

The Idea of Communism. (2010) C. Douzinas and S. Zizek, Eds.
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Douzinas and Zizek—Introduction: The Idea of Communism

after the crash of 2008, history is back on: and communism can be part of that history

Austerity and the return to fiscal discipline, bailout of banks, socializing the losses vii

the crisis has collapsed the end of history hypothesis viii

a return to politics; communism can come out again viii

question of the conference: is "communism" still the name to be used to designate radical emancipatory projects? viii

participants agreed that it is viii

did not agree on its meaning ix

common themes:

need for new political subjectivities and popular activation ix

communism must take its distance from statism and economism ix

communism must return to the concept of the common against privatization and enclosures of the commons ix

communism means freedom and equality x

Badiou—the Idea of Communism

This text is the same as part IV of his book *The Communist Hypothesis* (see notes for that)

Judith Balso—To Present Oneself to the Present

she wants to stress that communism must search for new political forms at a distance from the state

Communist hypothesis, when put into practice as a political hypothesis, has failed 15-16

it did not attain its objective, to invent and emancipatory political capacity 16

we should aim at opening up new paths for the political will toward a "politics for all" 16

we should not take philosophy for politics or subordinate politics to a philosophical idea 16

we must separate philosophy and politics 17

constituting the workers as a directing political figure, then taking politics toward real communism 17

communist can be used to mean vanguard organizers, as opposed to the workers themselves 18

Marx's idea of taking state power in order to break the machine of the state, to transform it into an instrument of the political hegemony of the proletariat so as to change the regime of property 18

so that it can become the "plain administration of things" as it says in the manifesto 19

this can be done through the party, and the Leninist hypothesis is that we have to build the capacity of a workers' party to take over state power and to hold on to it 19

the dictatorship of the proletariat is the only possible means toward the withering away of the state and the advent of communism 19

Balso calls this extraordinary optimism about the state 20

reduces the state to its function of managing class conflict 20

she rehearses this argument of Lenin's in order to show why it went awry 20

Mao reopens the question of the socialist state 20

cultural revolution aims to transform the Communist Party by placing it under the political control of the masses 21

Balso's point here is that the whole concept of being able to transform the state into something we can live with is a bad idea 21-22

May 1968 through clear distinctions between workers and the Communist Party, workers and unions [sexample of CORE in Chicago Teachers Union], and opened up questions of the political capacity of workers 22

about how it might become a political figure 23

so we have to address the political questions anew; we can separate the idea of communism from the disaster of actually existing Communism 23

we can't rely on capitalism as an emancipatory force 24

we require new political and organizational capacities 24

in politics we have always to begin again 25

we must proceed without reference to a party, both the Stalinist party and the democratic state parties 25

we must establish a principle of disjunction and distance between the state and politics 25

politics does not express a class, and already constituted people — any political capacity belongs to people who have become active in politics 25

a new political space at a distance from the state will be multiple 26

people will organize themselves to declare what it means for each to count for what he is, where he is, on his own terms not dictated by the state 26

politics as interior to people 26
the communist hypothesis of the withering away of the state, to transform the function of the state away from governing people and toward administering things 27
it was the state itself that did not allow the withering 27
we must set out not so much from the question of capitalism but from the question of breaking from the state 27
we can develop new political capacity except at a distance from the state 28
we must constitute a new political will 28
we must deploy three altogether new terms:
a place for politics at a distance from the state;
principles of a politics that counts everyone for what he is where he is; clear understanding of the state on its own terms, not nearly as a handmaiden of capital 28-29
Althusser the failure of socialist states was a failure of not having enough theory 30
we must break with this idea 31
politics is integral only to itself; it cannot look to philosophy for answers 31
we must give politics back to politics itself 31
communism today is a word that belongs to the state 31
a politics at a distance from the state has to grope its way forward and try to succeed in flowering 31

Bruno Bosteels—The Leftist Hypothesis

laborious attempt to steer in between the extremes of 1) fidelity to the party and state and 2) utter rejection of the party and state

