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The Kabarett of the Kynics

Satirical Peace Activism in an Era of
Enlightened False Consciousness?



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As a fruitful complement of the analysis at hand, the following site contains a film archive of contemporary Kabarett works:

<http://icw-class12.wikidot.com/kaba>




For current examples of «cynic military activism», as well as «Kynic peace activism», please visit:

<http://icw-class12.wikidot.com/chrill>

Tromsø, Nov. 2013

Harstad, Feb. 2014

Chrill

	<i>Prológos: Courage, Rage, and Enlightened False Consciousness</i>	01
1	Classifying Considerations: On Activism, Moralism, and Mockery	
1.1	A-B-C. The threefold notion of violence	11
1.2	A-B-C. Three popular reactions to violence	16
1.3	A-B-C. Who is the cynic?	24
2	Conscious Considerations: Satirical Mockery, Society, and the Schizophrenia of Contemporary Cynicism	
2.1	Cynicism with c: <i>Elementary empirical explorations</i>	37
2.2	Counter-cynicism with K: <i>An academic approach?</i>	53
3	Conclusive Considerations: Kynic Reflections on <i>the Cynic</i> and the Inversions of <i>Cynicism, Truth, and Marx</i>	
3.1	Peter Sloterdijk: Kynicism and the inversion of cynicism	57
3.2	Michel Foucault: Parrhesia and the inversion of truth	60
3.3	Slavoj Žižek: Knowledge and the inversion of Marx	62
	Closing considerations	
	<i>Epílogos and Outlook: Thinking in terms of Kynic peace activism</i>	66
	Literature	75

-Prológos-

Courage, Rage, and Enlightened False Consciousness

What sort of a man do you consider Diogenes to be?
«A Socrates gone mad», replied Plato.
Diogenes Laëtrios, ±330.

What is permitted to satire?
Everything.
Kurt Tucholsky, 1919.

*What is peace?*¹
[...].
Johan Galtung, 1969.

One can put it plain and simple: We live in an era of enlightened false consciousness. Whatever this means and whoever states such argument for which reason will be discussed later. For the moment it might be sufficient to take a step back and focus on its symptoms first. As a matter of fact, philosophy does not only take place within the ivory towers of academia. Taking the simplified image of an «average mass media consumer», we eventually talk about someone that tries to make sense of the information flow ^{s/}he feels confronted with on a daily basis. In that context, Niklas Luhmann shaped the concept of *published opinion* (*veröffentlichte Meinung*) as partly a contra-dictionary element of and partly a stimulating narrative on the *public opinion* (*öffentliche Meinung*).² While linking it to the sphere of mass media, he dealt with the highly sophisticated question: *Why do we know what we know?* And for sure, he was -- and is -- not isolated in asking so. To a certain extent, «the things we know» make us «us». But how does the very same system, the «us», react to the (howsoever) perceived world outside?

¹ The top ten of creative chapter titles I used to read in my peace study studies: «What is Peace?» (Shtromas/Anderson 1995: 15). «What is Peace? What is Organization? — First: What is Peace?» (Linebarger 1962: 13). «In the second place, what is peace?» (Inari 1911: 232). «What is peace?» (Allan 2006: 13). «What is peace?» (Lederbach/Jenner 2002: 34). «What is peace?» (Pepinsky 1993: 391). «What is Peace?» (Galtung 2002: 23). «What Is Peace?» (Myers-Walls et al. 1993: 66). «What is peace?» (Müller 2003: 53). «What is Peace?» (Duncan-Jones 1952: 6).

² In *Die Politik der Gesellschaft*, Niklas Luhmann (2000: 190-191) thinks «öffentliche Meinung» as «veröffentlichte Meinung». The two terms of public opinion versus published opinion can be seen as wordplay of sharp distinction.

Bad news is good news. In its most positivist and energizing notion, the *published opinion* seems to be a suitable tool to describe the medial generation of two basic human reactions of empathy. Both sound similar, but describe most different states: (i) *courage* and (ii) *rage*. However critical a «news readership» might be: the core of producing, providing, and sharing information «of the world» around *it*, the «us», seems to be linked to the consequent indoctrination of a certain belief/sense system (categorizing data) as well as to the consequent retrieval of empathy (acquiring data): Thus, the information flow of «globalized knowledge» does indeed call for the activation of *courage* in favour of some people, systems, ideas; and *rage* against some others.

This calls for a first, short media observation. On July 10, 2013, the readership of *The Guardian Online* can notice a strong statement on its screens: *In praise of cynicism*. In a seemingly self-reflective manner, the «you» -- thus, the «us» -- is able to "test how cynical you are" (Baggini 2013: 5). Following the test, an article of Julian Baggini, a popular commentator on philosophical issues, occurs under the same umbrella. Baggini takes the recent debate on whistle-blowing as a discussion starter to speak about the justification of -- what might be described as -- «a good portion of cynicism». Although many people, according to him, would underline that cynicism deepens with *age*, he argues, "what really happens is that *experience* painfully rips away layers of scales from our eyes" (Baggini 2013: 5). Baggini continues in describing some forms of cynicism as a greater force for progress than *optimism*. The escape from a world full of naïveté would simply lie in the reclaim of cynicism as a force of «light and truth»: To do so, "we need intelligent cynicism, which is not so much a blanket negativity, but a searchlight for the truly positive" (Baggini 2013: 5).

The concept of *cynicism* could indeed help us to approach our initial remark on the enlightened false consciousness. In

its basic notion, it seems to have something in common with the ideas on courage and rage. Yet, we do not know how the link could be formulated. But who are the agents that Julian Baggini would call actors of «intelligent cynicism»? To some extent, such actors have to be «intelligent and critical» (whatever that means). Furthermore, they should try to «enlighten the society» with the ultimate aim of «telling the truth», so that Luhmann's inter-linked concepts of (i) the *public* opinion on x, and (ii) the *published* opinion on x would not stand in sharp contrast -- or even negation -- towards (iii) x itself. On the other hand, those actors must be visible to a descent audience; a public sphere that seems only to be reachable through the structural dependencies of mass media networks. For the moment, *George Carlin* might function as a respectable personalised placeholder of such an idealised agent. The latter analysis will figure out why it must be seen as *problematic* to describe him as a «comedian», although he is widely known as such. In 2004, he himself makes a worthy statement that contrasts his work from both sheer comedy and contemporary cynicism:

I live a personal life of great optimism and positiveness. But I look around and I don't see a way out for this species. [...] I look at it and I think: 'Wow, I hope I live long enough to watch it all collapse. Just for the fun of it.' [...] When you're born to this world you've been given a ticket to the freak show. [...] Some people are the freaks. [...] Then there are the people who merely watch the freaks and that's most of us most of the time. [...] And then there are those of us who get to comment on the freak show, to review the freak show. When people say: "that's cynical". I say: *No, no, no* (Carlin 2004: 0:43:20).

Quite obviously, his comment confronts us with a necessary condition: although not belonging to the core principles of academic research, the communication on the following subject has to accept «irony» and «sarcasm» as two essential tools of understanding. The following analysis will to a great deal focus on ironic and sarcastic works. Its task will be to encode the cypher of hoax' hidden meaning. George Carlin, for example, sees himself confronted with the public description of «a

master cynic». The above-sited sequence of an interview held for *Inside the Actors Studio*, less than four years before his death, continues with a self-reflection of his oeuvre. If George Carlin would have done *The Guardian's* «test how cynical you are», he might have replied that instead of being cynical, his approach should have been considered as «realistic and skeptical»: “[...] to point it [the perceived «cynicism» around us] out isn't cynical. To point it out is to be highly skeptical of cynical behaviour” (Carlin 2004: 43:23). However, this initial step towards a definition on cynicism is not satisfactory. It still feels as if there was something true and honest in characterising Carlin's work as somehow *cynical*. Carlin's remarks do not manage to deny the common understanding that irony, sarcasm, and cynicism lie on the very same axis of mockery. The more biting it gets, the closer it comes to a distinct form of cynicism. We tend to call biting irony *sarcasm*. And we tend to call biting sarcasm *cynicism*. And still, George Carlin is right in his remark, that it is «the cynic[ism]» itself he is mocking on. Do we have to speak about cynic *counter-cynic[ism]*? At this point, Baggini challenges us. He complicates the narrative even more while highlighting “the importance of distinguishing between thinking cynically and acting cynically. [...] For many years, I too have tried to make sure that the cynicism in my outlook does not lead to cynicism in my behaviour” (Baggini 2013: 3).

Scene change: Do we need more *cynic thought of counter-cynicism*³ within peace research? If someone tries to locate contemporary peace research institutions and searches for academic categories for its description, one might wonder about the distinct ideological gap between (i) the «rebellious and alternative», rather «state critical and mass consumption hating», somehow «distinct left and hippie-like» stereotype that

³ Here, I combined the two notions in one phrase: «thought» stands out as Baggini's element, whereas the notion of counter-cynic cynicism relays on Carlin's remarks.

might be associated with the peace movement on the streets⁴; and (ii) the «professionalized», post-«meta critical» field of positivistic academia, understood as a «smart» network of think tanks that are institutionalised well, state-oriented, and mainly concerned on security and anti-terrorism issues. It seems, to put it in a nutshell, that nowadays' peace and conflict research did outsource the idea of pacifism to a small group of «unprofessional» individuals that are somehow prone to «conspiracy theories» and «easy solutions»: slogans such as 'soldiers are murders' or 'there simply is no just war' do not fit into the picture of a «well-balanced», «enlightened» peace research. One example might illustrate these thoughts roughly: the changing history of the *Peace Research Institute Oslo*⁵. While, in its first years, PRIO adapted Galtung's anti-imperialist, pacifist, and deep-critical approach towards the military and used its role as the first institutionalised peace research institute to approach structural violence and consumerism; the focus went more and more away from being a radical, left-leaning institution⁶ towards a state-affiliated positivist think tank of rather realist approaches with the final aim of supporting «security, freedom and democracy»: Three terms that are ideologically shaped by the demands of an ideology of «non-ideology». It seems as if the professionalized peace research lost its ties to many radical peace movements.⁷ But if academia's contemporary inquiry mainly addresses questions of *just war*, who then questions *war* itself?

Yet, cynicism's somehow «good attitude» -- the lit up of the «dark side» (cynicism's solely unsupportable version) --

⁴ Based on a reflective *Weltanschauung* that has been kept and conserved in not only a few peace movements.

⁵ As well as the pacifist figure Johan Galtung is linked to PRIO and its contemporary ideological inversion, the early pacifist figure Michael Walzer, then member of the anti-war movement, is linked to the later figure Michael Walzer, «Just War» theorist and fellow signatory of the controversial open letter *What we are fighting for*, a moral defence of Bush's «War on Terror» as *just*. See Walzer/Huntington et al. 2002 [Nov 11, 2013].

⁶ Here, the simplifying umbrella term should stand for an ideological frame against NATO alliance membership; against consumerism; against an all too easy perceived «Western» «moral» double standard within International Relations; against concepts such as «R2P»; «humanitarian intervention»; and geostrategic *security & safety* approaches.

⁷ This, indeed, has to be read as a subjective and over-simplifying comment. Although the «stereotypes» one has to take into account here could not be more evident: Heritage Foundation; smart-casual shirt style «changing the system from within» (tool of communication: the scientific article; the academic conference) versus the untamed and loud «against all» programmatic on the streets (tool: the provoking poster; the drum).

was able to find its way into the academic sphere. In a praising festschrift, Jeff Everett characterizes Norman Macintosh⁸ as “academe’s joyful Kynic” (Everett 2011: 148). And here, for the first time, we read about a cynic form with /k/. We will come back to that later. What Everett notices in the work of Macintosh is “a reliance on irony, emotive metaphor, humor, an excess” (Everett 2011: 149). According to Everett, Macintosh’s basic approach would undermine the self-confidence of the field’s «intellectual» (different as read before) and manifestly cynical authorities.

«Serious crimes in democratic participation», «an inability to address global environmental problems in a meaningful way», and «wars being cynically waged in the name of *democracy* and *freedom*»: Everett names many fields that could be read as global symptoms of a cynic superstructure. But what matters the most is his aim to draw the line from the cynic superstructure into the core of our already mentioned ivory towers:

Thousands of accounting academics continue to churn out research that practicing accountants themselves never bother to read (in part because of its questionable relevance, but also because of its highly technical language), while administrators blindly implore their faculty to continue producing this very same research (Everett 2011: 149).

Here, he portrays Norman’s «Kynical impulse» as a possible strategy out, “an impulse that has emerged in a general, three-stage shift in his work: from rational skepticism to a phase of critical stoicism on to a position of proactive Kynicism” (Everett 2011: 150).⁹

If we start to think about two cynic spheres -- whereby one of the two seems to be called «the Kynic one» later on --; where exactly should we draw the line between them? The main research question (and its interwoven sub-questions) will be

⁸ Since 2011, Norman Macintosh is Professor Emeritus for, what sounds as a contradiction in itself, «poststructuralist approaches» within «Management Accounting & Control Systems» at Queen’s School of Business.

⁹ A good indication to clarify Everett’s evaluation might be Norman’s appreciation of Jean Baudrillard’s *theory of bullshit*: Norman’s ultimately Kynical preference, his turn towards Baudrillard and the theory of bullshit, is presented as the aim to find a measure between the «too too big» and the «not too big enough» (Everett 2011: 155).

formulated as such: *Is it fruitful to characterise Kynic behaviour in terms of peace activism?* Do we find specific fields of contemporary Kynicism? Can, for example, the work of satirical-biting *Kabarett* be considered as *Kynic peace activism*?

What is Kabarett? -- Due to its limited scope, the analysis in hand will focus on (i) a utilization of Kynicism and the Kynic school for peace research; and (ii) a preliminary development of the term «Kynic peace activism». At the same time, the specific example of *Kabarett* work will be mentioned subliminally. Although the later established twofold notion of «/c/yynicism versus /K/yynicism» immediately suggests that the likewise twofold notion of «/c/abaret versus /K/abarett» must be considered as an exemplary empirical case analysis, a detailed elaboration on the diverse work of (political) *Kabarett* artists would simply go beyond the scope of the project.

Thus, throughout the thesis, the topic of *Kabarett* will remain *omnipresent* but *hidden* at the same time -- discernable only through its specific *diction*. Ironically, this improvised endeavour, which is constrained by its circumstances, will nicely fit the character of a classic *Kabarett* setting. In both its contextual and contentual orientation, *The Kabarett Of The Kynics* will be presented as a holistic mode that directly affects the style of writing and the variety of illuminating examples from society's daily life: While asking for the *hidden cynic* and Kynic elements within a howsoever perceived era of *enlightened false consciousness*, the reader will be invited to a journey full of *stream of consciousness style* which will be enriched by a *Kabarett*-esk topic diversity that reaches from critically reflected military cynicism on the global scale to thrown-away food on the local scale, from the seemingly too big to the seemingly too small -- and back.

Therefore, the main hypothesis (and its sub-hypotheses) will be: «*We*», *enlightened subjects*, know very well that *certain characteristics of the Western-oriented, developed societies and its praise on the individual's right to consume do*

not fit the most elementary discourses and principles of «sustainability». Nevertheless the pooled «we», the enlightened crowd, does not seem to transcend its lifestyle accordingly.

Kabarett is a tool that enables the Kabarett artist to reflect on political issues by peaceful means. It aims to work as a mirror of society. So does the analysis in hand. Somehow, it deals with questions of peace and war and the borders between friend and foe; borders which the artist tries to transcend. Its approach can be characterized as «satirical peace activism». The task of the thesis will be to specify the meaning of «satirical peace activism» into a more specific form of «Kynic peace activism» -- a voice of reason in a world filled by Arendt's *banality of evil*?

Kabarett makes use of language. The power of language might be seen as the «weapon of the pacifist». Task of the unconventional writing style -- that might also challenge the classic borders of academic sobriety -- will be to apply this very «language weapon». Here, we will eventually recognize Mikhail Bakunin's affectation of an announcing *collective anarchism*; or Mikhail Bakhtin's affectation of acting out *carnivalesque behaviour*. A colourized Johan Galtung -- framed in yellow, green, and red -- makes the start. The three colours stand for his three notions of violence: direct, structural, and cultural. After introducing them, the first chapter will also present a threefold list of popular responds towards «invisible violence» and a threefold search for «the cynic».

