Globalisation, Empire, and the Vampire

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Abstract: In his paper, "Globalisation, Empire, and the Vampire," Mario Vrbančić opens up the question of the possibility of a dialectical utopian thinking in postmodernism. Following Lacanian psychanalytic theory, Vrbančić analyses the vampire as the nation looking both at Hardt and Negri's theory of Empire and Žižek psychoanalytically inclined theory of nationalist identification. The vampire always occurs in the wake and decay of Empires: Dracula embodies Victorian fears of the infestation of the undead by invading the imperial centre; in America vampires disperse and multiply in popular culture and the mass media; in a newly emerging global order (Empire) they may embody the power of the multitude, with a view from the real of a hazy mirage of the earthly Jerusalem in their quest for global citizenship.
Mario Vrbančić, "Globalisation, Empire, and the Vampire"

Globalisation, Empire, and the Vampire

The Book of Revelations describes the Holy City, a New Jerusalem, its transparent glassy streets and pearly walls: "The nations will walk by its light" (Revelation 22.24), all nations, the poor, outcasts, all races, all human forms, to dwell forever within the Light of the Lord. In The City of God Saint Augustine developed this Heavenly City as an idealised polis, as an eternal haven of joy above and beyond the material world of the dying Roman Empire as barbarians were pounding on its gates. Very often our contemporary world is depicted as the disintegration of the Empire, the collapse of the Great Pax -- this time the Pax Americana. Umberto Eco compares America of the 1980s to the last years of the Roman Empire: the collapse of the central government, the ever-increasing feudalisation of its parts, the lights of a few monasteries in the darkened forests of Europe, together with a cauldron of mystic-religious fermentation and a yearning for a New Jerusalem on the part of a mysterious sect -- the Christians (Travels in Hyper Reality). In opposition to this dark vision of disintegration and collapse, just a decade later, at the beginning of a new millennium, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri envisage a new kind of Empire, an Empire unlike any previous Empire, based on the logic of late capitalism (Empire). They argue that everything is prepared for the new Empire: colonial regimes are overthrown, the Iron Curtain has fallen and the market economy has spread everywhere. The new Empire is born out of globalisation; it develops a new form of supranational, that is worldwide, sovereignty which cannot be contained in any nation-state, though Empire is built on the basis of US-American supremacy. However, Empire presents itself as eternal, outside of history, with an omnipotent global power (biopower) that can produce and deconstruct the world.

Empire, like a realist novel, needs a typical type of hero who will serve as an allegory for new identifications that are soon to spread over the entire globe. The ideal subject of global capital would be a solitary, lonely individual, moving from one identity to another according to the virtual rhythm of capital. To become a candidate for an ideal citizen of Empire, the subject does not need to be utterly new. On the contrary, it can be very old, but it must have a constant possibility of permutation; it must have a sexual plasticity that will stretch over all imaginable erogenous zones, so that constant corresponding with its erotic field opens up a new possibility for capital. Yet it should not be totally detached from the old previous stages of communities and national types, from classic realism to postmodernism. It must share the same greed, the same restlessness as capital itself. On the other hand, it should constantly enjoy its shifting subjectivities, each time mocking the previous ones. It should embrace all nations and yet be the specific one. Here, we might recall Bram Stoker's Dracula and the scene when the lawyer Jonathon Harker visits the mighty Count in the misty and mysterious Transylvanian land, the least known portion of Europe. Count Dracula delivers a lecture on the history of his vampiric nation: "One thing he said which I shall put down as nearly as I can; for it tells in its way the story of his race: 'We Szekelys have a right to be proud, for in our veins flows the blood of many brave races who fought as the lion fights, for lordship. Here, in the whirlpool of European races ... and of Asia and Africa too" (Stoker 34). Is not the Vampire the ideal type of citizen of Empire? Simply, this paternal figure of all vampires, the Count, in a bizarre way sucks the blood of all nations, swallows all nations and yet still preserves some kind of sovereignty. Is not this kind of sovereignty now developing "before our very eyes"; is not this kind of sovereignty the aim of Empire? The vampire and the nation are very closely intertwined. Through its blood sucking, the vampire links an impossible variety of phenomena with the intimacy of the subject: nation, Empire, and a process of identification. But at the same time the vampire echoes some opaque, enigmatic object which is more in us than of us. In our innermost being (although we disavow it) we always find something that is strangely anchored there, a link between our existential data and nation, something supranational, an Imperial vision of a boundless space of a moving multitude, that is constantly decoded by Imperial administra-
One of the strange connections between the vampire and the nation is sucking. Vampires are known as bloodsuckers, and sucking is the beginning of the life of the human mammal. Unlike humans, the sucking of vampires leads them to a kind of bad infinity, a melancholic eternity. Like the subject's insertion into the Symbolic, the vampire's bite bridges over the fleeting jouissance of the moment and the eternity guaranteed with the Symbolic. Joan Copjec notices that the vampire's enjoyment is indeed a matter of oral relation to jouissance -- sucking a breast (one of the most horrible scenes in Stoker's Dracula is the moment when Mina Harker sucks the Count's breast). This sucking turns the breast -- which is along with gaze, the voice, the phallus, and faces an object -- into something from which we separate ourselves to constitute the subject. Yet this separation is never fully realised, and this object has status "in between," something within us is the outside. The nation, as Žižek argues, is not just "a contingent discursive construction"; the nation "always implies a shared relationship toward a Thing, toward enjoyment incarnated" (Tarrying with the Negative 202). In this way breast sucking becomes connected to the nation. We may add that the new nation of Empire as an "unimagined community" envisages just such a big breast, sharing a metaphysical illusion of all its members enjoying the same breast-sucking.