Marx: "communism is the real movement which abolishes the present state of things" 33

Lenin referred to the radical pro-Soviet workerists as "leftists" 34

communism requires a *we* that does not pretend to be a subject 35

it is not an end state but a common horizon, a real movement 35

Badiou accused Rancière of being apolitical 36

Žižek is the modern heir of Lenin, complaining about too much reliance on people themselves 36

leftists lack maturity, discipline [it's the same old debate between Marx and Bakunin] 37

they take a principled stance against all parliamentary electoral politics, unions, and the party 37

they are what Bosteels calls "semi-anarchists" [and this is one of the *very rare* mentions of anarchism in the entire book] 37

appeal to the direct action of the masses [as Mao did] 37
of course the leftists lost the historical struggle and the default position of Marxism became: the masses are divided into classes, classes are led by parties, and parties are run by leaders, and those parties should seize power through the state 38
1968 [and the cultural Revolution] reintroduced this "Leftist hypothesis" 39
some rejected bourgeoisie-proletariat and instead talked in terms of masses against the state 40
[here you can see Ranciere, as well as Badiou, and Deleuze and Guattari]
an important target was totalitarianism, and obsession with resisting repression 41
a valorization of the creative force of people 41
sometimes called "mass democracy" 41
insistence on the primacy of politics [rather than the economy], the state is in itself repressive 42
Bosteels caricatures this argument, calls it melodramatic, and then says it's not realistic 44
another way leftism has stated its case is to insist on imminence, on the imminent presence of communism inside capitalism 44-45
here they use Marxists womb idea 45
communism merely needs to bring itself into consciousness 45
[here we can see Hardt and Negri and Lefebvre]
this tends to be is an anti-dialectic approach [at least for Hardt and Negri] 46
power is not some monstrous Leviathan, it depends entirely on the power of people 48
the multitude is the real productive force of our social world, Empire is an apparatus of capture 48
here communism is neither a utopian ideal or a future horizon – it is already at work within the present state of affairs 49
the question of whether or not to raise communism to a Platonic Idea 50
Badiou: complete separation of the communist hypothesis from the party and the state, Negri agrees 50
cultural Revolution helped solidify this idea 51
it is wrong to think the state can be reformed such that it guarantees its own withering away 51, 52
must distinguish between socialism and communism 51
[and this is how those two terms are getting used today: socialism is a form of the state in which a workers party controls political power, communism is direct mass self-governance] 51

Negri: communism is "absolutely radical political economic democracy" 51

Mao tried to subject the party to reform through mass action 52

Badiou: communism is anti-property, anti-authority, anti-hierarchy 52

 it is autonomous mass action against the state, or at least as distance from it 53

 in Badiou's conference paper we see mention of "another state," but one that is subtracted from the power of the state 53

this ongoing question of organization, party discipline, economism 54

the figure of Alvaro Garcia Linera, theorist and vice president of Bolivia 54

 separation between the plebs and intellectuals 56

 Negri's concept of *potenza* 57

 Linera follows Negri's reading of the Grundrisse 57

 empower the emancipatory potential that already exists among the plebs 57

 communism is the real movement of this empowerment 58

 this real movement does not emerge spontaneously from capitalism's crises 58

 it requires the weak to mobilize themselves 58

 they must curve the prevailing forces in another direction 58

 this requires multiple and massive practical forms 58

 for Linera, the party might be one of these forms 58

 there is an importance to historicizing this real movement, rather than creating an eternal Idea 59

the question of the way communism can be organized and embodied-- this is where all the major doubts and disagreements can be found 60

Badiou defends party politics in his book *Metapolitics* 61

possibility of the party being the name of the flexible organization 61

Linera stresses the importance of society's movement of self-organization, civil society must organize itself 61

 warns against non-statehood dreamed of by primitive anarchism 62

 the idea that society outside the state is an innocent speculation 62

 possibility of a non-capitalist state 62

 the state subjected to a new constituent power might be able to empower the communist hypothesis from within 63

 communism relies on society's self organizing capacities – can the state play a role in supporting people's autonomous organization 63

lots and lots of effort to get to his rather obvious conclusion:
Bosteels wants to avoid two extreme answers: strict rejection of the
state and blind allegiance to the party and state 64
calls for "a comprehensive and collective rethinking" of the state
of the party and their relationship to mass action 64
[i.e. in the search for new political forms there is no reason to
reject party and state out of hand]

Buck-Morss—The Second Time as Farce...

