10th Anniversary Issue

Journal of the Edinburgh Conference of Socialist Economists

Common Sense

Number 21

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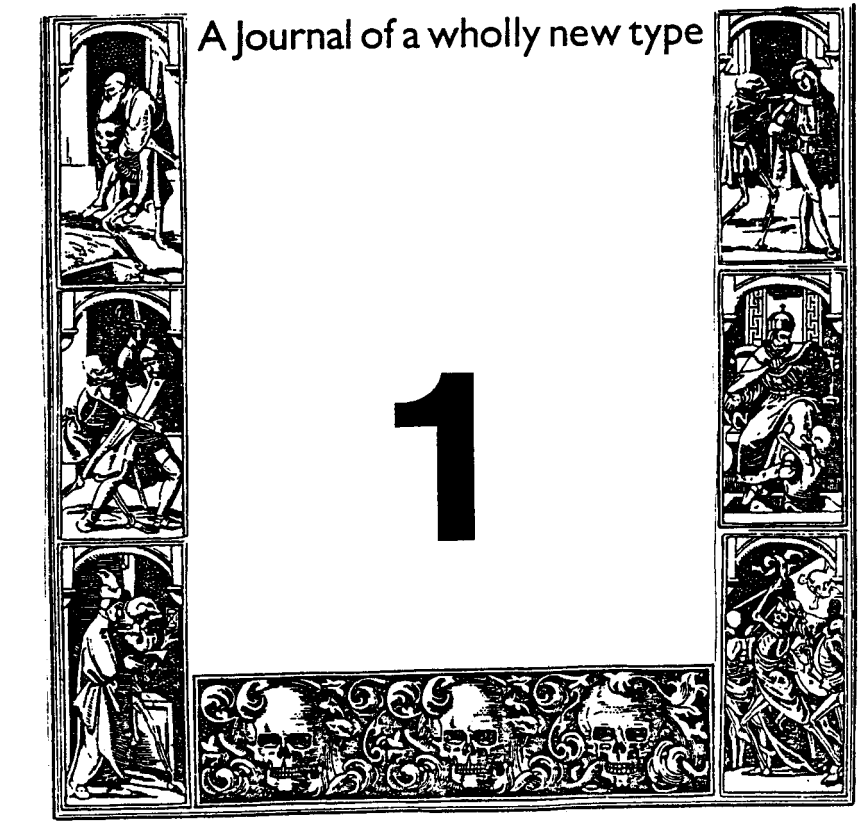
A Journal of a wholly new type



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10 Years of *Common Sense*

This issue of *Common Sense*, the 21st, marks the 10th anniversary of the journal's appearance in Summer 1987. Since then the journal has gone through several transformations in both form and content. Initially an A4 stapled, photocopied magazine/pamphlet (see the reproduction of the cover of the first issue on page 4), the journal moved to being an A5 printed paperback in the spring of 1991. The subscription and distribution networks have also grown throughout the decade and *Common Sense* is now read all around the world; on all continents.

However, perhaps the most surprising feature of *Common Sense's* ten years of existence has not been the journal's growth but its *survival* in an era of iconoclasm. We remain a journal of and for social revolutionary theory and practice, ideas and politics. Our project is class analysis and we aim to provide a platform for critical debates unfettered by conventional fragmentations of knowledge (either into 'fields' of knowledge or 'types' of knowledge, e.g. 'academic' and 'non-academic'). This continuity in the concepts of class struggle and social change flies in the face of most interpretations of the last 10 years.

When the journal first appeared the 'traditional' representatives of the working class found themselves in severe crisis. The Labour Party had just lost its third election to Margaret Thatcher, the trades unions were in decline (especially after the defeat of the miners in 1985), and many so-called 'revolutionary' political parties were making a bee-line for electoral respectability in the hope that some form of 'rainbow coalition' (with liberals, greens, and Labour) could stem the tide of what appeared to be an 'inevitable' right-wing onslaught.

Common Sense refused to accept such an apathetic and reified interpretation of the class struggle. We believed that such 'bowing' to the power of the electorate (including the legitimacy of union ballots) actually reinforced rather than questioned the concept of self-interest as a mode of existence. It placed the abstract 'political' citizen, and as such the Neoclassical concept of *homo economicus*, at the heart of the socio-historical process *rather* than the politics of emancipation.

This *denied* power was not long in making itself felt. By October 1987 the stock market crash indicated the underlying weakeness of capitalism in spite of its apparent 'political' success. The crisis of capital accumulation that first burst onto the world stage in the late 1960s and early 1970s was still not over. Indeed, it was deeper than ever. Thus, it was to the analysis of this crisis and its source in the contradictory power

of labour (that is, labour's creative and destructive power in and against its own commodified existence) that many of *Common Sense's* page have been turned over – leaving the neurotic analysis of the dead world, the autopsy of the Keynesian welfare state, to others.

And one only has to thumb through the pages of *Common Sense* to witness the power of labour in the on-going class struggle of the last decade. From the poll tax rebellion in Britain (1988-1992) to the Zapatista uprising in Mexico (1994-1997), from resistance by women workers in Malayian high-tec factories to self-valorisation in American high-tec universities, from workers compliance with Nazism to their insurgency against it, from the fall of the Berlin Wall to the rise of new social subjects, the journal has attempted to connect class struggles in a way – that is, give them a common sense – which does not reduce one to the other nor deny any their importance within the crisis of accumulation.

However, the journal rejected an understanding of all forms of struggle as inherently, in and of themselves, positive. The aim has always been to reflect on the relationship between revolutionary theory and practice and keep each 'on the boil', realising that reification does not cease to be a problem merely because someone reads Marx whilst, of course, seeing the reading of Marx as an important part of the struggle to overcome reification.

Whether the journal has been successful is not for us to judge. What we can offer is a platform from which to carry on debate. What we can try to do is to improve consistently the quality of the journal and keep the price down. Currently we recognise the need to make *Common Sense* more interactive and would therefore welcome shorter comments, letters, more conference reports and short book reviews, *and* notices of up an coming events. So let us know what you are up to!

Finally, it only remains to say thanks to all those who have helped *Common Sense* over the years. The following is a by no means exhaustive list of people that require our recognition: Bob Goupillot, whose contribution was significant; Ed Emery, for translating numerous articles; Rebecca Willner, for distributing CS in London; Andy Duncan, Mario Piccinni and Hugo Whitaker, who were involved in editing issue 10; all those involved at AK Distribution;Tommy and others at Clydeside Press; and Bob at Edinburgh Make-up Services. Our greatest thanks are to those who keep reading *Common Sense*, especially through subscriptions.

The Common Sense Collective

An Uncommon View of the Birth of an Uncommon Market

Alfred Mendez

Introduction

Any research into the subject of the Common Market is immediately confronted by a veil of confusing acronyms: E-this, E-that and E-the-other. True, the Common Market – or the EEC or the EU (it transpires that they are all the same at different stages of evolvement) – must be one of the most complex, if not the most complex bureaucracy ever created. But complexity invariably fosters unaccountability and inefficiency (to say nothing of corruption) - so why this complexity? Surely, the very concept of economic unity, of integration, as propounded by the creators of this body implies the very opposite of complexity? Can it be that the concept was not implemented as propounded? Can it be that the web of acronyms and unnecessary changing of titles was a diversionary tactic? After all, why are aliases used if not to divert attention?

Certainly, the current constant political bickering over the Common Market tends to distract public attention away from a proper understanding of its raison d'àtre, and to achieve this understanding it is therefore necessary to recapitulate the events leading to its birth – viewed from within the context of the politico-economic situation of the post World War Two period.

The political situation was one of an ideological confrontation between the West and the USSR: between Capitalism and Marxism (the question as to whether the USSR was a marxist state or not is irrelevant here inasmuch as the West – and particularly America – perceived it to be such). Again, the term 'confrontation' may at first seem to be an overstatement inasmuch as the West and the USSR had just emerged from a war in which they had been allies, but it must be remembered that this alliance had been one of circumstance and convenience. The intellectual dichotomy between Capitalism and Marxism of the late nineteenth century had become political confrontation with the advent of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 which, of course, invalidates the popularised view of the 'Cold War' as being a post-World War Two

phenomenon.

Another popular misconception is that at the end of the war it was the USSR that had reneged on decisions reached by the Allies, the 'Big Three', at the Yalta Conference of February '45 - particularly over Poland. Indeed, this was precisely the reason given, more than once, by the West for their subsequent policy of 'going their own way', one of the results of which was the Common Market. It therefore calls for a closer look. The American Secretary of State in '45, Edward Stettinius, who was Roosevelt's right-hand man at Yalta later records: "The Soviet Union made more concessions to the United States and Great Britain than were made to the Soviet Union". On the 27th of February '45 Churchill, in his speech to the House of Commons, stated: "I know of no government which stands to its obligations, even in its own despite, more solidly than the Soviet government". Given this background, it is extraordinary that, on the 23rd of April '45, a fortnight after Roosevelt's death and while Molotov was in America en route to the Founding Conference of the UN, Truman summoned Molotov to the White House and berated him (in "Missouri mule driver's language", to quote the columnist Drew Pearson), accusing the Soviets of failing to adhere to the Yalta agreements – agreements that had been reached only two months previously – and the war was still being fought! (It is not difficult to imagine what Truman's response to the Russians would have been had the roles of the protagonists in this situation been reversed. Mule-driver's language would most certainly not have been used!). Moreover, the following month, immediately following VE Day, Truman cancelled Lend-Lease aid to Russia, a country that had pledged at Yalta to declare war against Japan three months after Germany's defeat, namely, on the 8th of August '45. On the 6th of August the Americans dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima – without previously notifying their Russian ally of their intention so to do.

So why this switch in American attitude? It must be appreciated that America was then (as it still is) a corporate state. In his first two years in office, of the 125 key administrative posts appointed by Truman, 49 were bankers, industrialists and financiers, 17 were corporate lawyers, and 31 were high-ranking military officers. True, he had inherited a similarly oriented administration form Roosevelt, but the war had been profitable enough to sedate the latters' corporate cohorts – and Roosevelt an excellent diplomat. Now: the European war was over, Roosevelt dead, and a successfully tested atomic bomb to hand, and when it is recalled that in July '41, on learning of the German invasion of Russia, Truman – then Vice-President – had stated "If we see that Germany is winning the war we ought to help Russia; and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and in that way let them kill as many as possible" (as reported in the New York Times on 24th July '41) then the Americans' actions noted above are comprehensible. Certainly there would be no more cooperation with the 'red enemy'!

Talk of international unity was relegated to the posturings of diplomats and officials within the halls of the United Nations – as it had been under the League of Nations. European integration was the call heard more frequently in the real world outside. This idea was not a new

one, but before 1939 it had been of an amorphous nature with religious, Catholic overtones – hardly surprising, given the Vatican's centuries-long dominion over Europe under the banner of the Holy Roman Empire, which, in an historical sense, had not long ended. The Pan-European Union (Pan-Europa) formed by the Habsburgian Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi in 1923 was such a one.

During the war there had been other instances of movements towards European unity or federation which, because of their common aim, contributed something towards the eventual birth of the Common Market, even though it may not have been of a direct nature. After all, there would be the inevitable intermingling of ideas of those participating within the various groups formed. The call by André Malraux and Georges Bidault in '41 for a post-war federal style European New Deal – excluding the Soviet Union – was such a one. There were others, but there was no possibility of fulfilment until war's end anyway.

At war's end, economically, the West European nations emerged bankrupted, the USSR with its infrastructure decimated, and America with three-quarters of the world's invested capital and two-thirds of the world's industrial capacity (thanks in no small measure to the war). On the one hand a group of nations in desperate need of reconstruction; and on the other a rich nation with the capacity to satisfy that need. On the face of it, the problem so posited carried within it a built-in solution – but there was one main obstacle to a quick resolution: namely, one of those nations in need was the USSR. The problem here for Corporate America was that, although it had no intention of acceding to the USSR's request for assistance, both countries were still part of the Big-Three alliance. Indeed, at the Potsdam Conference in mid-July '45 the USSR had acceded to the American's call for the establishment of a Council of Ministers which was duly set up, and although relations between West and East became more strained with each subsequent Foreign Ministerial meeting, Peace Treaties with the ex-Nazi-satellite nations (Italy, Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary and Romania) were signed by the Big-Three in October '46.

To appreciate more fully the events that followed it must be recalled that Britain, at the end of the war, had, by military intervention, supplanted the popular left-wing Greek movement EAM with the right-wing dictatorship of Tsaldaris, and had thereby found itself enmeshed in a civil war which it was no longer able to afford. On the 24th February '47 it notified America of its intention to withdraw, and Truman immediately set Clark Clifford, a corporate lawyer (later special attorney to Du Pont, G-E, Standard Oil, TWA and RCA) to draft what was subsequently known as the 'Truman Doctrine'.

The next Foreign Minister's meeting in Moscow, beginning on the 10th of March '47, turned out to be a critical one in East/West relations. In the afterglow of the Satellite Peace Treaties signed some five months previously, the negotiators and staff met in Moscow in a hopeful mood to discuss such questions as German unity and disarmament and an end to the Austrian occupation by Russia. As eye-witness correspondent Howard K. Smith wrote: "Molotov proved uncommonly conciliatory in

the opening discussion on rules and procedure and yielded his own suggestions first to those of Marshall, then to those of Bevin. The Russians had undoubtedly assumed that all was well and that things would go according to prescription. Stalin even told Secretary of State Marshall that 'these were only the first skirmishes and brushes of reconnaissance forces'. Right on top of the Conference, two days after it had opened, burst the bombshell of the Truman Doctrine speech in which President Truman had said 'nearly every nation must choose between' the two worlds; it sounded like an ultimatum to the rest of Europe to be with us or to be counted against us. That wiped the smiles off the Russians' faces".

That had indeed been Truman's message to his Congress – and the Russians. Now the main obstacle to the flow of American capital investment into Europe had been removed, and was now to be activated by means of the Marshall Plan as proclaimed by Marshall at Harvard University three months later on the 5th of June '47. This speech called upon the Europeans to draw up plans for economic recovery, which the Americans would then finance. He had also stated in his speech that: "Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine, but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos". But, in saying this, had Marshall forgotten that two months before, as later revealed by Walt Rostow (Special Assistant to the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe from '47 to '49) ... "On April the 29th, the day after his report to the nation on the failure of the Moscow Conference, Secretary Marshall instructed the Policy Planning Staff to prepare a general plan for American aid in the reconstruction of Western Europe"? No mention here of Eastern Europe or the USSR.

But in any case, had not the United Nations been created with just such a scenario in mind? So why by-pass it? Again, to quote Walt Rostow: "...there was even in being an organisation dedicated to European economic cooperation – the Economic Commission for Europe – the ECE was, however, an organisation of the United Nations, with Soviet and Eastern European countries as members. Its very existence posed a basic question. Should an effort be made to embrace all of Europe in a new enterprise of reconstruction, or should the lesson of the Moscow conference be read as indicating that the only realistic alternative was for the West to accept the split and to strengthen the area still outside Stalin's grip?" Remember: Rostow had served in the ECE. This decision to by-pass the UN aroused the suspicions of the Russians, suspicions that were confirmed at the Paris Conference of the Committee of European Economic Cooperation (CEEC) called in July '47 to discuss the administration of Marshall aid. Molotov walked out of the conference after two days attendance.

A closer look at Marshall's 'Planning Staff' mentioned above is revealing. The committee charged with formulating the Marshall Plan was as follows: Chairman, Henry Stimson (ex-Sec. of State & War, Wall St. lawyer, Director of Council on Foreign Relations); Executive Committee Chairman, Robert Patterson (ex-Sec. of War); Executive Committee, Dean Acheson (Under-Sec. of State, Corporate lawyer of Covington & Burling); Winthrop Aldrich (Banker & uncle of Rockefeller

bros.); James Carey (CIO Sec. Treasurer); Herbert Lehman (Lehman Bros. Investment); Philip Reed (General Electric Exec.); Herbert Bayard Swope (ex-editor & brother of former G-E Pres.); David Dubinsky (Labor Leader). The composition of this planning group confirms what has already been referred to: namely, that the American executive administration had, since the mid-thirties, been heavily staffed with – and therefore controlled by – corporate executives: men who, precisely because they were unaccountable to the democratic interests - interests, moreover, that were coordinated to a high degree by interlinked membership of numerous 'advisory councils', 'foundations' and other forms of quangos whose common affinity was obeisance to Profit.

Here, two points need to be noted: the importance that America attached to the Marshall Plan; and the fact that the Common Market could not have evolved into the form it eventually adopted without Marshall aid. The US Congress duly authorised this aid by passing the Economic Cooperation Act (ECA) on the 3rd of April '48, and Paul Hoffman (of Studebaker, Ford Foundation, and co-founder of the Committee for Economic Development in '42) was subsequently appointed Administrator of the aid program, and since ECA approval was required before such aid funds could be supplied, this allowed US planners to influence directly the direction of economic change in Europe.

Meanwhile, as a result of the above-mentioned CEEC Conference in Paris, the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) was formed in order to determine the allocation of Marshall aid. The American desire was for a more integrated organisation than the Europeans were prepared to accept. As Paul Hoffman put it: "The substance of such integration would be the formation of a large single market within which quantitative restrictions of movement of goods, monetary barriers to the flow of payments and eventually all tariffs are permanently swept away." This was a scenario within which Corporate America could move its capital at will, and, as such, a statement reflecting blatant self-interest. Indeed, this message was further driven home by another ECA official, Richard Bissel, at whose instigation the OEEC set up the European Payments Union (EPU) in September '50 in order to facilitate intra-European trade and provide a basis for European integration and monetary union. (One interesting point here: good economist though he may have been in '50, Bissel was no military strategist when, in '60/'61, as CIA Deputy Director of Planning, he oversaw the Cuban Bay-of-Pigs fiasco!) The Europeans, some of whom were still in the time-warp of Empire and reluctant to relinquish any of their individual sovereign rights, opposed further integration. This not only meant that the aid became a scramble for dollars but, more crucially, posed an obstacle to the American's aim as laid out by Hoffman. This called for a change of mind on the part of the dissident Europeans, which eventually would be accomplished, primarily through economic necessity; but also by 'a little help from my friends'. Help that, initially, would necessarily be of a non-governmental nature, given the already-noted opposition of governments whose hands, in any case, would be full coping with their day-to-day, short-term problems. Use

would be made of the numerous lobbying groups formed in the aftermath of the war as a result of earlier calls for European union.

The earliest of these groups, and one which was to play a significant role in alleviating any discord among the Europeans, was the Independent League for Economic Cooperation (ILEC). This lobby group, ostensibly motivated by its desire to find an economic solution to Europe's' problems – as implied by its title – was responsible for the subsequent establishment in May '49 of the Council of Europe (COE) which, contrary to the aspirations of those who had laid the foundations for it at the Congress of Europe the previous year, ended up as a purely consultative body with no economic mandate, due primarily to the reluctance of Britain and the Scandinavians – as noted above. Be that as it may, the COE was established in Strasbourg with all key Europeans onboard – and is still in existence today. Indeed, it is sometimes referred to as the 'mother' of the Common Market – with some justification: was not its flag adopted by the EC – or Common Market – in May '86? To gain a clearer understanding of the above, it is necessary to take a closer look at the means by which the ILEC evolved into the COE. ILEC was the brainchild of a 60-year-old Pole, Dr. Josef Hieronym Retinger, a man with a history intriguing enough to warrant a biography – suffice it to say here that, as a result of comprehensive political dealings in both Europe and the New World, stretching from pre-World War One to post-World War Two, he had become the archetypal broker, an *eminence grise*. In Sir Edward Beddington-Behrens' words: "I remember in the US his picking up the telephone and immediately making an appointment with the President; and in Europe he had complete entre in every political circle as a kind of right." Having set up ILEC with the assistance of Paul Van Zeeland (Belgian Prime Minister-to-be), Retinger went to America at the end of '46 seeking financial backing for the group. In his own words (as reported by his biographer and Personal Assistant, John Pomian): "At that time I found in America a unanimous approval for our ideas among financiers, businessmen and politicians: Mr Leffingwell, senior partner in J.P.Morgans; Nelson and David Rockefeller; Alfred Sloan, Director of the Dodge Motor Company;" – et al – "... and especially my old friend Adolph Berle jnr. were all in favour, and Berle agreed to lead the American section." Berle was a prestigious corporate lawyer.

In March '47, ILEC was established at a meeting in New York, with Van Zeeland as President of the Central Council and Retinger as General Secretary. In December '47, as a result of Retingers' approaches to a number of other groups with similar aims of European unity – either of a cooperative or federalist nature (Churchill's UEM, Coudenhove-Kalergi's IPU, the Catholic NEI, the CFEU, and the UEF) – the International Committee of the Movement for European Unity (ICMEU) was formed, with Duncan-Sandys (Churchill's son-in-law) as Chairman and Retinger as Honorary Secretary. This committee – more commonly known as the European Movement (EM) – convened the Congress of Europe in the Hague in May '48 which, in turn, established the Council of Europe (COE) by the Treaty of Westminster in May '49 (as already noted).

In July '48 Retinger and Duncan-Sandys went to America to seek financial backing for the EM, accompanied by Winston Churchill and Paul Henri Spaak, the Belgian Prime Minister. This resulted in the launching of the American Committee on a United Europe (ACUE) at a luncheon in honour of Churchill on March 29th '49. The significance of ACUE lay in its stewardship: Chairman, William Donovan (ex-Director of the wartime American Intelligence Service, the OSS); Vice-Chairman, Allen Dulles (Deputy Director of the CIA); Secretary, George Franklin (Director of the Council on Foreign Relations); and Executive Director, Thomas Braden (Head of CIA division on international organisations). Funds for the EM, by now transformed into the Council of Europe, were soon flowing into Brussels - most of it from State Department secret funds.

ACUE was also the channel subsequently used to fund the Youth Campaign for European Unity, formed in '50 by Retinger and Duncan-Sandys as a result of a deal they had made with John McCloy, US High Commissioner for Germany (later Chairman of Chase Manhattan Bank), and Robert Murphy, US Ambassador in Brussels (later Consultant on Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board). Between '51 and '59, this group received approximately £1.5 million (Sterling).

Perhaps the most intriguing of Rettinger's contacts during this period was Dr. Hermann Josef Abs who then set up the German section of ILEC. Abs, as Director of the Deutsche Bank during the Third Reich, had been responsible for laying out the economic base the Nazis would adopt on attaining hegemony over Europe and Russia. Arrested for war crimes in January '46, he was released three months later on the intervention of the British who then appointed him economic advisor in their zone! More pertinently, in March '48 Abs was appointed Deputy Deputy Head of the Loan Corporation as well as President of Bank Deutsche Länder, and as such was in charge of the allocation of Marshall aid to German industry. Another fascinating link was that, among the 40 directorships he had held, one was in the I.G.Farben conglomerate which had been a client – before America's entry into the war – of corporate law firm Sullivan & Cromwell, whose senior partners were the Dulles Brothers.

The end result of the foregoing was the Council of Europe which, although it had failed to create an economic climate in Europe amenable to the free flow of American capital, was nonetheless the first post-war organisation of European unity, and, as such, of political importance. From now on, in order to create the necessary economic climate, the dissident British and Scandinavians would be by-passed. This was accomplished by the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in April '51, the result of the French Prime Minister Paul Schuman's call the previous year for the placing of French and German coal and steel production under the control of a supranational body, by which means the French hoped to gain some control over the future of Germany and thus, at the very least, hinder the Americans' plan to re-arm the latter. Schuman, born in the Alsace region, served in the German army in World War One and subsequently adopted French nationality, later joining the right-wing group 'Energie' of Professor

Louis Le fur who was to serve under Petain in the Vichy regime.

In July '67 the six ECSC members, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and Holland, formed two more analogous bodies: the European Economic Community (EEC – or Common Market), and the European Atomic Energy Committee (EURATOM). Thus, in spite of the non-membership of Britain and the Scandinavians, the Common Market was born (later to evolve into the European Community [EC] in '86, and finally into the European Union [EU] in '92).

