Concerning paternal enjoyment, an example of the later Žižek would be a film like *300* from 2007 as the film depicts the revolutionary battle of ‘virtue’ versus ‘corruption’ (Žižek, 2012b:120–2, film *300*, 2007). According to Matthew Sharpe and Geoff Boucher the change in Žižek’s political stance concerning democracy happened around 1996 and 1997 (Sharpe and Boucher, 2010:223–4).

⁴ In this article we use universal from the viewpoint of the revolutionary left as the dialectically contrary position to ‘particular all’.

⁵ An allusion to Conrad’s setting of the original novel where the ‘heart of darkness’ of the deepest Dark Continent is located as the abyssal hidden core of the colonizing white man.

⁶ Former colonel and U.S. army psychiatrist Grossman describes in his study *On Killing: the Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* how advocating the threat of personal close proximity violence and ultimately death at sexual range in a war is an effective way of breaking the will of the enemy instead of impersonal ‘indirect fire’. Even massive scale war efforts causing enormous suffering and death like the mass bombings of German cities during World War II did not cause much breaking in the will to fight among the civilians as there was no personal aspect felt in this violence against the populace. He traces this effect back to what the ‘bible of psychology’ in the United States, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-III-R), also reports of induced psychological stress causing psychic disorders, namely to the fact that ‘the disorder is apparently more severe and longer lasting when the stressor is of human design’. Grossman names this effect of personal violence as ‘wind of hate’. (Grossman, 1996:65–6, 76–82).

⁷ Here the symbolic authority of ‘the name of the father’ turns out as empty as the Lacanian split subject (e.g., Žižek, 2012a:517), which is shown clearly in the film during the last scenes of Kurtz’s downfall.

⁸ The depiction of this self-defeatingly open embrace of obscene paternal *jouissance* is leftist in the sense of what Žižek calls the Hollywood left (Žižek, 2008b:xi). An alternative depiction of socially rewarding an atrocity committed against the other may be found for example in the interviews of who could be called ‘the heroes of personal atrocity’, of the violence establishing the particular all of the modern state of Indonesia in Joshua Oppenheimer’s documentary film *The Act of Killing* from 2012. What would have made *Apocalypse Now Redux* a rightist film, viewed from the position of the left, is a different ending, perhaps depicting how, with the help of the American society or individuals, the protagonist Captain Willard would not have had to resign from the army as his voice-over in the end indicates, ‘They were gonna make me a major for this, and I wasn’t even in their fucking army anymore’.

Also in a really existing particular all of what could be labelled the western decency, the war trauma of responsibility for deaths witnessed at close personal range is usually covered with shiny objects or decorations which as 'recognition represent a powerful affirmation... that no one blames.' (Grossman, 1996:91)

⁹ A fitting example of this *jouissance* is depicted in the scene which is easily interpreted as glorification of war, and which we might be familiar with from its dubious uses in popular culture. It is the overpowering scene of the flight of helicopters in attack at sunrise, Wagner's 'Ride of the Valkyries' roaring in the background, in order to 'clear' a village for Kilgore to enjoy, to surf in the area, because 'Charlie [the enemy] don't surf', as he eventually explains while the whistling of bullets frames that little piece of the Real of death drive enjoyment.

¹⁰ There are at least two different ways to read this, one from each side of the antagonistic gap: firstly, as a direct threat to the established order, seen from the side of its law in the refusal just to function as prescribed (representing the non-all of the particular all of the established order). Secondly from the other point of view, what Žižek perhaps refers to with this supplemental smile is reading this fantasy of Bartleby's actor acting with a smile from the *Psycho* as a profanation of what from the position of the established order would be seen as a threatening figure of fully assuming the new terrifying big Other, feared to emerge through the Act of the figure of a psychotic revolutionary as kind of a subjectivizing and terrifying sublime object. To put it in other words: from the revolutionaries' viewpoint this figure could still be viewed differently as a mere appearance of profanation as they are profanators themselves (psychotics: Žižek, 2012a:667, profanation; a:985–9).

¹¹ In here we bypass categorization between enemy soldiers and 'neutral' civilians also because actuality of wars tend to break this categorization. In our example this breakdown is depicted with Kurtz surrounded by decapitated civilians; and covered by Kilgore with his cards thrown by the bodies of civilians killed as 'enemy fighters'.

¹² We understand this status of the 'included and simultaneously excluded' comparable to the problem of Carl Schmitt, for whom, the 'worst enemy', 'enemy of political as such' is an *anomos*, whose status for the established order is, 'unknown' i.e., the 'assimilated Jew' or potentially, if this logic is drawn to conclusion, the Agambean *homo sacer* as anyone, as professor Mika Ojakangas points out (Ojakangas, 2003:412, 417). The Schmitt's *anomos* relies however to potential friend-enemy dichotomy instead of paradoxical 'both'. Could it be then, that psychoanalytically more relevant question, even for political sciences, might be something like 'what is wanted from the subject', instead of power conducting questions (and answers) of the bureaucracy and equally orders of the master both concerning for example 'the enmity of the unknown neighbour or *anomos*'?

¹³ I thank Mika Ojakangas of his idea that the hysteric might be occupying the only 'free' position compared to the other structural positions of our schema.

¹⁴ Do four concepts of politics fit the equations which Žižek suggests with four fundamental concepts of ‘unified theory’? With Greimasian equations he outlines ‘a “unified theory” of Lacan’s formulae of sexuation and the formulae of four discourses: the masculine axis consists of the master’s discourse and the university discourse and the feminine axis of the hysterical discourse and the analyst’s discourse’. Here non-All of the analyst is the feminine/negative universal for it represents the non-All of the particular all. These yield ‘the following series of equations’: (Žižek, 2012a:794–5)

S1 = Master = exception

S2 = University = universality

\$ = Hysteria = no-exception

a = Analyst = non-All

¹⁵ Public lecture by Slavoj Žižek ‘the Need to Censor our Dreams’ on 11th of November 2014 in London School of Economics, London. Available in Youtube; (<http://youtu.be/YnzqY7qSzt0?t=1h1m34s>). The citation can be found from 1:01 onwards. (Accessed on 22th of November 2014.)

¹⁶ Is this fear of the ‘corruption’ of the revolutionary Saint-Just not precisely the obstacle to enjoyment for him? Obstacle presenting itself as masses of human beings who ‘do not care’, are ‘too lazy’, ‘just going to work in the mornings’ etc. to indulge in his ‘way of life’ – a figure who does not ‘the virtue nor terror want’?

¹⁷ ‘Conservative, ...is authentic in the sense of fully assuming the consequences of his choice, of being fully aware of what it actually means to take power and to exert it.’ (Žižek, 2000:236).

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