Žižek emphasises the importance of belief for national identification: "I believe that others (members of my community) believe in the Thing" (202), a belief in sharing the same belief that charts the tautological character of the Thing. The same is true of vampires, the only difference is that they believe in the dissemination of the bite across the nation. Bites have some strange qualities acknowledged by Lacanian psychoanalysis; bites reflect enjoyment, our enjoyment in our ties with others -- whether it be breast sucking or a solitary, horrifying vampire menace. In other words, where enjoyment in sucking the breast entices an illusion of community, vampire sucking intensifies the gaps, the intersubjectivity, an enigmatic Desire of the Other -- a community of lonely vampiric crowds. Perhaps because of that we can add a new slogan to Žižek's "Enjoy your nation as yourself!" - - "Enjoy your vampire as your nation!" The first slogan is more communal, the second is more murky. According to Žižek, the first slogan charts communal enjoyment, as ethnic hatred, racism as a belief in the possession of the national Thing; hence we believe that the Other wants "to steal our enjoyment" or "ruin our way of life" or "has access to some secret, perverse enjoyment"; the paradox is of course that the national Thing "is conceived of as something inaccessible to the other and at the same time threatened by him" (201-02). The second slogan charts dark corridors of the castle, a gothic anxiety in the urban suburbia of deserted nightmarish streets, wet dreams, dark corners, the subject's encounter with glistening fangs that can bite everywhere: neck, breast -- providing the horrifying pleasing of all erogenous zones. Is not this second "enjoyment" just some underside of the first one, of the celebration of the national? In the end, both pleasures spring from opacity, the strangeness of the Other, and we cannot avoid them because as Jacques-Alain Miller says: "the Other is the Other in my interior. The root of racism is thus hatred of my own enjoyment. There is no other enjoyment but my own. If the Other is in me, occupying the place of extimacy, then the hatred is also my own" (203). In other words the vampires are in me.

Hardt and Negri outline a utopic blueprint of counter-Empire, a New Jerusalem, an earthly Jerusalem, where moving multitude, as nomadic proletariat described by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in A Thousand Plateaus will meet in a new city (Empire 205-18). This time, "the holy city of Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God" (Revelation 20.10) will prolong its descent to earth, and its glassy surfaces will be trodden by the real feet and legs of all nations. We arrive there by a strange path, not by denying the vampire but by loving the vampire within us. As Žižek argues it is a love pronounced by Christ in the scandalous words of Luke (14.26): "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple"(The Fragile Absolute 12). According to Žižek, this hate uttered by Christ is a demand for a new kind of love, a love of freedom, a love by which the subject is freed from organic ties, of ethnic substance that determines place in the social, and in the global order of Empire. The hatred enjoyed
by Christ, says Žižek, is therefore not any kind of dialectical opposite of love, but the direct expression of love (121). This love is endowed by the glorious feeling of unplugging from my organic community, enabling me access from my particular point to the universal, this immediate access makes me "cosmopolite," a citizen of the world, of the cosmos. This is a stoic idea of universal humanity that derives from Augustine's City of God, to Empire, and is again envisaged as an earthly "City of God" by Hardt and Negri; as a kind of utopian counter-Empire to whirling globalisation, and omnipotent Imperial Power. But will nations included in the counter-Empire be intoxicated with the Draculean dream of a mighty race, a mighty nation of all nations, or some new kind of community? Finally, is it possible to envisage any community beyond Empire's melting pot? A community without the vampire, without its vampiric and constant undermining of the harmonious idyll of pastoral communal happiness. Or, no matter how many times we drive a stake through the vampire's hibernated heart, will its cold, terrifying gaze constantly follow us?