We should be quite catholic in our search for new ideas and new political
desires; don't let Eurocentrism or secularism limit our search

Trotsky: uneven development and permanent revolution 68
importance of time 68
danger of Eurocentrism in thinking communism 69
importance of Haiti, Muslim radicals, women's activism 70
the memory of these events increases in value by being shared 70
no class owns the position of agent in historical struggle; no region of the
world does either 71
there is one time, in which we all partake 71
there is a sense in which time is common, in which we share a time, we
are contemporaries across space 71
danger in Hegelian approach: thinking that critique is all that is required of
philosophy 72
we need to create also, something that did not exist before 73
yet we can draw on spirits of the past in that project 73
Benjamin and the human imagination, which is an act of freedom, of
developing new possibilities 74
the importance of religious radicalism as source of inspiration 75
it declares the freedom of man from the servitude to other men 79
objective crisis is not enough to propel a new consciousness 76
the truly new is the untimely as Nietzsche called it — it does not fit 77
we certainly don't want to stuff the contemporary back into tradition —
this would annihilate the potential of the now and the new, the hidden
potentialities of the present 77
that can arise and rupture the collective imagination 77
Badiou thinks of this in terms of the event 78
[and Ranciere in terms of politics]
we must seek to rescue the progressive potential in religious writers who are
operating in our time, as our contemporaries
we can affirm fragments of incompatible discourses, use them as they work in
our current project 79

Douzinas—Adikia: On Communism and Rights

Sprawling, disorganized, detour into rights bears little fruit

Most Marxists reject human rights discourse 81
and yet there is a desire to defend Universalism 82
Marx critiqued the way political rights became insulated from the economy 82
political emancipation versus human emancipation 83
rights separate humans from each other, see each other as threats 83-84
there is a sense that Marx wanted to push rights to their limit, to
realize a kind of human right to free activity 84
freedom then would be a positive power to connect with others 84
a social revolution leading to the emancipation of humanity 85
Bloch insisted on the will to resist and rebel [which is also central to
Bakunin]
he was interested in how people can be prepared ethically and
psychologically for the event 86
[what is the process by which one becomes active?]
Being involves both jointure and disjuncture 87
there is a tension between man's violent and creative power (*poiesis*), and the
ordering power of structure (*dike*) 88
poiesis must eternally work against dike 88
a primordial sense of *adike* (which is the primordial lack of *dike*,
chaos) prepares people for resistance 89
adike is the unmanageable, [the politics inside the police] 90
communism is the modern form of *adike* 91
right to revolution, to resistance to oppression [though he does not mention
Locke] 92
Kant dismissed the right to revolution 92
As do modern human rights 93
Democracy is presented as the exercise of rights 93
Negative power against state control 94
Rights depoliticize politics; don't challenge the overall structure 94
Ranciere's democracy: when a new political subject is constituted (or Badiou's
event) 95
But rights can be thought of as initiations of constituent power (rather than
as elements of the juridico-political order) 95
As the latter, they merely admit new groups at the margins of the same
liberal-democratic system [to which Marx's OJQ critique applies] 95
Communism insists on equality and on the right to resistance and revolution
when that equality is denied 97, 99
Right of rebellion founded assuming an original equality as a premise of
action 97