The second chapter will pick up on that point. As already sketched, it makes sense to reflect on a two-fold notion of cynicism. Here, a contextualization of «contemporary cynicism» versus «Ancient Kynicism» will be introduced. In the 1980's, a re-discovery of the old philosophical school of Kynicism took place. Peter Sloterdijk (1983), Michel Foucault (1984), and Slavoj Žižek (1989) took distinct elements out of the wide field of Kynicism to integrate them into their body of critical theories. Under the frame of «inversion» (inversion of

cynicism, truth, and Marx), three theoretical tools -- one for each philosopher -- will be carved out and utilized for the further analysis.

The Master thesis aims to develop a practical understanding of «Kynic activism» that neither seems to be tangible with positivist «change, democracy, freedom» concepts of «do-good» mass mobilization, nor with nihilist disillusion and complete resignation as such. The cynic and the Kynic both agree: «The system is bad. The human fellows are bad enough to follow the system.» *But*: For the Kynic, at least, there remains: a *but...*



-Chapter 1-
On Activism, Moralism, and Mockery

They do not know it, but they are doing it.
Karl Marx, 1867.

They know very well what they are doing, but still, they are doing it.
Slavoj Žižek, 1989.

*Do you know the country where the cannons bloom?
You don't know it? You'll get to know it!*¹⁰
Erich Kästner, 1930.

The following chapter will function as *tool box*. Terms and philosophical ideas that must be seen as crucial for (an understanding of) the further discussion will be introduced. Thus, the preconditions will be formulated. Beginning with a most notably and elementary definition -- «what is meant by violence?»¹¹ --, further normative concepts such as activism, moralism, and disillusion; irony, satire, and mockery will be classified before bridging into the debate on different forms of «cynicism». Chapter 1 ends with establishing the research question and formulating the main hypotheses.

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1.1 A-B-C: The threefold notion of violence
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Johan Galtung, widely described as the founder of institutionalized peace research¹², is known for his threefold distinctions on academic concepts. He made the triangle model a fashionable approach to describe complex and multi-layered phenomena. Mainly known for his «conflict triangle», he described peace not only as the antithesis of *invisible* and *visible* con-

¹⁰The German original goes as: «*Kennst du das Land, in dem die Kanonen blühen? Du kennst es nicht? Du wirst es kennenlernen!*» It is a take-off on Johan Wolfgang von Goethe's quote «*Kennst du das Land wo die Zitronen* (the lemons) blühen?».

¹¹As shown in footnote 1, many analytical texts within peace studies do indeed begin with the question: «what is peace?». Here, this question will be affected rather indirectly: «Peace» will be understood as the absence of direct and indirect violence of any kind, which admittedly will leave us alone with a utopian concept.

¹²John D. Brewer (2010: 7), for example, names him the “principal founder of the discipline of peace and conflict studies”. In 1959, Galtung founded the *Peace Research Institute Oslo*. In 1964, Galtung established the *Journal of Peace Research*.

flict, but also differentiated the sphere of conflict into three areas. In the *Transcend method trainer's manual*, he presents the «[A]ttitude-[B]ehaviour-[C]ontradiction triangle» as part of his conflict theory; the «empathy-nonviolence-creativity triangle» as part of his conflict practice approach; and the «direct-structural-cultural triangle» as part of his violence theory (Galtung 2000: 11-25). Not without a wink, the following remarks -- as well as the whole thesis itself -- will be embedded into such consequent tripartism. Galtung's conflict model works on the assumption that the best way to define peace is to define violence, its antithesis. As a persiflage on the first of fittingly *three* conflict triangles, the following thoughts on violence will be structured in [A]-[B]-[C] schemata as well.¹³

[A] Direct violence

Johan Galtung describes the most obvious form of violence as being *intended to harm or to hurt*. Of all the three forms of violence, it is the only directly *visible* one. Whenever we hear of violent attacks such as massacres, terror acts, murder, or «war», we tend to speak about direct violence: "Direct violence, visible, destructive, with a will to harm, is the form most feared" (Galtung 2000: 21). It might be linked to the usage of (armed) force and militarism; the fight between individuals and groups. Direct violence is deeply interwoven with the perception of the public/published opinion on «the other». *Critical Discourse Analysts*, for example, notice an immense focus on direct violence within the media coverage.¹⁴ Thus, the already mentioned credo *Bad news is good news* could be supplemented by: *remember, remember the 11th of September!* Whereas the 9/11 terrorist acts were acts of «direct violence»

¹³For a more profound investigation on Johan Galtung's *Transcend* method and his «conflict triangle» concept, see Beyer 2008: <http://www.transcend.org/tri/#downloads> [Oct 10, 2013].

¹⁴Holger Pötzsch, for example, builds his model *War* (Pötzsch 2014) on the assumption of the *overdetermination* of the spectator. See Ernesto Laclau's and Chantal Mouffe's remarks on the «undertheorization of overdetermination» in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985). The later analysis on Slavoj Žižek's *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989) will come back to this.

against a certain group, the terrorists themselves used a distinct other notion of «violence» to justify their -- using Baggini's elaborated term -- '*cynic action*': According to their perception, they fought against the unfair distribution of goods in the world and brand-marked «the West» while attacking the symbolic «hearts of capitalism and militarism»¹⁵. Galtung's approach of the interwoven forms of violence offers us the possibility to understand¹⁶ this perception in terms of an invisible violence: *structural violence*.

[B] Structural violence

With this second term, Johan Galtung relates to suffering and death by avoidable reasons such as malnutrition. According to his model, structural violence is to be understood as a form of *indirect* violence caused by an unjust structure. And also here, some notion of cynicism is used: "To refer to this as «early warning» of direct violence to come is [...] *cynical* and disrespectful of the suffering already there. The direct violence should be seen as too late warning of unbearable [...] conditions, exploited by *cynical* actors" (Galtung 2000: 13). These actors -- clearly marked as actors of the «dark side» of cynicism -- would then also function as the agents of the third, «cultural violence»: the legitimation of (at least) one of the other forms as *reasonable, right, or even good*.

Coming back to our example of the «9/11 attacks», it was not only the terrorists who used *one* notion of violence to justify *another*. (i) The perceived «structural violence orchestrated by the West» led to a use of «direct violence against those to blame». Then, «those» (a diffuse group; administratively led by the president of the United States) reacted themselves with «direct violence». (ii) Under the notion of «revenge» certain individual actors were discredited as «the evil» or «the devil»; certain collective actors as «out-

¹⁵See, for example, Osama bin Mohammed bin Awad bin Laden's (2002) *Letter to the American people*.

¹⁶Strictly formulated, this means the understanding of the perception of «unfair distribution of goods in the world» as «structural violence». It does *not* mean «to psychologically understand the terrorist's behaviour».

posts of tyranny» or «rogue state».¹⁷ (iii) Finally, a professionalized act of securitization¹⁸ enabled a «coalition of the willing» to wage two wars in the name of *enduring freedom* and *global justice*. The progress of securitization created at least *enough* «public» support for legitimating both military actions as somehow democratically backed. But how exactly could we describe this act of securitization in terms of violence?



Images 1-2 | Selected *Economist* covers from 2001 to 2011 and its narrative on a «global turning point»: *Remember, remember the 11th of September*. The common receipt to answer to violence seems to be a built-up of armament. In the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq, *The Economist* titles *Why They Should Stay* and *Why America Must Stay*.



Image 3 | Towards the public construction of a just interventionism? Selected *Economist* covers from 2003 (Iraq), 2007 (Iran) and 2012/2013 (Syria) deal with the issue of «Western-led» intervention and «regime change».¹⁹

¹⁷The term «outposts of tyranny» was established by Condoleezza Rice in 2005, describing the six state actors Belarus, Cuba, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea, Zimbabwe. Rice also characterized *the broader Middle East* as a «region of tyranny, despair, and anger». See <http://www.foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2005/RiceTestimony050118.pdf> [Nov 13, 2013]. The term «rogue state» was established by Ronald Reagan in 1985. As of November 2013, U.S. government officials consider the four state actors Cuba, Iran, Sudan, and Syria as so-called «rogue states». Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya – three states with a recent foreign-backed *regime change* history – plus North Korea were formerly considered as such. See the United States Department of State’s list of «State Sponsors of Terrorism»: <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/list/c14151.htm> [Nov 13, 2013]. The term «axis of evil» was established by George W. Bush in 2002, describing the three state actors Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. In the same year, John R. Bolton, the later U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, established the description of «beyond the axis of evil», including Iran, Iraq, North Korea; as well as Cuba, Libya, and Syria. See HF: <http://www.heritage.org/research/lecture/beyond-the-axis-of-evil> [Nov 13, 2013]. All concepts are closely linked towards the contemporary «War on Terror» narrative. As of 2013, Iran remains the only country being an «outpost of tyranny», a «rogue state», and part of the «axis of evil» at the same time.

¹⁸With reference to Ole Wæver’s *securitization approach* and to the security study frame of the *Copenhagen School* as such. See, for example, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (1997) by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde.

¹⁹The cover collections (images 1 and 3) were selected by the author. The photo (image 2) was taken by the author.

[C] Cultural violence

Galtung describes «cultural violence» as the sufficient condition to legitimate the usage of violence as well as the necessary condition of acknowledging violent behaviour as «good» or «reasonable». Cultural violence occurs as a result of the cultural assumptions that *blind* (Galtung) -- and *bind* (the author) -- «us», the agents, to direct or structural violence. One specific form of cultural violence might be uncovered through the analysis of more or less conscious media «war propaganda»: “mass media representations which convey a belligerent subtext (re)produce violence. They form the cultural pretext for justifications of war” (Pöttsch 2005: iv). Holger Pöttsch raises a seemingly basic question: *Who might have an interest in the perpetuated (re)production of a violent discourse of conflict by means of the mass media?* In doing so, he reveals the potential of Galtung’s model of indirect violence: Suddenly, it is possible to think and analyse violence in spheres in which it might not be visible at first sight. Taking image 3 as example, we might also ask who have had an interest in calling for a «justified war» on the basis of a «proof»²⁰ that was not even accepted as such by the «critical public»²¹: *cui bono? And why?*

One very important awareness we can learn from Galtung’s concept is that visible violence does not take place in an air-void space. It does not stay alone. It has a violent pre-history. Each of the three notions of violence offers us a channel for criticism. And the model offers us the possibility to think, for example, (i) the critique on consumerism and the

²⁰As it will be discussed later, this medial «proof presentation» – far from offering *proof* – involves the coverage on the so-called Syrian «civil war» which – far from being a *civil war* – stands out as a complex military dispute between foreign-backed forces, militias, and the Syrian army since early 2011 (using the violent militia oppression against peaceful inner-Syrian demonstrators in March 2011 as a moral legitimacy) and has since then developed into a classic *proxy war* setting of «one» [Syrian Arab Republic, Hezbollah, Revolutionary Guards, PFLP, Iran, Russia, China, Venezuela (and others)] against «another» [diverse arms of armed (exile-)opposition groups, Al-Nusra, ISIL, «FSA», Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United States (and many others)]; characterising the *Kurdish* fight as a side issue. Another common perception of Western/Arab media seems to be the portrayal of the Syrian crisis as a religious based *Shia-Sunni* clash. See recent CNN; BBC; *Al Jazeera*; *Al Arabiya* versus RT; *PressTV*; *teleSUR*; *CCTV* coverage.

²¹Another vague term: Here, the «critical public» has to be read as a counter-part towards the affiliated «published opinion». Indeed, we have to deal with a very simplifying model here. It is hardly worth mentioning that the same limitation applies to terms such as «(mass) media» which should therefore not be read as a *monotonic bloc*.

immensely unequal distribution of wealth; or (ii) the critique on «friend-foe» biased news coverage; or (iii) the critique on the weapon industry *as such* as possible critiques on violence.

This basic approach, in which we speak about visible and invisible forms of violence that are linked to each other within an interwoven structure²², raised attention in the academic field. Without directly referring to Galtung, Slavoj Žižek elaborated three forms of violence as well. In his best-seller *Violence (Six Sideway Reflections; 2009)*, he distinguishes between one form of visible and two forms of invisible violence; and can thus be read as a good example of prominent impersonators of Johan Galtung's addiction towards «the holy three».²³

Violence is always connected to harm. But some forms of perception are more hidden than others. It is rather easy to build the link between «everything that kills and harms in front of the camera» and the public protest against «brutality» (whatever is meant by this term). The more invisible violence gets, the more difficult it is to articulate the protest against it. After working out the possible channels of peace-oriented social criticism towards a focus on violence that goes beyond, we may have a short look into three popular forms of resistance towards violence in all of its facets: activism, moralism, -- and disillusioned mockery.

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1.2 A-B-C: Three popular reactions to violence
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[A] Stéphane the activist

Stéphane Hessel stands out as the prototype of a *driven* activist against diverse forms of violence. Based on a positivist (and quite positive) approach, he pursued the approach of

²²The term «military-industrial complex» and its extension towards a «military-industrial-media complex» will be part of the later analysis. See also Der Derian's *Military-Industrial Media-Entertainment Network* (2009) concept.

²³Both, Johan Galtung's and Slavoj Žižek's underlying theses are that violence takes on *three* forms: Galtung 1969 names «direct violence», «structural violence», and «cultural violence». Žižek 2009 names «subjective violence», «symbolic/linguistic violence» (as *objective*), and «systemic/structural violence» (as *objective*).

«waking up the people» and encourage them to act «good». Both, enormously normative-ontological and structure-affirming at the same time (*notion*: an UN diplomat with «dreams») he personifies the «do-good» involvement of collective actors such as Greenpeace or Amnesty International (*notion*: «urgent actions» against atrocities; good against evil) and stands as a representative for many other individuals that tried to «change the systems from within» such as his UN colleague Jean Ziegler. Thus, our *Stéphane the activist* is to be read as a synonym rather than a historical figure.

Nevertheless, the two most influential books that he wrote shortly before his death call for a short investigation. They do not only shed a light on a diverse life experience. They also give a revealing insight into the confrontation of a leading social-critic with the earlier mentioned empathic feelings of *rage* and *courage*: Hessel's call for *outrage*.

Until November 2013, his most prominent work, *Indignez-vous*, translated into 35 languages, was sold more than four million times worldwide.²⁴ After the *Time for Outrage* (this being the official English title), Stéphane Hessel went one step further in his appeal and called for *Engagez-Vous: Get Involved*. In both works (2011a/b), he articulates his criticism on the contemporary world society in a wide range: He notices (i) a growing gap between the very rich and the very poor, (ii) a somehow selective press that seems to be dependent on factual constraints, (iii) a historical destruction of the environment, (iv) a historical market radicalism and neoliberal dismantling of the state welfare systems, among other topics.

Diverse representatives of social movements all over the world called his thoughts influential and underlined its role model function.²⁵ Especially the so-called *Occupy (Wall Street) movement* seemed to be influenced by the ideas of Hessel: His

²⁴See the official homepages <http://www.indignezvous.com/> and <http://www.engagezvous.com/> [Nov 14, 2013].

²⁵Both, the so-called «Occupy» activist movement (in the US, Greece, the UK, Brazil, Mexico, Germany and elsewhere); and the so-called «Anonymous» *hacktivist* movement make references to Stéphane Hessel. See for example <http://www.occupytogether.org/aboutoccupy/#background> and <https://whyweprotest.net/community/> [Nov 13, 2013].

name emerged as a synonym of a forward thinker of the multimedia crowd; his quotes were enriched with hash-tags (#ows), a common recognition for the phenomenon of twitter/facebook activists.²⁶ From 2011 on, such protesters began to use the slogan of «We The 99%» around the world; portraying themselves as «the suffering, the good» site against «the greedy 1% one».

Thus, our *Stéphane* appears to be a friend of democratic movements, a friend of the masses. Atrocities do exist, but with the tools of information and activism, «we» (the 99%) can manage to overcome them and «change the world to a better place.» In challenging all three forms of violence, he still embraces the positive.