The only obstacle to Empire's final realisation of its own omnipotence is what I call the "Zone." The Zone is a Žižekian symptom of Empire, appearing as a matter of contingent circumstances preventing the realisation of a harmonious global market economy and the end of history. The Zone is the exception that has to remain as unresolved tension within Empire (since everything within Empire is Empire's sovereignty -- Imperial administration and biopower control -- the Zone has to remain an exception, a suspension of Empire's universality because if Empire's principles were to apply in the Zone, Empire itself would disintegrate). As the Other to Empire's citizens, the undead are constantly closed off in different Zones, for they are a sign of both the eternity and the decay of Empire. As Hardt and Negri point out the theory of the constitution of Empire is also a theory of its decline (Empire 370). The cyclical natural existence of Empire through good and bad forms of government cannot be exempt from corruption. With Enlightenment the corruption of previous forms of Empire is connected to the impossibility of social closure: the decline of Empire is a product of its impossibility to dominate unlimited space and time.

Now I return to Bram Stoker's Dracula, the most monumental vampire narrative, where Transylvania as Zone is depicted as "the least known" portion of Europe, a Balkanised sombre, unknown land of superstitions and a "whirlpool of races." Unlike previous creatures in gothic fiction, a genre mostly imbued with romance and wandering romantic heroes, Stoker's vampire bites into a new dimension of bloodsucking: vampires have now become involved in military conquests. It was a Victorian anxiety that introduced these new vampires; an anxiety known as the "Eastern Question," that is a horror of the Great Powers of what might happen after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. At the end of the nineteenth century, the Balkans, Dracula's homeland, was designated a site of ceaseless clashes and antagonisms, a region of "cultural wars" on the very edge of Western European civilisation. It was the place where, with the naked eye, you could view the cycle of the Empire -- rise, decay, collapse, displacement. Since that moment this "Eastern Question" has constantly evoked a fear of the decline of great powers. For example, the break-up of Yugoslavia evoked a fear of the fall of Western Europe, a fear of failure of unification; it produced an anxiety that Europe's imperialist dream was finally over. It is precisely Stoker's Dracula, a monumental, paternal figure of the vampire (nation), who gathers all these anxieties of decay and collapse, and yet projects the possibilities of new imperial expansions.

Stoker's Dracula is not just a Byronic, wandering aristocrat, but an industrious, global menace. He is a conqueror, a coloniser of territories, bodies, thoughts, knowledges; spreading like infection; he is un-dead. He represents a fear of "reverse colonisation" and decay, following "in the wake of imperial decay. Vampires are generated by racial enervation and the decline of empire, not vice versa" (The Occidental Tourist 465). This fear culminates in Dracula's voyage to London, where he will seduce Victorian ladies, undermine patriarchal authority, sap knowledge and private property, and carry out unimaginable horrors: "This was the being I was helping to transfer to London," Harker writes in anguish, "where, perhaps for centuries to come, he might, amongst its teeming millions, satiate his lust
for blood, and create a new and ever widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the hapless” (465). The fear of "reverse colonisation" does not indicate British anxiety alone over losing their colonies. Rather it signals the collapse of imperialism and thus creates a link to the future Empire. This connection between the Zone and Empire can lead us to presume that both are just another pairing, a binary machine so characteristic of the colonialism. But instead the Zone represents a hindrance and inner limit of all empires. Since the new Empire is spreading all over the globe, the Zone will shift throughout Empire too. Žižek, explaining the meaning of the Balkans for Europe, provides an example of how the Zone works. He advises us that if we want to capture the gist of an epoch we should focus on the disavowed ghost that haunts its ideological edifice. These ghosts dwell in a mysterious region of non-existent entities which nonetheless persist and continue to exert their efficacy. The imaginary cartography of the Balkans presupposes that the Zone shifts all over the globe, for no one knows exactly where to situate its elusive borders. Whereas the Balkans in European eyes, says Žižek, has the peculiar status of a ghost that haunts Europe. Hardt and Negri designate the Persian Gulf War and the war in Kosovo as two signal events in the construction of the new Empire (xvii). These two events (and we can now add the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq), are "disavowed ghosts that haunt the ideological edifice" of Empire. They are Empire's spectre.

