### **Links – Symbolic Violence**

#### The focus on specific identifiable acts of violence, ignores the systemic violence that is the underlying issue, capitalism cannot be effectively addressed if we focus on symbolic violence

Žižek 08’ (Slavoj Žižek, Philosopher and senior researcher at the Institute for Sociology and Philosophy, “Violenece : Six sideways Reflections”)

If there is a unifying thesis that runs through the bric-a-brac of reflections on violence that follow, it is that a similar paradox holds true for violence. At the forefront of our minds, the obvious signals of violence are acts of crime and terror, civil unrest, international conflict. But we should learn to step back, to disentangle ourselves from the fascinating lure of this directly visible “subjective” violence, violence performed by a clearly identifiable agent. We need to perceive the contours of the background which generates such outbursts. A step back enables us to identify a violence that sustains our very efforts to fight violence and to promote tolerance. ¶ This is the starting point, perhaps even the axiom, of the present book: subjective violence is just the most visible portion of a triumvirate that also includes two objective kinds of violence. First, there is a “symbolic” violence embodied in language and its forms, what Heidegger would call “our house of being.” As we shall see later, this violence is not only at work in the obvious—and extensively studied—cases of incitement and of the relations of social domination reproduced in our habitual speech forms: there is a more fundamental form of violence still that pertains to language as such, to its imposition of a certain universe of meaning. Second, there is what I call “systemic” violence, or the often catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our economic and political systems. ¶ The catch is that subjective and objective violence cannot be perceived from the same standpoint: subjective violence is experienced as such against the background of a non-violent zero level. It is seen as a perturbation of the “normal,” peaceful state of things. However, objective violence is precisely the violence inherent to this “normal” state of things. Objective violence is invisible since it sustains the very zero-level standard against which we perceive something as subjectively violent. Systemic violence is thus something like the notorious “dark matter” of physics, the counterpart to an all-too- visible subjective violence. It may be invisible, but it has to be taken into account if one is to make sense of what otherwise seem to be “irrational” explosions of subjective violence. ¶ When the media bombard us with those “humanitarian crises” which seem constantly to pop up all over the world, one should always bear in mind that a particular crisis only explodes into media visibility as the result of a complex struggle. Properly humanitarian considerations as a rule play a less important role here than cultural, ideologico-political, and economic considerations. The cover story of Time magazine on 5 June 2006, for example, was “The Deadliest War in the World.” This offered detailed documentation on how around 4 million people died in the Democratic Republic of Congo as the result of political violence over the last decade. None of the usual humanitarian uproar followed, just a couple of readers’ letters—as if some kind of filtering mechanism blocked this news from achieving its full impact in our symbolic space. To put it cynically, Time picked the wrong victim in the struggle for hegemony in suffering. It should have stuck to the list of usual suspects: Muslim women and their plight, or the families of 9/11 victims and how they have coped with their losses. The Congo today has effectively re-emerged as a Conradean “heart of darkness.” No one dares to confront it head on. The death of a West Bank Palestinian child, not to mention an Israeli or an American, is mediatically worth thousands of times more than the death of a nameless Congolese. ¶ Do we need further proof that the humanitarian sense of urgency is mediated, indeed overdetermined, by clear political considerations? And what are these considerations? To answer this, we need to step back and take a look from a different position. When the U.S. media reproached the public in foreign countries for not displaying enough sympathy for the victims of the 9/11 attacks, one was tempted to answer them in the words Robespierre addressed to those who complained about the innocent victims of revolutionary terror: “Stop shaking the tyrant’s bloody robe in my face, or I will believe that you wish to put Rome in chains.”1 ¶ Instead of confronting violence directly, the present book casts six sideways glances. There are reasons for looking at the problem of violence awry. My underlying premise is that there is something inherently mystifying in a direct confrontation with it: the overpowering horror of violent acts and empathy with the victims inexorably function as a lure which prevents us from thinking. A dispassionate conceptual development of the typology of violence must by definition ignore its traumatic impact. Yet there is a sense in which a cold analysis of violence somehow reproduces and participates in its horror. A distinction needs to be made, as well, between (factual) truth and truthfulness: what renders a report of a raped woman (or any other narrative of a trauma) truthful is its very factual unreliability, its confusion, its inconsistency. If the victim were able to report on her painful and humiliating experience in a clear manner, with all the data arranged in a consistent order, this very quality would make us suspicious of its truth. The problem here is part of the solution: the very factual deficiencies of the traumatised subject’s report on her experience bear witness to the truthfulness of her report, since they signal that the reported content “contaminated” the manner of reporting it. The same holds, of course, for the so-called unreliability of the verbal reports of Holocaust survivors: the witness able to offer a clear narrative of his camp experience would disqualify himself by virtue of that clarity.2 The only appropriate approach to my subject thus seems to be one which permits variations on violence kept at a distance out of respect towards its victims.¶