[B] Fabian the moralist

The second character in our cabinet of social-critics will be a fictional one, penned by Erich Kästner in 1931: *Fabian*. Fabian is the main protagonist in Kästner's most biting novel which uses not only the protagonist's name in his title, but also the fitting description: *Fabian. The Story of a Moralist*. Erich Kästner, widely described as a literal enlightener and voice of reason, was known for light sarcasm and wit. Yet, while many of his works were influenced by cheerful- and positiveness (fitting the character of Stéphane), the basic colour of Fabian is dark. It sounds plausible that Kästner worked up parts of his own character. In a speech for the PEN club in 1957, he, «Erich the moralist» introduces himself in third-person: "Our guest, ladies and gentlemen, is not an aesthete; he is rather a schoolmaster! [...] He is a moralist. He is a rationalist" (Kästner; cit. Bemann 1985: 158)²⁷. The character's description of Fabian as a stereotype goes beyond a pos-

²⁶See the site of its French publisher, *Indigène Éditions*, for images of common examples: <http://www.indigene-editions.fr/> [Nov 13, 2013]. Here, the two books by Hessel are considered as «protest bibles». See also the later comments on Žižek's *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (2009), specifically on the «liberal communists».

²⁷Translated by the author. German original reads as: "Unser Gast, meine Damen und Herren, ist gar kein Schöngest, sondern ein Schulmeister! [...] Er ist ein Moralist. Er ist ein Rationalist." Kästner continues: "[...] untertan und zugetan den drei unveräußerlichen Forderungen: nach der Aufrichtigkeit des Empfindens, nach der Klarheit des Denkens und der Einfachheit in Wort und Satz." Speech in front of PEN Club Zurich, 1957.

itive notion of moralism. Supplemented by a diffuse «rational» element, it rather focuses on the negative side of social-criticism.

If we have a short look into the novel, we seem closer affiliated with Carlin than with Hessel: Kästner takes us on a journey through the «madhouse» of the Weimar Republic. We follow Fabian's desperate observations of the «cynic life». Walking through whorehouses, temples of commercialism and profit-oriented newspaper agencies, he perceives the life around him as an «unjust structure» but does not believe in the good will of «the masses»²⁸. He simply sees no reason (anymore) to intervene. The more he informs himself the more he embitters. Finally, Fabian asks himself: "Where is the system in which I can function?" (Kästner 1976 [1931]: 42)²⁹. It does not seem to exist. And because of its non-existence everything he observes makes no sense in the end. Fabian does not represent a warrior's nature. The just ones and the sensible ones -- he might argue -- will never reach powerful positions: "hero Fabian engages himself towards the maxim of reputability and reasonability, without seeking practical consequences in his behaviour" (Bemman 1985: 171).³⁰ Helga Bemman notes that Kästner's story of Fabian has to be seen in sharp contrast towards his other works: it does without any somehow conceivable happy end.

Fabian's journey is a highly moralistic, (but) at the same disilluioning one.³¹ In a comment on Fabian, Erich Kästner states that «the caricature» is the ultimate tool of a moralist and adds with a sub-tone of melancholia: "If even that

²⁸This term should indeed meant as being rich in content. It reminds the author on the critiques of «diffuse masses» within Elias Canetti's *Crowds and Power* (1960) and Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem: a Report on the Banality of Evil* (1963).

²⁹Translated by the author. Original reads: "Wo ist das System, in dem ich funktionieren kann?" fragt Fabian."

³⁰Translated by the author. Original reads: "Held Fabian bekennt sich zu der Maxime der Anständigkeit und Vernünftigkeit, ohne zu praktischen Konsequenzen in seiner Haltung zu kommen."

³¹Erich Kästner's initial title suggestion was *Der Gang vor die Hunde*. Admittedly, the publishing house vetoed this title and censored its most politically biting and amorally obscene parts (which included scenes of aristocrat's paid group sex with infants). The more it should be seen as a fruitful side note in the following thoughts on the dog-philosophers in chapter 2. Later, the potted book was published in English under the title *Going to the dogs: The Story of a Moralist* (NYRB 2008). Kästner's unabridged original version was not published before October 2013. As of recently, *Der Gang vor die Hunde* is available through the distribution of *Atrium Verlag*, Zurich.

does not work, nothing works anymore. The case that nothing works anymore... -- back then and nowadays: no rarity" (Kästner 1976 [1931]: 5).³² In a conversation between Fabian and a secondary character, we find a theme that astoundingly fits our previous reflections on published opinion and media criticism:

One influences the public opinion more effectively with short reports than with long articles, but most effectively with publishing neither one nor another. Still, the most convenient public opinion is the *public lack of all opinion* (Kästner 1976 [1931]: 23).³³

From this sheer negative and apathetic perspective it is not far away from a fully dis disillusioned view. With the purpose to find the most appropriate stereotype description for the public phenomenon *George Carlin*, our third character in the cabinet of social-critics will darken the atmosphere even more. And yet, he will somehow moderate between Stéphane the activist and Fabian the moralist. It is the refusing «*anti*» attitude and a stance of common refusal that describe both, Fabian and Carlin. But Carlin is not lacking in drive. As opposed to Fabian, he takes the initiative: He uses the open stage to speak (and shout out) his criticism. To clarify the fine distinction it helps to recapitulate Beggini's distinction between «*outlook*» and «*behaviour*» (Baggini 2013: 3). While Carlin's attitude seems to fit Fabian's «*outlook*», it is somehow closer to Stéphane's «*go-out/into-the-public behaviour*». What we search for is a third character that is both: active but full of distrust: someone that is filled up with *too much* rage for being a positive positivist of the meta system around us, but also with *enough* courage for not being a negative *negator* of all forms of initiative within it.

³²Translated by the author. Original reads: "Wenn auch das nicht hilft, dann hilft überhaupt nichts mehr. Dass überhaupt nichts hilft, ist – damals wie heute: keine Seltenheit."

³³Translated by the author. Original reads: "Man beeinflusst die öffentliche Meinung mit Meldungen wirksamer als durch Artikel, aber am wirksamsten dadurch, dass man weder das eine noch das andere bringt. Die bequemste öffentliche Meinung ist noch immer die öffentliche Meinungslosigkeit."

[C] Sinclair the mocker

This, finally, is the metier of the biting satirist. Although harshly criticizing his fellow citizens and the institutions around, the satirist proves to be successful in taking up in the very same environment: the very same people and systems ^{s/}he seems to refuse guarantee ^{her/his} ³⁴ existence through their role of consumers or at least inspiring work models. The shortly presented stereotypical figure will be named after *Sinclair Lewis*. In a hymn of praise, Vernon Louis Parrington called Lewis -- one of the loudest and harshest American social-critics at that time -- *Our Own Diogenes* (Parrington 1973 [1927]). The similarity towards the Ancient name-giver will be elaborated in the following chapter. So far, it is enough to focus on Parrington's justification to call him as such:

His irrepressible satire belongs to a new school. He has studied the technique of the realists, and under the beguiling pretence of telling the truth objectively and dispassionately, he insists on revealing to us unaccommodated mass as a poor, bare, forked animal, who [...] persists in thinking himself a monstrous clever fellow (Parrington 1973 [1927]: 7).

His style, so Stuart Pratt Sherman in 1922, "[...] can be treated with that 'mixture of love and wit', which Thackeray declares is the essence of humour" (Sherman 1971 [1922]: 3). Without deeper investigating Lewis' work here, the descriptions of Sherman and Parrington allow us to create the picture of someone that uses his rage as a motor of activity rather than restraint. What Lewis notices is "a land of material abundance" in which "the good life is reduced to being measured in commissions and percentages; civilization comes to flower in the broker; the mahogany desk is the altar at which we sacrifice in a land of triumphant materialism" (Lewis; cit. Parrington 1973 [1927]: 13). This Sinclair Lewis clearly no-

³⁴Throughout the analysis, terms such as «s/he» should read as a quite helpless, partly ironical try to overcome the enforced *gender bias*: The thesis in hand does indeed mainly focus on: *men, men, men*. Beginning with the thoughts of a male sociologist, *the father* (sic) of peace studies, *three male* philosophers will be applied on *three male* Kabarett artists. This selection is more than random: It would indeed be interesting to investigate the fact that the clear majority of TV Kabarett work is done by male actors. This is aggravated by the fact that the seven abovementioned figures do all fulfil the classic notion of a white, left middle-class intellectual as it is «typical» for the addressed milieu.

tices cultural and structural violence around himself. As a reaction, he starts to *mock* society; -- *Sinclair the mocker*:

Mr. Lewis is a good hater, but, contrary to the common rumour, he is not all compact of antipathies. He has, I am convinced, a generalized conception of the Good, which, if he were a lyric poet, he could capture in a net of images (Sherman 1971 [1922]: 6).

In the end, the difference between our two prototype figures of negativity (Fabian and Sinclair) lies in their relation towards society: While Fabian does not even try to get heard by anyone, Sinclair aims to confront the society directly. Other than Stéphane and the Occupy Movement, he does not perceive «the 1%» as root of the diverse forms of violence. He finally makes «the 99%» -- the mass -- discharging its duties.

The mass; the crowd: this vocabulary stands out as one of the important phrases in our toolbox. In *Crowd and Power*, Elias Canetti formed the notion of the *double crowd*: people are prone to think in notions of «us» and «them», «99%» and «1%». Main divisions seem to take place in a two-fold notion (with a wink, one might highlight the distinct disparity towards the peaceful three-fold peace models) such as «men» and «women», «the living» and «the dead», «thesis» and «antithesis». The sphere of violence always inhabits a more or less outspoken notion of *the winning top-dog* on the one hand and *the losing under-dog* on the other. The more invisible violence gets, the more blurred the suffering of the latter might be. It is the task of the social-critic to question violence although it might appear in the frame of *normality*.

On the questioner the effect is a feeling of enhanced power. He enjoys this and consequentially asks more and more questions; every answer he receives is an act of submission. Personal freedom consists largely in having a defence against questions. The most blatant tyranny is the one which asks the most blatant questions (Canetti 1984 [1960]: 285).

Canetti thinks the unreflective space, the egalitarian area of "it-is-ok-how-it-is" as most blatant tyranny. In this way, he transforms into the ideal Sinclair. The radical social-critic

takes the questioning to the extreme: ^{s/}He aims to uncover the most brutal nature of violence. Again, and again the question must arise: Why does structural, cultural, and direct violence take place? *Again: cui bono? What is to blame? Is it the «us»?*

The most visible form of violence is war. Put in such a frame, war happens and takes place everywhere. Elias Canetti reduces the final goal of any war activity to the following greedy narrative: War occurs as the aim to transform an enemy crowd into a heap of dead. Each side would wish to be a larger living crowd than the other. The remarkable duration of wars would derive from their origin in crowds, for all crowds wish to persist and to grow (Canetti 1984 [1960]: 68).³⁵

Statements like this go beyond the positive notion of "the Good" within humanity. They seem to reduce human action on an unchangeable nature that is in its core bad. Human beings, to put it simply, are doomed. It is this desperate and melancholic background-notion that makes Fabian *Fabian*. This, mixed with a good portion of bounce-back-ability makes Sinclair *Sinclair*. Our mocker, by implication, stands as a representative for Walter Benjamin's notion "the leftist melancholy" (Hierholzer 1990: 9). Benjamin noticed in Kurt Tucholsky, one of the most famous German Sinclairs, "the view that man's unchangeable nature ultimately prevents any transformation of society" (Hierholzer 1990: 10). Such as Norway's most notable Sinclair -- *Knut Hamsun* --, Kurt Tucholsky used biting satire as a proper tool of the social-critic's communication with the public that he *loves* and *hates* at the same time. Other than Fabian's resignation, the love-hate relationship involves a maximum of social empathy.

At the same time, biting satire and black humour are prone to be misunderstood. The crucial social-critique, so to say, is put into a cipher of «nothing is as it seems». In this way, the world «that does not make sense anymore» is reflected by

³⁵The original version reads as follows: "In Kriegen geht es ums Töten [...]. Es geht um ein Töten in *Haufen*. Möglichst viele Feinde werden niedergeschlagen; aus der gefährlichen Masse von lebenden Gegnern soll ein Haufen von Toten werden" *Masse und Macht* (1960: 75), translated: *Crowds and Power* (1984: 68).

language -- *the wor(l)d's synopsis* -- that does not do either. This cipher, however, is in need of a recipient who feels the same: Someone that understands the sad «oh no» out of the apparently amusing «yay». Someone that reads mental underload out of an apparent mental overload. A classic example of the complexity of mistreatment of sarcasm and mockery can be looked up in the diverse literature on education. In 1928, for example, a highly sophisticated «experimental analysis» by Thomas Briggs "suggest(s) means that may be used by supervisors [here: namely teachers] to prevent sarcasm and to remedy any bad effects" (Briggs 1928: 685) and raises alarm:

The data give little comfort to those who may argue that sarcasm is occasionally justifiable. They show clearly that sarcasm even to one who may deserve it is far more likely to harm others than to do good to the individual (Briggs 1928: 694).

This piece of education theory's history reveals a basic problem: confronted with Canetti's *most blatant tyranny*, the biting social-critic -- let it be, as in this case, a teacher -- might find ^{her/}his only escape from the positivist «madhouse» around ^{her/}him in articulating ^{her/}his probably just aim with the psycholinguistics of sarcasm. But instead of being perceived as an «eye-opener», ^{s/}he might be characterized as a «hater».

Yet, there seems to be hope to think critical (peace) education in terms of mockery. Almost 60 years after *Briggs* comes *Gibbs*: In an analysis that combines both, psycholinguistics and the academic's reflection on knowledge transfer, Raymond Gibbs rehabilitates our Sinclair as a teacher of life: "[...] experiments examining memory for sarcasm showed that sarcasm was remembered much better than literal uses of the same expressions of non-sarcastic equivalents" (Gibbs 1986: 3). That leads us to the final question: Who, then, is the cynic?

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1.3 A-B-C: Who is the cynic?
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After we got to know the three stereotypical figures Stéphane,

Fabian and Sinclair with their different reaction towards three conceptualized forms of violence -- all being described as social-critics of *somehow perceived* systematic aberrations within the «game of society» --, we now risk a short look on the societies notion on the «cynic within the game». In a further consequent dependence on Galtung, this will be done on the basis of three global representatives of contemporary's *Cultural Hegemony*.³⁶

[A] The stock market manager

The story of [A] begins with the birth into an upper middle-class family. After visiting a prestigious, private high school, ^{s/}he studies at a well known «Master of Business Administration» programme with the financial counter value of a single-family home and completes ^{her/}his studies with a work on «smart human resource control management». Based on ^{her/}his radical *human potential savings model formula* («two should work for three by earning the half») ^{s/}he receives a *summa cum laude* and a high-paid position as a trader at one of the biggest banking houses in the world. To secure decent quarterly figures, the company applies ^{her/}his «smart» *human capital* model to classify 3289 employees into [A]'s specially designed «category 4b»: *highly ineffective for further progress according to the formula*. All of them receive an instant dismissal. The company's market cap grows onto a 14-months-high. After a successful promotion within the company, [A] focuses on the increasing trade with basic foods. The media uses the case of [A] to portray the image of a «greedy manager» while emotionally contrasting ^{her/}his behaviour with «the suffering of millions of people in Latin America and Asia» through prohibitive prices on wheat and rice. «The society», the *public opinion* characterizes [A] as being «cynical». Our Sinclair would have replied: «Yes, indeed.»

³⁶The author hopes to do justice to *Antonio Gramsci's Prison Notebooks* (1935) while portraying «the stock market manager» (top-dog), «the Mc Donald's employee» (under-dog) and «the mocking satirist» (the dog) as the prototypes of our contemporary's *Cultural Hegemony* (Gramsci), the age of global neoliberalism and market radicalism.

[B] The Mc Donald's employee

The story of [B] begins with the birth into a middle-class family. After visiting a private high school with good reputation, ^{s/}he studies at a popular «Peace and Conflict research» programme. With the aim to refinance some conveniences -- a car, a centrally located flat, a round trip through Thailand -- ^{s/}he decides to work at Mc Donald's besides studying although «not directly supporting» certain food policies and work practises of the global franchise chain.