The ECSC (Schuman Plan), which entailed a close Franco-German relationship, exemplified, on the one hand, the important role played by the coal and steel industry in their respective countries, and, on the other hand, the role played by post-war American aid in the resurrection of those industries, but it must be remembered that such aid was being distributed from as early as '46, primarily in the form of grants and two years prior to the distribution of Marshall aid. The popular conception of this aid is that it was primarily for the reconstruction of West European democracies ravaged by the war. This was not so. From '46 to '51 five right-wing dictatorships (Greece, Turkey, South Vietnam, South Korea and Formosa), with a total population of 75 million, received more American economic aid in grants than Western Europe, which had a larger population. Again, the five dictatorships received $7.9 billion in military aid (excluding such aid to South Korea during the war there) – whereas Europe received $7.5 billion in military aid, of which $4 billion went to France ($2.5 billion of which was for her war in Indochina), and $0.5 billion for fascist Spain (which had received $1 billion in economic aid). From '46 to '53 West Germany received $3.6 billion in economic aid. It is thus hardly surprising that it was debtor France who formulated the idea leading to the ECSC, an organisation whose federalist structure conformed to America's wishes – and that fellow debtor Germany was a willing accomplice.

The aid so allocated reflected Corporate America's political orientation in a nutshell, and a further example was the warning given by Secretary of State Marshall – aimed primarily at Italy and France – that no aid would be forthcoming if communists gained any positions of political power. Result: The Italian communists lost the general election in '48 (which they were expected to win); French communists were removed from cabinet posts. Then, one year after the implementation of the Marshall Plan, NATO was created. During the formative stages of NATO George Kennan had been Director of the recently created State Department Planning Staff, and for years he was considered the expert on Soviet affairs. Now, ten years later, a disillusioned man, he was giving the annual BBC Reith lectures at the end of '57, and deploring the fact that the military instrument they had initially created as a shield behind which the West could "meet the communist danger in its most threatening form – as an internal problem, that is of Western society, to be combated by reviving economic activity" – had now become "the major vehicle of Western policy". Incongruous, to say the least, that a man who had helped to formulate the politically motivated policy of military containment

should now be deploring its consummation! Be that as it may, Kennen had succinctly spelt out the raison d'etre of NATO. After all, the Americans were well aware that the Soviets posed no serious military threat in the post-war period: had they not for the last three years of the war been supplying the Soviets, under the Lend-Lease program, with military equipment that the latter lacked? Moreover, it was inconceivable that they were not aware of the devastation caused by the strategy of 'total war' waged by the German army on Soviet soil: a cursory glance at the statistics of that devastation would have been enough to convince them of the improbability of any military aggression from that quarter.

The passage of time has proved that NATO's purpose was political, not military: had it been the latter it would have been made redundant on the collapse of the USSR. Its political role assumed two functions: primarily, to ensure the hegemony of American capital – or 'American leadership' as propounded by all post-war US Presidents and most recently by the new Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, in her address to the House; and secondarily, to satisfy the more immediate need for an organisation that would embrace all the key European nations, including Germany and dissident Britain.

The Truman doctrine of containment of the USSR having struck a sympathetic chord amongst some key European governments, and Marshall aid having bolstered that sympathy with the added sense of indebtedness, NATO was the logical outcome. This would be an ostensibly military organisation with a command structure fenced with statutory clauses that ensured American control - to say nothing of the financial largesse that would accompany it, but the Americans' plan to induct Germany into the organisation and thereby re-arm her, met with stiff European resistance, and the setting up by the French of the ECSC and its supplementary European Defence Community (EDC) did not help matters. Enter one Josef Retinger: as a result of his approaches in the early '50's to the most influential West European leaders, he and Prince Bernhard of Holland went to Washington in '53 to lobby support from Walter Bedell Smith (Director of the CIA) and Charles Jackson (National Security Advisor to Eisenhower) for a group that would serve as a forum for lobbying at the highest political level in order to ensure that consensual policies would be adopted by the members of NATO - in particular. A US committee was formed: John Coleman (Chm. Burroughs Corp.), David Rockefeller (Chase Manhattan Bank), Dean Rusk (Rockefeller Foundation), Henry Heinz II, Joseph Johnson (Pres. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace) and George Ball (Corporate Lawyer, Partner Lehman Bros.). This, in turn, resulted in the formation of the Bilderberg Group in May '54. Since that date, all doors to the seats of power in the West have been accessible to the Bilderberg. George McGhee (ex-US ambassador to West Germany), who attended all Bilderberg meetings from '55 to '67 has revealed that "The Treaty of Rome which brought the Common Market into being, was nurtured at Bilderberg meetings." Germany joined NATO on the 6th May '55.

The movement of American capital into Europe could now be facilitated. Proof of this calls for the asking of that very common-sensical question: "Who benefited most from the Common Market?"

The answer to this question was spelt out clearly by the French newspaper owner Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber in his well-researched book The American Challenge of 1967 (in fairness, it should be noted here that the message of the book was the somewhat naïve one that Europe should copy the American's way of doing business). The following facts and figures are taken from that book, and, unless otherwise noted, are as of the year 1967:

(1) America had invested $14 billion, in fixed assets, in Europe – working capital being as much again (US Dept. of Commerce).

(2) From '58 to '67 "American corporations have invested $10 billion in Western Europe – more than a third of their total investment abroad. Of the 6000 new businesses started overseas by Americans during that period, half were in Europe."

(3) "The US Department of Commerce finds it 'striking' that from '65 to '66 American investment rose by 17% in the US, 21% in the rest of the world, and 40% in the Common Market."

(4) By 1963 "American firms in France controlled 40% of the petroleum market, 65% of the production of films and photographic paper, 65% of farm machinery, 65% of telecommunications equipment, and 45% of synthetic rubber." ('Foreign Investment in France by Gilles Bertain).

(5) "As early as '65 the Commerzbank estimated American-controlled investments in Germany at $2 billion, while the gross capital of all firms quoted on the German stock exchange was only $3.5 billion ."

(6) "More than half of the US subsidiaries in Europe belong to the 340 American firms appearing on the list of the 500 largest corporations in the world. Three American giants are responsible for 40% of direct American investment in France, Germany and Britain."

(7) "During 1965 the Americans invested $4 billion in Europe" ('Survey of Current Business') "This is where the money came from:

1. Loans from the European capital market (Euro-issues) and direct credits from European countries – 55%
2. Subsidies from European governments and internal financing from local earnings – 35%
3. Direct dollar transfers from the United States – 10%.

Thus nine-tenths of American investment in Europe is financed from European sources. In other words, we pay them to buy us."

(8) "In the words of M. Boyer de la Giroday of the Brussels Commission, 'American investment in Europe has its own special nature. When we set up the European Economic Community (EEC) we did something useful, but simple and still incomplete. So far its major result has been to

speed our economic prosperity by creating the most favourable climate for a growing invasion of American industries. They are the only ones that have acted on the logic of the Common Market'."

Implicit in the truism that the child is a product of its parents is the equally valid truism that in order to know the child well, one must know its parents. In the case of the Common Market, in view of the incestuous nature of its parentage – to say nothing of the strange midwives attending its birth – it is hardly surprising that it turned out to be a most uncommon market.

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Zapatista Discourse: What is New*

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Preface

The uprising in Chiapas has been qualified as a postmodern political movement. For example, Burbach (1994) argues that it is not a peasant political movement focusing on taking land, nor an indigenous revolt characteristic of past national liberation movements, nor a 'fence' of poor people against 'rich' cities. They do not call themselves 'guevaristas' nor 'foquistas' nor consider themselves as the avantgarde.

Some commentators, like Holloway (1996) assert that the Zapatistas use a 'new language' to argue against the discourse of globalised capitalism. Others, like Laclau (1992, 1996) propose the concept of 'empty significance' – defined as the 'critical presence of that which is absent' in the social formation – as the key concept for the analysis of a postmodern emancipatory policy. The term 'postmodern' is ambigious: for Jameson, as well as Burbach, it refers to the cultural condition of late capitalism. However, Laclau uses it to disclaim that politics has a direction and goal.

The aim of this paper is to analyse Zapatista discourse production and to ask where its orginality, if any, lies and to compare it with other left discourses. Our focus is on the question of whether the Zapatista discourse belongs to a postmodern 'ideological formation' (Pecheux, 1969) and whether it is possible to consider the Zapatista discourse as an emergent discourse (Gimenez Montiel, 1983). Within this context, we will assess Laclau's concept of 'empty significance'.

Introduction

Paraphrasing Foucault (1971), the first task of a political addresser – before undertaking discourse struggle for power - is the struggle for a public voice, the struggle to become a recognised addresser. This task is not a simple one: even if heard, there is the risk of becoming just one amongst the chorus endlessly repeating the same ideological signs (Voloshinov, 1926), each scarcely attempting to change a few of the features that determine their value in social exchanges, and to

differentiate itself by this means. Discourse analysis provides a set of tools to determine if a speech production can reach the special locus in the discursive net to establish new - different - truth values.

The bare fact that we are here discussing Zapatista utterance is evidence of its success in this first crucial phase: that of winning a voice in the public arena. Having become an object of academic and political discussion, Zapatismo has already given rise to reflections on the nature of social movements under late capitalism (Burbach, 1994), on the conditions for the production of emancipatory discourse in the media universe in which postmodern politics is developing (Debray, 1996), and on the features that distinguish it from traditional left statements (Holloway, 1996; Raiter and Munoz, 1996). Zapatista utterance has thus taken on another dimension: that of creating a privileged space for a collective process of self-reflection (Gouldner, 1975), for emancipatory social practices, and the construction of discourses capable of sustaining such practices. When Subcomandante Marcos was asked whether the Zapatistas were 'postmodern guerrillas', his reply was 'Neither modern nor postmodern. What I think has happened is that history did not end, only changed, not necessarily for evil (...)'.[1] In what follows, we advance three theses on Zapatista discourse to establish its politics. We shall argue that Zapatista discourse is not jut another addition to the chorus of ideological signs. Instead, Zapatismo sets itself against the ideological discourse of globalisation by invoking the value of ideological signs, the very construction of truth. Our theses will prove that, as addresser, Zapatista discourse breaks the neoliberal fence that cuts accross the 'pragamatic' leftist discourse and, at the same time, overcomes the isolation and ineffectiveness of traditional left discourse. In this way it has become a point of reference, not as 'a model' to be copied, but for the very possibility of constructing a new net of anticapitalist resistance.

I.

Zapatista discourse differs from classical left statements in its textual forms, changes in its mode of articulation and the way of negotiating the value of its ideological signs.

On many occasions, a political utterance or political language has been distinguished as 'new', referring to such dissimilar political leaders as Peron or Giscard D'Estaing, Fidel Castro or Perot, Daniel Ortega or Collor de Mello. However, if we merely affirm that a political discourse is 'new', we are saying nothing about it. Yet, it is possible, and useful, with the help of linguistics to supply an analysis that renders possible the establishment of significant differences.

I.1 Textual forms

With the Zapatistas, our attention is drawn to the combination of two features of language use that are foreign to the political utterance of the traditional Left. There are strong differences of register according to

each addressee.[2] Zapatista documents all have specific addressees; the communiques have different headings according to whether they are addressed to newspapers, to the 'people of Mexico', to the 'peoples and governments of the world', to various Native-American organizations, to student federations or political parties. Zapatista discourse varies with each of these interlocutors, especially in Subcomandante Marcos' famous postscripts. In the letters they send to other Native-American organizations they use no irony, a resource they do employ in letters addressed to political parties or to the student federation. Nor is this the place to inform about the military situation. In notes to non-governmental organisations or other social organizations, there is an effort to establish relations of identification or closeness, clearly differentiated from the distance that obtains in letters to political parties when the Zapatistas thank them for notes or communiques they have received.

The Zapatistas employ a considerable diversity of resources in achieving these variations: the variety of authorities cited - not limited to the traditional Left pantheon but including poets, novelists, football players and indigenous gods or demigods – a special way of talking that brings together a few words from Native-American dialects, sociolectal turns of phrase that are peculiar to Mexico, and dialectal expressions from cultured Spanish with words and phrases in English and French. There is no attempt to hide the juxtaposition of cultures, rather, it is exhibited along with an unusual conception of the world and its changes.

Finally, although generalization is difficult, we suggest that much of what is 'new' in Zapatista utterance is to be found in its textual forms. We are looking at texts that correspond to diverse discourse genres: historical and mythical narrations, public speeches, military orders and communiques, personal letters, draft legislation, fictional and fantastic tales, pamphlets, judicial decisions, poetry and animal fables - all these are textual 'types' of Zapatista production.[3] While traditional political discourse, and that of the Latin-American left in particular, stays, ad nauseam, within the bounds of what we call 'public speech' even in widely differing contexts, that is, whatever the type of communicative event (Hymes, 1974): parliamentary speeches or interventions in cabinet meetings, in the government or from the opposition, in election campaigns, at inaugurations or commemorations, interviews for radio, television or newspapers, for domestic or foreign journalists, in their own books or journalistic articles, pamphlets, in public party activities or with extra-party people, etc. Zapatista discourse breaks this mold by continual variation. The 'Lacandone Jungle Declaration', a true declaration of war, on January 2nd, 1994, was followed by a journalistic chronicle on January the 5th, and press communiques on the 13th that did not exclude a proposal for negotiation, drafted in an academic tone, a letter to another political organization, and ...a story mixing realism with fantasy.

The polemical function (Veron, 1987), constitutive of public political utterance, does not disappear, but the poetic function (to take a more traditional concept, see Jakobson, 1961) characteristic of literary

discourse, acquires unusual weight for political communication. Both the diversity of genres and the variations of register reveal the constant attention paid to the form of communication and to its reception. This contrasts well with the almost autistic practices of traditional left rhetoric.

I.2 Constitution of the symbolic locus of enunciation

Like any discourse, Zapatismo defines the images of the addresser, the addressee, and the 3rd excluded (Ducrot, 1972). Political utterance usually constitutes the addresser as a standard-bearer, anointed, powerful, all-knowing, who ought to be elected delegate because whoever knows represents: he knows the problems and the solutions. In this sense he is no ordinary or typical man, but a type (Lukacs, 1945), whose wisdom and power has led him to surpass the common men and women. In the idiom of literary criticism, he is a Greek hero, a hero of 'socialist realism'. The Chiapas addresser does not accept this arrangement usual in political discourse; on the contrary, he is – as an addresser – like any other person, someone who depends on others, who cannot decide by himself because he does not have the solution. He does not want to be the delegate: he is at best a spokesperson. The Zapatista addresser doesn't know the problems: they hurt him. He is a typical man, without a voice or face of his own, a humble man who apologizes for having to speak ... and to fight. He is an addresser who promises silence, the end of his existence and reason for being.[4]

Clearly, there is a dynamic relationship between the three *loci* of the enunciation. The way one of the three is constructed is not indifferent to the way the other two are set up; nor is the solution independent of other intentions in the utterance. The enunciation device (Sigal and Veron, 1985) is part of the meaning of a discourse, and therefore the way in which the symbolic *loci* are constituted is not only significant in itself but will be related to the meaning taken on by other constructions and terms. For example, the ideological sign 'truth' is something that the 'usual' political addresser, as we have described him, possesses, knows and presents as an inherent attribute of his pronouncements. For the Chiapas addresser, on the contrary, truth has the value of sincerity. It cannot be an inherent attribute of his words because he doubts, and because he may accept more than one truth. Truth depends on an attitude, on intentionality. Truths belong to the heart, not to things.

The addressees of the usual political speech are party members and sympathizers of one sort or another: they are the subjects of acts of persuasion. Those excluded from this discourse are defined by acts of warnings, threats, or assertions. In this way, the addressees are typically differentiated from the rest of the population, because they already are, in some sense, enlightened: they have understood the leader's truth, they share his knowledge, at least as consumers of the nectar of future happiness and bonanza, which he dispenses in abundance. Zapatista documents are unusual in this respect: they are not aimed at their own combatants and militants, but at the rest of the public. As political utterance, they are peculiar: a portion of their adherents are not

regarded addressees. As a result of this, if we accept the definition of the three *loci* of enunciation, the indigenous Chiapas fighters are constituted alongside the addresser. In Zapatista utterance, its addressees in civil society are presented with a discourse parareality that seeks to change their beliefs, behavior and attitudes, but ... does not incite them to join the Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional (EZLN) as such, nor to take up guns. They are merely asked to express themselves, to agree with the goal of peace, democracy and justice, and to do so with 'the truth of the heart'. Marcos spells out his identity saying that he is 'gay in San Francisco, black in South Africa, Chicano in San Isidro, anarchist in Spain, Palestinian in Israel, Native-American in the streets of San Cristobal, *chavo banda* in Neza, rocker in the University, Jewish in Germany, ombudsman in the Sedena, feminist in the political parties, communist in the post-cold war, prisoner in Cintalapa jail, pacifist in Bosnia, Mapuche in the Andes, teacher in the CNTE, artist without gallery or portfolio, housewife on Saturday night in any neighborhood of any Mexican city, guerrilla in end-of-the-20th-Century Mexico, striker in the CTM, fill-in reporter, macho in the feminist movement, woman alone in the subway at 10pm, retired person demonstrating in front of the Presidential Palace, landless peasant, marginal editor, unemployed worker, medical doctor without a post, non-conformist student, dissident in neoliberalism, writer without books or readers, and - for certain - Zapatista in the Mexican Southeast'. When he does this he is defining an addressee: 'Everything that means discomfort to the powerful and to conscience, that is Marcos'; his addressees are people without any power except that of sincerity. Thus, the Zapatista discourse seeks to constitute an addressee who is both universal and particular, who is much more than the Native-Americans of Chiapas and goes beyond Mexico, attempting to reach all corners of the world.

I.3 The value of ideological signs

The Zapatistas repeat three issues again and again: democracy, freedom and justice. These reappear in almost every document and sum them up. They are not - apparently - either new or original. However, we know that the meaning of signs is not constant, not given once and for all. Signs do not 'signify' by themselves but through the text in which they appear, including different addressers, individual and institutional. Signs acquire different values according to the syntagmas in which they appear, the other signs with which they are combined and qualified, with which they are compared, opposed or coordinated. Some few signs, repeated constantly throughout a given discourse production, become its characteristic ideological signs (Voloschinov, 1926).

I.3.1 Empty significants or ideological value of signs?

Justice-freedom-democracy are ideological signs of Zapatista utterance. What is the discursive value of these signs (Menendez and Raiter, 1986) and what is their specific role in the overall Zapatista discourse?

Our approach is quite different from that of Laclau (1994) who employs the concept of empty significant, a concept which he defines as

what is absent in a social formation, a linguistic form without any reference in the system. Laclau's approach allows members of the community to fill the empty significant with their own desire. However, this is achieved at the cost of sacrificing the explanatory capabilities of discourse analysis as a discipline, and the efficacy of utterances as speech acts.

From the theoretical point of view, on the other hand, we prefer a strict interpretation of Saussure, for whom the linguistic sign always has two faces - *signifiant* and *signifie* - neither of which can exist without the other: the sign is constituted by the (arbitrary) relation between the two. The arbitrariness of the relation between *signifiant* and *signifié* means that each particular sign cannot be defined positively, only negatively in the system. The value of a sign can be determined solely by what it is not: in its relationship with other signs, a particular sign is what others are not and thus it has a value that others have not. The sign *democracy*, for example, has the value of not being demagogy, authoritarianism, autocracy, aristocracy, dictatorship, or monarchy.

A *signifiant* is never empty because it is made up of phonemes with their acoustical image. If Laclau refers to a *signifiant* without *signifié*, there is no such thing (aside from the specific function it fulfills in Lacan's theoretical construct). In a particular statement within a communicative event, the sign acquires a particular sense that updates its ahistorical meaning, that of the *langue*. If an 'empty significant' points to 'something absent from the social formation', a gap, as it were, that might be 'filled', it would anyway have the negative value of being what other signs are not: it cannot be empty of all meaning because it has already been defined, as *absent*. If it could be filled arbitrarily - through a discourse operation that Laclau calls hegemony - we would have the usual case of a sign that does not have the same meaning for all members of the linguistic community at a given time. *Home*, for example, has the same value for all members of a community (it is not a school, a house of congress, a commercial establishment, or a gym.) The referent will vary: for some it may be a chalet with a pool, for others a 150 square meter apartment, for others still a modest 50 meter cabin, or a hut in a *favela*. However, no one who has any of these is *homeless*. Thus discourses are social and historical phenomena, not merely speech products collected by an analyst but semiotic productions, meaningful in the community that produced them, and where they are exchanged.

I.3.2. Democracy, freedom, justice

In Zapatista discourse, the value of the ideological sign 'democracy' is defined explicitly, although absent from Mexico - as we shall see - in a declaration of the leading body that is also an excellent example of Zapatista utterance. Democracy means 'to command obeying', opposed to 'to command commanding'. The context in which this definition is produced - for the first time and since then repeated in many documents - is a sort of mythical tale of origins, which describes the gathering of those who believed 'that the will of the greater number should be commonly held in the hearts of men and women in command', who discovered a word 'that came from afar', democracy, brought by 'those

who are abroad by night' (the guerrilla group? the ancestors? perhaps both? The text preserves ambiguity and allusion). In that meeting they note that 'the few now command, and they command commanding' and they then adopt the sign *democracy* for their struggle and objective: 'And we see that those who command commanding should go far away so that once again there be rectitude and truth in our land. And we see that change is needful, and that they should command who would command obeying, and we see that the word come from afar to name the reason of government, *democracy*, is good for the many and for the few'. To command obeying is thus the attribute of the addresser, while to command commanding is the value that the 3rd excluded: the 'supreme government', neoliberalism.

The value that democracy acquires here is that of a radical rupture; 'a new political relationship' that cannot be assimilated by the dominant logic, nor by the traditional conceptions of the Left. Socialism, capitalism and social democracy are presented as systems or directions to be decided upon by all, not as something that is programmatically given. The value of democracy, on the other hand, cannot be exhausted in a program; it alludes to a working social practice, with its timing and modes of decision. In the Zapatista narrations, democracy explains and at the same time substantiates the political tactics adopted, the decision to go to war, the conditions of the process of negotiation with the government, etc.

The strength of the syntagmatic chain democracy-freedom-justice intensifies the sense of rupture. Freedom always appears associated with democracy because it is assimilated to the 'elementary' right to decide. Freedom is non-subjection to decisions other than the collective ones, made in community. This is taken to the point where the EZLN does not pretend to take power in Mexico, because that would mean imposing its decision on that of other community organizations, who would thus be deprived of their freedom of choice. Nor does *freedom* simply refer to an autonomous attribute of individuals because in Zapatista discourse *freedom* is claimed to be an attribute of collective individuals: the native American community, civil society, the men without face. Justice is the guarantee of self-government and as such requires aboriginal justice, not merely the dismantling of the Chiapas Penal Code, but the community's acting as judge, without professional judges and lawyers, without division of powers. Besides, there is an essentialist sense, taken as self-evident: 'It is not just that there be no electricity in a State that produces it', nor that women die because 'there are no birth clinics'; right prices are necessary for the peasants' products and for the women's crafts. In this way, Camacho Solis, delegate of the 'supreme government' in the peace negotiations, cannot deal with the demand for justice made by the Zapatista delegates at the negotiating table, because, as a spokesman for the established power, he cannot offer justice but only subjection to the Law; the greatest possible concession would be 'trials' or 'amnesty for those who bear guns', that is, subjection to the laws of the Mexican State (laws that would be anti-aboriginal), that therefore lack legitimacy in the eyes of Chiapas Indians.

The value of the sign *justice* differs in the systems of references

of Zapatismo and neoliberalism. Its meaning will be distinct in different discourses, but it will never be 'empty'. Laclau's concept of 'empty significance' ends up by claiming that political practice has no goal, sense and meaning.

Along with the Rousseauian echoes that associate 'truth of the heart' with democracy as positive freedom, and others even older, such as the premodern references to 'right prices', there are some of a more modern stamp. The ideological signs democracy-freedom-justice have 'civil society' as their agent: assimilated to 'the people', it constitutes the multiple and plural repository of sovereignty. Sovereignty here exceeds national bounds. But in Zapatista utterance it acquires a distinctive ideological value: civil society is alien and almost opposed to the government, to the state and political parties, alien even to the EZLN itself, which makes no claim to represent it. However, if civil society is the bearer and maker of democracy-freedom-justice, it is so in a 'postmodern' sense: it is made up of a plurality of subjects and identities that exceeds any specific social or territorial anchorage. Marcos doesn't speak only for the working class, nor only the poorest, nor the Mexicans, nor the leftists. These considerations lead us to formulate our second thesis.