### **Links – Fem K**

#### The focus on patriarchy as the root cause of violence and suffering is incorrect; it is inherently a hegemonic position resulting from the market’s desire to redirect blame. Only a critique of Capitalism can addresses these issues

Žižek 10’ (Slavoj Žižek, Philosopher and senior researcher at the Institute for Sociology and Philosophy, “Living in the End Times”)

I totally agree with the general principle that "hegemonies are often represented as minority positions, as defenses against what are perceived to be hegemonic positions." Today's celebration of "minorities" and "marginals” is the predominant majority position. But we could add a series of other examples, such as the neocons who complain about the terrors of liberal political correctness, presenting themselves as protectors of an endangered minority. Or take those critics of patriarchy who attack it as if it were still a hegemonic position, ignoring what Marx and Engels wrote more than 150 years ago, in the first chapter of The Communist Manifesto "The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations." Such an insight is still ignored by those leftist cultural theorists who focus their critique on patriarchal ideology and practice. Is it not time to start wondering about the fact that the critique of patriarchal "phallogocentrism" and so forth was elevated into the main question at the very historical moment-ours-when patriarchy definitively lost its hegemonic role, when it was progressively swept away by the market individualism of rights? What becomes of patriarchal family values when a child can sue his parents for neglect and abuse, or when the family and parenthood itself are de jure reduced to a temporary and dissolvable contract between independent individuals? (And, incidentally, Freud was no less aware of this: for him, the decline of the Oedipal mode of socialization was the historical condition of the rise of psychoanalysis. 50) In other words, the critical claim that patriarchal ideology continued to be the hegemonic ideology is the form of the hegemonic ideology of our times -its function is to enable us to evade the deadlock of the hedonistic permissiveness which is actually hegemonic.¶

### **Links – White Supremacy**

#### The Focus on White Supremacy fragments resistance struggles preventing real gains and distracts from the root of the issue : Capitalism

Darder & Torres 99’ Darder Prof of Education at Claremont, & Torres, (Prof of Public Policy and Comp Latino Studies at CSU-Long Beach, 1999 Antonia and Rodolfo, “Shattering the Race Lens, from Critical Ethnicity” pgs. 184-185)

What seems apparent in hooks's explanation is both her belief in the existence of a White ideology that has Black people as its primary object (albeit her mention of "people of color") and the reification of skin color as the most active determinant of social relations between Black and White populations. Consequently, the persistence of such notions of racialized exploitation and domination mistakenly privileges one particular form of racism, while it ignores the historical and contemporary oppression of populations who have been treated as distinct and inferior "races" without the necessary reference to skin color. ¶ Moreover, "White supremacy" arguments analytically essentialize Black/White relations by inferring that the inevitability of skin color ensures the reproduction of racism in the post-colonial world, where White people predominantly associate Black people with inferiority. Inherent in this perspective is the failure to recognize the precolonial origins of racism which were structured within the interior of Europe by the development of nation-states and capitalist relations of production. "The dichotomous categories of Blacks as victims, and Whites as perpetrators of racism, tend to homogenize the objects of racism, without paying attention to the different experience of men and women, of different social classes and ethnicity."~~ As such there is little room to link, with equal legitimacy, the continuing struggles against racism of Jews, Gypsies, the Irish, immigrant workers, refugees, and other racialized populations of the world (including Africans racialized by Africans) to the struggle of African Americans in the United States. ¶ Hence, theories of racism that are founded upon the racialized idea of White supremacy adhere rigidly to a "race relations paradigm." As such, these theories anchor racialized inequality to the alleged "nature" of White people and the psychological influence of White ideology on both Whites and Blacks, rather than to the complex nature of historically constituted social relations of power and their material consequences. In light of this, hooks's preference for White supremacy represents a perspective that, despite its oppositional intent and popularity among many activists and scholars in the field, still fails to critically advance our understanding of the debilitating structures of capitalism and the nature of class formations within a racialized world. More specifically, what we argue here is that the struggle against racism and class inequality cannot be founded on either academic or popularized notions of "race" or White supremacy, notions that ultimately reify and "project a 'phantom objectivity,' an autonomy that seems so strictly rational and all-embracing as to conceal every trace of its fundamental nature Rather than working to invert racist notions of racialized inferiority, anti-racist scholars and activists should seek to develop a critical theory of racism to confront the fundamental nature and consequences of structural inequalities as reproduced by the historical processes of racialization in U.S. society and around the globe.¶."33