Hardt and Negri point out that the imperial military intervention of Empire is usually preceded by moral intervention. This moral intervention includes a variety of bodies: news media and religious organisations and, most important of all, the so-called non-government organisations which, because they are not run by governments, are assumed to act on the basis of ethical or moral imperatives. When Empire conducts a war, a war without borders, the role of these "angels" is to promote the beautiful side of Imperial discourse; their job is that of Van Helsing in Stoker's Dracula -- to make us believe the impossible. Experts for the particular Zone, journalists, administrators, non-governmental workers and so on are part of Empire's machinery employed to chart a new imaginary cartography. Their position is often wrongly assumed as one outside of the particular social antagonism, as if in a place of non-desire. However, these "angels" work on the basis of both the universal Kantian moral imperative and its negative judgment. Paradoxically, this universality of Moral Law upon which all other laws are deduced, as a main principle of today's machinery of Empire remains almost the same as it was in old empires. In that sense the fears of the late Victorians, at the twilight of the British Empire equal that of the postmodern Empire's fear of the Zone's ghost, the Zone's spectrum. Accidental tourists, adventurers, weird individuals who were a strange combination of spies and tourists at the end of the nineteenth century (well described by Foucault) are now replaced with the so-called "Zone experts" (the United Nations monitors who observe the conflict, which the "angels" report). Like the late-Victorian "tourist" reports, a field of discursive formations which Todorova named Balkanism, these reports are inflamed by Empire's nightmares of the final fall, the fall into overwhelming chaos where no control exists. At the same time, as the Empire looks "eternal" and "natural," the constantly-shifting Zone reactivates old fears and produces new ones, it looks natural too. Hence, there is no difference any longer between a description of the war in Bosnia and a serial killer in L.A. (see Enzensberger); and the Balkans is described by one of the Zone's experts as an area where only the poor enjoy violence (see Kaplan). In other words, the Zone is the dream of the Imperial military machine. Even when it is on the wane, Empire will constantly try to invent new Zones, mostly to control movement of the multitude. The Zone always seems somehow unreal, spectral in comparison with eternal "truth" of Empire -- it oscillates from a variety of fundamentalist struggles to the blueprint of an Utopian futuristic otherness -- all presented as equally "unrealistic." Hence, Empire's main ideological emphasis is on the division between "reality" and "illusion," which is, in Žižek, a classical ideological conjuring trick, since reality is always already symbolized: "What the spectre conceals is not reality but is 'primordially repressed', the irrepresentable X on whose 'repression' reality itself is founded" (The Spectre of Ideology 74). The repressed X is the Thing that erupts in a myriad appearances, a myriad of bizarre life forms that traverse Empire's space. In Empire, where the whole world is a crime scene
with the possibility of military interventions, Dracula's bloodline shifts from an old imperialistic European type of aristocratic vampire to a vigorous, democratic one of mass culture, the US-American one.