II.

Zapatista utterance develops in the cultural network of late capitalism and opposes its dominant discourse. It thus takes on some features of the so-called 'postmodern condition', but does so with critical effectiveness.

The idea that postmodernism is the cultural logic of late capitalism suggests - superficially - that Zapatista discourse is postmodern. As Marcos himself has put it: 'Things change'[5] and, we might add, so do the ways of naming them. However, there is a sense in which the notion of postmodernism is not banal: we must ask ourselves what role Zapatista production plays in the postmodern discourse formation of the '90s.

Zapatista statements are radically new in that they aspire to introduce a new discursive net in and against the existing set of socio-semiotic references. A discourse net is composed of all the statements that, maintaining these references, answer, criticize and affirm, wholly or partially, previous utterances (Foucault, 1971). Such a statement net will not be homogeneous. The *dominant discourse* (Raiter, 1989) establishes and determines the 'frame of reference' that qualifies the other discourses and establishes their condition as oppositional, marginal, allied, pornographic, police, journalistic, academic, true, false, and so on, by measuring their distance from the axis it establishes.

Zapatista utterance breaks violently through the dominant discourse of the 1990s: neoliberalism and modernisation. Classic Left statements have been surrounded, assigned a role as marginal, nostalgic, minority; in effect, they have been made an accompaniment: from their role of opposition to the neoliberal system of references, they have become the legitimate opposition discourse of neoliberalism. Zapatista

statement sets out to compete. It does not encounter other guerrilla utterances,[6] thus need not demonstrate that it is more nationalistic or more revolutionary; nor need it show that it is not bound to Soviet or Cuban foreign policy. But it does encounter other statements that, from the perspective of the dominant discourse, are categorized as unbelievable and retrograde: Social Democracy, the utterance of the traditional left, that of anti-imperialism, that of revolution.

Because of this new discourse context, Zapatista utterance is not *foquista* nor insurrectional, although armed, nor Rousseauian, although founded on the sovereignty of the people, nor Gramscian, although they speak of civil society. They are neither nationalist nor internationalist, although wavering permanently between calling themselves Native Americans (*indigenas*) *of* Mexico or *in* Mexico. They are...Zapatistas. Theirs is an utterance that uses forms and presents characteristics that are postmodern (such as the exaltation of the differences and the defense of various oppressed minorities, not merely class or national groups) and in this way is able to bypass nostalgia, to elude its assigned place, and to demand a different one. In this latter sense, although employing some characteristic forms of postmodern political utterance, they are not postmodern. We have already pointed out some of those features: the multiplicity of the subjects who are their addressees; the fact that they seek universality in the constitution of a subject irreducibly opposed to whatever the power there might be; the renovation of the genre of political discourse with an atmosphere of magical realism, bringing together old and new tales to give new value to pre-existing ideological signs. And there are other features: the use of irony, the lack of solemnity, the recognition of the uncertainty of having no solutions. Except for the essential ones: democracy-freedom-justice.

At the same time, Zapatismo constructs itself as a radical and unconquerable critic: NAFTA is unjust because 'we didn't vote it' and 'we weren't consulted' (and not merely nor even primarily because it is bad for us); the 'customs' and ways of doing politics of the established parties, labour-unions and political organizations are implacably denounced, the monolingual character of the government is fiercely and ironically contrasted with the pluridialect of their own force. Their tactics and strategy is the tenacious exercise of a politics of presence, 'because we are here and they can't ignore us', as they do not ignore the Supreme Government, the opposition PRD or the student federation. They don't ask to be heard, they simply talk; they build their own Aguascalientes; they show that the supreme government cannot promise nor guarantee what it promises, because its own leaders are notoriously murdered.

The bare fact of their armed presence in Southeast Mexico, without attacking the Federal Army, without boycotting elections or other decisions of the central government, reflects a conception of power as productivity. Patience and irony, employed to analyze their own actions 'from outside', give rise to self-examination and make it possible for them to admit the possibility of defeat, but without implying the end of the struggle.

All these features differentiate them from classical agendas,

while installing their voice in the contradictions of late capitalism: exclusion and marginalization. Their sensibility and use of the poetic function of language separate them both from rationalism and from the empty reliance on slogans. All this, along with their effort to communicate with the outside world, characterize Zapatista utterance. However, 'grand narratives', are not abandoned, but return hand in hand with 'old (folk) tales', enriched by the complex forms of magical realism. The ideological signs are modern, in the tradition of democracy as sovereignty, but they are anchored in a mythical and communitarian tradition in which the individual and the community are subjects that presuppose each other without mutual impediment: the result is both more essentialist and more universalistic.

Zapatismo is an emergent discourse insofar as it is not only limited to criticizing the values that neoliberalism assigns to itself, it also goes as far as to challenge the truthfulness of neoliberal statements and its system of references such as *efficiency*, including even the measurement of time. The Zapatistas and, on the other side, the supreme government and the great landowners were created as the product of different histories: 'men of corn men of wood and men of gold'.

Zapatista discourse thus acquires - to use Wittgenstein's term - a 'family resemblance' linking it to Howard Fast's *Spartacus*, Arguedas' *Todas las sangres*, to Manuel Scorza, Azuela, Bartolome de las Casas... and to Emiliano Zapata. It reflects the permanence of an ideological formation (Pecheux, 1969) that runs through (hypothetical) premodern, modern and postmodern utterance: the voices of the victims, of those who go to market as chattels, who yesterday were dominated and are dominated today but will not be dominated tomorrow.

III.

Zapatista utterance may become an 'emergent discourse', thanks to the network of action and statement in which it is inscribed.

When the Zapatistas decided not to support the PRD party, they argued that, while they recognized them as opposition to the ruling PRI party and the government, they saw in them the same system of *caudillos* and ward bosses, with decisions not being made in and with the community but by a group of leaders, in most cases. The EZLN can negotiate with the supreme government on a basis of equality precisely because they are not equal. They accept the PRD as an opposition within the institutional regime that legitimized the supreme government (although there was electoral fraud), but note with great concern that their methods are identical. The EZLN is not an opposition, like the PRD, legitimating the parliament and the elections. The PRD is the state's legal opposition, while the EZLN does not accept the legality of the state as far as Chiapas is concerned; nor do they accept any decision made by the supreme government without consulting them when it effects them as a people; they do not legalize their voice by denying or disputing that of others, but they impose their own because it 'comes from the heart'. They

have a voice because the men of corn have had it since the gods stopped making men out of gold or wood. They have the right to work the land because it is their duty, land is given by the gods to men and women; they cannot posses it, because the land is not to be possessed for buying and selling: the land was given by the gods only to be worked.[7] They are concerned not only with what space to occupy – opposition, left, nationalist – but also with constitutional rules (Searle, 1969; Habermas, 1984) that allow them to exist in a certain way, in and of themselves, rather than merely in opposition to someone else.

An *emergent discourse* (Gimenez Montiel, 1983) disputes and changes the sociosemiotic references of the network in which it appears, thus tending to inaugurate a new one. It takes up the present signs, but changes their value. At the same time, it questions existing values and tends to impose new ones. It sums up the existing signs, giving them a different value, and with those new values builds a new discourse parareality. The strength of the challenge is such that it challenges the official discourses to respond to this new parareality, so that a new system of references is imposed. This possibility is achieved when the dominant discourse fails to qualify the emergent discourse in any way (Zapatista discourse is not *foquista*, vanguard, nostalgic Left, nor *indigenista*). However, since what is being challenged is not its dominance but the very system of references, the dominant addresser must respond, and by doing so loses his discourse initiative.

We believe we have established that Zapatista utterance has accomplished the first operation. It may become emergent, as occurred with the national liberation discourses of the '60s and early '70s, if neoliberalism continues to respond, as it has been doing to some extent. But this second advance is by no means sure. The Zapatistas may yet be silenced.

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Notes

1. Interview, in *Pagina*, no. 12, Buenos Aires, 22.6.96.

2. We call variations of register (Lavandera, 1984) the differences of form and meaning that a particular dialect presents and that are due to the context in which they are emitted as, for example, situational (institutional, family, etc.) or interpersonal, as regards the symmetry or asymmetry, their power position, the degree of familiarity between the interlocutors, whether the addressee is individual or collective, etc.

3. We are here taking political utterance not as a discourse genre but as a dimension that is present in various textual types (see Raiter, 1986). Public speech is that political statement designed to be spoken at a gathering for a partisan audience, and to induce applause and scorn for the adversary. It is, then, speech that is part of the show (see Raiter/Edelman/Veron).

4. He introduces himself in the statements using the first person singular

- a subject who may be implicit or explicit ('Subcomandante Marcos') - in third-person singular (when he speaks of the leading body), or in the first-person plural ('we, the members of the CCRI', or 'we, the Native-Americans').

5. Interview, *Pagina 12,* Buenos Aires, 22.6.96.

6. This, however, is no longer the case since the appearance of the EPR in the Mexican state of Guerrero. Still, the substance of our analysis holds.

7. We refer here to Burbach's explanation of the revision of article 27 of the Mexican Constitution. This revision allows the buying and selling of communal land. Myth is thus joined with specific present-day affairs. See also Zibecci (1995).

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Reappropriations of Public Space

Toni Negri

translated by Ed Emery

1. For a good twenty years things had followed a fairly regular pattern – at least since the crisis of 1971-74, when, having digested the struggles of the 1960s and defeat in the Vietnam War, multinational capital relaunched its project of development in terms of liberal policies and post-industrial modernisation. These were the years in which neo-liberalism imposed itself: grey years, even if they were illuminated, as was the case in France, by a number of working-class offensives (that of 1986, for example) and by a succession of student explosions – the first manifestations of the revolt of immaterial labour – around which social protest attempted in vain to organise itself. December 1995 in France is significant because it marked the first mass break with the political, economic and ideological regime of the liberal epoch.

Why did the struggles of December 1995 represent such a powerful break-point? Why might we see them as the beginning of the end of the counter-revolution of the second half of the twentieth century?

People have begun to give answers to these questions, and the answers are often interesting. There has obviously been a growing awareness of the process of globalisation and of construction of a united Europe, which has been especially accelerated in France. There has been a feeling of betrayal of the Republican promise of the new presidency, and a whole set of contradictions brought about by the new organisation of social labour – mobility, flexibility, break-up of the labour market, exclusion, etc. There is also the crisis of the welfare state. All this has had immediate repercussions in the process of formation and radicalisation of the struggle. What seems to me important is to define the new context in which the various different demands were coming about: it is a "bio-political" context, in the sense that the struggle clashes against all the rules of discipline and control of the overall conditions of reproduction of the proletariat. Put briefly, the struggle takes its universal meaning, becomes a struggle "of general interest", in the extent to which it rejects the dictatorial choice between "liberalism or barbarism", and suggests a new threshold of possibilites for contestatory action and the expression of the desire for a new world.

However, having said that, we will only succeed in understanding

the radicality and the significance of the epochal breakthrough represented by this struggle if we pose a new question: who was its protagonist? Who has been the hegemonic subject of this struggle? What is the nature of the social stratum which has succeeded, in an extremely short time, in transforming a demand-based struggle into a political struggle against globalised capitalist command? And why? What are the material factors which led to the struggle expanding and becoming politicised?

2. It is easy to give an initial answer: the protagonists of these struggles have been the "public services workers". It has been these workers, on the railways, on the underground, in tele-communications, in the postal services, in hospitals and schools, or in the energy sector etc, who have launched the struggle and guided it, and have given a general offensive meaning to demands which had begun as principally locally-based. But unless we ask ourselves what is new about what these sectors represent today, within the political and productive apparatus of advanced capitalism, this initial answer is of no particular interest. What I mean is that there have been earlier episodes in the history of working-class struggles in which the ability to block the circulation of commodities has been fundamental in initiating political confrontations (strikes by railway workers, in particular, occur throughout the history of working-class insurgency). Today, however, within the organisation of advanced capital, the ability – of workers in public service sectors such as transportation, telecommunications, education, health and energy – to attack the system of production with determining political force becomes decisive, to the exclusion of all else. Thatcher and Reagan, those muscular initiators of liberal strategy, were well aware of this when, in the early phase of restructuration, they chose to make political examples of workers in the energy sector and the air transport sector. So, how do we explain all this?

If we want to avoid banal answers, we first have to recognise that in the structure of advanced capitalism the totality of transportation, telecommunications, education and energy – in other words, the major public services – no longer represents solely a moment of the circulation of commodities or an element of reproduction of wealth, but constitutes rather the global form which structures production itself. People have told us time and again the production has become circulation, that we have to work "just-in-time", that the worker has to become a link in the social chain. Well, the strikers in the public services have shown how, by exercising an effect on one of the links of circulation, they are able to affect the entire chain of production; they have shown how, when they acted against the container, the whole content had to react. And since we are not speaking solely of the structures of production, but of the subjective forces which become apparent through them, one sees clearly why the struggles of the workers in the public services have, right from the start, "represented" the totality of workers and why, in the strategic location that they occupy, their struggle was an immediate attack on the global totality of the productive system and its new social and political dimensions.

To those who describe this struggle as "reactionary" and "conservative", and who are particularly partial to objective analysis of the process of production, we can thus reply straight away, in the terms of their own frame of reference, that these struggles, and their protagonists, have, quite the contrary, a central and decisive place within the new mode of production: they have carried the struggle through against the truly decisive point of capitalist "reform" and have, for this sole reason, momentarily blocked it.

3. But the protagonists of the struggle have not been only the working class, and more generally the workers in the public services. They have also been a million men and women who, in Paris and in towns throughout France, in order to travel to work, or simply to get around, have made efforts worthy of wartime, in conditions that were extremely difficult. The media depicted these efforts, this daily weary slog, with excessive enthusiasm – first in an attempt to organise a revolt of transport "users", and then, once this attempt had been massively rejected, to highlight the civility and conviviality of their behaviours, while moralising about the suffering being caused by the strike. However, have not industrial sociology, neo-liberal ideology and whole swathes of literature on the state been telling us for years that, in post-industrial society, users are themselves producers of the services? So how is it that these producers of ideology now start contradicting themselves by attempting to set the community of users against the service-sector workers and by attempting, by all means possible, to split them into separate communities?

In effect, the users are "co-producers" of the public services. They are "co-producers" in a whole range of senses, going from a maximum passive consumption and minimum interactivity into a minimum passive consumption and maximum interactivity. In the first bracket we could put the users of energy services, and into the second, users of telecommunications, education and health. Today, in struggle, this "co-production" has displayed a very developed level of awareness. The "users" have recognised their own interest in the struggle of the workers who produce the services together with them. If services are a co-production, then they are a co-production which is public in essence. I am not denying here that there may be opposing interests and that contradictions may emerge between supply and demand in the provision of services; I am merely pointing out that these contradictions also take place within a public dimension. Thus, when the service-sector workers turned their struggle into a defence, and an affirmation, of the public character of their production and a demand for its recognition as such, the "users" recognised themselves totally as "co-producers" of this struggle. The long distances that people walked in the snow, the hitch-hiking, the queues, the endless waiting have thus to be considered as episodes of struggle. The strike demonstrated its power not only by means of noisy trade union demonstrations, but above all by cheerful processions to work in the morning and back again in the evening. This was not a "strike by proxy", but a strike that was diffuse, embracing the whole of societal life, and one that became part of everyday reality. In

the dictionary of strikes invented by the proletariat in struggle (sectoral strikes, general strikes, wildcat strikes, sit-down strikes, etc...) we now have to add a new term, the metropolitan strike.

Let us now look closer. In highlighting this metropolitan "co-production" of the struggle, we identify a concept of "public" which has a revolutionary valency. In the feelings of co-responsibility which the "users" have, as regards the functioning of – and also the strikes in – the services, one has effectively to recognise an act of "reappropriation of administration". An act which is direct and subversive. From an awareness of the nature of this act, one's thoughts therefore necessarily have to turn to what underlies it: to the identification of public service, and thus of its management and its productive functions at a very general level, as something which is in common to all. In common to all in the same way as are all products of cooperation, from language to democratic administration. A definition of "public" which no longer has anything to do with its "statist" definition.

4. The state bares its capitalist aspect when it seeks to privatise the public services. Conversely, the struggles reveal a subversive aspect going beyond the state and its function as protector of capital. Even when some of the protagnosists argue for a "French-style public service", I believe that very few people today would consider it credible to defend this left-over of the Third Republic, re-actualised by that Fordist compromise between the popular forces of the Resistance and the Gaullist technocracy which still exists despite its anachronism. For us the struggles mean that if a "French-style public service" is to continue to exist, it will pose itself in completely new terms, as a first experiment in a reconstruction of the public service within a democratic dynamic of reappropriation of administration, of democratic co-production of services. Through these struggles there now opens a new problematic, which is a constituent problematic. What we have to understand is what is meant by a new "public character of the services" which, in permitting them to remove themselves from privatisation and from the rules of the world market, permits them at the same time to extract themselves from the ideological mystifications which are born from the globalising and directly capitalist function of the action of the national state. The awareness of this problematic has been implicit in the struggles. It represents their subversive potential. Furthermore, if it is true that the services today constitute "the global form" of all forms of productivity, whether state or private – if it is true that they reveal how central and exemplary is the role of cooperation in the totality of production and circulation – then this new concept of "public" will constitute the paradigm of every new experiment in socialised production.

To sum up: the public as an ensemble of activities under the guardianship of the state with a view to permitting the reproduction of the capitalist system and of private accumulation, has here ceased to exist. We find ourselves facing a new concept of public. In other words a concept of production organised on the basis of an interactivity in which development of wealth and development of democracy become indistinguishable, just as the interactive broadening of the social

relationship is indistinguishable from the reappropriation of administration by productive subjects. The elimination of exploitation here becomes visible; it appears no longer as myth but as concrete possibility.

5. But this new subjective dimension of "the public" is not something which affects only the "social" workers, in other words the workers in the social services. It is something which affects, as we have seen, the subjectivity of the co-producers of services, and thus all citizens who work. The "*Tous ensemble*" ("Everyone together") slogan of the struggles can thus be read as having revealed a new community, a productive social community which is seeking to be recognised. The recognition is two-fold. It is on the one hand the dynamic of re-composition which runs through the movement – it is the community of struggle in which all workers are co-involved by the working class who, through their position, form the essential backbone of productive cooperation (and it is the first dynamic of the process). And secondly, the recognition demanded consists in the reappropriation of the services, both by the community in struggle, and by those who, in working, use the services in order to produce wealth.

Thus the struggle functions as a prefiguration of the aim to which it is tending: the method – in other words the "being together" in order to win – is the prefiguration of the objective aim – in other words, "being together" in order to construct wealth, outside of and against capitalism.

Here I am interested in showing that within the struggle which we have lived through, and most particularly in those areas where public services were involved, the concept of "community" became enriched with essential articulations. The concept of community has often been considered, even and particularly within subversive thinking, as something which mystified the concrete articulations of exploitation, by flattening them into a figure in which the totality of the association of social subjects was given by the unity of the function, rather than by the contradictory articulation of the process of association and production. In the course of the struggle which we are analysing, we saw appearing for the first time a community which is extremely articulated, a *Gemeinschaft* which has within it all the characteristics of multiplicity – and which, as a whole productive entity, opposes itself to power.

Our reflection on the movement thus leads us to pose the problem of the transition to a higher level of productive organisation, where the "public" is considered as the ensemble of social functions which, thanks to the wealth of its articulations, does not require the separation of levels of production and levels of command. On the contrary, reappropriation of command within the productive function and the construction of the social relationship henceforth form a continuum. The problem of the transition towards an autonomous social community, towards communism, will no longer reside solely in the definition of the form of struggle against the state, but on the contrary will reside essentially within the definition of procedures and forms which will permit the reappropriation of productive functions by the community to take place.

"*Tous ensemble*" is a project of transition to communism. These

struggles permit us to begin once again calling by its name the real movement of transformation of the present state of things. And while the work to be done in order to recompose in our imaginations the real movement and the development of history is immense, at the same time we can begin to give form to the utopia of the movement by means of statements which translate the desire.

6. The slogan "*Tous ensemble*" was launched and picked up by the movement, in conjunctural manner, as an invitation to workers in the private sector to join the strike movement. We have seen how the slogan gradually transformed itself. But it is true that the initial invitation, in its first signification, fell flat. Why? Why was it that the workers belonging to the "juridically" defined private sector of the economy did not join the struggle?

The explanations given for the fact that workers in the private sector did not come out on strike are grounded in realism: they range from justifications related to the structure of the waged workforce (a waged workforce which is individualised and therefore subject to immediate repression by its bosses in the event of strike action) to justifications arising from the crisis of trade unionism in the private sectors of industry and services. These explanations, for all their realism, nevertheless forget one structural element of private enterprise – the fact that in it the tendency of transformation of the productive structure into a public service structure is not evident, and that it remains hidden, on the one hand by the strong continued existence of the manufacturing industries, and on the other by the baleful predominance of the rules of private profit, often reinterpreted by means of financial models. This is perhaps the moment to say that the productive functions linked to manufacturing production are, in a thousand different ways, on the way to extinction. And that, consequently, the working-class strata within the arena of manufacturing are the most sensitive to the blackmail of unemployment, and are therefore the weakest. It is precisely for this reason that they are less capable of conducting offensive struggles. From now on they are locked into a paradox: at the moment when they enter into struggle, they will be doing it in order also to destroy the places of production in which today they receive their wages. In a sense they resemble the peasants of the French Revolution in an earlier age: they are struggling to ensure the victory not of the system of production within which they are engaged, but of another system of production in which they will be crushed.

However this interpretation applies only to the working class of the private manufacturing sector. If we look at the private sector as a whole, we find that service companies are becoming more and more of a presence. Large manufacturing concerns are massively "putting out" more and more of their directly and indirectly productive functions. They are reducing them to commercial services and inserting them into the context of social production. And it is within the private service sector that the rediscovery of the public, and thus the recomposition of the new proletariat, is possible. It is possible in the areas where the

working class elements, in the private sector, have as their basic characteristics temporal flexibility and spatial mobility. In other words, in the areas where profit is formed, as it is in the public sectors, principally through the exploitation of social cooperation.

In the struggles of December 1995, the invitation extended to the private sector to join the struggle was marked by delay and confusion. This invitation was made in the traditional form of an appeal to the workers of the private manufacturing sector, whereas, in the course of the struggle, it turned out to be the working class and the operators of the service sectors, and even of private-sector services, who grasped the opportunity to recognise themselves in the new concept of public – and thus in the cooperative reappropriation of the production of wealth in the construction and democratic administration of productive society.

7. We can now return to the business of identifying the subject of the December struggle. If one stays at a superficial level, one recognises that we are dealing with workers in the "public services"; looking closer, these workers appear as "social workers" – in other words, as producers of social relations, and thereby as producers of wealth; at a third and closer look, this identification is reinforced by the fact that the clients of the services, in other words citizens in general, were active in co-producing the struggle; fourthly, it appears evident that the fact that the services are public in character makes them the strategic locus of exploitation, and thus of new contradictions through which offensive struggles will be able to develop; fifth, it is clear that service workers in the private sector (in other words those majority workers in the private sector which has been restructured into services) will be drawn into this cycle of struggles.

But the "social worker" is an immaterial worker. He is this because he is a highly educated element, because his work and his effort are essentially intellectual and because his activity is cooperative. Henceforth what we find at the heart of society and its structures of power is a production made up of linguistic acts and of cooperative activities. So the social worker is immaterial inasmuch as he participates in the new intellectual and cooperative nature of work.

But this new nature of work is still "*bios*", an entire life made of needs and desires, of singularities and of generations succeeding each other. Those involved in the struggle of December showed, through the struggle and its objectives, that the entirety of life in all its complexity is both the object of struggle and production of subjectivity – and therefore refusal of social cooperation's enslavement to the development of capital.

In any event – as the striking workers told the government – if you don't want to recognise the freedom due to this collective intellectual nature of associated labour, you will soon be forced to recognise its power and to recognise that it is inescapable – and you will find that it is impossible for you to negotiate wages, social reproduction and political-economic constitution unless you take this reality entirely into account!