When that equality is denied, rebellion is called for [really strange he does not use Locke] 97
Every state rests on its own right to make law 98
State can accommodate this or that reform 98
But it cannot grant a right to law to any other entity [to auto-nomy] 98
Being in common is integral to each person 99
The idea of communism can help prepare us for the event, for the insurrection 100
The militant proclaims/assumes the equality of each to everyone else, and rebels when it is denied 100

Eagleton—Communism: Lear or Gonzalo

The problem of abundance as necessary for communism 101
development of the productive forces and hence surplus sufficient for the abolition of labor 101
then you have time for scholē 102
you have to develop material production in order to overcome the need for material production 102
then you can turn your attention to higher pursuits 104
Shakespeare puts productivity on the side of nature 103
in communism the release of creative powers for their own sake 105
not for the sake of exchange value; doing away with the idea of the equivalent, the commensurable 105
communism is what is created by the activity of its members, not a predetermined structure 106
socialism provides a structure as a placeholder; it is still a matter of the state 106
communism would be a kind of state of grace in which we have acquired the habit of self-governing cooperatives, such that we no longer need to be regulated, they would operate spontaneously 107
central problem: nature is far from an inexhaustible resource 107
but human needs are not infinite, even if our desire is 107
communism is about the *conversion* of desire into an unending exploration and enjoyment of the world for its own sake 107
[transforming the inner infant into delight]
savoring the use values of the world 108
King Lear offers a more modest, more chastened idea of communism 108
men and women are forced by circumstances that produce scarcity into sharing and solidarity with one another [as in war, or as in Cuba] 108
here drudgery remains [we must still do labor in Arendt's sense] 109

we must discover how to be a communist without abundance – a kind of materially austere communism, though not a spiritually austere one 109

Hallward—Communism of the Intellect, Communism of the Will

Communism is not purely anticapitalism 111

communism is a positive project for another world 111

we have to strive to realize it before it is fully formed; this striving converts the impossible into the possible 112

Marx did not give us a clear idea of communism; "an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all"; the autonomous deployment of "human energy as an end in itself" 113

"communism as the positive supersession of private property as human self estrangement and hence is the true appropriation of the human essence through and for man, the restoration of man to himself as a social, i.e., human, being" EPM 113

Badiou prioritizes Plato over Aristotle, the absolute and the idea 114

or should we work with old conceptions and try to build on 114

the working classes for Marx must emancipate themselves 116

they must get a grip on history and engage in transformative activity, acting as an immense majority 116

they must revolt and expropriate the expropriators, preside over a new mode of production marked by self management, the free association of producers 116

in the Paris commune workers took the project of their emancipation into their own hands and created their own will and made the impossible possible 116-117

work becomes defined by autonomous self-determination, which is to say it becomes free voluntary action rather than involuntary labor 117

we require a collective will to decide our own history 117

to become authors and actors of our own drama (*Poverty of Philosophy*) 117

subjective forms of awareness are critical 118

in yet we currently have a situation in which the human subject is being displaced 118-119

conscious volition has been called into question 119

Nietzsche, Heidegger, Arendt, Adorno, Negri, Deleuze, Derrida, etc. 119

Agamben suggests that political will is essentially the same as fascism 120

so self-determination and self emancipation become troubled 120

we require some return to voluntarist philosophy 121

Rousseau's general will 121
people participating in the act of willing of a general or generalizable will; this will is at work in the mobilization of any emancipatory collective force 121
striving to formulate a fully common interest 121
political will commands voluntary and autonomous action using free rational deliberation 122
autonomy is self-legislation, of actively willing a certain course of action 122
it is collective action and direct participation, democratic, and a common commitment 123
if you remain an active participant in the Association, you will what is in the common or general interest 123
general will is the active interest of the greatest number of people 124
it is not a matter of imposing an external will or awareness upon an inert people, it is people working to clarify and organize their own will 125
it is the self-production of general will 125
the shack dwellers movement in South Africa: we will no longer wait quietly for humanity to be recognized – we have already taken our place on the land and we have decided to take our place in political discussions, as people who count 126
for Rousseau people must choose to agree in order for the general will to exist, they must choose to privilege collective over particular interests 127
[Rousseau has a stark individual-collective dichotomy, which has been troubled by the new work on subject, identity, will]
a will that wills and realizes its own emancipation – this is the animating principle of the concrete political Association 128
since I can only will my own freedom by willing the freedom of all, the only subject that can sustain the work of self-emancipation is the people 129
it is people's passivity that empowers their oppressors, they must will to be oppressed 129