Karfakis and Kokkinidis (2011) discuss the paradox that a somehow indifferent attitude at the workplace can be seen as profitable for a big concern. Instead of lateral thinking and scrutinizing, ignorance might be seen as a profitable driving force: They describe acts of disengagement from the organizational values as a fruitful reinforcement of the individual's commitment to the organization and use the story of [B] as a metaphorical image for this kind of attitude: "The cynical worker of McDonalds might be wearing a 'McShit' tee-shirt under her uniform, attempting in this way to dis-identify herself from the organization's values, but still performs as an efficient member of her team" (Karfakis/Kokkinidis 2011: 333). Drawing on Fleming and Spicer (2003)³⁷, this example nicely illustrates how «silent» dis-identification is able to prevent a self-defeating form of resistance. Slavoj Žižek -- whose thoughts on the topic will be part of the latter analysis -- described the behaviour of the «*Mc Shit employee*» not only as archetypical within globally established (thus impersonal, rather imaginary) companies; but also within "every sphere of social life" (Žižek 1989: 32). Around the same time, in the late 1980s and early 1990s critical sociology debates, George Ritzer (1993) and Benjamin R. Barber (1992) established the terms «McDonaldization of Society» and «Mc World» respectively. Under such umbrella terms, Barber outlined his thoughts of

³⁷Peter Fleming and Andre Spicer were the first ones to think the «cynical employee» as a «dis-identifying» but «functional performer» within the *organization theory*. Their work 'Working at a cynical distance: Implications for power, subjectivity and resistance', *Organization* 10:1, 157-179, co-opts the employee's refusing of power as a power tool.

contemporary, especially Western, consumerist societies while highlighting «forces» that would demand *integration and uniformity*

[...] and that mesmerize the world with fast music, fast computers, and fast food—with *MTV*, *Macintosh*, and *McDonald's*, pressing nations into one commercially homogenous global network: one *McWorld* tied together by technology, ecology, communications, and commerce [...] (Barber 1992: 53).

As did Samuel Huntington in his well-elaborated, contemporaneous theory of the *Clash Of Civilisations* (1993), Barber postulated a possible «clash scenario» between a Western *McWorld* and an anti-Western *Jihad* movement. In his opinion, both categories could stand representatively for a dichotomous *World Order* that would continuously erode and undermine -- what he indirectly calls -- «real democratic structures» on two front lines. Both grouping concepts formed the later, considerably catchy title *Jihad Vs. McWorld* in which Barber formulates the sceptical symbiosis in which “the planet is falling precipitantly apart *AND* coming reluctantly together at the very same moment” (Barber 1992: 54; emphasis in original).

In this shady light, Žižek states that a denying consciousness full of ignorance, rather than a lack of knowledge, has become the *ideological force* in our late modern societies. This is what he calls «ideological fantasy»: “even if we do not take things seriously, even if we keep an ironical distance, we are still doing them” (Žižek 1989: 32).

This leads Karfakis and Kokkinidis³⁸ to think disidentification as a *success* of «organizational control» instead of an *imperfection* of this control. The silent Mc-Shit statement, as Peter Bloom would put it, allows the disillusioned subject “the moral high ground of internal dissent without the added obligation of revolutionary or reforming action” (Bloom 2008: 12). «The society», the *public opinion*

³⁸Who, as fruitful background knowledge, both work for the «Leicester School of *Managements*», which the author sees as comparable with the earlier mentioned, somehow schizophrenic, «poststructuralist approaches» within «Management Accounting & Control Systems» at *Queen's School of Business*: Cultural Hegemony as its best.

characterizes [B] as being «not cynical». Sinclair, however would have replied: «No; [B] *is* cynical.»³⁹

[C] The biting satirist

In an essay with the meaningful title *Who Names The World With What Consequences*⁴⁰, Robert Arnove presents us an insight into the *Theory of Bullshit*:

There is a game that more critically-minded academics play when they go to meetings (from the local to the international) when they hear such buzz words as those mentioned by Steve—*donor harmonization, knowledge management, and country ownership* as well as *strategic plans, outcomes-based management, accountability, quality control, metrics, poverty reduction strategy papers* and so on. It's called 'bullshit bingo' (Arnove 2009: 128).

Character [C] could be imagined as one of them. While swimming within the system to a certain degree (receiving a decent education at a university; working within the public state sector), the prototype of [C] does not seem to accept (social) injustices or dislocations with a silent protest on a hidden t-shirt but rather prefers to speak out his criticism loud. Arnove continues to present the game as such: "As soon as the words on the Bingo sheet are filled up, members of the audience stand-up and yell *Bingo!* – often to the surprise of the speaker" (Arnove 2009: 128). In doing so, the imagined figure seems to neglect the most essential (work) hierarchies around her/him. This kind of mockery and cheekiness might be accepted as long as this figure is conceived to be *somehow weird* or *clownish* instead of *dangerous* or *system-threatening*.

This, nevertheless, exactly *is* the hidden *métier* of the «biting satirist»: the more biting her/his approach might be, the more anti-systemic thought is able to filter through such power-refusing action. The anecdote of the bullshit bingo does not lead to a convincing description of [C] alone. But it

³⁹The critical examination of the McDonald's business model and its adaption on a wider «neoliberal society» within sociology and a somehow *left progressive* public debate seems to be a common-place access to make invisible structures visible. See, for example, *Le Monde Diplomatique Norway's* lead story for February 2014 (6-8): «McFattigdom». Already 20 years ago, the sociologist George Ritzer (1993) established the term «McDonaldization of Society».

⁴⁰The title nicely consorts with McDermott's *What We Think We Know And Why* (2004) and Luhmann 2000 (p. 1).

functions as a symptom. Limited to certain frames of the system that ^{s/}he tries to mock on, the 'biting satirist' might find ^{her/}his role in the work of a jester. Images 4 and 5 stand representatively for such systemic out-spoken, but somehow frame-limited criticism.



Image 4 | Jan Matejko, 1862. *Stanczyk*, 1514: The court jester seems to be the only person at a royal ball who is troubled by current political events.

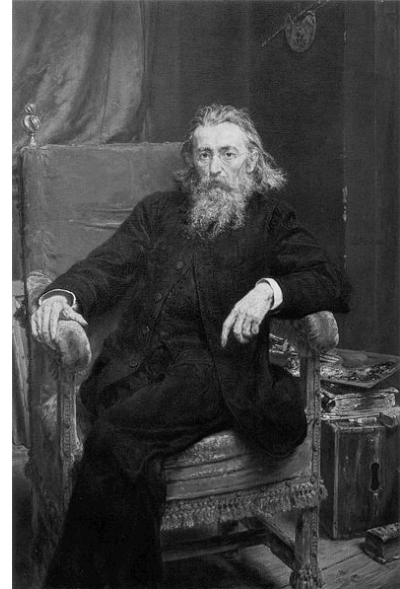


Image 5 | Jan Matejko, 1892. Self portrait.

Within the Polish popular culture, the figure of *Stańczyk* symbolizes the prototype of a court jester. Like the German pendant *Eulenspiegel*, *Stańczyk* could use ^{her/}his role as court-accepted humourist to criticise political dislocations in front of the actors who were to blame: the functional and systemic elite of that time. Jan Matejko, whoms self-portrait from 1892 (image 5) seems to be highly influenced by ^{her/}his 30 years older *Stańczyk* painting (1862; image 4), portrays two disillusioned, rather melancholic figures. The ones who 'did not get' *Stańczyk*'s and Matejko's criticism, would declassify them as a funny comedian and a positive artist; the ones 'who did' would shout: *bitter cynics!*

No matter which factual constraints have to be taken into account, Kurt Tucholsky describes *the work of satire* as such as a throughout *negative business*. In *What Is Permitted To Satire*, he calls for any action that "bites, laughs, whis-

bles, and beats the great colourful battle-drum against all stagnation and sluggishness" (Tucholsky 1919; transl. Hierholzer 1990: 21). Whoever would blur the concepts of *sheer fun and comedy* with the sphere of social-criticism would undermine the seriousness of a clear-pointed skepticism: "Nothing betrays lack of character more quickly, nothing demonstrates more rapidly the conscienceless clownishness of someone who attacks this person today and tomorrow that" (Tucholsky 1919; transl. Hierholzer 1990: 21). In a way, the popular characterization of a social-critic's work as being *cynical* must be seen as an appreciation: it consists of radical meaning. On the other hand, the satirist is anything but a cynic. The cynic arranges with the existing, systemic state of affairs, while the satirist wants to jolt. "The satirist" -- explains Tucholsky -- "is a wounded idealist. He wants the world to be good, but it is bad, and he combats such badness" (cit. Hierholzer 1990: 25).

Back to Bingo! It is not the *Bullshit Bingo* alone that leads the common audience to describe [C] as a 'cynic'. It is ^{her/}his whole appearance. Based on a demonstrated lack of confidence in the own ability to influence the state of affairs in a perceived *world gone mad*, [C] openly announces that ^{s/}he considers any individual action useless. But instead of giving up; instead of vanishing from the public sphere such as Fabian, the biting satirist uses the tool of *elegant provocation* - - and all that remains is the hollow laugh of the ^{wo/}man on the gallows:

The only weapon of the modern satirist is the continued production of satiric material, and the most prominent message seems to be that the next generation is undeniably worth protection and salvation. Even if there is no hope for an audience "sophisticated enough" to enjoy "wit, imagination and the graces of literature" and their application to "serious topics", then laughter as a primal expression can still be used as an alternative (Aanensen 2011: 89).

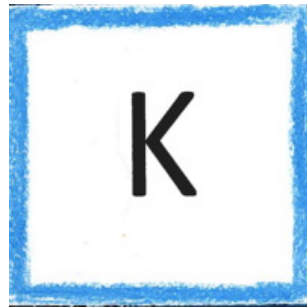
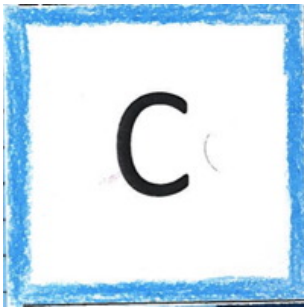
But not even such exorbitance of laughter is able to unveil the deeply pessimistic world view of the satirist. No matter,

which human-made topic ^{s/}he is investigating in, ^{s/}he encounters something that ^{s/}he might interpret as *errors of man* in diverse shapes or forms. "In the end, satire is an exploration of humanity", argues Mariette Aanensen, and adds that the satirist has to define ^{her/}his task in seeking to convey such "errors" (Aanensen 2011: 19) -- willingly or not. «The society», the public opinion, characterizes [C] as being «cynical». Sinclair, however would have replied: «No; [C] is not cynical.» From now on, we will call our Sinclair, the biting satirist, Diogenes.

Finally, the previously used terms moralism, skepticism, gallows humour and biting satire can be thought together. They give a hint towards a further conceptualisation of counter-cynic cynicism and will lead us towards a reflection on Kynicism with /K/. After an introducing threefold circular tour -- from violence [A] and [B] to violence [C]; from reaction [A] and [B] to reaction [C]; and from character [A] and [B] to character [C], it is time to investigate into the research question: Is it fruitful to characterise satirical behaviour in terms of Kynicism? If so: Is it fruitful to characterise Kynical behaviour in terms of peace activism? Do we find specific fields of contemporary Kynicism? Does *Kynic peace activism* function as one of such *métiers* of the modern Diogenes? In the following, the work of Kabarett will be shortly presented as a possibly fruitful approach to such satirical endeavour.

After extensively investigating the *three-fold* thoughts of one thinker (Johan Galtung; colourized in yellow, green, and red) and causal derivations from the phenomena of the diverse experience of «violence», it is then time to literally set a inverse mode: In the following, the remarks of *three* thinkers will be bundled to one coherent thought: the Kynic inversion. First, we concentrate on its inherent meta-inversion:

c goes K.



-Chapter 2-

**Conscious considerations: Satirical Mockery, Society,
and the Schizophrenia of Contemporary Cynicism**

*«What is a cynic?» asked Cecil Graham.
«A man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing»,
said Lord Darlington.*

Oscar Wilde, 1892: Lady Windermere's Fan.

*«You are very cynical», said Lord Mannering, looking at her with curiosity.
«No, I only state facts»,
said Mrs Elwood.*

Mabel Collins, 1893: Juliet's Lovers.

*«You are very cynical», said Lady Locke, flicking the pony's fat white back with the whip.
«All intelligent people are. Cynicism is merely the art of seeing things as they are
instead of as they ought to be.»*

Robert Hichens, 1894: The Green Carnation.

It was the moment when we spoke about the principles of peace education, when I asked myself: through which influences did I begin to think in a reflective way on such wide topics such as war, peace, and its (in)direct relationship towards our very own lifestyles? Who (understood as: which institutions; which individuals) did influence me to what extent? Sure, I used the common information channels to inform myself about politics. Moreover, I was quite satisfied with the political education at my school. But there was a third, *more critical* «political education» that aroused my interest and later influenced many of my understandings of societal relationships: political Kabarett programs.

These stood in sharp contrast towards the faithful study of institutions that I saw myself confronted with in the sphere of *political science*. Enriched with deep skepticism towards positivist models on «Just War» or «Humanitarian Interventions»; the role of the nation-state as guarantor of security and its seemingly natural role as a unit of organizing cultural and societal life, many Kabarett artists seemed to «speak out what I felt». In my opinion, this enigma was reason enough, to focus on it in a scientific way. Since the work of

political Kabarett is a rather unknown side issue, the thesis aims to be a voyage of exploration. How fruitful might the work of political Kabarett be? What, strictly speaking, *is* the work of political Kabarett? It did not take long until the feuilleton described Hagen Rether -- a quite 'radical' German Kabarett artist -- as the «prototype of a cynic». Similar to George Carlin (nowadays' Sinclair Lewis) in the USA or Knut Nærum (nowadays' Knut Hamsun) in Norway, the societies' most radical counter-cynic seemed to function as a figurehead of «cynicism itself». In my opinion, this was reason enough to focus on what is meant by the term *cynicism*.

How to discover κυνισμός? What I saw on the stage was someone that seemed to be highly critical towards the lifestyle of -- what he considered as -- the «Western world societies» on the costs -- thus, the suffering -- of others. Far away from a commercialized comedy that would formulate its primary purpose as *cheerful, joky entertainment*, biting Kabarett seems to fall closer in such categories as *meta-critical pamphlets*. The following extract should briefly illuminate this point:

Mexico? I don't know anything about it. Well, I know that they starve because they cannot bake Tortillas anymore, since the corn price is being speculated too high. Our fat stock in Germany gets that shit. And the rest of it is being used as fuel: 'Oh, damn... the mineral oil is getting scarce soon. What should we use for tanking up our cars then?' – 'Mhh... let us maybe tank up groceries!' – 'Oh, good idea! But not our groceries... mhhh, maybe their groceries?' – 'Well, sure! It also was their mineral oil, moron!' (Rether 2011: 0:12:36).

But what exactly let people describe the work of biting satire as «cynicism»? According to the common understanding⁴¹, a person might be considered as such if ^{s/}he acts selfish, ignores basic moral attitudes and fulfils more or less exactly the attributes that actors like Carlin or Rether criticize in a harsh manner. One look into the philosophical movement of

⁴¹ Surely, the postulated, all-embracing argument «common understanding» lacks far-reaching evidence. Nevertheless, a short look into Nunn 1989 and into Mazella 2007 might be helpful here. Sam Nunn formulates *A Common-Sense Definition of «Common Understanding»*, while David Mazella investigates *The Making of Modern Cynicism* from Ancient roots into a contemporary selfish, rather nihilist, attitude: “When we think about cynicism, we usually think of it as a reaction to the latest political scandal [...][- but...]” (Mazella 2007: 1).

Kynicism⁴² might be a fruitful escape from the conceptual confusion: In the 1980s, Peter Sloterdijk, Michel Foucault, and Slavoj Žižek rediscovered⁴³ a school of (practical) philosophical thought that seemed to be forgotten a long time ago: the Ancient Kynics and their most recognizable figure, Diogenes of Sinope. Besides the definitions of -- and distinctions between -- Kynicism (German: *Kynismus*) and cynicism (German: *Zynismus*) (Sloterdijk 1983), a rather popular scientific debate arose on Kynic virtues such as *parrhesia*, the conceptualization of Greek free speech (Foucault 1984), and the inversion of Marxism (Žižek 1989). Slavoj Žižek used the concept of κυνισμός, Kynicism, to formulate his ideology criticism. As it will be shown in terms of a sketchy reference, the work of biting, satirical Kabarett stands out as a good illuminating example for the application of Kynic terms in contemporary times.