Telecommunications and formation [*trans*: in the sense of education and training] are the most significant class sectors from the point of view of immateriality, of the interactive public, of the "*bios*" –

here the General Intellect which Marx foresaw as being the fundamental agent of production in advanced capitalism reveals itself as *bios*. In the processes of formation, the labour force constructs itself and reconstructs itself as an ongoing process, throughout one's own life and through future generations, in full interactivity not only between active singularities, but between these and the world, the *Umwelt* which surrounds it, constructed and reconstructed ongoingly by human activity. Given that telecommunications are shortly coming to represent the totality of circulation of productive signs, of cooperative languages, they thus constitute the exterior aspect of this constant capital which human brains have reappropriated to themselves. And it is through formation and telecommunications that the processes of production of subjectivity come up against the processes of enslavement of productive subjectivities and against the construction of surplus-value-profit.

It is thus on these articulations that the struggle over the form of appropriation concentrates – because formation and telecommunications represent the highest point, and the most explicit structure, of production as public service.

8. The struggles of December 1995 are a formidable challenge for revolutionary theory. The workers in both the material and immaterial sectors have been hegemonic here – in other words, the social worker in the fullness of his productive attributes. Consequently these struggles are situated at the level of advanced capitalism or, if you prefer, post-modern and/or post-industrial capitalism. The service sector workers bring the issue of social productivity to the forefront and reveal the contradictions which are opposed to its development. The problem of emancipation from capitalist command and the problem of liberation from the capitalist mode of production are here posed in new ways, because the class struggle here presents itself in an entirely new manner. Manufacturing industry and the people who work in it are definitively losing the central role which they had had in the launching and leadership of class struggle, whereas those people who work in the services, even and particularly those in the private services sectors of the advanced economies, are powerfully attracted into entering into the field of revolutionary struggle.

Therefore theory today needs to confront this new reality. It has to work in general terms on the relationships between "general intellect" (in other words hegemonic immaterial and intellectual labour) and "*bios*" (in other words the dimension within which intellectual labour as reappropriated constant capital opposes itself to a capitalist command which has by now become completely parasitic). But above all theory needs to work on the relationships which closely link social interactivity and its political forms, production and politics, productive power and constituent power. In his time Lenin had already posed the problem of the relationship between economic appropriation by the proletariat and the political forms of this appropriation. In his time, and within the relations of production with which he was dealing, realism led him to think that the term "dictatorship" might represent a solution. However, without casting aspersions on a man who was the first to have

understood the necessity of combining revolution and enterprise, our liberation utopia is radically different from what he proposed. We have the possibility of doing it – and of knowing what we are talking about, because production is today a world of interactive relations which only "democracy" can constitute and manage. Democracy, a powerful democracy of producers, that is the essential motivating core of our work and analysis today.

To build "the public" against the state, to work on the basis of a democracy of producers against the parasitism of capital, to identify the forms in which the interactivity of production (revealed by the development of services) can articulate with the (renewed) forms of political democracy, and to bring to light the material fabric of the political co-production of the social: there, in a nutshell, you have the new tasks of theory. Urgent, and extremely alive, just like the struggles which brought them into being.

When we take a closer look, we see that numerous theoreticians of social reproduction in postmodernity are already posing similar problems. A whole range of social science researchers who have not accepted liberalism as the only way of thinking – particularly in the country that is the queen of capitalism, the United States of America – are working to clarify the problem of the relationship between growing social cooperation and the production of democracy.

But the struggles of December go well beyond these thematics, because they pose the problem not simply as a possibility, but as a necessity, because they anticipate the solution by showing that democracy of the multitude is a revolutionary fact. So here we have a new theme, which is far from secondary: what does it mean to revolutionise social cooperation, by democratically reappropriating administration, in order to manage the totality of production and reproduction of society?

9. With the struggles of December 1995, we have entered a new phase of political practice.

The first problem posed is obviously that of the re-opening of the struggle after its suspension, and thus the problem of how to enlarge and strengthen the front of the social worker, in the public services, but above all in the private sector. We also have to find ways of expressing in the broadest and strongest possible terms the contribution made by social subjects in education/training (schools, universities etc), and in telecommunications, to new perspectives for the construction of revolutionary movement, and to organise the co-producing these struggles together with the citizen-as-worker.

But here emerges the second fundamental problem: how to define a form of struggle and of organisation which will be coherent with the new concept of "the public" in the terms in which it was expressed in the struggles of December. This means a form of organisation which permits, increasingly, the creation of relationships and links between category demands and general demands for a bio-political wage, for an extension of public service, for the reappropriation of administration.

Clearly, the capacity which the workers in struggle have revealed

– that of reorganising themselves at the territorial level, and breaking with the traditional professional divisions of French trade unionism – could be taken up as a paradigm for a unifying recomposition of the objectives of struggle and for the general form in which the struggle is conducted. In a sense these forms of organisation prefigure new rank-and-file and mass political instances (in other words, no longer simply trade-unionist). They reveal – paradoxically by reconnecting with the organisational origins of the labour movement – a central element of the post-Fordist organisation of production: its societal diffusion. This local, territorial, intercategorial and unitary organisation really does seem to present a solid basis for the generalisation of the defence of workers' interests as regards wages and struggle over the conditions of social reproduction; and at the same time it is precisely from this starting position (and only from this) that it will be possible to launch that initiative of "public" reappropriation of administration and of services that will be capable of opening a perspective of struggle for a truly radical democracy.

The Autonomy of the Economy and Globalization*

Massimo De Angelis

1. Introduction: The autonomy of the economy

Globalization, like capitalist exploitation, is not something new. Capitalism, as Braudel reminds us, has always been global. However, what is certainly new is the form, the context and the strategic reasons for this globalization. It is from these that we need to start if we are to clarify the strengths and weaknesses of those contemporary processes before which everyone seems so impotent; before which the residual radicalism of many parties of the European left turns into cynical fatalism and submission.

Globalization is the globalization of many things. Borders have certainly fallen: not for masses of emigrants (who are increasingly illegal), but for TV images, cultural discourses, political projects; for flows of money, commodities, and productive cycles. Money-commodity-information-production are the elements through which the global factory is built in new forms,[1] and to which echoes the chorus of submission in the name of "responsibility" and "realism". Spaces of manoeuvre have increasingly been limited by budget constraints, and these in turn are constrained by a global system (in the form of international treaties, or "objective" economic and financial mechanisms) apparently external to the realm of national politics.

It certainly seems paradoxical to discover that the satisfaction of needs are more constrained by the productive system of today, which produces more absolute wealth with higher productivity levels, than in the "golden age" of reformism. Then again, perhaps this is only a paradox for those who continue (despite the silence of official economic science) to insist upon interrogating the economic system from the point of view of human needs. If we examine it instead from the point of view of profit, there is no contradiction. A simple equation (say Marx's notion of the rate of profit) would be enough to verify that if the "immateriality" of labour increases relatively, if the proportion of sophisticated machines forming constant capital increases over living labour, then the ratio between surplus value and variable capital must be increased for the rate of profit to remain constant. Furthermore, if we identify the rate of

exploitation in terms of the rate of social exploitation, it is clear that not only wages, but also social expenditures forming social variable capital, must be targeted by capitalist strategies if the rate of profit is to be maintained or accumulation increased. To this end the productivity of waged and unwaged workers in industries and social services, of those working in schools and universities, of those involved in labour of reproduction etc., must increase. In many of these cases, this means an increase in the intensity of labour. So much for the death of Marx.

It seems, therefore, that the pervasiveness (across the most disparate social spheres) of economic discourse as budget constraint is the product of the generalised difficulty of capitalist accumulation at a social level. This pervasiveness, which has become the substance of mass cultural and political discourse, reflects a desperate attempt to impose the hegemony of capitalist values upon every aspect of human and social existence, and is a further step towards that Great Transformation that Karl Polanyi denounced as illusory and untenable.

From this source, too, springs the hegemonic role assumed by technocrats and technocratic certainties. As Pierre Bordieu noted in an article against Juppè (*Libération* 14 December 1995) "the technocrats arrogantly ascribe to themselves reason, modernity and reform, and with a wave of the hand ascribe irrationality, anachronism and conservative inertia to the common people." It would be mistaken to think that these "kings of technocracy" are simply the so-called apolitical technicians who have governed Western governments in the past few years. Rather they are the "genuine" politicians: those who, having reduced the room for manoeuvre in the face of economic globalization, are increasingly obliged to conform to the strict "objective" criteria of economic management demanded by the "objective" constraints imposed by the international economy. Basically, Bill Clinton is a good technician to the extent that he accepts the principle of public spending cuts and a balanced budget. He is also a good politician if he is able to mediate between a range of different interests whilst managing this reduction. For the same reason, Italy's Prodi or Britain's Major are good technicians or politicians. Juppè has proved to be a good technician but a terrible politician, because in order to manage "the" sacred principle of public debt reduction, he opened the door to an explosive social conflict.

After all, what is a technocrat? A good technocrat is someone who knows how to do the job, in circumstances where the nature of the job as such is held to be impartial, above question. A good economist in the finance minister's seat is simply someone who champions cuts to social spending. The fetishistic character of technicism lies in the way it abstracts from its social nature, embracing instead the presumed objectivity and impartiality of economic discourse. Technicism is the ultimate mental state for the legitimation of those processes that seek to make the economy into the great Leviathan, the unchangeable and unquestionable constraint facing all political and cultural subjectivity, a constraint that subsumes everything. Viewed through the lenses of the philosophers and ideologists of technicism, the economy becomes autonomous. Not in the sense of an economic determinism, of the economy determining political processes etc., but rather that the

economic priorities dictated by technocratic discourse, and which now encompass every sphere of life, are themselves considered to be the constraint which must be imposed. In other words, economic discourse becomes the meta-principle of an epoch, the "pre-analytical vision" (not of a particular trend in scientific thought (as it was for Schumpeter), but of life itself, in all of its possible manifestations.

Autonomy of the economy therefore: the liberal right as the prophet of this autonomy, and the left (also liberalist) as a loyal convert, albeit one marked by the original sin of past membership in another religion. For the right, autonomy of the economy means the active promotion of institutional constraints, be these the Maastricht criteria of convergence as the basis of European monetary union, IMF structural adjustment programs in the South, or active policies to deregulate the market. For the left, autonomy of the economy means accepting these constraints as a starting point from which to allow the national economy to assume more human and intelligent forms of the competitive game. It is no coincidence in this regard that the educational system has become one of the priorities of the European left. But to what end? Perhaps to provide a better basis for the free development of subjects? Hardly. Rather, its aim is to improve competitiveness on the international market.

Globalization is thus the contemporary discourse which makes us embrace fatalism. Through globalization of the economy we learn to accept the constraints that we, local human beings, must face, constraints that limit our actions, needs, and aspirations. These constraints present themselves first as constraints on national economic policies. Whatever political colour is the government, its policies must be compatible with the tough competitive requirements of the global economy. Second, this means that within the institutional framework of the national economy, those mechanisms (central in the Keynesian era through the institutions of the productivity deals and the welfare state) of accommodation/management of the social conflict acquire much less importance. Instead, the management of the class relation occurs mostly through its diffusion within the market (e.g. casualization of labour) and the increasing criminalization of marginalised behaviour.

The sinister strength of the globalization discourse is that it goes back to the origin and deep roots of capitalist ideology and it naturalises the market and the economy, to such an extent that it present the latter as autonomous force to which we must bow. Critics have both questioned the factual evidence of economic globalization (e.g. Gordon 1988) and argued for the possibility for an international institutional strategy aimed at co-ordinating policies to limit the rule of the global markets (Hirst & Thompson 1996). In the first case they help us to remember that capital has always been global, and in the second that globalization as we know it today is a strategy that, at least in principle, could be avoided. Yet, buy downplaying the current case for globalization, they fail to recognise the importance of the strategic form that globalization assumes vis-à-vis social conflicts today. By calling for an international institutional strategy to reduce the rule of the market, especially financial markets, and establish the premises of a sort of global Keynesiansim,

they fail to acknowledge that old Keynesianism crumbled under the attacks of the working class world-wide, and that global Keynesianism would call for other instruments of management of the capitalist class relations. In this paper I briefly examine the class meaning of this apparent autonomy of the economy (yes, only apparent, because there are plenty of alternatives once we recognise that the profit constraint is not a natural *imperative* but a historical *conditional*; yes, apparent, because the ìeconomyî can only be autonomous to the extent that human beings give up their autonomy and freedom to create their own conditions of life; yes apparent because the *autonomy of the economy* which is presented to us has been and is being engineered), of this apparent totalizing constraint that goes under the name of globalization: firstly finance, and then the question of the productive cycle.

2. Financial globalization and public spending cuts

To begin with, there is the globalization of monetary and financial markets. Here the data is clear and unquestionable. For example, the Federal Bank of New York, one of the 12 organizations which comprise the US Federal Reserve, has recently estimated that the daily value of transactions in foreign exchange is 650 million dollars within the Tokyo, New York and London markets alone. Other estimates place the value up to a trillion dollars. The important thing, however, is the composition of these transactions, almost 18% of which are the result of international commerce and investment (for example, if the USA imports electronic products from Japan, they need to pay in yen and therefore to exchange dollars for yen). The other 82 percent of these transactions is pure and simple speculation, aimed at making a profit from the movement of exchange rates. While the profit per unit of each currency is low, being measured in tenths or hundredths of a dollar, the enormity of the volume involved means that profits (or losses) are very high. Even small deviations in the rate of interest or other factors that affect the profit expectations of the speculators can cause the flow in real time of huge masses of money, a flow that in turn produces fluctuations in the exchange rate and thus constitutes a constraint upon the economic policies of various national governments. In this regime, the power of the market seems huge, a power before which national governments must surrender their traditional instruments of economic management.

Who or what is the target of international financial speculators? We know that speculative attacks are directed against the currencies of those countries that do not rigidly control public finance: those governments that give into pressures on social expenditure, that display weakness in the management of financial reconstruction programs. If a country is not on the path of budget restructuring, of public spending cuts (especially to those components which enter into the social wage), it becomes paralysed by capital outflow, by the collapse of the national currency's exchange rate, by an increase in imports. It finds itself, therefore, in a situation wherein imports prove inelastic in price terms, where inflationary push increases, and where the real income of

workers (an income that is less and less indexed to inflation) begins to fall. If, on the other hand, a country has begun a "healthy restructuring" of the public budget, and if substantial cuts to the welfare state have been introduced successfully, then it finds itself rewarded, with the loyalty of international speculators guaranteed and its currency stabilized. In this way, the competitiveness lost through a strong currency is counterbalanced by supply-side policies, productivity increases, and the reduction of labour costs. It seems obvious, if seldom acknowledged, that from the point of view of the proletariat, from the point of view of waged and unwaged workers, from the point of view of those whose experience of the economy is simply that of living out the work of production and reproduction, together with the satisfaction of needs through the wage (social and otherwise), the alternative posed by the globalization of international finance is a false one. In the first case, what has not been lost with cuts in public spending is lost through more unemployment and income-eroding inflation. The possible export push caused by the devaluation of money here is little compensation, since its effect is both small and concentrated in those geographically limited production sectors that are geared towards export.

In the second case, what has been lost with the cuts in public spending is not won back either through the speedup of work and life rhythms demanded by international competitiveness, or through cuts in social spending and decelerating employment growth (which is increasingly the only source of workers' income). It is clear, therefore, that this financial constraint has a class significance, being functional to the management of a country's rate of exploitation. It seems to me, then, that behind the common sense acceptance of the second alternative imposed by financial globalization, there lies the recognition by international capital of something very simple. This is that the factory, the place of production of capitalist social relations, has become identified with society, and that competition between different national capitals (yes, "national capitals") must be played out in terms of the intensification of labour within production and reproduction.

It is certainly true, as Revelli (1995: 168-169) reminds us in a recent essay, that unlike during the Fordist period, capital no longer seems to have a nation, in the sense that the space of the nation and that of politics no longer coincide. This is so because globalization processes have limited national sovereignty by reducing national governments' room of manoeuvre over monetary and fiscal policies. At the same time, it is also true that national states have not exhausted their functions of policing and planning labour power. In fact, these functions have now become their central strategic pivot. The management of public spending cuts is not symptomatic of a lack of national economic policy, but rather the opposite. The state tends increasingly to manage the variable capital of a nation, managing the social wage by guaranteeing the shift to private forms of pensions etc. This entails the creation of savings that can be invested in the stock exchange and in speculative flows, through the privatisation (and therefore commodification) of essential services (such as education) according to the criteria of international competition. Furthermore, all of this is often done in

collusion with private firms (Ovetz 1996). In this context, economic policies enacted within individual national realities are presented as adaptations to an external objectivity, and national governments become the prophets of capitalist constraints said to be external, objective and immutable.

As constraints or external forces controlling social variable capital, both financial globalization and the free flow of capital share the same strategic aims as the Maastricht treaty in Europe, or the control of indebted Southern countries by the IMF: namely, the increase of surplus value and the reduction of social variable capital.[2] As for the Maastricht treaty's efforts to create a European currency, it is clear that the target ratios of Deficit/GNP at 3% and Debt/GNP at 60% set for individual states must be understood as a conscious policy of attacking public expenditure, especially its social component. It is also true that, to date, none of the big European players (Germany included) have fulfilled the requirements for European Monetary Union set out in the strict (and orthodox) interpretation of the Maastricht treaty. The near future, therefore, will see either a strategic retreat on other objectives, or else a more massive attack upon public spending at the European level.[3] The next two years are therefore of crucial importance in defining the relation between classes in Europe. In this sense, the recent struggles in France and Belgium are an indication of how things are moving in a direction that is fruitful and promising, and how such constraints can actually be "deconstrained".

It is also worth remembering the strategic meaning of a single European currency. Immediately after the explosion of conflict in France, *The Economist* noted, in an article only somewhat paradoxically entitled "France prepares for EMU",

> if Germany succeeds in imposing strict fiscal limits on other single currency countries, all the burden of adjustment in a recession will fall on output and jobs. The only policy instrument then left to national governments will be microeconomic ones (such as, for example, structural changes to labour markets) (Economist 1995, December 9th: 11).

What is anticipated, then, is a European zone in which the whole weight of recessionary mechanisms falls upon the labour market and labour processes, in which the macroeconomic buffers used to smooth the cycle during the Keynesian era are abandoned, in which trade union and government spaces of mediation are consequently also reduced (a situation, in other words, wherein the continuous restructuring of capitalist relations of production becomes the only manageable variable in the competitive battle between economic blocks.

The distinction between capital flows as represented by the globalization of international finance, and those imposed by constraints such as the Maastricht treaty or IMF dictat, is more formal than substantial. If the latter clearly represents an institutional constraint, the free flow of capital via financial globalization is equally the product of

precise political choices by Western governments. Gramsci comes to mind here with his observation that "liberalism too is a form of state 'regulation', introduced and maintained through coercion and legislation: it is a fact of conscious will, a will conscious of its own ends, rather than the automatic, spontaneous expression of an economic fact" (Gramsci 1994: 152).

Here, then, can be found capital's theoretical and political understanding of "constraints". From this point of view, here and now, the alternatives are either liberalism (that is, a strategy to increase the social rate of exploitation) or the reduction of the social rate of profit. From this point of view, a Keynesian-style management of capitalism has become unthinkable, not so much because an increase in demand will not increase employment, but rather because Keynesian policies presuppose a social structure able to engender institutionalised productivity deals between labour bureaucracies and employers, able to subordinate the social rate of exploitation to economic growth. This social compact, this class composition, has gone forever, destroyed through restructuring after it became a political composition and began to threaten capital. Its dismantling also destroyed the material base of any joint (union-employer) management of the rate of exploitation. At the microeconomic level, and in the face of a restructuring based upon the growth of capital's technical composition, "the battle against public debt" is mainly a battle to reduce social variable capital and to increase the social rate of exploitation-this is the old adage behind the mystifications used to legitimise the cuts.

And there have been many mystifications. For example, the high public debt in Italy is really nothing more than the combined result of fiscal evasion by privileged social strata, financial aid to those firms which restructured themselves at the expense of the workforce, clientelism, and interests on debt (Fumagalli 1994). A real Welfare state, after all, has never existed in Italy. In other countries, such as the United States, the enormous public debt of the 1980s was the combined product of anti-inflationary policies (that is, the capitalist management of the crisis of Keynesianism), tax cuts for companies and high income groups, an increase in military spending, and an increase in interest payments (itself caused by interest rate rises that had provoked, at the beginning of 1980s, a recessionary phase aimed at helping anti-worker restructuring) (Cleaver 1981; Heilbroner 1989). This is the kind of public debt that governments want the great majority of the population to pay.

It's obvious that any reduction of public debt causes, through a multiplier effect, a reduction of economic growth and therefore employment. It has been estimated that were all European countries to conform to the Maastricht criteria, there would be cuts in expenditures equivalent to 1/5 of the European GNP in 1994. This of course would have catastrophic effects in employment. It is also obvious that the reduction of the deficit/debt could be obtained through cuts in military expenditures and increased taxation upon the richest part of the population (this could also compensate for the losses in income endured in recent years by the great majority of the population). It is also well known that the public debt is not so great as to justify cuts in social

expenditures. Indeed, if government capital expenditures are distinguished from government current expenditure and adjusted for inflation, the deficit reduces notably (Bellofiore 1993). It has also been established that the greater part of interest is owed to enterprises and high income families, in the United States even more than in Italy (Heilbroner & Berstain 1989), so that a healthy moratorium or annulment of debt would be in the interest of most. All this is obvious, but the alternative is never raised in the debate. The constraint is clear, and the equation has only one unknown: how much should social expenditure be reduced in order to meet public debt? Or, how can the social security system be restructured so that it weighs less heavily upon on the state budget?

Let's take the example of pensions. The British prime minister, the Tory John Major, regularly attacks his Labour colleague Tony Blair, accusing him of fomenting the "politics of envy" when-in the face of widespread popular discontent-he timidly points the finger at the scandalously enormous profits made by recently privatised firms over the last few years (a privatization, moreover, that has not been followed by any significant reduction in prices or increase in service quality). The "politics of envy" seem instead to be embraced by those Italian and French commentators scandalised at the relatively short working life of some groups of workers in the public sector. But what is so unfair about retiring at the age of 50 or 40? If this is unfair to those who must work until 65, then we should simply adjust the retirement age downwards. Little if any of this perspective, however, has made it into the debate. The "conventional wisdom" proposed instead by the press and TV networks is that the current difference in conditions is unfair. In highlighting this, though, they all reach the same conclusion, which is that everybody should retire at 65, since to level the retirement age downwards would be irresponsible given the public debt. Keeping for a moment to the theme of pensions, there is also the classical argument that, demographically speaking, the number of workers paying contributions is declining, while the number of pensioners benefitting from them is on the rise. From here stem all the proposals to lengthen people's working life and working day, to abandon inter-generational solidarity, and to promote private and integrative pensions. The validity of this argument, as with all economic arguments, is limited to the set of assumptions made-in other words, to what is left out of the picture. In this case, a very simple historical fact is overlooked. If it is true that the number of young workers has fallen in relation to those who are now retired, it is also true that the social productivity of the former has increased. Since the difference between labour productivity and wage rates allows us to estimate the rate of exploitation in the form of profit per hour, it is clear that in principle one could comfortably "support" the growing number of the elderly by eroding profits.[4]

The true question of pensions, one which is strategic for capital, seems therefore to be firstly, the attempt, through the introduction of private pensions and thus investment funds, to increase the link between workers' savings and capitalist investment. Since workers' savings are simply postponed consumption, which in the hands of today's bankers

become capital that can be loaned out in the production process, it follows that, secondly, the strategy on the pension front tends at any given time towards increasing the quantity of available capital that can be thrown into the valorization process. In doing so, however-and here is my third point-this strategy also tries to link the fate of workers increasingly to the prospects of capitalist accumulation. The higher the social conflict, the more that the financial Leviathan makes share prices fall, the more the value of workers' "capital"-which from their point of view is simply future consumption-falls. Once internalized, this link may serve to restrain conflict. For example, were share price to fall, today's workers who contribute to private pensions would have to "invest" an increasing amount of capital in order to guarantee a given future consumption. So, while the question of pensions is simply one of the many themes concerning the current restructuring process, attempts to "reform" it tend to increase the rate of social exploitation, to attack current consumption and increase the length of people's working lives, and to mobilise the active subjectivity of workers in a capitalist sense, by attempting to transform all citizens into careful and anxious readers of the daily stock exchange bulletins, an activity which was once the preserve of a privileged and wealthy minority.[5]

3. Globalization of production processes

A second meaning generally associated with the term "globalization" concerns production. There is no doubt that in the last twenty years, the process of restructuring in the North that followed the social conflict of the 1970s has led to the establishment of production lines in parts of the world where lower wages and a greater intensity of work guarantee higher profit margins for international enterprises. This phenomena can be described as a leopard-skin spread of manufacturing to the South of the world, housed in free-export zones created by local governments which guarantee to transnational companies favourable fiscal terms, the use of infrastructures, and a large reservoir of very cheap labour power, itself made available through "enclosure" policies directed against traditional forms of economic activity.