Vampires are often connected with wealth; for example Stoker in his novel paints Count Dracula as overwhelmingly rich but also greedy. Dracula's money is an indication of his mobility, his trade traverses national boundaries, without allegiance to any nations; it disturbs all previous identities: family, nation, locality. Dracula's money like his bloodline, spreads as supranational wealth, not a wealth of one particular nation but of all nations indicating the dream of capital as a world market and at the same time a fear of the emergence of new objective, systematic violence. Marx's oeuvre is full of metaphors of capital as a vampire sucking the blood from poor or exploiting them. Indeed, the vampire is connected to the spectrality of capital that in postmodernism, according to Žižek, produces again and again new ghosts (The Fragile Absolute 11-21). This global reflexivisation of materialising Empire, chases away the ghosts of the past, but at the same time generates its own ghost which is inflicted upon the un-dead in their new homeland, the USA. Herman Melville declaimed: "You can not spill a drop of American blood without spilling the blood of the whole world ... (O)ur blood is as the flood of the Amazon, made up of a thousand noble currents all pouring into one. We are not a nation, so much as a world; for unless we may claim all the world for our site ... Our ancestry is lost in the universal paternity ... We are the heirs of all time, and with all nations we divide our inheritance" (Empire 370). So, as the opposite of the old European fantasy of exclusion of vampires on different levels, postmodern US-American culture gestures in a different direction, towards fantasy of massive inclusion, expanding the potency of the vampire, and in that way its movement towards Empire. In a sense, this transition from "exclusion" to "inclusion" designates a new kind of US-American democracy. The impotent gaze of Europe and her constant dread of "reverse colonisation" has frozen her sterile aristocratic forms of morality that, organised in the institutions of modern sovereignty, cannot manage to endure concurrently with mass (US-American) democracy; just as the old aristocratic form of vampirism cannot stand the exuberant and superfluous onslaught of US-American vampires. While Europe was "excluding" her vampires, US-American popular culture embraced the wandering Count Dracula letting him multiply freely over the vast frontiers of Empire. Since Béla Lugosi's words in the film, "Listen to them, children of the night, what beautiful music they play," vampires have conquered US-America through the silver screen, the most powerful bite of "dissemiNation" (Location of Culture). They have left the closure of the Zone to be propagated in new ways. Their monstrous otherness is constantly metamorphosing, filling the gaps in the ideological edifice. In the past, they were wandering aristocrats, the citizens of the world, but in US-American culture they have transmuted into teen vampires, queer vampires, paedophile vampires, psychic vampires, educational vampires (my daddy vampire, my mommy vampire, vampire rock stars and serial killers).

The question is: how can one imagine community beyond a nation or even beyond a supranational sovereignty of Empire? If one doesn't want to be trapped by various technological sublime of virtual bodies or New Age bodiless bodies, how can one open the Gate of the "New Jerusalem"? The question is how to enter the earthly heavenly city, with our buttocks, legs and bowels, and not to be mesmerised by the overwhelming power of Empire? Since any concept is caught in a kind of spectrality (as a demand for global perversion), can we think about universality beyond capital and Empire? For Žižek reality itself is constituted through an intricate regime of power that constantly operates through the split subject by inducing him or her into the very forgetfulness of primal violence. Vampires endanger the illusion in reality, the illusion on which reality is based, they threaten to dissolve reality with some terrifying bite, (as Žižek says, what the spectre conceals is not reality but what is "primordially repressed," "the unrepresentable X" on whose "repression" reality itself is founded). As Fredric Jameson has taught us, any ideology or narrative contains some Utopic impulse. Vampires may present an expansion of the hegemonic religious code to accommodate what is essentially a vision of the Utopian body, of the libidinal transfiguration of human life in some non-alienated state. To imagine vampires is to imagine sex freed from the feelings of prohibition and guilt. Postcontemporary
vampires designate the postmodern paradox: to free oneself from the body to indulge more in the body; that is, disconnection with civilisation leads them to envisage spectral materiality of the phase in between: they travel through space and time. They traverse Empire, nothing can prevent the desire for movement, the desire for movement through different erogenous zones, and different points of Empire. They still yearn for a Utopian body, beyond various disciplinary regimes and society of control, a kind of cosmic welfare state, the universality beyond Empire.