Three theoretical cornerstones from Sloterdijk, Foucault, and Žižek will be essential for the analysis. They all have their roots within the philosophical Kynicism, but transfer the Ancient concept into the contemporary time. In a reader's comment on the earlier mentioned article «In praise of cynicism» one can read the following distinction between *skepticism* on the one hand and *cynicism* on the other: to be skeptical would mean to be "marked by or given to doubt; questioning: e.g. a skeptical attitude; skeptical of political promises" (Baggini 2013: 3). To be cynical, then, would be equalized with "the belief that people are motivated chiefly by base or selfish concerns" (ibidem). Thus, the first approach is seen as positive and rational, the basis of an Enlightenment-inspired intelligent thought. The concept of cynicism, on the other hand, finds itself limited to an unthinking, unreflective negativity that illuminates nothing. The task of the fol-

⁴²The attribution of the Ancient philosophical Kynics as 'school' must be seen controversial; some research uses the umbrella term 'group' instead; see Niehues-Pröbsting 1988 [1979].

⁴³The set phrase "rediscovered" should point to a rediscovery within the sphere of wider, *popular* research. Niehues-Pröbsting 1988 [1979] must be seen as a precursor of contemporaries' – though initially very limited – studies on Kynicism. In his introduction towards the ninth lecture of his later mentioned series *The Government of Self and Others* at the *Collège de France* in 1983/1984, Michel Foucault names *Niehues-Pröbsting 1979* as a major source.

lowing section will be to show that this simplification is no longer maintainable.

One first hint on the complexity of the term κυνισμός could be a focus on its semantic structure in different languages. A comparison between the English, the Norwegian, and the German translation out of the Greek reveals an interesting insight. In English, /c/ynicism is used for both, the Ancient school of philosophy and the contemporary notion of a selfish behaviour. Within the academic debate, many scholars decided to use capital letters to distinguish the Ancient /C/ynicism⁴⁴ from the modern /c/ynicism, whereas in Norwegian this distinction has not been made. Nevertheless, the Norwegian translation reveals another interesting point: Instead of using a sharp /c; s; z/, the Norwegian term begins with a /k/. Both, the philosophical movement and the modern meaning are described with *kynisme*. On the other hand, the German language uses a distinct form for each case: whereby *Kynismus* [/K/] describes the philosophy of Kyon, the dog, the Cynic; *Zynismus* [/Z/] stands for the modern understanding of a *Zyniker*, the selfish person; the cynic.

English*	/c/ynicism	versus	/c/ynicism	c (C) c
French	/c/ynisme	versus	/c/ynisme	c = c
Spanish	/c/inismo	versus	/c/inismo	c = c
Esperanto	/c/inikismo	versus	/c/inikismo	c = c

Norwegian	/k/ynisme	versus	/k/ynisme	k = k

Turkish	/k/inizm	versus	/s/inizm	k s
German	/K/ynismus	versus	/Z/ynismus	K Z

*Alternative	/K/ynicism	versus	/c/ynicism	k (K) c

Table 1 | On κυνισμός: Linguistic differentiation between Ancient and contemporary form.⁴⁵

Scholars such as Heinrich Niehues-Pröbsting (1988 [1979]), and later also Michel Foucault, pointed out that -- curiously enough -- research on Cynicism was mainly limited towards the

⁴⁴Here, the usage of upper-case characters is comparable with the naming of the academic discipline «International Relations» in order to distinguish it from *international relations* as such.

⁴⁵The content of *table 1* was carried together by the author. Throughout the thesis, the Ancient «Kynicism» will be written in capitals, whereas the contemporary «cynicism» will be not.

German-speaking world.⁴⁶ The city of *Sinope*, origin of *Diogenes the Kynic* (sic), is located in nowadays' Turkey. This would explain why the same distinction is still being made in the modern Turkish language. The popular rediscovery of Kynic thought by Sloterdijk lead also some English-speaking scholars to distinguish between /K/ and /c/: The translation of *Critique of Cynical Reason* draws on such a distinction by purpose. This thesis will do so as well.

=====
2.1 Cynicism with /c/: *Elementary empirical explorations*
=====

Kynically spoken, cynicism is everything that surrounds us. One might take any random example of contemporary peace research to illustrate this point. Between 2011 and 2013, for example, the so-called *Syrian civil war* dominated and still dominates the media coverage. (i) First, the concept of war as such can be perceived as cynic action. As we will see later, Peter Sloterdijk lists the term «military cynicism» as one of the major cynic forms. Many might consider that «the first casualty of war is truth»; or to put it in other words: *the first thing that dies in war is the truth*.⁴⁷ A counter-cynic would put it different: ^{s/}He would highlight that «the truth»⁴⁸ must have already died long before any action of war could occur. Clearly we have to take divergent assumptions of the natural state into account: Do human beings act *bad*; just for the purpose of it? Or is the one's perception of *the* «bad» just the other's perception of *the good*? Most prominently stands the phrase: *One's terrorist is another's freedom fighter*. And vice versa. In other words: is any direct violent action thinkable in which the 'aggressive' violator does not perceive ^{her/}his action as somehow justifiable? Even in the case of the -

⁴⁶See chapter 3.

⁴⁷Please see *The Guardian's Debate: Who coined the phrase «The First Casualty of War is Truth»* for a debate on the origins of this statement. URL: <http://www.theguardian.com/notesandqueries/query/0,5753,-21510,00.html> [Nov 11, 2013]

⁴⁸*How* this very vulnerable term might be used remains most essential. We will come back to that in chapter 3.

- what might be normatively described as -- *worst humanitarian crimes* that occur(ed) throughout the history of mankind, one should allow oneself the simple thought: Could it be that also the *worst of the worst* acted within their very own sense system that could justify their -- again, normatively perceived - *brutal* action? (ii) Second, *how* and *why* do we perceive «*what is going on in Syria*»⁴⁹, sticking to this elementary example of current events. Especially within the sensitive field of peace studies, researchers and so called «*experts of their field*» are vulnerable when it comes to any confrontation of a somehow perceived «*reality*» with sophisticated philosophical terms such as «*justice*», «*moral*», and so on. Also, and especially academic agents and political actors sometimes *don't know*; but their professional stand seems to obligate them *to know*. As a matter of fact, they have to make sense of the system they live in and have to enable others (students; citizens; followers; readers; listeners) to do so as well. The same mature and responsible person who learns through BBC (UK), CNN (USA), Al Jazeera (Qatar) and Al Arabiya (Saudi Arabia) that «*not everything should be considered as black-white; but still: Assad [the personified symbol; the symbolised person] is the tyrant*» would learn through RT (Russia), PressTV (Iran), CCTV (China) and teleSur (Latin America) that «*not everything should be considered as black-white; but still: the Takfir [the p.s.; the s.p.] is the tyrant*».

This example simplifies. Because simplifying lies in the nature of such illustrating examples. At the same time, cynicism (with c) just lies in the nature of violence. The more visible violence gets, the more visible its inherent cynicism gets. Therefore, many other (occasionally simplifying) examples of «*military cynicism*» could be found. One could, for example, focus on the official *casus belli* of the last major «*defensive*», «*just*» and «*humanitarian*» interventions. In 1990,

⁴⁹Here, the author uses the expression «going on...» – to be understood as a common news filler text – on purpose.

the Nayirah testimony⁵⁰ -- the claim that Saddam Hussein's soldiers stole baby incubators out of a hospital in Kuwait and let the babies die -- convinced the last senators and the public to favour the Gulf War. The claim turned out to be falsified. The military involvement took place. Ten years after, a direct line between the 19 Saudi Arabian terrorists from 9/11 was drawn towards Afghanistan and the Taliban regime. Up to now, this connection does not seem to convince, but the just intervention took place. George W. Bush announced: "The battle is now joined on many fronts. We will not waver, we will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail".⁵¹ He clearly fulfills the image of the proto-cynic. This, nevertheless, hides the fact that Bush just had to act according to a given role within the *military-industrial complex*⁵²: A role that any other president before him and any other after him played, plays, and will have to play. Not he himself is the cynic alone.

Another claim, in 2003, can be described as the mainstream's acceptance of «every war preparation involves its speculative moment»: the case Curveball, Powell's Power Point presentation and the «evidenced» existence of weapons of mass destruction was insomuch suggestive and dishonest that even the broader public opinion in many Western countries turned against the cry for war. Nevertheless, the published opinion worked smooth and the intervention took place. The same can be said about the final claims before turning a non-fly zone over Libya into a hot war zone: Gaddafi's soldiers were reportedly '*using Viagra for mass rape*'; Gaddafi himself seemed to '*lose the credibility of his own people while massacring them*'. Interestingly enough, the UN Human Rights Council and the National Transitional Council published official victim esti-

⁵⁰ See Gottschalk 1992: *Operation Desert Cloud: The Media and The Gulf War*, World Policy Journal 9:3.

⁵¹ This famous statement was raised in George W. Bush's «Presidential Address to the Nation» on October 7, 2001. Cited in Bush 2003.

⁵² Not without coincidence, Dwight D. Eisenhower's concept of the *military-industrial complex* is being used throughout the analysis. See Eisenhower's «Farewell Address to the Nation» from January 17, 1961, at 08:15 of the 16 minutes long speech: Eisenhower 2009.

mates of «tens of thousands being killed».⁵³ In 2013, only two years after, such claims turned out to be untrue or exaggerated. Again and again, the basic model seems to be the same: a somehow enlightened, moral-infiltrated, *liberal-democratic* society must be convinced to favour war; supporting any military action with the greatest asset: democratic will, filled by empathy with «the suffering; the victims».

In the case of Kosovo, Slobodan Milošević was portrayed as the new Hitler. *The Sun*, for example, titled: “Serbian troops and paramilitary forces are slaughtering thousands, tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands of Kosovar Albanians. [...] The Serb cruelty has chilling echoes of the Holocaust” (cit. O’Neill 2012: 3; McLaughlin 1999). Not even after more than ten years of investigation, any evidence of such numbers can be found. The *Holocaust narrative* seemed to function as a plausible we-have-to-interact reasoning. Thus, the usage of this cynic narrative for waging cynic interventions has to be described as meta-cynic. No matter, if the published opinion speaks about Iraq or Iran; Libya or Syria; Kosovo or Kuwait. It always seems to be the blackmailed (d)evil^{her/} himself (Hussein; Gaddafi; Assad;...) that tends to «kill his own people». And we, the enlightened must act. Somehow. Until now, the claim that Bashar al-Assad’s troops used «chemical weapons» on August 21 against the «own population» is not evidenced.⁵⁴

⁵³See for example *The Guardian* and *The Huffington Post* from September 8, 2011: “At least 30000 died in the war.” (Laub 2011a; 2011b). As well as in the case of the so-called Syrian *civil* war, the Qatari news channel *Al Jazeera English* took the role of a notoriously biased, but «neutral» framed news agent of a «truth setting» in which the predominantly foreign rebel forces were portrayed as *freedom fighters* and *civilians full of rage* (see for example Bertly 2011). Due to its rather «investigative» role on the Iraq War coverage (as a counter voice towards the BBC/CNN frame), *Al Jazeera English* is still seen as a reliable source by many; even in the case of the Libya and Syria conflict coverage. As in the above mentioned *The Guardian* example, journalists from other news agencies as well as political agents such as Cherif Bassioni and other head agents from the UN Human Right Council referred repeatedly to *Al Jazeera* projections, *Al Jazeera* itself referred repeatedly to exile *Human Rights Observation Offices* and *The National Transitional Council* – a media-agent-institution network that reminds in its packaging on the interwoven Syrian infotainment of *AP/AFP*, *BBC/CNN*, *Al Jazeera* and *Al Arabiya* linked on the policies of *Syrian Observatory for Human Rights* (SOHR) and *Syrian National Council* (SNC) and *Free Syrian Army* (FSA).

⁵⁴Quite contrary, as of February 2014, prominent voices increase that neglect the official US States Department view. In December 2013, the prominent investigative journalist Seymour Hersh contested any «evidence» that would blame the Syrian government for the attacks in his leading article *Whose Sarin?* In January 2014, Richard Lloyd (MIT) and Theodore A. Postol (*Tesla*) falsified previous *White House* statements by means of a physical weapon character analysis within a detailed report titled *Possible Implications of Faulty US Technical Intelligence in the Damascus Nerve Agent Attack of August 21, 2013* that build on the previous Åke Sellström (UN) report in late 2013.

Nevertheless, the published (and public) opinion seem(s) to be convinced: «Everything does speak for it.» Does it? And why? Cui bono? It is the same public that might be strongly convinced about an Iranian nuclear weapon programme. Sure, it did exist. But only until 1979; only until the Islamic Republic's foundation and its holy fatwa ban. Keeping the cynic structure of any nuclear (also so called «peaceful») activity and the cynic structure of a religious-based society model -- enforced through force -- by side: Since then, a network out of academic (*Heritage Foundation*) and journalistic (*The Economist*) «experts» warn year by year that Iran «plans to build the atomic bomb» under «the pretext of a peaceful nuclear programme». The last mentioned phrase could at least be noticed as a hint of investigative, neutral journalism. Not even the IAEA or the US Intelligence Community could find any evidence for such a weapon programme. One could go into detail and start to reflect on wrong citations that try to portray Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the former president of Iran, as someone that aims to «wipe Israel off the map»⁵⁵, «would kill the Jews» in a «new Holocaust»⁵⁶. Sadly enough, all of these false stigmatisations made their way into the canon of «enlightened peace education». Ten years after 2003, Powell's citation "We have first-hand descriptions of biological weapons factories on wheels and on rails" (cit. McGoldrick 2004: 270) is widely recognized as cynic statement. Two years after 2011, Susan Rice's comment "Gaddafi supplies troops with Viagra to encourage mass rape" (cit. MacAskill 2011) is widely recognized as cynic statement. Barack Obama's statement: "There is very little doubt at this point that a chemical weapon was used by the Syrian regime against civilians in this incident" (cit. Leigh

⁵⁵See Schramm 2010 for a Kabarett work that reflects on this wrong translation within certain media channels and certain newswires. See also Steele 2006.

⁵⁶Well-established securitization nexus: «Mullah regime»-«Nuclear bomb»-«Israel attack». Tehran's 2005 controversial conference *A World Without Zionism* can be read as a fire-starter of the current debate. Benjamin Netanyahu is known for a continues usage of the above mentioned securitization nexus, warning of a «New Holocaust». See his diction towards Iran within the *Social Media setting*, for example on <https://twitter.com/netanyahu> [Nov 11, 2013]. At the same time – and with the same required distance – the *Facebook/Twitter/Instagram* comments on Israel by the official profiles of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Hassan Rouhani, and Ali Chamene'i are worth a read.

2013) could have received the same cynic notion if it would have been used as a *casus belli*. And it would have been used.

But still, what we focused on here is just the most basic, the most visible form of contemporary cynicism. All of these examples are just too easy to understand as contemporary (military) cynicism. The *real* cynic structure behind is hidden. Of course, one could stick to the example of contemporary military cynicism and find manifold hidden cynicisms that would be worth writing on. Obama's statement could have led to a hot war «led by the coalition». This coalition does in fact supply military and structural help since March 2011. A simple *google* search on «Kafranbel», «Brown Moses» or «Alexia Jade»; or on the involvement of Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, USA, Great Britain, France and Jordan might disillusion the last supporter of an «Arab spring» *twitter-freedom-facebook* movement of the middle-class entrepreneurs -- and set reports on Iranian and Russian involvements into relation. «We» have the information on everything, but still, we do not use it. It is always the «us» that tends to stand on the just side and ignores side-effects of an eternal cycle of action-reaction-action: *Information* for its own sake? Here the problem begins.

«We», the «enlightened» peace students; the «informed public» might even have a good feeling to be involved in do-good NGOs and other help-the-world groups that shout out loud: *Kill Kony 2012! Free Syria! Free Africa! Free Kuwait! Free Tibet! Free Libya! -- Free Pizza!* But it is us who do fulfil the most cynic notion of a contemporary cynic. For sure, the stereotyped «generals» and «bankers» remain the best visible pupils in the class of the *military-industrial complex*. Meanwhile it is «us», the «99%», that stimulate and breast-feed Eisenhower's famous notion. «We» want to make career. «We» want to be somehow successful. As soon as we are confronted with social dislocations we aim to «change the system from within» -- if at all.