While South Korea, Taiwan, Mexico, Malaysia, Haiti and Brazil are the countries with the highest numbers of workers in such areas, the industrial triangles in the south of China have developed at a remarkable rate over the last decade. The majority of industries in these areas are owned by big transnational companies, and the majority of workers are employed in the electronic, textile, and clothing sectors. And while the total numbers employed in these areas is not enormous, the figures have grown significantly in recent years. Total employment in Mexico's Maquiladoras, for example, has gone from 110,000 in 1980 to 500,000 in 1992, while in Asia about 700,000 workers are employed in the free-export zones. What is significant is the proportion of female workers involved. In Asia these are mostly unmarried women aged between 17 and 23, with the highest densities being 88% in Sri Lanka, Taiwan, and Malaysia, and around 75% the South Korea and the Philippines. Often

there is a widespread use of "training contracts" as a way of paying only 60% of the local minimum wage, with workers repeatedly fired and re-hired, as a way of guaranteeing for the employer a permanent cut in wage costs (Knox and Agnem 1991).

Table 1 summarises occupational changes in manufacturing industry in some key areas of the world economy. Although the loss of 9 million jobs in the North has not been completely offset by the increase of 6 million in Latin America and Asia, the table clearly shows a structural shift within the international division of labour. The limitations of this comparison should also be noted, since no data has been included for Africa (which apart for South Africa is not, in any case, particularly relevant to a discussion of international manufacturing), China and other countries of East Asia. As has been mentioned, an important aspect is that of gender composition. In Table 2 the ratio of female to male workers in manufacturing industries between 1984 and the early 1990s is set out (a ratio which, apart from India and Brazil, is higher in developing countries than in those of the North. In Malaysia, Singapore, and Sri Lanka, the number of women waged workers has overtaken that of men, while in Thailand the number is almost identical. In many instances, this has meant a conscious choice by the companies concerned to hire relatively young women, since these workers are considered more submissive. Furthermore (and especially in the textile industry, where the use of fixed capital is often modest) it is relatively easy for employers to react to any worrying signs of workers' struggles by closing their plants and relocating elsewhere. As The Economist notes, "the clothing industry uses little capital and is very mobile. All you need is a shed, some sewing machines, and lots of cheap nimble fingers" (Economist 1987: 67).

Table 1:
Wage employment in manufacturing (millions of people)[6]

	1974	*1984*	*1993*	*%Δ 74-84*	*%Δ 84-93*
North America	22	21.3	19.8	- 3.18	- 7.04
Japan	12	12.1	13.7	+ 0.8	+ 13.2
Western Europe	35.2	28.3[7]	26.5[8]	- 19.6	- 6.3
Total Centre	69.2	61.7	60	- 10.8	- 2.75
South Asia	5.6	6.4	6.5	+ 14.3	+ 1.56
S-E Asia	6.3	6.4[9]	9[10]	+ 1.6	+ 40.6
Latin America	7	7.6[11]	9.5[12]	+ 8.6	+ 25
Total Periphery	**18.9**	**20.4**	**25**	**+ 7.9**	**+ 22.5**

Table 2:
Ratio of female to male manufacturing workers[13]

	1984	*1993*[14]
USA	0.48	0.48
UK	0.41	0.43
ITALY	0.49	0.49
GERMANY	0.41	0.41
JAPAN	0.54	0.55
CHINA	0.67	0.81
HONG KONG	1.02	0.8
INDIA	0.1	0.1
SOUTH KOREA	0.61	0.65
MALAYSIA	0.81	1.04
PHILIPPINES	0.64	0.66
SINGAPORE	1.06	1.11
SRI LANKA	0.6	1.36
THAILAND	0.72	0.98
BRAZIL	0.32	0.37

We should not be deceived by this very broad picture, since current changes are more complex than a simple move of the Fordist factory from North to South. At least two further pieces of data demand consideration. To begin with, none of the big transnational corporations can at present be truly defined as global. Of the hundred transnational corporations on the Fortune list, around forty firms generate at least half of their sales abroad; less than twenty maintain at least half of their production facilities abroad; with very few exceptions, executive boards and management styles remain solidly national in their outlook; with even fewer exceptions, R&D remains firmly under domestic control; and most companies appear to think of a globalization of corporate finances as too uncertain (Ruigrok and van Tulder 1995: 159). Secondly, the great majority of investment flows between nations occur within the triad of US-Europe-Japan. According to the data of one United Nations agency, four-fifths of the movement of international capital during the 1980s occurred in these regions. And although the yearly economic growth rate of foreign investment in developing countries has almost doubled in recent times, it is also true that the amount of foreign investment in developing countries has fallen from 25% of the world total (1980-84) to 19% (1985-89) (UNCTC 1991: 10).

As some researchers have suggested, this data means that "globalization," rather than being a given reality to which we must submit ourselves, is actually a strategic objective, and therefore capable of failure (Ruigrok and van Tulder 1995: 175). Moreover, there currently seem to be two alternative "global" strategies for reaching this objective

(Ruigrok and van Tulder 1995: 178-182). The first of these, globalization in the strict sense of the word, aims at establishing an international division of labour within the transnational corporation through a vertical integration of the production process. The production cycle, in other words, will be globally subdivided according to criteria of comparative costs. Forms of production that are labour-intensive and in need of little capital are destined for low wage areas, while the production of those components that require sophisticated technologies or high value-added services will instead be concentrated in areas that offer a suitable structure and environment. This strategy, then, very much resembles the old Fordist one, but now deployed in new forms and contexts. The factory becomes the global factory, in which the different production departments are spread throughout the world. As a consequence, the geographical dispersal of different types of workers within the wage hierarchy constitutes a barrier to the circulation of struggles. To the extent that production is still concentrated in the countries of origin, this global strategy serves to threaten and discipline the bargaining power of the internal domestic working class.

The second global strategy, called "glocalization", aims at an inter-firm division of labour within enterprises that remains confined to the triad of the US, Japan and Europe. This alternative strategy is based more upon a Toyotist than a Fordist managerial philosophy, with firms trying to "glocalize" through the subcontracting of productive cycles and the structured control of supplier networks (outsourcing).[15] For this reason, this strategy is based largely upon the presence within the global North of de-regulated labour markets and a flexible labour force. A couple of observations follow on from the fact that the processes of globalization are centred around these two strategies. First, globalization and glocalization produce contradictory effects. For example, the first tends to promote international trade together with the international division of labour, while the second, being concentrated within particular blocks, tends to reduce them. This indicates that the world economy is not subject to one dominant structural dynamic, given that the hierarchical integration of North and South, which follows on from globalization, or the dichotomy between development in the North and underdevelopment in the South, which follows on from glocalization, are both possible scenarios, depending upon which strategy prevails. This in turn depends, of course, upon the relative difficulty of implementing each strategy in the face of a spreading revolt within the South against work rhythms and low wages, and within the North against casualization and cuts to welfare benefits.

Secondly, the interaction between these two strategies tends to accelerate the geographical diffusion of the dichotomy between development and underdevelopment. Taken as a whole, then, the current trends don't seem to point to a worker-subject with homogeneous work and employment conditions, let alone to a clear distinction between workers of the North and those of the South. The vertical integration strategy deployed by globalizing firms exploits the lower wages of the Third World, and uses them as a bargaining chip to push down workers' wages in their home country. Furthermore, it also

exploits the skilled workers of the South: those engineers, technicians, and programmers who are increasingly entering the ranks of the transnational corporations at only a fraction of the costs of their Northern counterparts.[16] The horizontal nature of the glocalisation strategy is based upon the dichotomy between a Toyotist management of labour power in the "mother corporation" (workers' participation, quality, etc.), and the use of territorially dispersed, subcontracted labour power.

The latter in turn is based upon a de-regulated labour market that induces the workers to greater competition and flexibility. The net result of the interaction between these strategies of globalization and glocalization is the simultaneous presence of development and underdevelopment in the same country, region, city-or even neighbourhood.

The erosion of the social fabric, the increase in poverty and marginalisation produced by cuts to public spending can become functional to accumulation, especially so far as the strategy of glocalization is concerned. This strategy can even capitalise to some degree upon the lack of social cohesion, when the increase in marginalisation leads to the construction of prisons as outsourced, forced labour camps. This is already a reality in the United States. Faced with an explosion in detainee numbers, prisons managed by private companies expanded by 500% between 1985 and 1995, making theirs one of the most lucrative of businesses. Once guaranteed a state subsidy, the companies managing prisons can concentrate upon cutting costs and maximising profits. Here are some cases taken from the PEN-L Internet discussion list and other lists (see also Mack 1997):

* the majority of workers from a furniture company (Michigan Brill Mfg. Co) lose their jobs and $5.65 hourly wage, while the inmates of the state prison are hired instead with a wage ranging from 56 to 80 cents an hour.

* In Texas, about 100 inmates of the private prison in Lockhart assemble electronic components for industrial giants such as IBM, Dell and Compaq, production performed by an Austin firm before its closure. The prisoners earn the minimum wage and no other benefits.

* In Ohio, the inmates of the Ross County's prison were assembling car parts for Honda, until the United Auto Workers union succeeded in stopping the operation. Now the inmates assemble toys and input data in computers.

* Juvenile prisoners answer the telephone and take bookings for TWA near Santa Barbara. The inmates in San Quintino input data in computers for private companies.

* Staff at the prison in Pendletone Oregon manage the company Oregon Corrections Industries, Unigroup, where the inmates

produce jeans with the brand name "prison labor".

* Exmark, a company specialising in product packaging, used 90 prisoners at TRCC to package 50,000 units of Windows 95 demo disks and direct-mail promotional packets. Exmark pays prison labour the minimum wage ($4.90), but workers can see a spendable wage of $1.80-$2.80 after deduction by the prison.
(See prison legal news, http://www.synapse.net/~arrakis/pln/pln.html)

Third, these strategies depend-at least for part of the production process, and in some of its geographical locations-upon the active participation of workers in quality control, in product innovation, in production design, and in the self-management of the firm's use of their labour power. In the words of Marco Revelli,

> The Japanese industrialists of the post-Fordist era and their Western emulators . . . think it "fortuitous" that workers remain human beings. They can afford to solicit their employees "to think", "to re-humanise themselves", because they are convinced that they possess a monopoly upon human nature (and that the "commodity that works" is the only possible way of being human). Thought born in the universe of the factory is inherently conformist and directed towards the goals of production (1995: 192).

Unfortunately for the philosophy of these post-Fordist managers, their employees have a rather different opinion. The results of a survey recently taken among 1500 hundred workers and managers by Kepner-Tregoe, a U.S. consultant firm, have been so shocking that it was decided to have them checked again by another group of consultants. The results clearly show that every aspect of the philosophy of workers' participation is matched by a disenchanted cynicism amongst workers. Kepner-Tregoe's president, T. Quinn Spitzer, had this to say: "The vitriolic response was amazing . . . Workers don't like their companies, and there is a fundamental social change going on in this country regarding workplace relations . . . The workers hear the verbiage about how 'our people are the most important asset we have' and they want to throw up." (quoted in Collective Action Notes 1996).

Fourth, both globalisation and glocalisation are based upon a labour power which is presently disorganised, especially at the international level. Despite this, the low wages in the labour intensive parts of the global factory engendered by globalization are the targets of movements and struggles that seem to replicate, at an accelerated pace, the high points of class struggle in the Fordist West.[17] And while the Fordist factory of the North had emerged hand in hand with a wage policy which attempted to recuperate workers' antagonism (just think of Ford's $5 day scheme in 1914) in the South wage increases have mostly been the product of workers' struggles. Table 3 compares International Labour Office strike data from some of the countries of the world's South. As can be seen, apart from the case of the Philippines, where the

period 1984-1988 coincided with struggles against the Marcos regime, the developing countries sampled have witnessed a growth of industrial class conflict, against its apparent stagnation in the United States. These figures must be treated with caution, however, since they report only official strikes.

Table 3:
Numbers of strikes
(average working days lost for strikes, thousands)

	1984-88	*1989-93*	*% rates of change*
USA	7257.82	7001.76	- 3.52
NIGERIA	225.66	1414.86[18]	+ 527
MEXICO	1436.60	1636.58	+ 13.87
HONG KONG	2.86	5.29	+ 84. 9
INDONESIA	165.05	811.59[19]	+ 391.7
SOUTH KOREA	2500.78	3386.42	+ 35.41
MALAYSIA	16.59	74.72	+ 350.27
PHILIPPINES	2287.16	974.57	- 57.38
SRI LANKA	164.57	286.86	+ 74.30
THAILAND	96.78	155.34	+ 60.50

This growth of the workers' movement within the Fordist parts of the South forces transnational corporations towards a greater mobility, insofar as that is possible. So, if American clothing factories such as Levis or Nike subcontract large parts of their production process to countries like South Korea, these in turn subcontract to Chinese or Indonesian factories, where wages are lower, and the workers' movement does not yet pack the punch of its South Korean counterpart. Finally, one also has to bear in mind here the possible effects of social antagonism within the cycle of high-tech capital upon a range of geographical areas (Witheford 1995).

As for as the strategy of glocalisation, based upon the flexibility of work in the North, two examples (one from Paris, the other from Liverpool) seem worthy of mention. In the first, the massive working class response to Juppè's measures during December 1995 again raises the spectre of rigidity against the strategy of flexibility. In the second, an ongoing action by English dock workers is significant for a number of reasons: because it opposes their bosses' decision to use legally guaranteed forms of flexibility and to fire workers who had struck against casual labour, and because the strikers are bypassing the law against sympathy strikes in UK through the concrete solidarity of Canadian, US, Israel, Australian, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, and other dock workers who are actively boycotting ships coming from Liverpool. This is a concrete example of how the struggle against elements of flexibility can throw up a global working class response. Not only this, but as the mobilisation in the early 1990s of hundreds of groups in

Mexico, US, and Canada against NAFTA has shown, this struggle is trying to make use of communication technologies and the Internet both to accelerate and organise the circulation of struggles, and to confront capitalist strategies of globalization with an equally global antagonism.

4. Conclusion

Within current common sense, the word "globalization" is associated with a perception of the fate of contemporary societies as fixed, immutable and given. If there is some space for changes, these are nonetheless confined to what is necessary for adaptation to global competition's new rules of play, or for the fine-tuning of the budget. But it seems impossible to contemplate radical changes, even within the hypothetical horizon of parties belonging to opposing camps. The ideology of the "failure of communism" (read state capitalism) is used here to taint as fanciful any attempt to think beyond the basic assumptions that constitute the most expeditious tallying of life in pursuit of accumulation. With all its dependence upon subjectivity and creativity, modern capitalism can only promote a political culture characterised by the absence of "radical" imagination, by the absence of an alternative vision of existence-not in the distant future, but here and now, where the present material and subjective bases could render it conceivable, if not actualisable.

It seems to me that the picture of globalization set out in this paper is quite different from that static, given, incorruptible and immovable one presupposed in political debates and offered up in the common places of traditional channels of information. Our picture illustrates that the globalization of both finance and production processes is a strategy, and thus subject to failure. Furthermore, it seems that we need to respond in two ways to the passive acceptance of the economy's autonomy. Firstly, with autonomy from the economy, with a critical and radical thought that refuses to accept the basic assumptions imposed by a representation of the world finalised in the elaboration of strategies for the maintenance of the current system of affairs. Secondly, with the economy of autonomy, economy understood here not as a system of capitalist relations, but as an alternative system of social relations, definition of needs and of human modes for their satisfaction, given the current material and subjective bases. In short, against the false realism of economic fetishism we have to recover a utopian discourse, in thought as well as in antagonistic and constitutive practice. Through an interesting play on words, the word utopia is defined in English as no/where-no place. But this could also be read as now/here-here and now. Utopia therefore not as an alternative model, not as a party program or a plan in search of subjects to subordinate, but rather as an open and inclusive horizon of thought, as antagonistic practice and communication (along this lines see for example Holloway 1996, Bonefeld & Holloway 1996). If theoretical and political recomposition must occur as a heterogeneity of antagonistic themes, and thus of subjects-labour, production, reproduction, race, gender, health, environment, education etc.-then this entails a discourse which to those

who manage the Great Leviathan will necessarily seem "utopian": that is, as a discourse centred around the needs and aspirations of real human subjects, uncoupled from the priority of social relations which take the form of despotic things.

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Notes

1. For a good review of the recent trends of globalization of information see Ramonet (1997).

2. See Cleaver (1988) for a general class analysis of the debt crisis and IMF policies. To my knowledge, we still lack a similar class analysis of the most recent developments of the debt crisis and, in particular, of the development of financial crisis following the beginning of the Zapatista rebellion in 1994.

3. The main bulk of this article was written before German chancellor Kohl's announcement late in April 1996 of a cut of 70 million marks to public spending, and before most of the discussion about possible elastic interpretations of the Maastricht criteria. The former steps up the battle against public spending, the latter concedes to popular pressure against cuts: Europe's fate is still to be decided on the ground.

4. Furthermore, the pensioners of today are the workers of yesterday who, whatever the balance between their past social insurance contributions and the pensions they receive, have created more wealth than they have been paid.

5. Evidence of this is the recent Tory UK government proposal to turn the entire pension system into private hands by the beginning of the next millennium (a proposal that has not been opposed, in its principles, by the labour opposition) in a condition in which even official sources agree on the fact that in the UK, after the Tory's reforms of the 1980s, there is not a problem of pension financing (De Angelis 1997).

6. North America = USA and Canada. Western Europe = Austria, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Sweden. South Asia = India and Sri Lanka (1984 and 1993), India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh (1974). South East and East Asia = Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan (only for 1974). Latin America = Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela. Source: Knox and Agnew (1992) and my updates.

7. Holland 1987.

8. Austria 1989, Belgium 1991, Germany, Italy and Sweden 1992.

9. Thailand 1985.

10. Malaysia 1991.

11. Mexico 1985.

12. Brazil and Venezuala 1990. Source: Knox & Agnew (1992) and my updates.

14. Italy 1992, Germany 1992, China 1991, India 1989, Malaysia 1991, Singapore 1990, Sri Lanka 1991, Thailand 1990, Brazil 1990.

15. For a discussion of the limits of just-in-time production from the persepctive of workers subjectivity in antagonism to capital, see Barchiesi

1997.

16. "A top-level scientist at a major American corporation would cost at least $250,000, including salary, benefits, and overhead. The same calibre of talent could be had in the East for one-tenth the cost" (Reich 1991: 124; from J. Holusha, "Business Taps the East Bloc's Intellectual Reserves," The New York Times, February 20, 1990, pp. A1, D5).

17. Just as the mass worker in these regions has been created at an accelerated pace, so too are the forms of struggles and levels of confrontation typical of the mass worker reproduced at a faster pace than those seen in the Western countries. A case in point is South Korea. "In Korea, labor's attitude bordered on the insurrectionary, making nearly impossible the institutionalization of Western-style bargaining processes . . . precisely because labor and other groups had been strongly repressed in the pursuit of high-speed development, political decompression did not lead to the creation of a new consensus around the traditional strategy of growth but to a politics of polarized struggle over the distribution of income, sectoral priorities, the trade-off between environmental and economic priorities, and the direction of development itself" (Bello and Rosenfeld 1992).

18. 1989-92.

19. 1989-92.

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Notes on Anti-Semitism[1]

Werner Bonefeld

Preface

These Notes arose from teaching a course on Political Identity in (the former West-) Germany. The Jewish Question in the German question of political/national identity is, of course, an important one; better: it is the fundamental question. Some commentators, for example Dinar (1987) and Rabinbach (1986), speak about a 'negative symbiosis' between the Jewish Question and the German Question post-1945. This is a neat way of focusing and posing the issue. It is a 'negative' symbiosis for basically two reasons. First, after 1945, hardly any Jews remained in Germany and beyond - the Nazis' war aim of exterminating European Jewry has been frightfully 'successful'. Thus, and this is the second aspect of 'negative symbiosis', the 'dead Jews' confront the living Germans in their quest for 'normality'. The so-called 'coping with the past'[2] was a coping with a past in which Jews were exterminated for the sake of extermination. A measure of this 'coping' can be gleaned from Henryk Broder's remark about the Germans: 'They will never forgive the Jews for Auschwitz!'[3] Did the desecration of Jewish cemeteries after German unification happen *because* or *despite* of Auschwitz? What do we make of the student-left of 1968 that responded to the Six-Day War of 1967 by suggesting that Israel behaved like Germany had in occupied Poland. What, indeed, do we make of the left's response to the Lebanon War of 1982 when Begin, Israel's then Prime Minister, was said to be a Nazi?.[4] Paraphrasing Broder, 'coping with the past' has more often than not taken the form of exorcising the burden of the dead by persecuting the living Jews in the present.

Auschwitz has, time and time again, been identified, by Conservative historians as well as concerned left-liberals like Habermas, as an obstacle to the reconstruction of national identity in Germany.[5] However, 'Auschwitz', the word of horror, has become sidelined and replaced by the term 'Holocaust'. This replacement creates a much more abstract, intangible relationship with the deed. Indeed, the word Holocaust not only removed Auschwitz from the vocabulary, its use has also proliferated and has become a generalism: ecological holocaust, global holocaust, etc. The word Auschwitz signals horror. The word Holocaust, however, 'normalises' the horror through its popular usage (Clausen, 1995). The killing of millions is normalised as all trace of annihilation is erased through relativism.

It is, however, not just Auschwitz that is being normalised but, also and importantly, the very conditions through which anti-Semitism existed and persists to this day. Of course, there is a difference between the anti-Semitism that culminated in Auschwitz and the anti-Semitism of the post-1945 world. However, and within the context of these Notes, whether anti-Semitism persists because or despite of Auschwitz is, ultimately, an idle question. This is for two reasons: Firstly, the notions 'despite' and 'because' presuppose that the power of anti-semitic thought was somewhat put to rest at Auschwitz. It thus gives credence to Auschwitz as a factory of death that is assumed to have destroyed anti-Semitism. Furthermore, and connected, anti-Semitism is viewed as a phenomenon of the past, that merely casts its shadow on the present. In this way, overt expressions of anti-Semitism are deemed 'ugly' merely as pathological aberrations of an otherwise civilised world. The assumption thus is that anti-Semitism belongs to capitalism's past history.[6] However, and anticipating much of the following argument, it is not anti-semitic thought that is anti-semitic in itself. Rather, anti-Semitism belongs to a form of thought that not only rejects reason's historical role to demand human conditions but, also, confuses reason with instrumental rationality. In short, 'reason' is confused with a form of thought that treats the social practice of human labour as a resource for the accumulation of abstract wealth. Anti-Semitism does not 'need' Jews. For anti-Semitism to rage, the existence of 'Jews' is neither incidental nor required. 'Anti-Semitism tends to occur only as part of an interchangeable program', the basis of which is the 'universal reduction of all specific energy to the one, same abstract form of labor, from the battlefield to the studio' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 207). Thus, anti-Semitism belongs to a social world in which sense and significance are sacrificied in favour of compliance with the norms and rules of a political and economic reality that poses sameness, ritualised repitition, and object-less subjectivity as the citizen's only permitted mode of existence. Difference, and therewith the elevation of human dignity to a purpose of social existence, beyond and above the ritualised mentality of empty and idle thought thus stands rejected. The mere existence of difference, a difference that signals happiness beyond a life of rationalised production, fosters the blind resentment and anger that anti-Semitism focuses and exploits but does not itself produce . [7]

Introduction

The following notes are not concerned with recent attempts at normalising Auschwitz. Neither are they concerned with the desecration of Jewish cemeteries after the fall of the Berlin wall and neo-nazi attacks on passers-by because of their 'Jewish' looks. The focus is on that anti-Semitism which found its *raison d'etre* in Auschwitz. Is anti-Semitism only a form of racism, a mere prejudice which can be overcome by education and good-will?; or is it a 'hatred of capitalism', a 'hatred of men against money and exploitation', as the late left wing terrorist Ulrike Meinhof suggested?[8] These notes suggest that anti-Semitism is

different from racism and that it has a direct relationship with 'modernity's' attempt at reconciling its constituting contradiction, that is the class antagonism between capital and labour. These notes go thus beyond a mere commentary on anti-Semitism: the issue is not just 'anti-Semitism' but, rather, the negative dialectic of the Enlightenment. In this way, the notes provide a critique of the 'Enlightenment' through the lenses of 'anti-Semitism'. The argument, in short, is that anti-Semitism has to be seen as subsisting in and through the negative dialectic of the Enlightenment. Without a critique of the Enlightenment, a study of anti-Semitism would merely allow a historical-sociological argument that already presupposes what it wants to show. It presupposes the 'eternity' of anti-Semitism regardless of historical circumstances and thus the changing mode of existence of anti-Semitism. In this way, anti-Semitism becomes to be seen as a fate to which one has to resign oneself, a fate that cannot be put into the museum of history.