Hardt—The Common in Communism

we need choices beyond capitalism/private property and socialism/state property 131

neither is the common that communism aims at 131

we should not abandon the terms Communism, democracy, freedom – even though they are corrupted – we should fight for them 131

we need an analysis of the forms of political organization that are possible 131

instead of doing that, though, he limits himself to a critique of political economy 132

- composition of labor has changed 132

- the relationship between property and the common is key to a communist analysis 132

- shift from immobile property (land) to mobile property (commodities) 132
 - this was the shift from rent to profit as the dominant mode of expropriation 133

- the shift from agricultural production to industrial production 134

- industrial production becomes the leading edge 134

- today industry no longer holds that position, immaterial production, or bio political production does 134

- production of ideas, information, images, knowledges, code, languages, social relationships, affects 134-135

- this is now the leading edge 135

- the production of affects and care becomes increasingly essential in the valorization process 135

- the struggle today is between material and immaterial property, which is to say between exclusive and shared property, between non-reproducible and reproducible property 135

- scarcity applies less fully to this new domain 135

- it is difficult to police ownership because products are so easily shared and reproduced 136

- sharing something increases its utility to me 136

- the realm of the production of ideas, maximum productivity comes through common and shared practices, not privatization practices, or even practices of public/state property 136

- so there's an emerging contradiction: the more the common is corralled as property, the less productivity it has 136

- labor is the sole essence of wealth (EPM) 133

- the common can mean the earth and resources, or the results of human labor and creativity 136

- the common is expropriated through privatization, through patents 137

- this method of expropriation is in the form of rent 137

- patents and copyrights generate rent – and income that is based solely on the ownership of property, not on having invested in its production 137

- capital remains external to the processes of the production of the common 137

- capital must exert control by gaining property rights in order to expropriate value through rent 138

the general trend from profit to rent 138
the production and productivity of the common becomes an increasingly autonomous domain (or at least autonomous from capital) 139

Marx says that communism is the positive expression of the abolition of private property 139

crude communism extends private property to everyone 139

communism is the abolition of property as such 139

something is ours though we do not possess it – open access, wikis, creative commons 139

today's common and its increasing productivity provide the basis for an alternative society and mode of production, the communism of the common 140

Marx: communism is the positive supersession of private property as human self-estrangement, and hence the true appropriation of the human essence through and for man; it is the complete restoration of man to himself as a social, i.e. human, being 140

appropriation of our own subjectivity and social relations and creative and productive powers 140

not so much appropriation but production: man produces man 141

not so much a humanism, that is taking recourse to a pre-existing or eternal human essence 141

but rather the autonomous human production of subjectivity, of humanity 141

but this is precisely what late capitalism is producing: lives, subjectivities, human faculties 141

capital is in its essence a social relation, it produces social relations and forms of life 142

Foucault says we should not call Marx a humanist, since he stressed the production of man by man, man produces something that does not yet exist 142

thus producer and product are both subjects in biopolitical production 143

this bio political production does not just reproduce capital but presents the potential for an autonomous process to create something new 143

it can exceed the bounds of capitalist relations because it constantly refers to the common, grants labor increasing autonomy 143

the idea of communism and contemporary capitalist production are thus quite close 143

the common is increasingly central to capitalist production 143

Hardt links communism to Ranciere's notion of politics 143

Communism is the affirmation of the common 144
deformation of open and autonomous bio political production, of
self governed continuous creation of new humanity 144