In *Violence*, Slavoj Žižek (2009) introduces his term «liberal communists' charity». He takes the example of a classic do-good entrepreneur and asks for the hidden motivation of changing the world through charity. Al Gore, the Dalai Lama or Bill Gates could function as top-of-the-class in such a frame: Žižek speaks about two faces that could parallel the *two faces of Soros*: "The cruel businessman" as a figure of our time would destroy or buy out competitors, would aim at virtual monopoly, and employ all the tricks of the trade to achieve her/his goals. Žižek portrays the other *face of Soros* as such: Described by the main magazines as «greatest philanthropist in the history of mankind», the businessman would quaintly [Žižek] and kindly [the author] ask: "What does it serve to have computers, if people do not have enough to eat and are dying of dysentery?" (Žižek 2009: 18). Žižek lets us unveil contemporaries' cultural hegemony. He removes the nice façade of the capitalist's aim to *be good*. In liberal communist ethics, Žižek states, the ruthless pursuit of profit is counteracted by *charity*:

Charity is the humanitarian mask hiding the face of economic exploitation. In a superego blackmail of gigantic proportions, the developed countries "help" the undeveloped with aid, credits, and so on, and thereby avoid the key issue, namely their complicity in and co-responsibility for the miserable situation of the undeveloped (Žižek 2009: 19).

For a further understanding, this point is very essential. We learn that *cynicism* does not only mean the most blatant direct violence, crime and murder. Furthermore, it does not only point to a certain, small group of «selfish» people (the group of the «1%») whose behavior could be somehow called «greedy» or «unjust». The form of cynicism that the counter-cynic social-critic tries to name and shame, surrounds us in our daily life. The better we function within a cynic system, the happier we are, the more we are cynics ourselves. To put it simple and plain: 'There is no just life within the unjust, there is

no right life within the wrong one.’⁵⁷ Every coffee-to-go, along with its unsorted paper-plastic waste is a cynic action. Every Google search, every smartphone call is a cynic action on the cost of others, every 10-Kroner pølse or 13-Kroner burger is a cynic action on the costs of others; let it be the environmental damage costs and work exploitation that remain invisible within the «happy islands of prosperity». Charity, thus, comes into the picture as the tip of the iceberg of a felt misperception. «We», the subjects of enlightened false consciousness, tend *not only* to be political animals filled by Isaiah Berlin’s negative and positive freedom, democracy, success, and happiness. «We» do also tend to be social animals full of care and empathy. While being blind for the structural coherences that lead billions of people starve, we are not blind towards the portrayed poverty on glossy magazine titles: Big brown eyes meet slogans such as «adopt a poor child in Africa». And the angels of humanity start to feel sad. Žižek would answer with an «and so on...» and add an academic’s interpretation of *The evil in you is the evil in me*: “The exemplary figures of evil today [...] are those who, while fully engaged in creating conditions for such universal devastation and pollution, buy their way out of their own activity, living in gated communities, eating organic food, taking holidays in wildlife preserves [...]”⁵⁸ (Žižek 2009: 23).

If someone tries to grasp the contemporary system around «us»; searching for a meta-variable that would manage to describe the red line connecting every single individual of the world’s population with each other -- and with its different levels of community, this someone could end up with an idea such as Antonio Gramsci’s «cultural hegemony». Many issues on

⁵⁷This modified statement of the author makes reference to Theodor W. Adorno’s saying “Es lässt sich privat nicht mehr richtig leben”; in a later version published as “Kein richtiges Leben im falschen”/“Life does not live” in his *Minima Moralia: Reflections From Damaged Life* (1951).

⁵⁸The narrative of «the evil in you is the evil in me» allows us to read Žižek 2009 with the bitter-sweet enrichment of *bin Laden 2002*: “Let us not forget one of your major characteristics: your duality in both manners and values; your hypocrisy in manners and principles. All manners, principles and values have two scales: one for you and one for the others.” Available online: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/24/theobserver> [Nov 11, 2013].

greed and grievance are linked to each other. Overconsumption and poverty, overproduction and hunger, exploration and exploitation happen side by side. The disillusion of the mother that lost her child due to malnutrition is somehow connected to the disillusion of the wealthy, oversupplied peace student who reads about her story in expensive, well-sophisticated books that use terms such as *destiny*. Each of these two distinct forms of disillusion takes not place *although* the other part of the extreme occurs at the same time. It takes place *because* of the existence of the other extreme at the same time. To put it simple, nowadays cultural-hegemonic superstructure is *capitalism*. In its contemporary form, it comes along with the sheer acceptance of neoliberal inherent necessities.

Scene change: Watching a film⁵⁹ on a couple from Manila in their mid-20s that struggles with gaining enough income to barely survive can enlighten this thought roughly. All the 12 students who watch the film, sit in a warm, cosy cinema that is owned by the university they study at. The size of the course and the equipment (professional cinema seats, big screen, multi-media high tech) suggests that «money» does not play a major role. The state uses «his» money to invest in «education». Large parts of this money come indirectly from successful oil explorations worldwide, for example in Angola and Libya⁶⁰. The students study subjects full of moral power: *human rights, peace, and visual culture*. They are the sons and daughters of wealthy middle-class families. Their childhood was secure. The income of their parents enabled them to focus

⁵⁹This section deals with the Australian feature length documentary *Celso and Cora*, watched on October 25, 2013, as part of the film seminar SVF-3105, *Film in cross-cultural research*, at the University of Tromsø.

⁶⁰*Statoil ASA* holds major oil and gas exploration concessions in Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Libya, Nigeria, Mozambique, Surinam, and Tanzania. See <http://www.statoil.com/no/ouroperations/explorationprod/internationalfields/pages/default.aspx> [Nov 11, 2013]. In 2011, Statoil received extensive drill rights on Iraqi oil fields. The former MI6 chief John Scarlett was then appointed as special advisor for Statoil's Iraq activities: Scarlett, who "drew up the document which claimed Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction that could be deployed within 45 minutes, has been taken on by Norwegian firm Statoil" <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1389867/Spy-chief-dodgy-dossier-gets-Iraq-oil-job.html> [Nov 11, 2013]. In November 2013, Statoil's activities in Iran as well as in Iraq cease. Meanwhile, the oil company advertises: "In 2013, Statoil found more oil and gas than any other company worldwide" <http://www.statoil.com/no/OurOperations/ExplorationProd/Pages/Funn2013.aspx> [Nov 11, 2013]. As of 2013, the Government of Norway is its largest shareholder with 66,6% of the shares.

on fine arts. What the audience, what these 12 people are confronted with is the following: Celso and Cora, two portrayed adults in the same age, struggle with earning enough money for themselves and their two children to survive as a functioning family. More precisely, they hardly manage to pay medical treatment for one of the children. Celso works as a fulltime cigarette seller, selling Western brands such as *Marlboro*, thus enabling Manila's wealthy sons and daughters a cigarette break from «clubbing» in a trendy disco. The whole plot is presented to the audience through the lens of a white, -- and again -- wealthy middle-class filmmaker. Celso and Cora are clearly portrayed as the under-dogs of a structure that enables others to enjoy a life of overconsumption. After the screening, the students perform their academic duty, their «workload»: they try to give significance to the filmmaker's meaning; they try to read the code of the filmic work. One of the students raises the question: *'Why did the filmmaker not intervene; why did he not help to buy the medicine?'*

That question has the potential to let us unveil a specific form of subtle every-day cynicism: The situation of Cora and Celso is understood and framed as a single case, not as a structural problem that the 12 students are part of. The asking spectator simply chooses not to see the structural violence that emanates from a seemingly stable system of global social inequality: The same system that guarantees the spectators a «free» cosy cinema seat at their education institution; the very system that also helps to fulfil materialistic dreams and academic goals. This perspective we call «non-ideology». We tend not to see the link. And we tend to call the few ones that do highlight this very link «ideologists». For the *realist* non-ideologist, the «portrayed system» provides enough self-healing forces. For the *do-good* non-ideologists, overcoming the portrayed situation would mean to «help through charity». It would result in the aim to change the lifestyle of the portrayed ones. It would not necessarily have to result in a

change of our very own lifestyles. This shortly presented scene change would have made Antonio Gramsci's day: It is, after all, the portrayed «ideologist» alone who would refuse both, (i) accepting the cultural hegemony of global neoliberal thought and (ii) trying to overcome the system's injustices with treating merely the symptoms than accusing the causes.

We live in a society where a kind of Hegelian speculative identity of opposites exists. Certain features, attitudes, and norms of life are no longer perceived as ideologically marked. They appear to be neutral, non-ideological, natural, commonsensical. We designate as ideology that which stands out from this background: extreme religious zeal or dedication to a particular political orientation. The Hegelian point here would be that it is precisely the neutralisation of some features into a spontaneously accepted background that marks out ideology at its purest and at its most effective. This is the dialectical "coincidence of opposites": the actualisation of a notion or an ideology at its purest coincides with, or, more precisely, appears as its opposite, as non-ideology. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same holds for violence. Social-symbolic violence at its purest appears as its opposite, as the spontaneity of the milieu in which we dwell, of the air we breathe (Žižek 2009: 31).

The presented dilemma is insomuch tricky, as one cannot blame the 12 students for being egoistic agents built up barely by apathy and ignorance. But how is it possible that the struggle of the majority of the world's *population*⁶¹ and especially the malnutrition, the starvation and the constant hunger of almost one billion people is not being consequently connected towards the overconsumption of others? The problem we have to deal with is *not* the individualised malnourished baby with the big brown eyes on the glossy *TIME* cover. Or Cora. Or Celso. These are only the individualized and emotionally charged symptoms of a cynic superstructure of a hyper-ideological «non-ideology».

In the most general sense: Why do we accept and support man-made inequalities that we find imposed to ourselves through neither fault nor initiative of our own? The 12 students might confront themselves with two basic questions: (i) Does anyone of them think that ^{s/}he works more than the por-

⁶¹Here, the holistic term (*world*) *population* should indeed focus on all creatures and organisms, not only on human beings or certain other species.

trayed characters? This question might be easily answered. Both, the «non-ideological» *realist* agents and the «non-ideological» *do-good* agents would reply: 'No.' An examination on the first question would somehow force the audience to re-think the above mentioned ideological setting of «non-ideology»: where a person's (self)-esteem builds upon monetary variables; where social inequalities are seen as a howsoever accepted performance measurement and a driving incentive system; while equalizing idea⁽¹⁾s are regarded as the core of utopian *ideological* naïveté. This leads to question two.

(ii) Does the fact that Cora and Celso «work more» than the spectators (according to the non-ideologist *performance*-based notion) mean that Cora and Celso receive more «credit» than the spectators (according to the non-ideologist *monetary*-based notion)? No. It does not. Here, we notice the classic dilemma of capitalist «non-ideology». Financial inequality is justified by different workloads and its time exposure. Work is money. Time is money. Money is the key to wealth. But there lies the rub: To secure their living, Cora and Celso have to invest much more physical workload than any of the 12 students. It simply works the other way around. Even if we tend to perceive the non-ideologically framed, «connected» *facebook-TEDtalk-broadcast world* around us as «smart»; Cora and Celso will never have the capability to take a camera, book a flight and film 12 visual cultural students watching a visual cultural film addressing social inequality. Unless someone would find this meta-film idea «dynamic, refreshing and creative». Then, of course, a singular scholarship could work as singular do-good charity by a noble spender: 'Why did the noble spender not intervene?'

When we look into the mirror, we are confronted with «I», the every-day cynic; a master of schizophrenia. We somehow manage to avoid cognitive dissonance caused by conflicting values, cognitions, beliefs, and emotions within ourselves. The psychoanalytic term *compartmentalization* tries to grasp

this phenomenon: "Compartmentalization allows (...) conflicting ideas to co-exist by inhibiting direct or explicit acknowledgement and interaction between separate compartmentalized self states" (Leary/Tangney 2005: 58-59). While being part of a cynic superstructure, the classic contemporary cynic neglects to be a cynic ^{her/}himself and outsources the blame to an easily portrayed *cabinet of cynics*: *Kony* is a cynic, *Assad* is a cynic, *Bush* is a cynic. And while surrounded by and engaging in daily cynic actions, the cynic tends to shift *occurring cynic actions* as far as possible from ^{her/}himself -- and as catchy as possible: *Free Gaza, Free Syria!* For ^{him/}her, the visible conflict; the most blatant cynicism happens there, not here.

On the one hand, the author of these lines refuses to use a smartphone because of the aim to minimize his very role in a global ruthless «rare earths business». On the other hand he uses a laptop from a company that is known to play a major role within this exact business. On the one hand, the author of these lines rejects to consume coffee-to-go coffee due to the enormous plastic consumption and disposable waste. On the other hand he consumes litres of coffee each week and supports the whole industry that guarantees a caffeine overconsumption even in the Arctic. On the one hand, the author of these lines decides to print the thesis on hand on recycled paper. On the other hand he printed out dozens of papers just for the preparation of this thesis. As mentioned earlier: No matter which topic we investigate in: we, the overcivilized subjects -- to be understood as a cohort of Althusser's *overdetermined subject*⁶² -- are doomed to be cynic once we manage to live a convenient life within any cynic system. The more convenient our life, the more cynic we get. We do know very well about the schizophrenic character of the accumulation of capital. Yet, we defend capitalism as the «best functioning» societal system

⁶²The interjection «Althusser's overdetermined subject» refers to Louis Althusser's *Contradiction and Overdetermination* (1962). On the term: <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1962/overdetermination.htm> [Nov 15, 2013].

because of the annexed «greedy nature» of mankind. This, to put it simply, is the core statement of Sloterdijk's *enlightened false consciousness*.

The question remains: Do we notice the described contemporary cynicism? How do we frame cynicism? Is it the sheer metier of the «other», the «(d)evil»? The less we perceive ourselves being connected to a cynic mode, the happier we are. Those who pick the fruits of a globalised cultural hegemony of a neoliberal superstructure do not have to work as much as the billions of people who indirectly guarantee this wealthy lifestyle full of materialistic joy and leisure. The notion of *the (capitalist) system* we tend to speak about is not naturally given. It is man-made. Jean Ziegler, the former United Nations' Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, is *not* cynic while announcing the cynic fact that every "child who dies from hunger is a murdered child" (Ziegler 2011: 12)⁶³. He is not cynic while announcing that our world society -- the sum of all «I» -- actively murders billions of animals, including millions of humans by its overconsumption. He neither is a «crazy leftist» nor a «conspiracy theorist», but someone that sticks to one of the most relevant occurrences of our time. As long as the immense suffering takes place more or less silent and somehow invisible, *the system* seems to function logically.

The borders of countries do not divide between rich and poor. It is an illusion to talk about the «poor» Third World countries and to describe all of its citizens as needy. The financial elites act globally. Excessive ownership and accumulation of money takes place within the poorest countries -- unveiling the gap of the global goods' distribution in its most radical notion. But one does not even have to glimpse at the uncountable Mercedes S-class cars driving through Manila. A look into one of the many supermarket dumpsters in the Arctic city of Tromsø works the same: On a daily basis, we find

⁶³Translated by the author. French original reads: "Un enfant qui meurt de faim est un enfant assassiné", in *Destruction massive: Géopolitique de la faim*, 2011.

roses from Ghana, avocados from Chile; and bananas from the Philippines -- products of the big businessmen and large scale manufacturers in Accra, Santiago, and Manila. Meanwhile, the rebellious «anti-capitalist» «anti-cynic» smokes a joint and supports the financial elites of the influential drug markets in Colombia and Afghanistan, wearing a Che Guevara shirt that was produced in Bangladesh.

It is very easy to blame «singular events» such as the *Holocaust* as a cynic superstructure; driven by Hannah Arendt's concept of the *banality of evil*. It is less easy to blame nowadays' unjust distribution of goods -- including even the cheerful visit at Burger King or Starbucks -- as another *banality of evil* that inevitably results in death of animals [directly], nature [directly], and human fellows [indirectly]; as a cynic superstructure as well. Although we live in times of «infotainment», we do not seem to draw the link between our very own lifestyle and the hidden consequences of it. As said above, the price of a *hamburger* wrapped into plastic-paper is not the price the direct consumer has to pay. It is not «10 Kroner». This tasty snack in-between contains a lot more environmental damage costs. Costs, that neither the consumer nor the company have to pay. *But who pays then?*

If today's biggest forms of violence are not longer marked within the *visible*, it needs courage to speak them out loudly. What must be focused on here is Foucault's *Courage of Truth*; the shamelessness of the maverick. While raising the question '*But who pays then?*' we aim at the same time for the answer of the following framing question: *Who asks 'but who pays then?'*

In an analysis on the so called *critico-political function of literature*, Jacques Derrida notes that the "freedom to say everything is a very powerful political weapon, but one which might immediately let itself be neutralized as a fiction" (Derrida 1992: 39-40). According to Derrida, this revolutionary power could become "very conservative: The writer can just as well be held to be irresponsible" (*ibidem*).