### **Links – MOST K AFFS**

(replace “representative social issues and their respective violence” with the K aff being critiqued, e.g. “race”, “gender”, “sexuality”, “disability”, etc.)

#### The focus on \*representative social issues and their respective violence\* fails to address the root cause and inevitably perpetuates those structural issues. Only the critique of capitalism can solve

Zavarzadeh 94 (The Stupidity That Consumption Is Just as Productive as Production": In the Shopping Mall of the Post-al Left," College Literature, Vol. 21, No. 3, The Politics of Teaching Literature 2 Oct., 199, pp. 92-114)

Post - al logic is marked above all by its erasure of "production" as the determining force in organizing human societies and their institutions, and its insistence on "consumption" and "distribution" as the driving force of the social.5 The argument of the post-al left (briefly) is that "labor," in advanced industrial "democracies," is superseded by "information," and consequently "knowledge" (not class struggle over the rate of surplus labor) has become the driving force of history. The task of the post-al left is to deconstruct the "metaphysics of labor" and consequently to announce the end of socialism and with it the "outdatedness" of the praxis of abolishing private property (that is, congealed alienated labor) in the post-al moment. Instead of abolishing private property, an enlightened radical democracy which is to supplant socialism (as Laclau, Mouffe, Aronowitz, Butler, and others have advised) should make property holders of each citizen. The post-al left rejects the global objective conditions of production for the local subjective circumstances of consumption, and its master trope is what R-4 [France] so clearly foregrounds: the (shopping) "mall"?the ultimate site of consumption "with all latest high-tech textwares" deployed to pleasure the "body." In fact, the post-al left has "invented" a whole new interdiscipline called "cultural studies" that provides the new alibi for the regime of profit by shifting social analytics from "production" to "consumption." (On the political economy of "invention" in ludic theory, see Transformation 2 on "The Invention of the Queer.") To prove its "progressiveness," the post-al left devotes most of its energies (see the writings of John Fiske, Constance Penley, Michael Berube, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Andrew Ross, Susan Willis, Stuart Hall, Fredric Jameson), to demonstrate how "consumption" is in fact an act of production and resistance to capitalism and a practice in which a Utopian vision for a society of equality is performed! The shift from "production" to "consumption" manifests itself in post-al left theories through the focus on "superstructural" cultural analysis and the preoccupation not with the "political economy" ("base") but with "representation"? for instance, of race, sexuality, environment, ethnicity, nationality, and identity. This is, for example, one reason for [Hill's] ridiculing the "base" and "superstructure" analytical model of classical Marxism (Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy) with an anecdote (the privileged mode of "argument" for the post-al left) that the base is really not all that "basic." To adhere to the base/superstructure model for [him] is to be thrown into an "epistemological gulag." For the post-al left a good society is, therefore, one in which, as [France] puts it, class antagonism is bracketed and the "surplus value" is distributed more evenly among men and women, whites and persons of color, the lesbian and the straight. It is not a society in which "surplus value"?the exploitative appropriation of the other's labor-is itself eliminated by revolutionary praxis. The post-al left's good society is not one in which private ownership is obsolete and the social division of labor (class) is abolished. Rather it is a society in which the fruit of exploitation of the proletariat (surplus labor) is more evenly distributed and a near-equality of consumption is established. This distributionist/consumptionist theory that underwrites the economic interests of the (upper)middle classes is the foundation for all the texts in this exchange and their pedagogies. A good pedagogy in these texts therefore is one in which power is distributed evenly in the classroom: a pedagogy that constructs a classroom of consensus not antagonism (thus opposition to "politicizing the classroom" in OR-1 [Hogan]) and in which knowledge (concept) is turned through the process that OR-3 [McCormick] calls "translation"?into "consumable" EXPERIENCES. The more "intense" the experience, as the anecdotes of [McCormick] show, the more successful the pedagogy. In short, it is a pedagogy that removes the student from his/her position in the social relations of production and places her/him in the personal relation of consumption: specifically, EXPERIENCE of/as the consumption of pleasure. The post-al logic obscures the laws of motion of capital by very specific assumptions and