Nancy — Communism, the Word

etymology of communism: people having in common property 145
English diggers: land as a common treasure 146
community as a drive toward something that does not exist 147
communism as togetherness, the *Mitsein*, the being-with 147
the link between individuals who are separate 147
communism has more than political meaning, it says something about
property 148
property is what makes a possession *properly* the possession of the
subject 148
I never exist alone, I exist essentially *with* other beings 148
the width has nothing to do with collective, with the co- of being side-
by-side 148
it is rather the mit- of the *Mitsein*, which implies that neither you nor
me are the same when together or when separate — the with belongs to
the very constitution, to the being of each of us 148
not mere side-by-side, relationship 148
existence as ontologically being-in-common 149
individual property is proper to the subject, even personal property 149
the subject is the capacity of having properness 149
Freud: the ego is only a small disk emerging at the surface of the large
it which is the totality of the otherwise being in the world—I am made
of this whole world 149
communism therefore means the common condition of all the singularities of
subjects, all the uncommon points whose network makes the world 149
it comes before any politics 149
it is in danger of becoming ideology 150
we can only exist with others, and so the politics of communism are
simply how can we think about society with the aim of letting the common
come and take its own chance 150
a bit about chrematics: wealth means to possess more than common life needs,
poverty needs to have less 151
communism means to give to the common what common life needs 151
Plato critiques money after money [more so Aristotle] 152
property is only proper property, the proper level of wealth, and the
only level of wealth that is proper is common-wealth 152
common means the opening of the space between beings in the indefinite
possibility that this space opens 152

Ranciere—Communists without communism?

Communism is about emancipation, but the question is to know what emancipation means 167

Jacotot's idea of emancipation is that it is a way out of a situation of minority 167

it is not about moving from the situation of inequality towards a situation of equality, that is the logic of enlightenment 167

equality is not a goal it is a starting point, a presupposition to be verified 168

intelligence is not divided, it is one 168

so emancipation means the appropriation of this single intelligence 168
the emancipation of workers is the affirmation that there is no specific aptitude for the artisan 168

emancipation means the communism of intelligence, the demonstration of the capacity of those considered incapable, the capacity of a community of workers to organize production themselves, or to govern a city that its rulers have deserted 168

emancipation cannot apply to a society 169

it is an anarchical principle, it cannot govern society, it means disorder 169

it is a worker asserting his capacity to talk and make decisions 170
there can obviously be no communist state 170

Marx and Engels thought communism was the full implementation of a form of universality already at work in capitalism; all that was needed was reappropriation 170

communism of intelligence: the capacity of anybody to be where she can't be and do what she can't do 171

[i.e. for him communism is the same thing as "politics"]

we should not suppose incompetence and inequality and see communism as a movement toward competence and equality 172

he does not think we should revive the discussion on spontaneity and organization 173

what is important is the history of communist moments; effective reframing is about what 'common' means; reconfigurations of the universe of the possible 173

moments like when ordinary workers prove their capacity, to struggle or run factories 173

we might try to connect up those moments 173

acknowledges Negri's discussion of immaterial labor 174

says we must take into account the failure of capitalism to produce the utopia of a perfectly self regulated market 174

he thinks Negri's analysis is still caught in the inegalitarian logic: communism waiting to be born in the body of capitalism seems to suggest

the goal of transcending the current inequality for a future state of equality 175
a sort of social evolution 176
what we need to do is examine the multiplicity of forms of experimentation of the capacity of anybody at all to act and show their capability 176
his communism seems to be very close to his concept of democracy 176
emancipation must mean the autonomous growth of the space of the common created by the free Association of men and women implementing the egalitarian principle, which is to say assuming equality and acting as though it were true 176
is not about some fully formed system that we should aim to achieve 177
communism or democracy? There is some value in the term communism in that it points to the collective intelligence [the general intellect] 177