In other words: What does it mean to read the blatant criticism of Sinclair Lewis or of Knut Hamsun if, at the same time, one has to admit that Hamsun's novels were *powerful weapons* but at the same time neutralized by a readership that shrugged them off as pure fiction: "Hamsuns romaner var kraftfulle politiske våpen", forceful weapons, "men det lesene borgerskap nøytraliserte romanene som fiksjoner og stilte ikke Hamsun til ansvar" (Dingstad 2003: 296). Thinking about Knut Hamsun; about Kierkegaard and Nietzsche -- and many more biting critics of that kind leads us to think on the earlier mentioned figure of *Sinclair*. It leads us to think about what the scholastic philosopher would call a *neo-Kynic*⁶⁴. Ståle Dingstad writes:

Det ironiske i Hamsuns romaner, den uendelige absolutte negativitet, kan man dermed forstå som en intellektuell kynisme. (...) Til gjengjeld tar han til orde mot en hel rekke fenomener i tiden, for eksempel de August representerer: kapitalismen, industrialismen, amerikanismen (Dingstad 2003: 241).

That leads us to ask: Who utilizes the power of such a dark, but enlightening *intellectual Kynicism* in our contemporary times? Until here, the analysis was based on a stream of consciousness and, as a result, an overdetermination of both, the writer and the reader. This was insofar helpful as this mode lively reflects the language of Kabarett. Now we change the sites: From a practical-driven (occasionally *Kynic*) observation of the cynicism around us to a theory-oriented exploration of the *Kynic* thought within academia.

⁶⁴The term «neo-Kynic» refers to Heinrich Niehues-Pröbsting's *Neo-Cyniker*; see Niehues-Pröbsting 1988: 213-216.

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2.2 Counter-cynicism with /K/: *An academic approach?*
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Coincidentally, the author of these lines came across the picture to the right (image 7), which strongly reminds him on the image structure of the 130 years older well-known painting of *Diogenes the Kynic* by John William Waterhouse to the left (image 6). This painting, nevertheless, portrays a situation that could have happened in such a way 2330 years ago. If we, conclusively, want to adapt the Ancient thought in the «here and now»; -- or, more precisely: if we want to think in terms such as Kynic peace activism, a final focus on counter-cynic activism within academia could be helpful. As mentioned earlier, the following chapter will focus on the popular rediscovery of Ancient Kynicism within Political Philosophy in the 1980s. To do so, a theory net will be spun. This theory net will deal with one theme, Kynicism, and three associated inversions.



Image 6 | J. W. Waterhouse, 1882: **Image 7** | L. Jackson, 2012: «New York». ⁶⁵
«Diogenes». ⁶⁶

⁶⁵Comment by the photographer Lucas Jackson: «Fashionistas pose for photographs in front of a homeless man outside Moynihan Station following a showing of the Rag & Bone Spring/Summer 2013 collection during New York Fashion Week». September 7, 2012». Interesting phenomenon throughout the thesis outline: Why does the portrayal take place in a framing of the 'good, ascetic' masculine versus 'bad, greedy' feminine?

⁶⁶Other important works: Jean-Léon Gérôme's ^[1824-1902] «Diogenes» (1860) shows a lonesome Diogenes with tube, dogs, and lattern; Jules Bastien-Lepage's ^[1848-1884] «Diogène» (1873) shows a lonesome Diogenes with lattern. Johann H. W. Tischbein's ^[1751-1828] «Diogenes sucht einen Menschen» (1870) and Jacob van Campen's ^[1595-1657] «Diogenes in the market of Athens» (1628) show a Diogenes with lattern, surrounded by the masses.

«Theory net»: *What is meant with that term?* Instead of focusing on one model or one theory alone, the following outline will work with different modern interpretations of the *Kynic 'school'*¹. To use the Kynic movement and its main motives as *such* would definitely go beyond the scope of the following analytical discussion. At the same time, with respect to the specific empirical focus on contemporary (counter-)cynicism, it indeed makes more sense to focus on (rather) *contemporary interpretations* of Kynicism than to focus on a traditional, historical elaboration of writings and documents from the time of the Kynics themselves.

Thus, the theory net aims to present three (rather) contemporary philosophers that challenge nowadays' societal cynicism with the tools of the Ancient Kynics. As already mentioned, Sloterdijk's *Critique of Cynical Reason* (1983), Foucault's *Courage of Truth* (1984) and Žižek's *Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989) give the reader the possibility to investigate into the popular rediscovery of Kynic thoughts within the academic spheres of philosophy within the 1980s. And this is how the theory net will be build up: From each of these three works on counter-cynicism, one main notion is drawn into the theory net. While Sloterdijk mainly focuses on the two-fold character of ^{k/}cynicism -- in its cynic and counter-cynic form --, Foucault presents the truthful speech, *parrhesia*, as rebellious and cheeky tool of the counter-cynic social-critic. Doing so, he disqualifies the inner-systemic «truth» as an instrument of falsehood and highlights the Kynic counter-truth as the *real metier of honesty*. Finally, Žižek calls for a realignment of Marx' famous statement: "They do not know it but they do it" (Marx 1992: 125) into his (and in this case: also *its* inherent) Kynic inversion: "They do know very well, but *still* they are doing it" (Žižek 1989: 43). It is primarily this threefold notion of *Kynic inversion* that will be presented in the following analysis. Thus, the *Kynic theory net* can be spun. After investigating the threefold effects of violence

and the twofold notion of cynicism, the primary aim of the following chapter will be to finally ask: *How can the portrayed «rediscoveries» of Kynicism be thought together in a theory net?*

Thereby, the underlying hypothesis is the following: All three authors use a somehow distinct version of «inversion». While Slavoj Žižek formulates his principle as an *inversion* himself; namely as the “*inversion [of Marx]*” (Žižek 2009: 25[28]); the other two philosophers use the term not by themselves. Nevertheless, a short portrayal of the main statements of Sloterdijk’s *Critique of Cynical Reason* and Foucault’s *Courage of Truth* will reveal that it is Sloterdijk’s aim to present the Ancient Kynicism *as such* as the inversion of the contemporary cynicism; and that it is Foucault’s aim to portray biting *cheekiness* and «truthful» *social-criticism* as inversion of what is sold as *common* truth. The following chapter will examine the three approaches and will *translate* them into the following inversions:

- i. Sloterdijk’s rediscovery of Kynicism: the *inversion of cynicism*;
- ii. Foucault’s rediscovery of Kynicism: the *inversion of truth*;
- iii. Žižek’s rediscovery of Kynicism: the *inversion of Marx*.

All three theoretical cornerstones from Sloterdijk, Foucault, and Žižek have their roots within the philosophical Kynicism, but transfer the Ancient concept into the contemporary time. Compared to chapter 1 and 2, the *modus operandi* of chapter 3 will be rather descriptively, whereby the three models (and their translation into the language of inversion) will be presented one after another (ONE t[w]o THREE). All presentations will relay to each other while building up on the previous empirical insights of contemporary’s enlightened false consciousness.



-Chapter 3-

Conclusive Considerations: Kynic Reflections on the cynic and the Inversions of cynicism, Truth, and Marx

«Every truth passes through three stages before it is recognized. In the first it is ridiculed, in the second it is opposed, in the third it is regarded as self-evident.»
Arthur Schopenhauer, 1993 [1844].⁶⁷

«[Every] new doctrine [...] goes through three stages. First, people say it is not true; then, that it is against religion; and in the third stage, that it was long known.»
Karl Ernst von Baer, 1866.

«Every great scientific truth goes through three stages. First, people say it conflicts with the Bible. Next they say it had been discovered before. Lastly they say they always believed it.»
Alan Mackay, 1992.

The following section will undertake an above-board academic approach. It will lead us from elementary empirical explorations to three theoretical thoughts.

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3.1 Peter Sloterdijk: *Kynicism* and the inversion of cynicism
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What does it mean to speak about a *cynic* person? This question could be formulated as the most essential discussion point within Peter Sloterdijk's *Critique of Cynical Reason* (1987 [German original: 1983]). In this (being his *main*) work, the German philosopher focuses on the "laughing tradition of satirical knowledge" (xviii) and describes cynicism as the *enlightened false consciousness* (5), as mentioned above. In opposition to cynicism with /c/, he develops the idea of a Kynicism with /K/: Against the fatal power of the cynic figure (the military cynic, the political animal, the careerist among other), the Kynic pits an "anarchic counter-power" (14). Sloterdijk links himself above all with what he calls the "neo-Kynical" approach of Nietzsche and Heidegger⁶⁸; and calls

⁶⁷ Cit. *The Harper Book of Citations*, page 451 (Fitzhenry 1993). Wrong attribution. See Shallit 2005.

⁶⁸ The term «neo-Kynic» refers to Heinrich Niehues-Pröbsting's (1988: 213-216) *Neo-Cyniker*.

for the re-discovery of a *lost cheekiness* and biting social criticism in the treatment of violent and disfiguring /c/yonical maxims (241). His work aims to find the Kynic's "lost cheekiness" (116) within our times. Throughout the comprehensive book, Sloterdijk illustrates his statements with a vast number of images. Not without reason, a portrayal of Nietzsche is the first one (xxviii). Whereas the German original edition covers 960 pages in two volumes, the official English *Minneapolis translation* from 1987 has 559 pages. Talking about Sloterdijk's work itself -- and not only about its content -- makes insofar sense as the *Critique* can be read as neo-Kynic art as well:

6.	Concerning the Psychosomatics of the <i>Zeitgeist</i>	139
	Tongue, Stuck Out	141
	Mouth, Smiling Maliciously, Crooked	142
	Mouth, Bitter, Tight	143
	Mouth, Laughing Loudly, Big-Mouthed	143
	Mouth, Serene, Still	145
	Eye Gazes, Eye Blinkers	145
	Breasts	147
	Arses	147
	Fart	150
	Shit, Refuse	151
	Genitals	152
8.	The Cardinal Cynicisms	217
	Military Cynicism	219

Table 2| Content list [excerpted by the author] of *Critique of Cynical Reason* (Sloterdijk 1987).

Indeed, Peter Sloterdijk describes «the arts» as a form of bourgeois neo-Kynicism (391). Taking the excerpt from the content list shown above (table 2) into consideration, one might understand what the author means with counter-cynic (but *Kynic*), counter-academic (but educated), neo-Kynic cheekiness. Most elementary for Sloterdijk's work is his Kynic definition of cynicism:

Cynicism is *enlightened false consciousness*. It is that modernized, unhappy consciousness, on which enlightenment has laboured both successfully and in vain. It has learned its lessons in enlightenment, but it has not, and probably was not able to, put them into practice. Well-off and miserable at the same time, this consciousness no longer feels affected by any critique of ideology; its falseness is already reflexively buffered (Sloterdijk 1987 [1983]: 5).

One specific form that directly links to the field of peace studies; and that takes a prominent role within Sloterdijk's concept of *contemporary* cynicism, is the distinctively formulated *military* cynicism (see again table 2). Here, he differentiates between three types: "Military cynicism can emerge when three male martial character types have assumed clear contours in a society: the *hero*, the *hesitater*, and the *coward*" (220). Interestingly enough, the number *three* does also in the work of Sloterdijk play a dominant role. Towards these *three* military characters he later formulates *three* military tactics. For the formulation of a contemporary (pacifist) counter-military activism this would mean to formulate a *three-fold* notion of Kynic peace activism; always with the intent to ask: *What would Diogenes have done today?*

And here comes the point where we can reflect on Sloterdijk's notion of Kynicism with /K/. According to him, Kynic behaviour can only function through *cheekiness* and adapted *sarcasm*: "There can be no healthy relation of modern-day enlightenment to its own history without sarcasm" (7). In the moment in which the *counter-enlightened agent*, the intended self-reflective «I» -- which still has a notion of 'virtue' -- does stop to take man-made variables such as *the state*, *commercialism*, *militarism*, *religion* [and so on] (too) serious, ^{s/he/}it enters the sphere of "light-hearted disrespect in the continuation of the original tasks" (7)⁶⁹. The task to read the *language* and *behaviour* of Ancient Kynicism could not be formulated more simple and plain than that: "As things stand, the only loyalty to *enlightenment* -- which means: a 'real' form of enlightenment; the inversion of /E/nlightenment; a counter-/E/nlightenment -- consists in disloyalty" (Sloterdijk 1987: 7). *Here, Kynicism means the inversion of enlightened false consciousness. It means the inversion of cynicism.*

⁶⁹As alternative towards siding with the «light-hearted disrespect», Sloterdijk formulates a «pessimism that remains 'loyal' to its origins and reminds one of decadence» (1987: 7).

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3.2 Michel Foucault: *Parrhesia* and the inversion of truth

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In his last lecture series⁷⁰, Michel Foucault focuses for the first time on “Ancient Cynicism”⁷¹. He describes *parrhesia* as the major characteristic of the Cynic and highlights the motto of Diogenes: “Change the value of the currency” (Foucault 2012: 241). Thereby, the whole background of his last published lecture might be cynically interpretable: Instead of actively participating and critically challenging Foucault, the preface informs the reader that many students preferred to just use their radio recorders to record the lecture series and remain in silence. Foucault noted:

It should be possible to discuss what I have put forward. Sometimes, when it has not been a good lecture, it would need very little, just one question, to put everything straight. However, this question never comes. The group effect in France makes any genuine discussion impossible. And as there is no feedback, the course is theatricalized. My relationship with the people there is like that of an actor or an acrobat. And when I have finished speaking, a sensation of total solitude... (Foucault 2012 [1984]: xii).

On the other hand, the obsession of ‘silently recording’ their idol helps us to follow Foucault’s lessons (including his well-archived statements on short-handed improvisations) 30 years after. And, what might be even more valuable, this short anecdote might directly reflect Michel Foucault’s aim to speak out the *truth*. Here, the philosopher presents what he defines the basic instrument of Kynicism: to *speak out*. To *mock*. To *unveil*.

Why -- he might have ask himself -- did none of my listeners intervene although I presented what a Kynic would have called «bullshit»? For the Master’s thesis, Foucault’s *Courage of Truth* must be considered a happy finding: Shortly before

⁷⁰Joseph J. Tanke, for example writes that “Foucault opened what would be his last series of public lectures [...]. The guiding theme is the study of ethical *parrhesia* in the Greek world. This series of lectures is full of many *aperçus* that remain undeveloped. One such insight [...] [is to look] at the modern artist as a contemporary Cynic [sic; *here to be understood as*: Kynic]” (2002: 170).

⁷¹Foucault does indeed speak about Ancient «Cynicism». Nevertheless, from here on, also the paragraph *Two, The Inversion of Truth*, on Foucault’s interpretation will use the phrase «Kynicism» for consistency reasons.

the well-known philosopher died, he changed the original outline of his *parrhesia* lecture that should have presented *free speech* in general and chose to purely focus on its Kynic form from lecture 9 (February 29, 1984) on until the end (March 28, 1984)⁷². "I would like -- without knowing yet how far I will take it, if it will last until the end of the year, or if I will stop -- to take the example of [K]ynicism" (Foucault 2012: 164): With these honest and kind words, Foucault opened his remarks on Kynicism. And «it» *did* last; he *did not* stop. Moreover, within the following two introducing sentences he already formulated the outline of hundreds of sentences that would follow on the same issue:

- i. It seems to me that in [K]ynicism, in [K]ynic practice, the requirement of an extremely distinctive form of life – with very characteristic, well defined rules, conditions, or modes – is strongly connected to the principle of truth-telling, of truth-telling without shame or fear, of unrestricted and courageous truth-telling, of truth-telling which pushes its courage and boldness to the point that it becomes intolerable insolence (Foucault 2012 [1984]: 165).
- ii. This connecting up of truth-telling and mode of life, this fundamental, essential connection in [K]ynicism between living in a certain way and dedicating oneself to telling the truth is all the more noteworthy for taking place immediately as it were, without doctrinal mediation, or at any rate within a fairly rudimentary theoretical framework (Foucault 2012 [1984]: 165).