At the end we have a bizarre traffic: the vampires gesture towards the City of God, but weirdly to the earthly City of God, since they cannot raise themselves to the transcendental sphere; a counter-Empire. This gesture, which makes them political subjects for the multitude, is not just a collapsing into a 'black hole' of the crowd of all nations and genetic mutants and other outcasts, but rather it is unified through the singular power of a new city. This is a utopian moment -- here and now. This impossible gesture uncouples the subject from being the hostage of illusion, the prevailing construction of reality, it is almost a mystical moment, a transcendental step on the road to the earthly New Jerusalem, the earthly and yet divine city. It is a moment, fragile and fleeting but yet somehow absolute. This is what Žižek calls a "fragile absolute." It is the moment when we are guided by a spectre, but not a usual spectre of the past, not the Zone's spectre, nor a spectre of Capital but, as Žižek says, the spectre of a brief apparition of a future utopian Otherness. This is, for Žižek, the Holy Ghost itself: "the community of believers qua 'uncoupled' outcasts from the social order, with, ideally, authentic psychoanalytic and revolutionary political collectives" (The Fragile Absolute 160). An encounter with such ghosts is more monstrous than that with the vampir. For Hardt and Negri, this gesture, a brief moment of pure Utopian otherness in a globalised world of Empire may be materialised in another way, a nomadic multitude as political subject. Multitude would be constantly generated and gathered by Empire's command, gathering all strands of defeated revolutions, and hopes of subjugated and exploited producers of the twentieth century. Imperial Command, the imperial system of capital, even more than postmodern capitalism, would exploit and decode all flows by constantly increasing commodification. Like the story by Borges, "The Lottery of Babylon," everything would become commodity: if you spit on a street it would have a value, your orgasm would have a monetary value, fresh water, even different modes of happiness would be translated into the value of post-electronic, biopower money, the Empire would be a hyperreal, as well as a real and surreal, market. The multitude would resist this power of abstraction by repeating the gesture of the first aristocratic vampire -- who desires to wander, to unshackle the constraints of desire, to move and to drink blood. The multitude, like vampires, would go wherever desire takes them. They would inhabit all levels of the heterotopic space of sprawl, all the levels of Blade Runner-like cities; they would be crammed into different zones. There is a moment when they would envisage a New City and the gesture would transform the chaotic explosion of movements of a vampiric crowd in a real multitude. This moment coincides with Žižek's evocation of Utopian otherness, a moment illustrated by Plotinus's mystical call to leave behind the beloved fatherland, habitual perception, the spectrality of ideology, reality: "all this order of things you must set aside and refuse to see: you must close the eyes and call instead upon another vision which is to be waked within you, a vision, the birth-right of all, which few turn to use" (Empire 396). Žižek finds this moment in Jesus's hate-speech as truly a speech of new love, hate as a new love, that is, breaking all ties, an immediate access to the universal; to a New Jerusalem that would turn in the counter-Empire into an earthly, a new city. The multitude would be universal, beyond the nation, it would be a community forged of all migratory imagery, from the Exodus onward, from political asylum seekers to immigrant workers. All of them would be in a new city, a Divine City of aliens. Their first political demand would be global citizenship (which reminds us of the rights of the wandering aristocratic vampire); the second one would be the social wage for everyone -- the "sublime requirement." They would form a new cyber proletariat, partly described in Gibson's cyberpunk outcasts. The heterotopic space of the sprawl (which we discover in the film Blade Runner) would become familiar and homely. The Zone would vanish, or its vestiges would be "musealised" like Disney-
land: there will be no more First, Second, and Third worlds (that through the Zone's various simulations still existed in Empire); everything would be one world, a new counter-Empire, a New Jerusalem, a heavenly city, but this time on earth.

Maybe we will never reach this point? Maybe this Utopian desire of unbridled movement will never be fulfilled? This New Jerusalem will never be finished; movement through the roads, squares, corridors of this city should not be curbed by stone, steel, and architecture, but vice versa, a rhizome-like openness of the city should always remain. In Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* there is a city whose architecture grows following the rhythm of movement of its citizens' desire, the movement of desire materialises the whole city. This rhizomic possibility of movement dramatises the formal dilemma of the Utopian imagination itself: how to open a space for itself beyond the fallen world of contingency, and at the same time not be trapped by any closure. For, as Jameson has taught us, we should always appreciate the treasure of failure. Indeed, the truth of the Utopian imagination is not so much in the representations of this earthly Jerusalem, but rather ultimately in its failure to outline its architecture, for the greatest Utopias are those which explore the limits and the impoverishment of our visions of utopia. The form of movement, the power of negative which caught the Real in dialectical movement, is a Bakhtian carnivalesque body waiting to be stirred by the power of negative. For Žižek it is the "night of the world" a Hegelian moment of total night, a night full of partial objects swimming through an aquarium of the emerging "I." This is the point, I think, where Žižek's dialectic, unites German idealism and Lacanian psychoanalysis, in some irresistible, irreversible force that reminds us of Goethe's principle of the demonic (see Jackson). This demonic principle is the vanishing mediator, like the Devil himself. The power of the negative can disturb the separation of the two cities: Babylon and the City of God. This is an Event, or a materialistic miracle.

**Works Cited**


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