Negri—Communism: some thoughts on the concept and practice

communism is the real movement that abolishes the present state of things (Marx in the German ideology) 155
communists assume that history is always the history of class struggle 155
there is no longer any semblance of use value, we are completely immersed in exchange value 156
communism takes shape when the proletariat decides to reappropriate the community and make it into a new society 156
money has become the common land, the privately held wealth that has been expropriated from the common 157
communism reappropriates the common reality that is not from the past 157
an accumulation of counter power, of desire becoming solidarity 158
drawing on Gramsci he says: the pessimism of the will reminds us that it is not about the emergence of rebellions but the constant in critical effort of organization – this always prepares the way for the event 158
being communist means being against the state 158
against all forms of private property, against the public (which is a form of alienation and exploitation of labor) 158
state-public-socialism 158
communism means the desire and ability to manage the entire system of production in a radically democratic way 159
this prospect of a different order is virtually present today 159
political composition of the power of the multitude must take place 160
communist being involves turning constituent desires into expressions of power 160
communism attempts to build a new world where the exploitation of capital and the subjection to the state are eliminated 160

the multitude must constitute a force that is superior to the one currently in command 161
this requires a collective revolutionary will, a constituent will, and that requires organization (the event is not enough) 161
a collective desire that using force builds up its organized surplus throughout the aleatory process of struggles 161
multitude of singularities organizes into an anticapitalist force/power – not formally as a party – but as a resistance that is stronger and better articulated as the multitude becomes increasingly a whole of singular institutions 162
 institutions like forms of life, struggle, union organization, experiences of reappropriation, and the like 162
 the multitude is a group of such institutions, or coagulates 162
 the cognitive proletariat is a leading-edge, hyper productive of surplus 163
communism already exists in the development of singularities, and in the production of surplus value through cognitive labor 163
communism is an ethics of struggle that moves beyond indignation and toward subjection [here he is like Ranciere instead of Deleuze and Guattari], a becoming-subject of the multitude 163
 as singularities withdraw from solitude and work to make themselves multitude looking for the common instead of privacy 163
 democracy is: the common management of the common 164
organization is crucial, it is a collective being-against, it is a principle of institution, and institution is essential to creating the multitude as subject 164
 labor freed from capital's command; love freed from solitude-- coming together to develop new forms of common coexistence in both resistance and organization 164
 the power of the poor and the common desire for love, equality and solidarity 165

Russo—did the cultural revolution and communism? Eight remarks on philosophy and politics today

the communist hypothesis is the name for an ethics of philosophy concerning its political condition 180
defending philosophy against depoliticization 180
 communism opposes the enchainment of politics inside state power 180
is communism a Platonic idea? 181
politics in sequences, which is the idea of Sylvain Lazarus, brief and singular [essentially the idea that politics corrupts briefly] 181
 politics is a rare and intermittent phenomenon 181
the political sequence of the 1960s was important 182

especially the cultural revolution 183
there is a need to think beyond the tradition of party, class struggle,
and proletariat 183
the need to think beyond "the worker" as the agent of historical change
184
possibility of self organized forms of political subjectivity 184
these were on display in China in the 60s even in the context of the
party-state 184
red guards as independent entities 185
explosion of political activity among students 186 and workers 187
the question of the capacity of workers to organize their own political
entities outside the party and outside the state 188
he claims the political exhaustion of party-state, class-based politics, the
inclusion of the worker in the state 189
the welfare state as a way to include the worker in the state 189
acknowledgment of the gap that separates the working class from the
Communist Party; they are not the same thing 190
the cultural revolution didn't end communism, divided communism in two 190
communism as a powerful party-state 190
and communism as a form of mass self-liberation 190
it seems he wants to argue that there is a need for the invention of a
new name to designate mass self-liberation, other than communism 191
need for a new relationship between politics and philosophy 192
we should stress their separation 193
we need a new exploration of the theory of the subject and a materialist
rethinking of the theory of the state 193
communism is closed as a political name; it is reopened as a name in
philosophy 194