This could already bring us close to the field of Kabarett: Who speaks out what Foucault would call the 'truth-telling without shame or fear', who does risk and provoke 'intolerable insolence'? Could the initial mentioned statement of Hagen Reither not be perceived as the ideal example of a truth-teller? Other than the audience of Foucault in Paris, he shouts it out loudly: the «lost cheekiness» against the cynicism of our times. Whoever «risks» something for telling the *truth that might hurt the mass* -- and let the only costs be not to be liked by a wider public; or to be called a 'cynic' -- would, according to Foucault's understanding, step into the footsteps of Diogenes:

⁷²Please find Michel Foucault's course content list under the following link: http://pages.uoregon.edu/koopman/events_readings/cgc/foucault_CdF_84_CT_complete.pdf [Jan 31, 2014].

In Diogenes Laertius, for example, among the many other anecdotes attributed to Diogenes [...], there is this one. One day he was asked what is most beautiful in men (*to kalliston en tois anthropois*). The answer: *parrhesia*, free-spokenness» (Foucault 2012 [1984]: 166).

To «change the value of the currency» does for Foucault mean to change the understanding of what is meant by *truth*. He describes the Kynic figure as “the man of parrhesia, the man of truth-telling” (Foucault 2012: 166). This we can read as Foucault’s momentum of inversion. *Here, Kynicism means the inversion of truth.*

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3.3 Slavoj Žižek: *Knowledge* and the inversion of Marx

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If any of the three roughly presented philosophers could be described as the *reincarnation* of an Ancient Kynic, it might be him: Slavoj Žižek. He is widely visible: on the film screens, in social science compendia, in the Internet. He fulfills the notion of a loud mocker. His language is the language of provocation. His beard is sloppy, his appearance messy, and his ‘academic’ style is counter-academic: Instead of lecturing in lecture halls, he prefers to lecture on the street, or on the rubbish dump (Taylor 2008; see images 8-9).



Images 8-9 | Slavoj Žižek in *Examined Life* (Taylor 2008: *vid.* 0:23:32; 0:22:21).

It should not surprise that the Slovenian thinker focused on Kynicism in the beginning of his public breakthrough. And maybe it was especially the topic of Kynicism that conferred and offered his counter-approaches the suitable frame; a «channel

of communication» that would go beyond the classical scope of *positivist* sense making.

In other words: Slavoj Žižek is not thinkable without an inherent Kynic attitude. He uses the attributes that were highlighted in section ONE and TWO as a label for a kind of *in-your-face* social-criticism. As soon as the camera points to the waste and rubbish shown in image 8, Žižek announces out of the background: "This is where we should start feeling at home" (Žižek, cit. Taylor 2008: 22:21). He then continues to make his philosophical point with the most blatant Kynic element that we firstly encountered through Sloterdijk's content list on page six: *shit*; or, to turn it cynical: the *refusal* of it:

Part of our daily perception on reality is that *this* [showing at the waste] *disappears* from our world. When you go to the toilet... shit... disappears (...). Of course, rationally you know it, *it's there*, in canalization and so on; but at a certain level of your most elementary experience, it disappears from your world. But the problem is: waste does not disappear (Žižek, cit. Taylor 2008: 0:22:58).

With this seemingly easy language, Žižek uses the power of provocative cheekiness, of *counter-cynic* (Sloterdijk) *truth-telling* (Foucault), to enter a very complex topic: our very own partnership with the contemporary cynic, the *over-consumer*. He speaks in images while at the same time directly pointing out the core problem of the 'enlightened' 'post-ideological' Western society. What does *the shit* stand for? It, literally, means the combined shit of every single individual in its most elementary form. But it does of course consist of more meaning at the same time: Drawing on Sloterdijk who inspired him to note that "cynical reason is no longer naïve, but is a paradox of an enlightened false consciousness" (Žižek 1989: 28), he formulates an inversion of Marx' famous *Capital* statement⁷³: "one knows the falsehood very well, one is well aware of a particular interest hidden behind an ideologi-

⁷³"The most elementary definition of ideology", says Žižek (1989: 28), "is probably the well-known phrase from Marx's *Capital*: 'They do not know it, but they do it'", ["by reducing the material thing to the abstraction, *value*"] (supplementation in square brackets added by the author; taken from Marx 1992: 125).

cal universality, but still one does not renounce it" (Žižek 1989: 29). This can stand as the essence of his ideology-criticism within *The Sublime Object of Ideology* in which he further asks: "Does this concept of ideology as a naïve consciousness still apply to today's world?" (ibid.). Diogenes would have answered: *Yes!* In other words: *We do wrong, and we know it, but we refuse to refuse. Here, Kynicism means the inversion of Marx.*



-Epílogos-

**Thinking in terms of Kynic peace activism?
Outlook: Kabarett as Kynic peace activism?**

«Every joke is a tiny revolution. [...] Whatever destroys dignity and brings down the mighty from their seats, preferably with a bump, is funny!»
George Orwell, 1945.

«[...] everybody shouts for transparency and information. But we don't do anything with it. We know everything, but still don't know what our knowledge is good for. Otherwise, we would have to change our lives; — information for its own sake!»
Hagen Rether, 2011.

«[...] if everything is ideology, everyone is lying. No one believes in ideology, yet they act as if they do while knowing full well they don't.»
Menachem Feuer, 2013.

This thesis aimed to be a voyage of exploration. After passing through practical, palpable passages that were characterized by the *Kabarett-esk* narrative mode *stream of consciousness*, the last chapter was used to translate Kynic thoughts into a workable peace research language on which further investigations can build up. I aimed to present a theoretical threefold approach that I called a (loosely interwoven) *theory net*. While focusing on three distinct works on Kynicism -- each of them understood as *counter-cynicism* -- the question was raised: How can the portrayed «rediscoveries» of *Kynicism* be thought together? I chose to find a common language -- or better: a common access -- towards the three different contemporary readings on Kynicism. I then chose to adapt a notion that initially was used by Slavoj Žižek to describe his understanding of Kynic thought: the language of *inversion*. Whereas Žižek made it clear towards his readership that the Kynic slogan «everyone knows very well, but...» should be understood as an *Kynic inversion* of Marx[ism], such notion of inversion was also seen to be helpful for an encounter of Sloterdijk's and Foucault's remarks on the Kynic behaviour and Kynic parrhesia. Therefore, every of the three sections ended with the same phrase: 'Here, *Kynicism* means the *inversion* of...'.

Thus, the final investigation into the metiér of Kynicism elaborated three forms of inversion that must be seen crucial in any formulation of Kynic peace activism. Throughout the foregoing main analysis -- a very detailed, very graphic, and indeed very critical observation of our times --, the following question could have been read between the lines: *How does the Kynic topic of «changing the value of the currency» take place in contemporary times?*

Due to the limited scope, the Master's thesis does not aim to be more than an *outlook for more*. It offers a tool kit for further investigations into the topic, especially relating the initial remarks on biting social-criticism in the form of political Kabarett: As noted above (though the example of Hagen Rether), it is the *Kabarett* artist of all people who is considered to be a *cynic* -- although ^{her/}his aim is quite the opposite: to mock societies' *cynicism*. The name /K/abarett itself reveals the schizophrenia of meaning: while the commercial *cabaret* with /c/ aims for comedy, entertainment, and fun; its counterpart with /K/ does the opposite: it performs a harsh critique on the grievances and social wrongs -- so does Kynicism in relation to cynicism. Diogenes of Sinope was a figure full of virtue, always adverting to the necessity of the common good. This marks him out from every selfish cynic -- back then as well as in our contemporary times. Both disciplines, Kynicism and cynicism, share their common ground: they cannot take man-made meta-systems such as religions, nation-states, or «the good will of the masses» for serious. Whereas the Kynic aims for the position of the anti-systemic under dog, the cynic merges in the system that he himself can only accept as a tool for securing *power*.

The Kynic instead questions everything around him. What does it mean to act cynical? Who is the real cynic? Is it the «greedy 1%» (whereas the «99%» are perceived to *be good*) or is it rather «the mass» (whereas the «99%» are perceived to act cynical)? What does it mean to speak about «truth»? Who uses

such a concept and why? What does it mean «to know» -- and who can ever argue that «they do not know, but still they are doing it?»

It is this convolute of questions that I read out of the here presented works from George Carlin, Hagen Rether, Kurt Tucholsky, Erich Kästner, Johan Galtung, Peter Sloterdijk, Michel Foucault, and Slavoj Žižek. All of them must be seen crucial for further investigations into the field of *The Kabarett of the Kynics*. In any further attempt, however, a strong women's voice should not be missed. First and foremost, Bertha von Suttner and Rosa Luxemburg come into my mind. So far, the considerable gender bias could stand as an ironical, illustrative acceptance of the inheritance of a Western White Old Man's discipline. But the question remains: Why does the here presented harsh, Kynic and biting forms of social criticism seem to be predominantly masculine?

Despite being full of crude thoughts; despite being half-baked, the work in hand sees itself as part of substantial *critical peace research*. And despite all here formulated limitations, the analysis compiled enough vivid data, examples, and action patterns for letting the reader inspirationally think about his or her very personal (and very possible) contributions of *Kynic peace activism*. Finally, this outline will glean tasks and fields of such investigative resistance.

All around, critical observers of peace research read statements such as: "the initial critical and creative spirit of [...] peace research has turned into a 'normal science' that does not reflect on its basic categories or its role in society" (Juttila et al. 2008: 623). Almost 50 years after the foundation of the Peace Research Institute in Oslo, Matti Juttila, Samu Pehkonen, and Tarja Väyrynen aim for a (more) *Critical Peace Research* "as an epidemic community that can house a variety of approaches with a shared understanding of the importance of critical reflection, dialogue and creativity" (ibidem) -- all these issues are taken up in Kynic Kabarett.

What it needs, in my opinion, is more Kynic peace activism: a concept that diverges itself from realism (think tanks such as the *Heritage Foundation*) on the one hand and positivist humanitarian good-will activism (within *morally impeccable actors'* networks such as *Save the Children*; or *Model United Nations*) on the other. In this debate, the Just War Theory was seen as a compromise: neither fully pacifistic (which was claimed as being 'naïve'), nor free of moral. So to say, it worked as the antipode compromise of Kynicism: Herein lies the possibility of accepting pacifism as a reasonable action while denying the possibility of 'the good and moral masses'. -- A negative, rather disillusioned description of «the world as it is» does indeed not mean that biting Kabarett satirists and Kynics in general negate the possibility of a «better world». They only unfold that the way to get there is directly linked to our very own lifestyle(s) and thus not easy to go.

Fast good-will actions such as charity programs or Western hippie-oriented peace education programs are not seen as any solution. The link between our Hamburger (or -- for the *hipsters*: the Brazilian soya menu) and hunger in the world; the link between smart phones and the cynic business of rare earths cannot be overcome from 23-years old peace students who put on a vest from Human Rights Watch, fly regularly to conferences all over the planet, wear high heel shoes for the photo shooting in a Syrian refugee camp while blaming 'the evil dictator who is killing his own people' based on BBC-, CNN- and Al Jazeera-coverage consumption, swim in South Sudanese five star hotel pools while wondering how the people manage to pay the 'high local prices for a Latte Macchiato' -- or just get active within SAIH, Greenpeace, Amnesty International because it looks good on the CV while cashing up the last volunteer catering full of meat and shrimps and plastic cutlery. The wealth of the world is unjustly distributed. It is winter in the Arctic. Thank you, global food capitalism, for more than two years of free, high-qualitative, pleasantly refriger-

ated groceries (images 14 and 15). Diverse preliminary works of this Master's thesis were printed on a printer whose ink cartridge must be changed every few days because the future peace workers prefer to print out complete PowerPoint presentations, one slide each page. Thank you, heated street between Peace Centre and main library, for protecting me from falling on ice. Thank you, Statoil, meanwhile oil drilling concession owner in 36 countries worldwide, for two and a half years of free peace, free prints and free pizza!

In 1922, Kurt Tucholsky wrote: "What oppresses me most of all is the complete hopelessness of our esteemed endeavours – or let's rather say: my endeavours. My writing fails to affect life. And that's impossible for me over the longer term" (cit. Hierholzer 1990: 16-17). From 1926 on, he became a member of the Revolutionary Pacifists Group.

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 Kynic Kabarett must comment on cultural violence
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Image 10 | DGB goes CDU. Trade union meets bourgeoisie.

Image 11 | Twofold-Divided News Coverage on Syria.

What do we know and why? Kynic Kabarett tries to sort media networks according to their Syrian coverage and wonders about the creation of two distinct truth settings. It generally eyes alliance building between agents of power on all levels and aims to make sense of a variety of differently perceived real-

ities and truths. Why is one wo/man's terrorist another wo/man's freedom fighter? Does history change societies? Do societies change? The examples for more sensible, less sensitive, investigation are unfathomable. They can be found on every level at every time, in every-day life. What does it mean if the major trade union supports bourgeois parties? Does it even make sense to reflect on such positivist, inner-systemic questions?

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 Kynic Kabarett must comment on direct violence
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Image 12 | EliteCommandAR. «Toy of the Future».

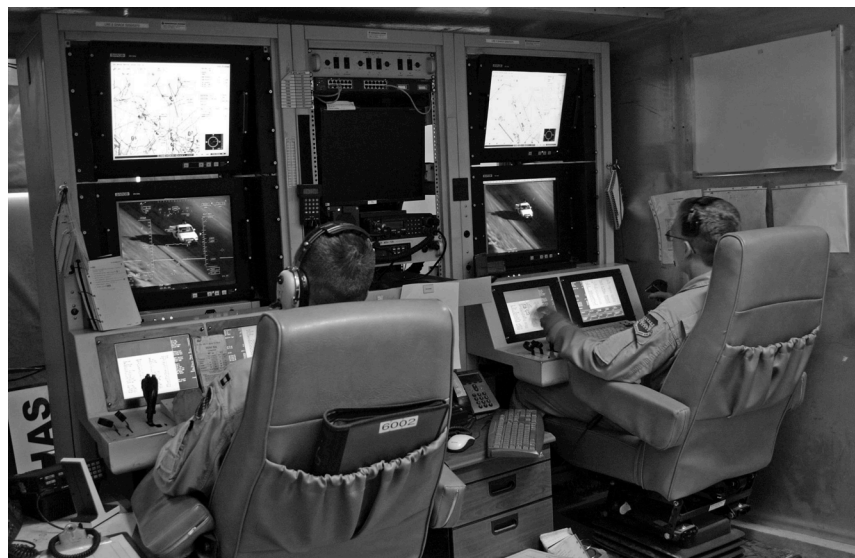


Image 13 | «Function checks after launching an MQ-1 Predator unmanned aerial vehicle.» August 7, 2007, at Balad Air Base, Iraq.

It must critically reflect the notion of «humanitarian interventions» and speak out loud against so-called «Just Wars». Michael Walzer himself mentions that “seen from the perspective of primitive Christianity, this account of just war was simply an excuse, a way of making war morally and religiously possible” (Walzer 2002: 925). Why is *this* specific evaluation on the mentioned historical account not generally applicable to *all* so-called *just* wars? What does *just* war mean outside of the diplomatic and academic lingo?

It must ask: What does it mean if the «the toy of the future» promotes *smart* and *realist* killer adventures while surpassing the *felt reality* in relation to the *real* [dr]one?

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Kynic Kabarett must comment on structural violence
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Image 14 | Dumpster Diving in Kvaløya, Tromsø (1).



Image 15 | — (2).

It must primarily invest in the aim to make invisible connections visible and start with the local supermarket round the corner. It must deal with the cynic tip of the overconsumerist's food globalization iceberg: dumpster meat. (i) Not only does our ethical speciesism allow us to lock up, abuse and slaughter animals as hell; (ii) not only does an enormous industrial mass production guarantee an overconsumption of animals without limits; (iii) not only do we waste others' basic food and water for our nice BBQ steak. As a matter of fact, it is better than that: (iv) we do just fill our containers with tons of cadavers, making the death of souls even more senseless. Day by day we can walk on dozens of them. Just our small supermarket in Kvaløya fills a complete container with dead animals: two times a week. To make environmental matters worse, everything is wrapped into plastic-plastic-plastic. That keeps all the other items nicely clean: milk cartons and yoghurts do not crack, delicious African, South-East Asian and Latin American specialities (something that, naturally, the locals who grow the groceries could not effort) land on a soft, Arctic container ground -- and today's drumstick will become tomorrow's grocery shovel. Cheers!

«- ... *and so on.*»
Slavoj Žižek, 1989.



Image 16| Caricature: War As Peace. Bombing For Humanity?

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