In what follows, I have freely borrowed from Horkheimer and Adorno (1989) and Postone (1986). In their *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno emphasise that Enlightenment's 'reason' obtains fundamentally and substantially as 'instrumental reason'. Theirs is not a denunciation of 'reason' as such, that is of 'reason' as the illuminating power of human practice and as the categorial imperative that we all live a good, a dignified life. On the contrary, their concern was to criticise instrumental reason in and through which 'reason' subsists in a mode of being denied. Thus, they negate that 'reason' and 'instrumental reason' relate to each other in an external way. They belong together without being identical with each other. The determination of 'reason' as reason being denied in the form of 'instrumental reason' entails that instrumental reason is reason's false friend and that, as such a friend, negates reason's promise to destroy all relations where humanity exists as a resource.[9] The first four theses supply an introductory interpretation of Horkheimer and Adorno's analysis of anti-Semitism. Postone's work on anti-Semitism elaborates Horkheimer and Adorno's insights by analysing anti-Semitism through the lenses of Marx's critique of fetishism. These insights will be drawn upon towards the end of these Notes when the argument deals with Nazism's 'anti-capitalist capitalism'.

I

In anti-Semitism, the 'Jewish Question' is posed as one between 'society' and 'community'. 'Society' is identified as 'Jewish'; whereas community is posed as a counterworld to society. Community is seen to be constituted by nature and 'nature' is seen to be undermined by evil social forces. The attributes given by the anti-Semite to Jews include mobility, intangibility, rootlessness and conspiracy against the values and integrity of a traditional community. The presumed 'health' of this community is seen to be at the mercy of evil powers: sexual perversion, intellectual thought, abstract rules, and laws and the disintegrating forces of communism and finance capital. Both, communism and

finance capital are seen as uprooting powers and as entities of reason, both of these are seen as the property and project of the rootless intelligence of 'Jews'. The 'Jew', in view of the anti-Semite, is rootless and seeks to impose rootlessness upon the 'community'. Thus the 'Jew' is projected as some-body who is not part of the family. It is essential not to confuse racism with anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism is based on the ideas that 'the Jews are not a nation. They do not speak a language of their own. They have no roots in a *nature*, like the European nations. They claim to have their roots in a book' (Lyotard: 159). [10]

II

> The desecration of Jewish cemeteries is not a mere excess of anti-Semitism - it is anti-Semitism in its essence (Horkheimer and Adorno: 183).

The 'uprooting' of the final resting place denies not only peace in death it also, and importantly, empties the place of rest, the final place of peace. This refusal of peace appears like a preventive action on the part of the anti-Semite: the Jews who are said to be without roots, are prevented to find roots in death. The depiction 'Jews' as rootless - the 'wandering Jew' - concerns thus not only the living but also the dead. The 'Jew' is refused 'humanity's' mercy to rest in peace. The refusal of a 'homeland' found in death finds its emblematic articulation in the refusal of a peaceful grave.[11]

III

> Anti-Semitism as a national movement was always based on an urge which its instigators held against the Social Democrats: the urge for equality (Horkheimer and Adorno: 170).

Social Democracy saw equality as emanating from the project of the Enlightenment. It urged equality to achieve a just and fair society. This demand focused on citizenship rights for all and on the sphere of distribution where equality of opportunity is seen as a civil good compensating for the absence of humanity at the point of production. Anti-Semitism urges a different sort of equality. Anti-Semite equality appears, at first sight, to be the complete opposite to the form of equality proposed by the project of the Enlightenment. Equality is derived from membership in a *völkisch* community. This equality is one of 'property', the property of land and soil defined by the bond of blood. Blood and soil are configured as the bond of community, of *Volk*. The notion of the original possession of land and the purity of blood amount to a mythical conception of community insofar as possession is construed as a blood-tied property.

Community, then, is the community of equals: *Volksgenossen*. Their perceived original bond with nature is seen to be threatened by the

dark forces emanating from 'society'. Society stands rejected not only because it 'is' rootless but, also, because it declares 'rootlessness' as its purpose: abstract equality before the law is presented as the organisational form of appropriating and accumulating monetary wealth.

The notion of equality based, as it is, on the conception of the soil and blood, defines the Other as a parasite whose objective is to oppress, undermine and pervert the 'natural community' into a society based on the accumulation of abstract and intangible values. 'If the Jew did not exist, the anti-Semite would invent him' (Sartre: 13).[12] It is the invention of the 'Jew' as the Other, the one that deviates from, and is not allowed to participate in, the community of blood and soil, who serves to provide equality where class conflict and struggle rages: the *Volksgenosse* is an entity defined in terms of natural equality by virtue of its construed antagonistic relationship to the construct 'Jew'. The concept 'Jew' knows no individuality, can not be a man or a woman, and can not be seen as a worker or beggar; the word 'Jew' relates to a non-person. 'The Jew is one whom other men consider a Jew' (Sartre: 69). Their 'equality' as Jews obtains as a construct to which all those belong who deviate from the conception of the *Volksgenosse*. In this way, then, 'the portrait of the Jews that the nationalists offer to the world is in fact their own self-portrait' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 168). The naturalisation of the *Volksgenosse* as a *Genosse* of and through blood and soil subsists through the denaturalisation of the Jew as a rootless entity. The *Volksgenosse* portrays himself as rooted in blood and tradition so as to defend his own faith in the immorality of madness. 'The true benefit of the *Volksgenosse* lies in collective approval of anger' (ibid.: 170). This anger is directed towards civilisation's supposed victory over nature, a victory that is seen as condemning the *Volksgenosse* to sweat, toil and physical effort, whereas the Other is seen to live a life as banker and sexual pervert. This the *Volksgenosse* aspires for himself with murder becoming the climax of his aspiration.

For the *Volksgenossen*, the Jews 'are the scapegoats not only for individual manoeuvres and machinations but in a broader sense, inasmuch as the economic injustice of the whole class is attributed to them' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 174). The liberation, then, of community from society is not only conceived as a liberating action but, also, as a moral obligation: anti-Semitism calls for a just revenge on the part of the 'victimised' community against the powers of rootless society. Extermination is thus conceived as the 'victim's' just cause. 'Community' is seen to be both victimised and 'strong'. Strength is derived from the biological conception of community: blood constituted possession and tradition. The *Volkgenosse* sees himself as a son of nature and thus as a natural being. This biologisation of community finds legitimation for murder in the biologisation of the 'action': biology is conceived as a destiny. From this follows the demand to overturn and break society's hold on community in order for the latter to reassert its 'purity'. The purpose legitimates the means. In this view, then, those victimised have the moral high ground on their side, reinforcing the claim to liberation as a moral obligation, whatever the means. 'As a

perfect madman or absolutely rational individual, he destroys his opponent by individual acts of terror or by the carefully conceived strategy of extermination' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 191). Thus the negative dialectic of the Enlightenment where the 'victory of society over nature changes everything into pure nature' (ibid.: 186).

The organised anti-Semite mob does not pretend not to be driven by the thirst of blood: indeed, it is the liberation of 'blood' from Vampire like society which reinforces the mythical conception of the original possession of land, a conception that anticipates the common deed as a bond of shared identity. The urge for destruction and its cold, dispassionate execution - the cruelty of silence in the house of the hangman - realises the project of 'equality' where Social Democracy failed: the rationally executed extermination of millions created an invisible horror far stronger than the invisible hand of the market that social democracy set out to direct in a just way. Why is this horror invisible? True, the horror was visible, even for those who claimed not to have smelled, seen and known. However, invisible still: the common deed remains invisible through its incomprehensibility. Auschwitz is beyond comprehension. 'The soul, as the possibility of self-comprehending guilt, is destroyed' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 198).

In a world where the 'true social individual' (cf. Marx) subsists against itself and thus in the state of individuality denied, the passion for deadly deed is far stronger than the attempt to tame, through a policy of social justice, the invisible hand of the market through the application of reason. The power of reason finds its claim to reason limited by the very forces upon which it depends. The dark side of reason is the invisible which Adam Smith praised for its just and impartial power of distribution. And it is this same power of the invisible which anti-Semitism claims for itself. 'Pogroms demonstrate the impotence of sense, significance, and thus reason and ultimately truth'. The negative dialectic of instrumental reason finds its synthesis at the place where one should expect its presupposition to stand: the cruelty of its beginning, that is the primitive accumulation of capital. Reason that escorted the primitive accumulation of capital with the promise of human dignity, appears transformed into the idle occupation of killing for the sake of killing. Kant's claim that only science is able to lead the common individual to dignity[13] formulated reason's claim to think beyond itself in order to find salvation in significance and meaning, in humanity. This is reason's moral and indeed revolutionary imperative. However, reason is not one-sided; it has a darker side as de Sade showed. The darker side of reason subsists as instrumental rationality, a joyless rationality interested only in calculability be it in terms of a market rationality or fordist production processes.[14] Indeed, in instrumental rationality, humanity is denied its existence as it is merely conceived as a resource to be integrated into the well-oiled systems of economic production and political machines. Thus, in instrumental reason, significance and meaning are bereft of their revolutionary imperatives and its theoretical project.

The Cartesian dualism between subject and matter emphasises pure reason as an abstract reason devoid of social content and thus in

sharp contrast to reason's claim to lead humanity's exodus from its self-imposed immaturity. The forward march of instrumental reason during the last century does not amount to a destruction of reason as Lukács (1980) claims. Within the negative dialectic of the Enlightenment, instrumental rationality is reason's other - its constituting - self (Horkheimer, 1985). The moral obligation to lead the exodus to a better world and the immorality of instrumental reason are historically and theoretically two halves of the same walnut: Revolution and its containment in the name of revolution itself. 'The thought of happiness without power is unbearable because it would then be true happiness' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 172). Instrumental reason is the mode of existence of the expanded reproduction of the *status quo*. It allows merely technological revolutions and serves the continuous project of bourgeois revolution by fashioning human existence as a resourceful tool for profitable calculation.

Thus, the idle occupation of killing does not deny 'reason'. In fact, it is reason's constitutive other and affirmed itself as such. The industrialised slaughter of millions reinforces reason's instrumental rationality whose concern with efficiency denies both sense and truth. All it knows is how best to achieve the optimum result, how best to increase efficiency be it in terms of produced cars or gassed corpses. The immorality of slaughter only confirms instrumental reason's claim for impartiality, the value-neutral rationality of calculation where no-body is at the same time no-one. Its dispassionate application is mirrored by its disregard for individuality: corpses all look the same when counting the results and they are equal to each other; and nothing distinguishes a number from a number except, of course, the difference in quantity. In anti-Semitism, the urge for equality confirms thus instrumental reason's conception of equality where the mere existence of happiness is a provocation to the rational application of physical effort. Judgement is suspended. 'The morbid aspect of anti-Semitism is not projective behaviour as such, but the absence from it of reflection' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 189). The *Volksgenossen* are thus equal in blindness. 'Blindness is all-embracing because it comprehends nothing' (ibid.: 172).

IV[15]

> 'Anti-Semitism is a passion' [which is] 'not caused by experience but by hatred and fear'. 'There is a passionate pride among the mediocre, and anti-Semitism is an attempt to give value to mediocracy, as such, to create an elite of the ordinary' (Sartre, 1976: 10; 11; 23).

The biologically defined possession of land and tradition is, as was agreed, counterposed to the possession of universal, abstract values. The terms '*abstract, rationalist, intellectual* ... take a pejorative sense; it could not be otherwise, since the anti-Semite lays claim to a concrete and irrational possession of the values of the nation' (ibid.: 109). The abstract values themselves are biologised, the abstract is identified as

'Jew'. Both, thus, the 'concrete' and the 'abstract' are biologised: one through the possession of land (the concrete as rooted in nature, blood and tradition) and the other through the possession of 'poison' (the abstract as the rootless power of intelligence and money). The myth (and biology) of national unity is counterposed to the myth (and biology) of the Jew. Tradition is counterposed to reasoning, intelligence, and self-reflection; and the possession of soil is counterposed to the abstract value of international finance and communism. All these abstract values are deemed to be Jewish values: Jewry is seen to stand behind the urban world of crime, prostitution, and vulgar, materialist culture. 'The illusory conspiracy of corrupt Jewish bankers financing Bolshevism is a sign of innate impotence' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 172). Hence, the above reported notion:

> 'pogroms demonstrate the impotence of sense, significance and ultimately truth. The idle occupation of killing confirms the stubbornness of the life to which one has to conform, and to resign oneself' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 171).

The elevation of soil and tradition to the good, and the stigmatisation of reason and money as evil, confirms the view that those with a 'home', 'tradition', 'roots' and 'soil' are expropriated by vulgar powers. In the struggle between 'good' and 'evil' reconciliation appears neither possible nor desirable. Evil needs to be eradicated in order for the 'good' to be set free. The paradox of this claim seems clear, or so it seems. The attack on 'reason' rests on the employment of reason's other self: instrumental rationality, confirming, rather than denying, the circumstance that Nazism was less an aberration in the forward march of instrumental reason than the transformation of the forward march itself into delusion. 'The unleashed colossi of the manufacturing industries did not overcome the individual by granting him full satisfaction but by eliminating his character as a subject. This is the source of their complete rationality, which coincides with their madness' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 205). Civilisation's supposed victory over nature is assumed to have overcome its own law of impoverishment. This 'notion which justified the whole system, that of man as a person, a bearer of reason, is destroyed' (ibid.: 204). Auschwitz, then, confirms the 'stubbornness' of the principle of 'abstraction' not only through mass killing but also, and because of it, through 'abstractification'. The biologisation of the abstract as 'Jew' denied not only humanity, as the 'Jew' stands expelled from the biologised community of the concrete. The abstract is also *made* abstract: all that can be used is used like teeth, hear, skin; labour-power; and, finally, the abstract is made abstract and thus invisible itself through gas. The invisible hand of the market, identified as the abstract-biological power of the 'Jew', is transformed into the invisible itself. Within the negative dialectic of the Enlightenment, Auschwitz stands for the 'victory' of instrumental reason over reason's moral imperative that we all live a good life in dignity. Reason's claim to lead humanity out of self-imposed immaturity showed

itself as smoked-filled air.

V

> No analysis of National Socialism that cannot account for the extermination of European Jewry, extermination for the sake of extermination is fully adequate (Postone: 303).

National Socialism projected itself as an anti-capitalis movement. This projection should not be dismissed out of hand. Yet, National Socialism also embraced industrial capital and new technology. Indeed, according to Aly and Heym (1991), the preparation of the Final Solution in occupied Poland was based less on anti-Semitism as an ideology, but, in fact, followed the instrumental reasoning of resource management. It was 'based', they argue, on meticulous research concerned with the rational planning of resources. Their argument is that, for the Nazis, the economic viability of occupied Poland depended on the reduction of the population per capital in order to secure that capital exported to Poland could be applied efficiently.

How do we approach the apparent contradiction between Nazism's anti-capitalist ideological projection and the rational calculation that proposes mass murder as a 'solution' to capitalist profitability? Nazi anti-Semitism is, as the above has tried to make clear, different from the anti-Semitism of the old Christian world. This does not mean that it did not exploit the anti-Semitism of the old Christian world.

In Christian anti-Semitism, the 'Jew' was also construed as an abstract social power: The 'Jew' stands accused as the assassin of Jesus and is thus persecuted as the son of a murderer. In national anti-Semitism, the Jew was chosen because of the 'religious horror the latter has always inspired' (Sartre: 68).

The 'Jew', in the Christian world, was also a social-economic construct by virtue of being forced to fill the vital economic function of trafficking in money (cf. Horkheimer and Adorno). Thus, the economic curse that this social role entailed, reinforced the religious curse (cf. Satre).

National anti-Semitism not only uses and exploits these historical constructions but, also, transforms them: The Jew stands accused and is persecuted for following unproductive activities. His image is that of an intellectual. 'Bankers and intellectuals, money and mind, the exponents of circulation, form the impossible ideal of those who have been maimed by domination, an image used by domination to perpetuate itself' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 172).

Thus, in national anti-Semitism, the Jew is portrayed as an entity which stands behind international capitalism and Bolshevism, both at the same time. The Jew as international banker and Bolshevik revolutionary? As was already discussed, Jewry has powers attributed to them which can not be defined concretely. The 'Jew' is seen as one who is not rooted and as such accused to stand behind phenomena: They

represent an immensely powerful, intangible, international conspiracy deemed to uproot the concrete (cf. Postone, 1986).

Why did national anti-Semitism - a secular anti-Semitism - coincide with the political emancipation of Western European Jewry during the 19th Century?[16] The opening of social and political space meant that 'Jews' became visible in society. They entered professions from which they had previously been barred. It was these that expanded during the turn of the century. There appeared to be a sudden increase of Jewish lawyers, scientists, University teachers, hospital doctors, etc. Although, in Germany, only a small percentage of Jews occupied these professions, they became, nevertheless visible. They became visible in areas which were associated with modernity, universality, intellectuality and reason (Postone, 1986).

The political emancipation of European Jewry coincided with a rapid industrialisation with all its 'effects': risk of unemployment, inflationary wage erosion, urbanisation and overcrowding, destruction of crafts and the risk of bankruptcy. The old liberal idea of the self-determining individual mastering his affairs came to an end. What happened to reason's espousal of the self-determining individual? The entrepreneur of laissez-faire capitalism was increasingly replaced by a much more globally organised capitalism which seemed to operate independently from the individual entrepreneurial decision making. This change was captured by Hilferding and others who analysed this development in terms of finance capitalism. The result was the transformation of judgement into compliance with instrumental rationality. 'In spite of, and because of, the evident evil nature of domination, the latter has becomes so supremely powerful that each individual in his impotence can exorcise his fate only by blind obedience' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 199) to the delusion of the invisible hand and its insane political reality.

As was reported above, anti-Semitism identifies 'society' as a perverting force and sees this perversion to be personified by the 'Jews'. Instead of the entrepreneur making independent decisions, it is the murky world of international finance that sets the conditions of market success. The invisible hand of the market and the hard hitting 'power' of money are rejected as 'Jewish'. At the same time, communism is denounced as a threat to the ruled because it would deliver them from sweat and toil. 'The rulers are only safe as long as the people they rule turn their longed-for goals into hated forms of evil' (ibid.). The Jews seem ready made for the projection of horror. 'No matter what the Jews as such may be like, their image, as that of the defeated people, has the features to which totalitarian domination must be completely hostile: happiness without power, wages without work, a home without frontiers, religion without myth. These characteristics are hated by the rulers because the ruled secretly long to possess them' (ibid.). Anti-Semitism invited the ruled to stabilise domination by urging them to destroy, suppressing the very possibility and idea of happiness through participation in the Aryan enterprise of robbing the Others of all possession, including their life.

VI

> 'Fascism is also totalitarian in that it seeks to make the rebellion of suppressed nature against domination directly useful to domination. This machinery needs the Jews' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 185).

This insight poses the issue of Nazism's espousal of capitalist enterprise and its tirades against 'Jewish capitalism'. To answer this, the earlier insights into the biologisation of the concrete and the personification of the abstract need to be looked at again.

There has been a long 'radical' tradition which sought to cure capitalism from its social and economic ills. This tradition, which includes, for example, Proudhon, straddles the political divide between 'left' and 'right'. Their common concern is to save capitalism from what they see as the perverting power of money. Their critique of capitalism is based on a dualist conception between, on the one hand, social relations as relations between creative, industrious individuals and, on the other, their subordination to relations between things, to money. Marx's critique of Fetishism supplied an uncompromising critique of this dualist conception by making clear that the two do not exist independent from each other but are in fact each other's mode of existence. However, the radical 'right' and 'left' have all too often separated what, fundamentally, belongs together: the fetish-like endorsement of the concrete, of creative labour, of enterprise and of industry supplying material products that satisfy wants. Counterposed to this is the abstract sphere occupied by money and finance, specifically speculation and global finance capital. The celebration of the concrete goes hand-in-hand with the rejection of the mobility, universality and intangibility of finance capital that is charged with knowing neither national identity nor social 'responsibility'. The Vampire-like figure of capital sucking labour in the quest for surplus value, portrayed by Marx in *Capital*, is thus displaced: the Vampire becomes money. Industrial enterprise, rather than being conceived in terms of an enterprise of exploitation, is projected as concrete, creative labour. The viability of this labour is thus seen to be put at risk by money. Money is conceived as the root of all evil and the cause of all perversion. Enterprise and industry are fetishised as the concrete community, as concrete nature. Industrial endeavour is thus portrayed as a 'victim' of the evil force of money.

In anti-Semitism, then, the world appears to be divided between finance capital and concrete nature. The concrete is conceived as immediate, direct, matter for use, and rooted in industry and productive activity. Money, on the other hand, is not only conceived as the root of all evil, it is also judged as rootless and of being merely interested in itself: all enterprise is perverted in the name of money's continued quest for self-expansion. In this way, money, that is financial capital, is identified with capitalism while industry is perceived as constituting community's concrete and creative existence. Between capitalism as monetary

accumulation and social community as industrial enterprise, it is money which calls the shots. In this view, industry and enterprise are 'made' capitalist by money: money penetrates all expressions of industry and thus perverts and disintegrates community in the name of finance capital's abstract values. This destructive force puts claim on and so perverts: the individual as entrepreneur; the creative in terms of a paternalist direction of use-value production; the rooted in terms of *Volk*; the community in terms of a natural community. Instead of community's natural order of hierarchy and position, money's allegedly artificial and rootless force is judged to make the world go round by uprooting the natural order of the *Volksgenossen*. In this way, then, it is possible for the *Volksgenossen* not only to embrace capitalism but, also, to declare that the exploitation of labour creates freedom: *Arbeit macht frei*. 'They declared that work was not degrading, so as to control the others more rationally. They claimed to be creative workers, but in reality they were still the grasping overlords of former times' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 173). By separating what fundamentally belongs together, that is 'industrial' exploitation and money, the differentiation between money on the one hand, and industry and enterprise, on the other, allows the attack on reason and universality in the name of instrumental rationality set to work to improve capital efficiency.

With the biologisation of creative activity, the unfettered operation of the exploitation of labour in the name of blood and soil is rendered attainable by the elimination of the cajoling and perverting forces of the abstract: European Jewry. In this way, the ideology of blood and soil, on the one hand, and machinery and unfettered industrial expansion, on the other, rather than relating to each other as opposites, became instead the image of a healthy nation that stands ready to purge itself from the perceived perversion of industry by the abstract, universal, rootless, mobile, intangible, international 'vampire' of 'Jewish capitalism'. The projection of the 'Jew' as the personification of capitalism rests on the celebration of the Aryan-*Volksgenosse* as the personification of the concrete, of blood, soil, tradition, and industry. The *Volksgenosse* manifests a stubbornness of the most industrial kind: killing as an idle and efficiently discharged occupation. Their stubbornness only serves to strengthen their sense of destiny. As *Volksgenossen* they have all committed the same deed and have thus become truly equal to each other: their occupation only confirmed what they already knew, namely that they had lost their individuality as subjects.