Toscano—The politics of abstraction: communism and philosophy

the possibility that Stalinism results from thinking communism abstractly 196
Marx says that we do not anticipate the world with our dogmas but attempt to
discover the New World through the critique of the old one 96
non-dogmatic anticipation 197
the productive negation of ideal history can extract the weapons for
overturning the status quo 197
theory is an active principle, a set of practices 198
it is not a question of creating a Truth to serve as the standard
against which to judge social change 199
that is what Marx and Engels accuse utopian socialism of doing in
The Communist Manifesto 199
equality is not an abstraction, therefore, it is something that
must be tried out, experimented with 199

equality in the distributionist sense is still steeped in the
abstractions of bourgeois society 200
we can't apply an equal standard to unequal individuals 200
communist equality has no standard of right 200
it implies creating social relations that render inequalities in
operative 201
realization, experimentation is intrinsic to the idea of communism 201
communist philosophy can only delineate the problems and lines of
solution that communism calls for, but communism must be worked
out in practice 201
this requires communist power, force, authority 202
we need to think together communism as a form of political
organization and communism as a form of social association 202
power is not the same thing as the state 202
there is constituent power and constituted power (he doesn't
use these terms) 203
it is necessary to foster constituent power towards
communism 203
that power will have to negate the current world in addition
to building a different one 204

Vattimo—Weak communism?

Communism ought to be weak, theoretically weak 205
which is to say not metaphysical 205
metaphysics is the violent imposition which claims objective evidence
with respect to truth 206
weak communism would include a good dose of anarchism which is where the
idea of weakness comes from 206
when the left comes to power it loses its transformative energy 206
the key is to find a new form of subversive political action and yet not
renounce the few benefits of liberal democracy 207
refuse to formulate a system or a constitution 207

Zizek—How to begin from the beginning

necessity of admitting mistakes 209
and accept the necessity of beginning again, of starting all over 210
and so our communism might be entirely new, rather than a building on
communisms of the past 211
the problem used to be the lack of a revolutionary subject constituting itself
as a subject 212
the commons: the shared substance of our social being 212
nature, culture, human biology 213
capitalism will try to enclose this commons 213
we shouldn't drop the notion of the proletariat we should radicalize it 213

no longer the act of a particular social agent but a combination of different agents 213
something along the lines of the 99%, the excluded 214
the part of no part that claims its part, which claiming is called democracy 215

what to do with Mao's cultural revolution 216
the new left says to leave behind centralized dictatorial power 217
he thinks we need more of that kind of power [because is a moron-clown] 217
there is a tension between the bureaucratic power of socialism and the democratic power of the Soviets 218

how can we revolutionize an order like capitalism which is constantly self revolutionizing 219
since capitalism continually disorders what is ordered, our revolt should enforce a new order 219
the failure of the communist state was the failure of anti-statist politics, the failure of non-state forms of organization 219
the task is to make the state work in a non-statal mode 219
it's a false dilemma to say we have to either struggle for state power or pursue resistance at a distance from the state 219
revolutionary violence should not take over the state but should transform it 220
the dictatorship of the proletariat is when the state is radically transformed, relying on new forms of popular participation 220

then into his quite useful analysis of China as capitalism with Asian values, or authoritarian capitalism 220
democracy is not necessary for capitalism, or even very useful 221
relations between people are now the very material of our everyday exploitation [Hardt and Negri's immaterial labor] 221
and this makes capital purely parasitic on our common production of affect and relationships 222
the key then would be to see that the multitude directly produces life, and that capital is a kind of unnecessary excess or remainder 223
immaterial labor directly produces social relations, which are then privatized by capital 224
Marx didn't envisage the possibility of the privatization of the general intellect 224
it takes the form of rent, and rent needs direct authority to impose itself on the direct production of the multitude 224
a much more authoritarian state makes sense in this situation 224
Microsoft privatizes the code 225
three fractions of the working class: intellectual laborers, manual laborers, and outcasts 226

difficult to create a space where these can all meet 226

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