moves-many of which are rehearsed in the texts here. I will discuss some of these, mention others in passing, and hint at several more. (I have provided a full account of all these moves in my "Post-ality" in Transformation 1.) I begin by outlining the post-al assumptions that "democracy" is a never-ending, open "dialogue" and "conversation" among multicultural citizens; that the source of social inequities is "power"; that a post-class hegemonic "coalition," as OR-5 [Williams] calls it-and not class struggle-is the dynamics of social change; that truth (as R-l [Hill] writes) is an "epistemological gulag"? a construct of power and thus any form of "ideology critique" that raises questions of "falsehood" and "truth" ("false consciousness") does so through a violent exclusion of the "other" truths by, in [Williams'] words, "staking sole legitimate claim" to the truth in question. Given the injunction of the post-al logic against binaries (truth/falsehood), the project of "epistemology" is displaced in the ludic academy by "rhetoric." The question, consequently, becomes not so much what is the "truth" of a practice but whether it "works." (Rhetoric has always served as an alibi for pragmatism.) Therefore, [France] is not interested in whether my practices are truthful but in what effects they might have: if College Literature publishes my texts would such an act (regardless of the "truth" of my texts) end up "cutting our funding?" [he] asks. A post-al leftist like [France], in short, "resists" the state only in so far as the state does not cut [his] "funding." Similarly, it is enough for a cynical pragmatist like [Williams] to conclude that my argument "has little prospect of effectual force" in order to disregard its truthfulness. The post-al dismantling of "epistemology" and the erasure of the question of "truth," it must be pointed out, is undertaken to protect the economic interests of the ruling class. If the "truth question" is made to seem outdated and an example of an orthodox binarism ([Hill]), any conclusions about the truth of ruling class practices are excluded from the scene of social contestation as a violent logocentric (positivistic) totalization that disregards the "difference" of the ruling class. This is why a defender of the ruling class such as [Hill] sees an ideology critique aimed at unveiling false consciousness and the production of class consciousness as a form of "epistemological spanking." It is this structure of assumptions that enables [France] to answer my question, "What is wrong with being dogmatic?" not in terms of its truth but by reference to its pragmatics (rhetoric): what is "wrong" with dogmatism, [he] says, is that it is violent rhetoric ("textual Chernobyl") and thus Stalinist. If I ask what is wrong with Stalinism, again (in terms of the logic of [his] text) I will not get a political or philosophical argument but a tropological description.6 The post-al left is a New Age Left: the "new new left" privileged by [Hill] and [Williams]- the laid-back, "sensitive," listening, and dialogic left of coalitions, voluntary work, and neighborhood activism (more on these later). It is, as I will show, anti-intellectual and populist; its theory is "bite size" (mystifying, of course, who determines the "size" of the "bite"), and its model of social change is anti-conceptual "spontaneity": May 68, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and, in [Hill's] text, Chiapas. In the classroom, the New Age post-al pedagogy inhibits any critique of the truth of students' statements and instead offers, as [McCormick] makes clear, a "counseling," through anecdotes, concerning feelings. The rejection of "truth" (as "epistemological gulag"?[Hill]), is accompanied by the rejection of what the post-al left calls "economism." Furthermore, the post-al logic relativizes subjectivities, critiques functionalist explanation, opposes "determinism," and instead of closural readings, offers supplementary ones. It also celebrates eclecticism; puts great emphasis on the social as discourse and on discourse as always inexhaustible by any single interpretation? discourse (the social) always "outruns" and "exceeds" its explanation. Post-al logic is, in fact, opposed to any form of "explanation" and in favor of mimetic description: it regards "explanation" to be the intrusion of a violent outside and "description" to be a respectful, caring attention to the immanent laws of signification (inside). This notion of description which has by now become a new dogma in ludic feminist theory under the concept of "mimesis" (D. Cornell, Beyond Accommodation)?regards politics to be always immanent to practices: thus the banalities about not politicizing the classroom in [Hogan's] "anarchist" response to my text7 and the repeated opposition to binaries in all nine texts. The opposition to binaries is, in fact, an ideological alibi for erasing class struggle, as is quite clear in [France's] rejection of the model of a society "divided by two antagonistic classes" (see my Theory and its Other).