VII

> 'Anti-Semitic behaviour is generated in situations where blinded men robbed of their subjectivity are set loose as subjects' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 171).

They were set loose as subjects of instrumental reason and are thus

robbed of their subjectivity as a social individual to whom reason has meaning and significance. While reason subsists in and through the critique of social relations, the *Volksgenosse* has only faith in the terror of instrumental rationality. The collection of gold-teeth from those murdered, the collection of hair from those to be killed, and the overseeing of the slave-labour of those allowed to walk on their knees for no more than another day, only requires good organisation. Besides, there might be fun. 'One can beat and torture Jews without fear' (Sartre: 47).

Everything is thus changed into pure nature. The abstract was not only naturalised in the form of the 'Jew', it was also 'abstractified'. Auschwitz was a factory 'to destroy the personification of the abstract. Its organization was that of a fiendish industrial process, the aim of which was to "liberate" the concrete from the abstract. The first step was to dehumanize, that is, to strip away the "mask" of humanity, of qualitative specificity, and reveal the Jews for what "they really are" - shadows, ciphers, numbered abstraction'. Then followed the process to 'eradicate that abstractness, to transform it into smoke, trying in the process to wrest away the last remnants of the concrete material "use-values": clothes, gold, hair, soap' (Postone: 313-14).

The concrete (industry) and the abstract (money) belong not only together as each other's presuppositions (cf. Marx). Also, the concrete is abstract as the category of abstract labour indicates, and conversely, the abstract is concrete as social relations exist as relations of exploitaiton (cf. ibid.). To separate the two, that is the concrete and the abstract, amounts to a politics of terror. Nazism's attempt to liberate the concrete from the abstract emphasised the internal relationship between the constitution and synthesis of the negative dialectics of the Enlightenment. The treatment of humanity as a resource and the demand that humanity is a purpose, both of these ideas, belong to the tradition of the Enlightenment. The treatment of humanity as a resource has, at times, been overshadowed by the social democratic dream of equality. This project could not succeed: the attempt to humanise the inhuman finds itself confronted by the paradox that the effort of 'humanising' presupposes inhuman conditions. Humanising of inhuman conditions amounts merely to tinkering. Thus, the limits of reason within the tradition of the Enlightenment whose project of 'civilisation' presupposes the continuous guarantee of private property.

Nazism signalled not so much the end of reason but the application of reason to its own presuppositions, that is the primitive accumulation of capital. Nazism's 'anti-capitalist capitalism' showed that the Enlightenment's project of the self-determining individual that foreshadowed better things in the name of reason, had transformed into madness. This transformation does not represent a 'pathological' aberration of the Enlightenment's forward march. Rather, this 'madness' constitutes the violence of its beginning. Just as the primitive accumulation of capital, Auschwitz has been written into the annals of human history. The difference between primitive accumulation and Auschwitz should not be overlooked. Primitive accumulation has been written into the annals of human history with blood and tears.

Auschwitz has been written into the annals of history with industrialised slaughter. While primitive accumulation launched the negative dialectic of reason and with it humanity's hope to leave behind self-imposed immaturity, Auschwitz destroyed the hope in the Enlightenment's civilising project. 'The dialectic of Enlightenment is transformed objectively into delusion' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 204).

Postscript

Attempts at 'normalising' Auschwitz have also to normalise the delusion that the Enlightenment presents. Is that possible? The dream of a human capitalism persists and has become even stronger since the fall of the Berlin wall. The end of history has been announced and with it the notion that everything is possible within the limits of what is called distributive justice. The dream of a human capitalism has already shown itself to be a nightmare. And what should one call the idea of a distributive justice without history? There is only one name: Deceitful publicity.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Olga Taxidou and Adrian Wilding for their very helpful comments. The usual disclaimers apply.

2. On this see Adorno (1986).

3. Quoted in Wistrich (1992: 96).

4. On this and also on the reaction of the student left in 1968 to the Six Day War see: Dinar (1987); Markovits (1984); Initiative Sozialistisches Forum (1990, ch. 3); see also Wistrich (1979).

5. See the so-called Historians' Dispute of the 1980s where conservative historian's attempted to restore German national identity by interpreting the Nazi-regime as an understandable reaction to Communism. Habermas, who triggered the debate by rejecting the conservative interpretation, argued instead in favour of a 'constitutional patriotism'. Both camps, despite their obvious differences, seemed, nevertheless, to agree that a nation state requires a patriotic public: one emphasising history as a resource for identity, the other constitutional value-orientations. The documents of this dispute are available in English in *Forever in the Shadow of Hitler?* (1993).

6. The notion of anti-semitism as merely an historical phenomenon of capitalism's past is conceived in analogy to Nolte's attempt to put good distance between post-war capitalism and pre-war capitalism. In his view, fascism was no more than an era in the development of capitalism. Once it has gone through this era, the epoch of fascism is of merely historical interest (Nolte, 1965). Nolte's emphasis on 'discontinuity' served an important role: it legitimised post-war capitalism in general, and the Federal Republic of Germany in particular.

7. The above paraphrases an insight borrowed from Horkheimer and Adorno (1989: 207-8).

8. Quoted in Rose (1990: 304). Rose's book supplies a common conservative

critique of revolutionary thinking. For a thorough assessment of the relationship between the revolutionary Left and anti-Semitism, see Clausen (1987). For a critique of left-wing anti-Semitism in (West-) Germany and beyond post-1945: Initiative Sozialistisches Forum (1990); Poliakov (1992); and Clausen's (1992) preface to Poliakov's book.

9. This is the basis of their claim that 'enlightenment which is in possession of itself and coming to power can break the bounds of enlightenment' (page 208). Their critique of the contradictory constitution of the enlightenment has often been misunderstood, see, for example, Offe (1996, ch. 2), to mean that their critique of instrumental reason is identical with the denuciation of reason as such. Offe's 'misunderstanding' is 'systematic' in that his theoretical project is not concerned with the 'rescue' of reason's historical role but, rather, the endorsement of instrumental reason as a civilising force.

10. Of course racism can go as far as murder, arson and destruction of communities. However, compared with racism, the hatred of Jews is different in that the Jews are seen to have come from no-where.

11. The desecration of cemeteries should not be seen as isolated events committed by a minority. Their 'action' subsists in a context which invented Jews as the Other. Lyortad makes this point well when he argues that 'Jews represent *something that Europe does not want to or cannot know anything about*. Even when they are dead, it abolishes their memory and refuses them burial in its land. ... When the deed is done in full daylight, Europe is seized for an instant by the horror and the terror of *confronting its own desire* (Lyotard: 159). An assessment of Lyortard's post-modernist conception of 'difference', important though that might be, can not be attempted here.

12. On this see, amongst others, Rabinbach and Zipes (1986), Fetscher (1990), Enderwitz (1991).

13. Quoted in Agnoli (1992).

14. On the connection between 'Fordism' and concentration camps see Gambino's insightful analysis of the origins of so-called Fordism. He shows that Fordism's totalitarian production system amounted to a factory of fear whose summit is nothing less than a slave-labour camp: 'the assembly line is, together with totalitarian state systems and racist nationalism, one of the originating structures which broadly explain the concentration-camp crimes perpetrated on an industrial scale'. Of course, the history of so-called Fordism is often seen as a phase where capitalism took on reforming itself in a social-democratic manner. However, as Gambino emphasises, 'Fascism and Nazism were not in their origins the losing versions of Fordism, but were forced to become such thanks to the social and working-class struggles of the 1930s in the United States' (Gambino, 1996, p. 48). These struggles led to the constitution of a more 'social-democratic' version of 'Fordism' which, today, is seen as something that merely followed the functional needs of, and objective logic inherent in, 'capital' (on this see, amongst others, Hirsch/Roth, 1986).

15. The purpose of this section is to condense the previous argument. Though it repeats what has already been said, the aim is to take stock before moving on to an assessment of Nazism's 'anti-capitalist capitalism'.

16. On this see Fetscher (1990) and Enderwitz (1991).

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Revolutionary Theory in 1579*

Richard Gunn

Stephanus Junius Brutus, the Celt
VINDICIAE, CONTRA TYRANNOS: or, concerning the legitimate power of a prince over the people, and of the people over a prince
Edited and translated by George Garnett
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Junius Brutus
A DEFENCE OF LIBERTY AGAINST TYRANTS or, Of the lawful power of the Prince over the People and of the People over the Prince: VINDICIAE CONTRA TYRANNOS
Reprinted from the 1689 translation: Limited Edition
Still Waters Revival Books 1989
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Some explanation is necessary before more substantive questions can be addressed. The two books here under review are two differing translations of one and the same Latin text. The text was first published in 1579 and both its author ('Junius Brutus') and its place of publication ('Edinburgh') are fictitious. Its title might best be translated as 'A Claim against Tyrants' but its nuances are difficult to pin down and so the Latin title – which should, indeed, have a comma – is most frequently retained. As the work's subtitles imply, *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos* is a treatise on the nature and origins and limits of political authority.

The two editions before us, each offering its respective English translation, could hardly differ from one another more. Garnett's is the recently published, and perhaps definitive, scholarly edition: it comes complete with an analytical introduction, a glossary which unpacks terms in Roman and feudal law and an apparatus of Biblical and other footnotes. These notes are indispensable for anyone intending to approach the *Vindiciae* in a serious way. By contrast, the Still Waters Revival Books edition has the interest of being a (modernised) republication of the seventeenth-century translation of 1648 and 1689.

Additionally, it is of interest because Still Waters Revival Books is a publishing house which speaks for North America's creationist, neo-fundamentalist Christian right wing. In an editorial Introduction to this 1989 edition of the *Vindiciae*, and in four Appendices, we can eavesdrop on virulent anti-gay, anti-abortion and anti-welfare state polemics; we can read how 'humanistic relativism' must give way to theocracy, to a 'new reformation in which every human institution is brought under the Lordship of Jesus Christ'; and we can learn how even the US state, Congress and courts are coming to 'share in the Marxist belief in total state jurisdiction'. The humanist state, we gather, is the new tyrant. In the same way as the author of the *Vindiciae* believed that junior magistrates should oppose the actions of a tyrannical supreme magistrate, 'the civil leaders in our cities, countries and states must resist the ungodliness at the federal level'.

What are we to make of all of this? What kind of book is *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos*? Is it a book that is best left to the present day's fundamentalists and fanatics or is it a work from which critical consciousness can still learn?

*****

Such a question can be approached only by taking note of the work's context: the context concerned is that of the European Reformation, and, despite its anonymity, the *Vindiciae* is generally regarded as having a Huguenot, or French Calvinist, provenance. (The editors of Still Waters Revival Books are to this extent right in their identification of the *Vindiciae* as a protestant, and indeed a Calvinist, text.) Still more precisely, we can learn something from the context of the *Vindiciae* by attending to the circumstance that it gives 'Edinburgh' as its fictive place of publication: Edinburgh in Reformation years was amongst other things the base of the historian and political theorist George Buchanan, and in 1579 (the *Vindiciae*'s own year of publication) Buchanan published his *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*, a work which became famous - or notorious - owing to its defence of tyrannicide (ch LXXXVI). The *Vindiciae* itself supplies a defence of tyrannicide (pp 164-71: my page references are to the Garnett edition) and it may be that 'Junius Brutus' named 'Edinburgh' in order to affiliate himself to Buchanan's broadly similar views. (Buchanan's views were likely to have been known quite widely even before the publication of the *De Jure* itself.) Whether or not this was indeed the reason for the choice of 'Edinburgh', the *Vindiciae* (like the *De Jure*) gained an enormous and long-lasting reputation as a text which upheld the conviction that it may be lawful to oppose a tyrannical monarch by armed force. The *Vindiciae* acquired something of the reputation of an underground, revolutionary classic: regardless of questions of ones religious persuasion, it seemed to hint that the spectre which was haunting Europe in the decades of the Reformation was none other than the spectre of the armed people.

In fact, the *Vindiciae*'s endorsement of tyrannicide is a good deal more cautious and qualified than its alarmist and sensationalist

reputation might suggest. Taken as a whole, *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos* is a "constitutionalist" rather than a "populist" piece of writing (as its more sensitive readers, for example Althusius in his *Politica* of 1603, were able to appreciate) and it is this constitutionalism that governs 'Junius Brutus's' conviction that, in cases where the question of tyrannicide arises, 'the sword is not conceded to individuals [*singuli*]' (p 169), i.e. it is not conceded to individuals qua individuals: instead, it is the right and indeed the duty of junior magistrates – 'nobles' (pp 165-6, 168), for instance, acting by analogy with the 'ephors' (p 166) of Ancient Sparta – to lead and organise the armed force by which the tyrannical supreme magistrate is opposed. In place of the armed people itself Junius Brutus favours the armed people constitutionally led.

This said, there comes a place in his discussion of tyrannicide where the author of the *Vindiciae* appears to throw caution to the winds and to enquire: 'what now prevents the same God, who has loosed tyrants against us at the present time, from also sending extraordinary avengers against tyrants?' (p 171). In Biblical times, were there not such extraordinary avengers and do they not appear as exceptions to the view according to which it is only constitutionally-led tyrannicide, and not individualistic and anarchistic tyrannicide, that counts as justified?

The *Vindiciae*'s uncompromising answer to this question is that there were indeed such avengers and they are not exceptions: 'since we know that they were called extraordinarily, and that, as it were, God manifestly girded them with His sword, not only do we not consider them private individuals, but we deem them to be more powerful than any ordinary magistrate' (p 62). Junius Brutus cautions sobriety and circumspection lest, in supporting an extraordinary and as it were "charismatic" leader, we merely promote the interests of a new tyrant (pp 62, 171-2), but for all that his conclusion in this passage of his argument is one designed to send shivers up the spine of the entire European ruling class: 'I do not say that the very same God who has visited Pharaohs and Ahabs upon us in this our age, may not also raise up a few extraordinary liberators from time to time' (p 62-3). That the frightening quality of this conclusion was appreciated by rulers is attested by the widespread banning of the *Vindiciae* as an inflammatory and insurrectionary work. Once again it is important to bear in mind the *Vindiciae*'s context: when the individual avengers are described as being 'called extraordinarily' this is no mere figure of speech. On the contrary, it is Calvinism's conception of a calling effected through God's irresistible grace that the author of the *Vindiciae* is invoking and, inasmuch as Calvinism in its revolutionary phases has always carried alongside itself (like its shadow) antinomianism, or in other words the morally subversive figure of the "justified sinner", it may not be going too far to add that the vengeance exacted by the God-inspired 'extraordinary avenger' can, and perhaps must, be a vengeance that stands beyond good and evil: a vengeance that in its own eyes counts as answerable to nothing beyond itself. Hence, perhaps, the *Vindiciae*'s council of sobriety and circumspection (p 62): Junius Brutus was in awe of the forces which his text threatened to unleash.

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These reflections on the concept of a calling bring us face to face, of course, with the more general issue of the religious basis of the *Vindiciae*'s argument. The editors of Still Waters Revival Books are not entirely accurate when they describe the work as 'eminently biblical': in fact, its argument appeals to the authority not merely of the Bible but of the Natural Law tradition (as refracted through the complexities of feudal law). This emerges very clearly in the Garnett edition, as a consequence of Garnett's detailed scholarship as recorded in his apparatus of notes. For example, in the course of its argument against the view that monarchs hold absolute authority, the *Vindiciae* is fond of describing kings as the mere 'vassals' of God (e.g. p 20). As Garnett points out, this legal analogy becomes somewhat clouded when kings are also characterised as possessing their authority 'by a sort of precarious grant' (p 75): in Roman law *precarium* is defined as 'a revocable grant' (Garnett) whereas, in feudal law, vassals have rights as against their lords. This sort of refinement - and internal tension - in the text becomes invisible if the work is read as Biblical through and through. However, this said, it is Biblical references which predominate and our task must be to try to understand what part in the *Vindiciae*'s overall argument they play. What follows is sketched out, I emphasise, in the most provisional and hesitant way.

An approach to the question of the role of religion in the *Vindiciae* might take, as its starting point, the work of George Buchanan. As I have already indicated there may be a concealed reference to Buchanan in the fictive identification of 'Edinburgh' as the *Vindiciae*'s place of publication. Taking the hint given in this identification, let us construe the *Vindiciae* as an elaboration upon, or deepening of, Buchanan's line of thought.

In the first line of the chapter in the *De Jure* already cited, Buchanan states that 'There is a mutual contract between king and people'. His idea is that kings, when they acquire their authority, enter into promises to which they may later be held. In effect his proposal is that coronation oaths be taken seriously. He solemnises this proposal by claiming that the authority of the very first king of Scotland, the mythical King Fergus son of Ferchard, derived from just such an oath or promise (Buchanan's *History of Scotland* Bk IV, para iii).

Authority, then, is for Buchanan promise-based. At this point, let us stand back a little and ask what the notion of *promising* involves. I suggest that what is *interesting* about promising is the following: promises bind people together, and create or establish obligations where none previously existed; their force is constitutive and, because constitutive, revolutionary. They are revolutionary owing to the circumstance that, so to say, they legitimise themselves: they mark out origins, in the logically strong sense, and their orientation is to the future rather than to the (by definition, wanting and deficient) past. If a revolution is 'an unconnected, new event breaking into the continuous sequence of historical time' - I quote from the twentieth-century political theorist, Hannah Arendt - then, as Arendt herself emphasises, a

notion of *revolutionary promising* would appear to hold together in a politically plausible and conceptually satisfying way. Certainly it is to just such a tradition of revolutionary promising that Buchanan belonged: indeed, he did much to found it. Although a leading figure in the Scottish Reformation, his cast of thought was profoundly secular and he appears to have construed the Reformation as first and foremost a political and revolutionary (rather than a religious and doctrinal) event. It is from him that "social contract theory" has come to inherit much of its revolutionary sting.

However, plausible and challenging though the notion of revolutionary promising may be, it remains a troublingly open question whether or not the notion of *promising*, itself, can support the normative weight which here rests upon it. Can promising really *originate* obligations? Can it actively *constitute* obligations? Can it generate obligations which are sufficiently binding without – as it were, *sotto voce* – attempting to seek grounding and support in norms and values that *exist already* before any specific act of promising is made? Traditionally "social contract" theories, including "contracts of government" such as Buchanan's contract between king and people, have sought to ground themselves in doctrines of an already-obtaining Natural Law and, of course, God's word as revealed in the Bible can be deployed to the same effect. But the difficulty which such appeals to normative orders which subsist prior to the act of promising is that, as it were, they purchase legitimacy for the promise at the expense of no longer focussing on *the making* of the promise as an action of a constitutive or "revolutionary" (that is, a "self-legitimising") kind. They dissolve the force of the link between promising and, in the political meaning of the term, *founding*. To state the point in a Buchananist fashion: a politically potent coronation oath could never have been sworn for the first time.

From here, I suggest, we can make a useful step towards an elucidation of the *Vindiciae*. 'Junius Brutus' is most certainly writing in the tradition of revolutionary promising, and it may be that he was seeking (whether consciously or unconsciously) to make good deficiencies in Buchanan's statement of the same case. In particular, it may be that he was seeking to reinforce and to intensify the *act of promising* in a way which would strengthen such an act's normative weight-bearing capacities; concomitantly, to the extent that an approach along lines such as these succeeded there would be the lesser need for promise-based political theory to turn to codes of allegedly already-existing ethics for help. My suggestion, in other words, is that the author of the *Vindiciae* proposes to discover fresh resources and capacities within the notion of promising, itself. Thereby, he proposes to discover (or to re-discover) promising's revolutionary force.

It is at this point that the *Vindiciae* itself becomes deeply controversial and my argument concerning it becomes both highly tentative and all too easy to miss. For, in a word, *it is from within the Bible* that Junius Brutus claims to find the resources which revolutionary promising needs. But how and where does he find this? In one sense, the appeal he makes to the Bible is the traditional one: he

thinks of God's word as an already-existing basis upon which promises can be made. (It is in this, traditional, sense that the Still Waters Revivalists feel able to characterise *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos* as 'eminently biblical'.) In just the same sense, as above indicated, Junius Brutus is happy enough to invoke feudal law and Roman and Natural Law (see for example p 127) as a valuable ground for promising: as it were, any port in a storm. But to the extent that these traditional appeals are relied upon there can be nothing specifically revolutionary in Junius Brutus's text, and the act of promising shifts out of focus. In place of a deepening and intensification of Buchanan, the *Vindiciae* would amount to nothing more than a pious reproach occasioned by the latter's secularist frame of mind. My suggestion at this juncture of our interpretive argument is that these traditional and external appeals (to the Bible and to Natural Law) are not the whole of the *Vindiciae*'s story; that *what Junius Brutus discovers in the Bible* is not merely a source of authority to which appeal might be made but a conception of promising as self-reflective and, because self-reflective, binding. It is through the depth of its (potentially agonising) self-reflection that acts of promising can support revolutionary and constitutive normative weight. A sufficiently self-reflective promise really can originate obligations: or, so I suggest, Junius Brutus thought.

This, it is to be noted, is by no means necessarily a religious thought: in and of itself it may be as secular as Buchanan's thought to the effect that there obtains a mutual contract between king and people. Junius Brutus *need not* be a religious writer. Whether or not *he is* a religious writer, however, he wrote in a deeply religious idiom and it is to his exploration of promising within the Biblical tradition that we must now turn.

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The crucial passage in the *Vindiciae*, the passage around which all the rest of its argument concerning political authority is organised, runs as follows:

> We read [in the Bible] that there was a twofold covenant at the inauguration of kings: the first between God, king, and people, to the effect that the people should be the people of God; the second between king and people, that while he [the king, that is] commanded well he would be obeyed well. (p 21)

The passage is, indeed, eminently Biblical. It summarises, and generalises and extrapolates from, 2 Kings ch 11, verse 17:

> And Jehoida [the high priest] made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also and the people.

Orienting ourselves in relation to these passages we may note, at the

outset, that where the second contract (or covenant) in each passage is concerned we are on familiar ground: the contract 'between king and people' is in effect Buchanan's contract of government (*De Jure* ch LXXXVI, opening). It is an entirely non-theological contract and, in Buchanan, it purports to establish and delimit kingly authority. With the first contract (or covenant) in each passage, however, we are led into fresh territory. Let us start by reassuring ourselves that the first contract in each passage is, more or less, one and the same contract: there are three parties to it, namely God, the king who is to be the ruler and the people who are to be ruled. The upshot of this first contract is that, somehow, and in whatsoever meaning of the term, the people become God's people; and it is *as* God's people that they enter into the second contract, viz., the contract of government that involves only the people and the king. This "as" is, I think, important. Junius Brutus goes out of his way to emphasise the order of the contracts, stating that the twofold oath which the people swear is 'first and most anciently to God'; it is only 'second, and immediately following, to the king' (p 54). This ordering ensures that the king's authority is limited to what is consonant with rule over God's people; it also, and perhaps still more importantly, guarantees the people's authority and normative competence *in the matter of promising* since it is not, now, just *any* people but *God's* people who exchange (in the contract of government) mutual promises with the king.

What are we to make of all of this? Does Junius Brutus's allegedly prior, theological promise really suffice to ground and reinforce Buchanan's secular one? Does 2 Kings xi 17 shed light, for us, upon the question of political constitution and foundation? More generally, is there not something dubious about invoking one promise to back up the authority of another? Does not an awful prospect open up of an infinite series of promises, each one of which presupposes another if it is to make normative sense?

In the 'Federal' (i.e. promise-based) theology that became influential in the decades subsequent to the publication of the *Vindiciae*, it was just such a daunting proliferation of promises that in fact emerged. However, for present purposes the detail of this proliferation need not concern us. What we can note is how, throughout the period concerned. the Biblical verse quoted earlier supplied a point of reference for a range of writers. In the *Vindiciae* itself allusion to 2 Kings xi 17 is frequent (pp 18, 21, 37, 130). The verse is cited in the *Politica* of Johannes Althusius. It plays a central role in the anonymous *Covenanters Catechisme*, published in London in 1644, and it supplies the text for the sermon preached by Robert Douglas at the (presbyterian) coronation of Charles II at Scone in 1651: this last-mentioned citation is especially significant since it firmly binds the passage to the Buchananite advice that, as it were, coronation oaths are to be taken seriously. (As though to dramatise the Buchananite provenance of the event, the 1651 coronation ended by a ceremonial recitation of 'the Royall Lyne of the Kings upward, to FERGUS the first': *The Form and Order of the Coronation of Charles the Second*, Aberdene, 1651.) Other instances where the passage from 2 Kings is

either cited, or referred to indirectly, would be easy to give. Our own focus will continue to be upon this passage; we shall refuse to allow ourselves to be distracted by the plethora of promises - covenants of Works and of Grace, most notably, and a shadowy third promise entered into by God and Christ before the beginning of history - which became foci of controversy in the years when the tide of Federal Theology ran high. It will be enough to try to understand something of the fascination of 2 Kings xi 17. What thought is ordered, however sketchily and provisionally, in this Biblical text?

First of all, we should admit or indeed emphasise that 2 Kings xi 17 really does attempt to ground the authority of one promise (the contract of government between king and people) upon that of another (the contract between king, people and God). Or rather, more precisely stated: it attempts to ground this authority on nothing *external to* or *prior than* the activity of promising itself. As it were, the whole "argument" of 2 Kings xi 17 is internal to promising. Is this sufficient to unleash the infinite series of promises - see earlier - each of which presupposes another? No, not necessarily: not if what initially seemed to be two promises (contract between king and people, and contract between God and king and people) are construed as one and the same promise - the same promise, as it were, regarded in two different ways. For then the first step in the infinite series would never be made. Moreover, in the absence of any external or extra-promissory appeal (to Natural Law, say) the revolutionary credentials of promising would remain intact.

Turning back, now, to the text of the *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos* we may ask: is there any sign that the line of thought just sketched was present in Junius Brutus's mind? *Yes there is* – we may answer. Read carefully, what the *Vindiciae* expounds is a scenario involving, not two discrete covenants or contracts, but a single 'twofold covenant [*duplex foedus*]' (pp 21, 37, 54). If it is indeed a single contract that is involved a reader may enquire, justifiably: what becomes of the emphasis that Junius Brutus placed on the order of the contracts ('first and most anciently...and immediately following...': p 54)? Does ordering not imply difference? No, we can reply, it need imply merely internal difference or self-difference. Just such a self-difference is present whenever reflection upon oneself is present: descriptions of self-reflection (or "reflexivity") characteristically involve self-reference, i.e., just such a "doubling" of reference as the *Vindiciae*'s 'twofold covenant' contains. Approached from this angle, the all-important ordering in the argument presented in the *Vindiciae* is the *ordering* inherent in a situation where deep and searching self-reflection precedes actions or commitments that are made once and for all. I suggest that there is nothing in the least far-fetched, historically, in the proposal that Junius Brutus, as a Calvinist and a Huguenot, ascribed to self-reflection and considered judgement so exalted and personally demanding a role. In this connection we may recall his insistence that 'we should be...sober and circumspect' (p 62) in our estimation of charismatic leaders and potentially false prophets. Just this sobriety and that circumspection are, I propose, the crucial resources upon which the *Vindiciae*'s contract of

government is required to draw.

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Can we carry this line of argument a step further, and show how the notion of self-reflection is in some way linked with the *specific form* of the double contract or twofold covenant expounded in the *Vindiciae* and in 2 Kings xi 17? Is it not merely the "doubling" of the contract but something in *the character of the contracts or promises themselves* that makes self-reflection find, in them, especially fertile ground?

A fundamentalist from the school of Still Waters Revival Books will, naturally, have no difficulty in responding to this question positively: the crucial feature of the first stage in the 'twofold covenant' is that it involves God's word. This in itself is sufficient to anchor the whole process of promising to an authority which will withstand the most searching and reflective or self-reflective of looks. However, in this case as in so many others, the fundamentalist's invocation of God's authority short-circuits, instead of engaging with, the interpretive argument. Not only does it dilute the revolutionary force of promising by resting the contract of government on what I have called an external or extra-promissory appeal (in this case, an appeal to God): such a consideration, to be sure, is likely to leave a Still Waters Revivalist unmoved. But also it begs the question of why promising (or contracting, or covenanting) enters into Junius Brutus's text at all. If the extent and nature of our political obligation to rulers is divinely based, what is *added to* or *subtracted from* the obligations that we may enter into by contracting? If God already requires us to obey just kings and permits (and perhaps even requires) us to disobey unjust tyrants, how can a contract of government make a difference to the normative position that we are in? If it *does make a difference* is not Julius Brutus's appeal (partly at any rate, but crucially) to the act of promising rather than to the revealed word of God? Do not the unchangeability of God's will and the difference made by promising stand in a sort of zero-sum relationship? Here, it may be suggested, lies a principle of instability inscribed at the core of Federal or covenanting or promise-based theologies: *in the last instance*, if indeed promises do make a difference and found or originate new obligations, the choice must be between revolutionary promising and the assumptions of theology itself.

What, then, if anything, may be learned from the specific character of the twofold contract set forth in the *Vindiciae* and in Kings? Are these twofold contracts irremediably dependent on an external authority, such as God? In this connection what I have to offer is the merest hint or wisp of an admittedly speculative interpretive argument. It turns simply on the observation that there are merely two parties to the contract of government (namely, people and king) whereas in the contract which precedes it – the contract itself regarded proleptically, that is to say – there are not two parties but three.

According to my elucidation of the *Vindiciae* so far, the "first" contract mentioned by Julius Brutus and by the author of Kings is, in effect, conceptual space cleared for the sober self-reflection in which the

"second" contract (viz., the contract of government) culminates. And I suggest that we observe, now, that within this conceptual space - or upon this conceptual stage - there are three actors: the people, the king, and God. God's presence on the conceptual stage is flitting and *shadowy*: as it were, he retires from the stage once the curtain is raised and, in the full public glare of coronation, the two-party contract of government is sworn. In effect, God's role is that of a facilitator. But why should he be necessary?

My suggestion is that he is necessary not *qua* God but *qua* a third actor. What is necessary is not God's presence specifically but the presence of a third actor on the conceptual stage. Such a "third" makes possible a mediation of the people's and the king's opposed interests since it is by empathetically adopting the "third's" viewpoint that each of the interested parties can gain self-detachment (and self-reflection), thereby achieving the clarity of mind which allows a comprehension of the terms of the contract of government taken as a whole. A "third" who facilitates this comprehension must, perforce, efface him or herself once the public oath of reciprocal allegiance is taken. By definition, he or she plays what I have called a shadowy role. Let us be clear that this is not (or not necessarily) a *Godly* role: all that is required is a viewpoint which is that of neither contracting party. Just as God may mediate the king/people contract, so, and by the same token, the people might mediate a God/king contract and the king might mediate a people/God contract: in principle, the roles are interchangeable and each may act the part of the "third". However, it may be fitting that it is God who plays this part in Julius Brutus's argument inasmuch as a Calvinist God emerges from and retreats into the very depths of the soul-searching and self-scrutinising self.

Is there any evidence that the line of thought just sketched was present in Junius Brutus's mind? There is only indirect evidence, but it is evidence of a suggestive kind. It concerns not so much individual passages in the *Vindiciae* as the way in which Junius Brutus has chosen to order his exposition. In the course of explaining his notion of the first, proleptic, three-way contract the author of the *Vindiciae* distinguishes two (so to phrase it) sub-contracts: there is a sub-contract between God and kings (pp 21ff) and there is a sub-contract between God and people (pp 36ff). Together, these sub-contracts compose what one may (loosely) refer to as the first contract. Commentators on the *Vindiciae* tend to have difficulty with this subdivision, feeling – not unreasonably – that such a subdivision obtrudes a scheme of three contracts (between God and king, between God and people, and finally between king and people) into the two-contract scheme with which, in company with 2 Kings xi 17, the *Vindiciae* set out. However, in the light of the above speculations on the role of a "third's" viewpoint, the difficulties begin to unravel. What could be more natural than that, before the curtain rises on the contract of government, the king should, as it were, *contract into* God's viewpoint so as to gain a balanced and reflective comprehension of the oath he is about to swear? And by the same token what could be more natural than that, before the curtain rises, the people should *contract into* God's viewpoint so as to gain a balanced comprehension of

their oath of fealty? Each empathetically sees the reciprocal promise through the eyes of a "third" as a precondition of entering into the contract of government in a self-reflective and disinterested way. The debate about whether there are "two" contracts in the *Vindiciae* or "three" is a non-starter since what Junius Brutus presents is a fluid and dynamic process culminating in an agreement between a free people and a just king.

I should like to close this section of my argument by suggesting that one of the chief glories of the *Vindiciae* is its introduction of the shadowy "third" into the framework of a social contract theory that might otherwise count merely as legalistic and dry. This legalism is the most common objection raised against social contract theories: with the "third", however, the framework of discussion shifts away from one which is (merely) legal to one which is social and interactive and recognitive; it places questions of the social basis for normative claims, rather than the minutiae of these claims' implications, at the centre of the conceptual frame. What the "third" adds is a deepening of the abstract idea of self-reflection into a self-reflection that is social and interactive. It adds this because it is the mutually recognitive circulation (or exchange), through empathy, of the "third's" viewpoint that introduces the element of disinterest and detachment required if novel (or "revolutionary") claims are to be sustained. Via the "third", a deepening of self-reflection into social self-reflection generates detachment whilst, in complementary fashion, a self-reflection which is detached must needs be a self-reflection that is social. The crucial point in all of this is that the recognitive chemistry just described makes sense only if three and not merely two agents or recognitive viewpoints are involved.

In the light of this some general comments on the relation of the *Vindiciae* to social contract theory are in order. Too often, the phase of social contract theory represented in *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos* - the phase when 2 Kings xi 17 was the seminal text, when the contract was 'twofold [*duplex*]' and when a shadowy third party served as mediator - tends to be forgotten, or at least relegated to footnotes in the history of political thought. Too often, social contract theory tends to be assimilated to "possessive individualism" and to the unmediated conflict of interests described so vividly (some three-quarters of a century after the *Vindiciae*) by Hobbes. As it were, Hobbes's thought-experiment was that of dispensing with the "third" and then asking whether a satisfactory formulation of the contract could be found. Hobbes's experiment succeeded in this at least: it served to divert social contract theory into territory (that of capitalist exchange and labour-market relations) where any allusion to a "third" could seem irrelevant at best and mystificatory at worst. When, eventually, the theme of the "third" was resumed it was outside of the social contract tradition, the pivotal text being Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* of 1759. George Davie's now classic essay on 'The Mirror Theory' (in his A Passion for Ideas) explores the role of the "third" in Smith's argument. For my own part, I confine myself to adding that it may be in the *Vindiciae*, and more generally in the current of thought surrounding the

political theory of Buchanan, that the early sections of the long saga of the "third" are to be found.

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One way of drawing together the threads of the present discussion is to ask whether the fundamentalists of today's neo-Right are the *Vindiciae*'s legitimate intellectual heirs. Is it fitting that *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos* should appear - with or without a comma, but with an enthusiastic recommendation - on the publishing list of Still Waters Revival Books?

In an important, if superficial, sense the answer to this question must be 'yes'. The intellectual roots of contemporary fundamentalism lie in the Calvinism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a circumstance that goes some way towards explaining the theocracy (or, as they would have it, the 'theonomy') that the fundamentalists favour when they urge that 'every human institution' should be brought under the Biblically-revealed 'Lordship' of God. The *Vindiciae*, for its part, is a product of the same Calvinist soil and it would be pointless, for example, to scrutinise its pages for signs that its author was a modern-day liberal and vindicator of toleration *avant la lettre*.

However, this said, the 'yes' which we have conceded to the fundamentalists becomes much more shaky and hesitant once it is noted that values which present-day fundamentalism stands for are by no means confined to values which, in the *Vindiciae*, are embraced. Where the present-day fundamentalists strike a distinctive note is in their fusion of fundamentalism with anti-communism and with opposition to 'the oppressive taxation of the welfare state'. (Let there be no mistake about this: all taxation for such purposes counts as by definition 'oppressive', and we are enjoined totally to 'dismantle' the welfare state in God's name.) This distinctive note, we may now point out, is one which corresponds to nothing in the *Vindiciae.* It was, in fact, a commonplace of political theorists of Junius Brutus's and Althusius's epoch that the state just is a welfare state: that the entire rationale of the state was that it nurtured and looked after the *res publica* (or common welfare, or common weal). A minimalist "night-watchman" state designed solely to service the needs of a free market would not have been recognized by Junius Brutus or Althusius *as* a state. Admittedly, amongst the common "goods" administered by, say, an Althusian state, pride of place would be given to normative "goods" - the just administration of law, for instance - rather than to the economic "goods" which are distributed under the category of welfare in the contemporary sense. But they need not and did not exclude the latter, and the soil which Althusius's political theory favours is (transposing the argument into twentieth-century terms) a state of a welfarist rather than a minimalist, or New Rightist, kind. Even the 'total state jurisdiction' which the Still Waters Revivalists impute to communism need not have unduly alarmed, say, Althusius since - painting the picture in very broad strokes here, admittedly - it was an assumption shared by writers of his period that state jurisdiction was justified wherever it promoted the common weal.

Given this, a question arises concerning how contemporary fundamentalism views the socio-political approaches that writers such as Junius Brutus and Althusius share. In the Still Waters Revival Books edition of the *Vindiciae* the difference is acknowledged: 'this book, written as it was some four hundred years ago, naturally does not speak directly to issues of our day' - for example, it does not address the question of the 'ungodliness of our federal government'. No, indeed: and we may sympathise with the Revivalists in acknowledging that to ask for *literal* applicability of a four-hundred years old text would be to ask too much. (To this rule the Bible, whose literal truth is assured, would seem to be an exception.) What is asked for in the case of the *Vindiciae* is applicability in principle: 'the principles set forth in this work are certainly applicable to our situation'. So indeed they are. The preceding paragraph is intended to establish that those who endorse precisely *the principles* of the *Vindiciae* and Althusius's *Politica* should announce themselves as welfarists. The Still Waters Revivalists fail to notice this since, precisely because they are fundamentalists, they approach texts in a characteristically blinkered way.

I should like to carry this last-mentioned stop just one step further. A fundamentalist reads any text in the light of a single, preordained truth: the boundaries of this truth coincide with the boundaries of the Bible and any text other than the Bible is either 'eminently biblical' (the status claimed for the *Vindiciae*) or it is non-biblical or anti-biblical as the case may be. As it were, all meaning in a text is illuminated from a single side. Ambiguities and ambivalences, although they may be difficult to unravel, are not in the last instance *real* because the single light-source admits only of a single sense. Differing vocabularies - I hesitate to say "discourses" - in the last instance require to be translated into the Biblical vocabulary. Inner contradictions or tensions are never grasped as life-giving principles within a text but, on the contrary, are impatiently dismissed out of hand. Fundamentalist readings are flat, unchallenging, monological, astigmatic, uninteresting and imbecilic. In place of a world of meanings they offer the hermeneutic equivalent of a car alarm, viz., a seemingly endless and singled-toned whine.

In this review I have sought to rescue the *Vindiciae* from the fundamentalists. In the first place, I have sought to establish that the author of the *Vindiciae* was not, himself, a whole-hearted fundamentalist: his main and most challenging recourse is not to Biblical authority (or to Natural Law) *but to promising*. His concern is to deepen self-reflection into self-reflection where it is both exposed to and constituted by viewpoints (in the plural) other than its own. My claim is that it is in the humane voice of socially achieved thoughtfulness, and neither in the dogmatic voice of fundamentalism nor in the legalistic voice of traditional social contract theory, that *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos* reaches us today.

In the second place, as it were practising what I preach, I have sought to dwell on tensions within the *Vindiciae* itself. These have included tensions between what I loosely termed "populist" and "constitutionalist" approaches to tyrannicide, tensions between Biblical

and law-based vocabularies and tensions between (on the one hand) appeals to external sources of authority such as Law and the Bible and (on the other hand) appeals to authority which may be intrinsic to promising itself. This last-mentioned tension enabled us to situate the *Vindiciae* within a tradition that I termed "revolutionary promising", a tradition wherein critical consciousness may develop and learn. In this connection we were able to observe that social contract theory is not quite the dry and merely legal stick which critical thinking has tended to examine, cursorily, and then throw aside.

In sum, it is by shining lights from differing viewpoints that I have sought to make the overall architecture of the *Vindiciae* emerge. The differing viewpoints are the positions which stand in tension within the *Vindiciae.* A fundamentalist reading is reductionist in regard to these viewpoints (because ultimately it acknowledges only One viewpoint) whereas critical consciousness finds points of purchase within the emergent three-dimensionality of the awoken text.

* **Editorial Note:** The book here under review, *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos,* was published in 1579 and earned a widespread and long-lasting reputation as Europe's most famous (or infamous) revolutionary text. But does this text have something to say to us today? More specifically, are fresh perspectives opened by the tradition of "revolutionary promising" in which the *Vindiciae* stands? The publication of two, contrasting, editions of the *Vindiciae* offers an opportunity to explore such questions. *Common Sense*, as a critical and generalist journal, welcomes the opportunity inasmuch as the fresh light cast by discussion of a relatively unfamiliar text may allow us to approach the issue of what counts as revolutionary theorising in a novel and a challenging way.

Book Reviews

Keith Jenkins
On 'What is History?' - From Carr and Elton to Rorty and White
Routledge, London, 1995. pp.200
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Reviewed by Derek Kerr

On 'What is History?' is an interesting and thought provoking introduction to contemporary debates on the nature of history. For Keith Jenkins, we live in 'new times', postmodern times, therefore the old forms of historiography, as undertaken by the likes of Edward Carr and Geoffrey Elton, have to be placed in the dustbin of history and replaced by the postmodern-type approaches of theorists such as Richard Rorty and Hayden White. As Jenkins puts it, 'with the end of modernity, so its ways of conceptualising history have also ended, and that within our postmodern times, modernist renditions are now naive: their historical moment has passed' (p10). The book therefore unfolds this argument, and Jenkins notion of what constitutes a more appropriate approach to history, in terms of the movement expressed in the book's sub-title. In his introduction and first chapter, Jenkins places Carr, Elton, Rorty and White within current discussions concerning the discourse of history. This contextualisation is then followed by four chapters; the first two subject Carr and Elton to radical critique while the other two focus on aspects of the works of Rorty and White as postmodern-type thinkers who Jenkins feels offer a way forward for today's historiographical concerns. Surprisingly, the whole tenor of the book is that there is no objective history, no past patiently awaiting its turn to speak, yet the book also presupposes that something called modernism has been replaced by postmodernism, that the past now voices its possession of modernism. 'Today we live', declares Jenkins, 'within the general condition of postmodernity. We do not have a choice about this. For postmodernity is not an 'ideology' or a position we can choose to subscribe to or not; postmodernity is precisely our condition: it is our fate' (p6). According to Jenkins, then, on the one hand, all history is ideologically positioned, but on the other hand, we presently live outside ideology!

Jenkins takes as his point of departure the works of Carr and Elton because these have, ever since their publication some thirty years

ago, constituted the 'strongly recommended' reading for those wishing to develop their thinking about the question of what is history. But these modernist texts are no longer adequate for our postmodern times in which it is recognised that there are no, and never have been, any 'real' foundations of the kind alleged to underpin the experiment of the modern. We apparently now live amidst social formations which have no legitimising ontological or epistemological or ethical grounds for our beliefs or actions beyond the status of an ultimately self-referential (rhetorical) conversation. Consequently, argues Jenkins, it is here, between old certainties and rhetorical postist discourses, that the current debates over what constitutes history and how historical knowledge is effectively constructed, live (p7). According to Jenkins, both bourgeois and proletarian versions of modernity articulated as key elements in their respective ideologies, a shared view of history as a movement with a direction immanent within it - a history which was purposefully going somewhere - differing only in the selection of 'its' ultimate destination and the 'essentialist' dynamics which would get 'it' there. They both expressed their historical trajectories in versions of the past articulated in the upper case, as History. While Jenkins points to what is undoubtedly the case with some versions of Marxism, the criticism does not apply to all versions. Jenkins continues by pointing out that another way of reading the past was also developed within the bourgeois version. This version became dominant as the need for a future-oriented upper case past lost its urgency as more and more of the bourgeoisie 'made it'. This more servile version of history, 'proper' history in the lower case, is the disinterested and scholarly study of the past 'objectively and for its own sake'. But postmodernism has shattered both 'History' and 'history'. The postmodern perspective recognises 'that there never has been, and that there never will be, any such thing as a past which is expressive of some sort of essence, whilst the idea that the proper study of history is actually "own-sakism" is recognised as just the mystifying way in which a bourgeoisie conveniently articulates its own interests as if they belonged to the past itself....Consequently the whole "modernist" History/history ensemble now appears as a self-referential, problematic expression of "interests", an ideological-interpretative discourse without any "real" access to the past as such; unable to engage in any dialogue with "reality"' (p9).

Jenkins dwells on the important distinction between the 'past' and 'history', noting that historians never access the past *as such*. Consequently, the problems formulated along the traditional lines of, 'how can historians truly/accurately know the past?', or, 'if historians cannot access the "real past", then how can we have checks on historians' accounts that are "real" checks as opposed to being "just interpretations"?', are beside the point. The issue for historiography is what can be derived and constructed from the *historicised* record or archive which is not some kind of extra-discursive object, but an already interpreted textual trace. The status of historical knowledge is not based for its truth/accuracy on its correspondence with the past *per se* but on the various historicisations of it, so that historiography always 'stands in for' the past, the only medium it has to affect a 'historical'

presence. This point is recognised in the postmodern literature. Hayden White, for example, argues that the historical work is a narrative discourse, the content of which is as much imagined/invented as found. By this he means that while the historian can certainly find traces of past events in the historicised records and thus establish some of 'the facts' about them, no historian can ever find the context or the totality or the background against which the facts can become significant and meaningful. Such context which is constructed has to be ultimately imagined or invented; unlike the facts, the contexts can never be definitively found. Furthermore, although the historian presents history in story form, the past did not actually live stories, so that to see people in the past or the past 'as such' in story form, is to give to it an imaginary series of narrative structures and coherences it actually never had. In other words, to transform the events/facts of the chronicle into what they *become* in a story (ie a series of events/facts arranged in 'a hierarchy of significance' relative to a beginning, a middle and an end) is a form of fiction-making. This is not to say that the events/facts did not truly happen in exactly *the way they did*, but that in the story (and the finished narrative) they happen in exactly *the way they do*: historians deal with 'truth' alright, but that truth has about it 'the truth of fiction'. Whilst it is generally the case that specific 'facts' can be checked, the 'picture of the past' cannot be so checked, simply because the statements as put together by the historian to form such a picture do not have a picture of their own, prior to this assembly, for that assembly to be checked against. And since what is essential in the writing of historians is not to be found at the level of the individual statement but rather at the level of the picture of the past, then historiography is again as much invented/imagined as found. Having made the point that history is textual, Jenkins quickly adds that this does not define a way of 'doing' history. All it does is to draw attention to the 'textual' conditions under which all historical work is done and all historical knowledge is produced. The various methodological approaches (eg. Marxist, phenomenological, etc.) can continue, but with the proviso that none of them can continue to think that they gain direct access to, or 'ground' their textuality in, an extra-textual 'reality'.

The implications of this postmodern turn is that historians, whatever their ideological positions, acquire an understanding of the past which is always positioned, always fabricated, always ultimately self-referencing and is never true beyond peradventure. According to this 'position', therefore, history has no intrinsic meaning and there is no way of privileging one variant over another by neutral criteria. Furthermore, histories located at the centre, or on the margins, are seen to be there, not necessarily by virtue of their historiographical rigour but by their relationship to those that have the power to put them there. What Jenkins appears to be suggesting, then, is that ideology/power reveals itself through the history it both writes and imposes on History as the truth. Disputes over historiography, over what counts as the 'past', are always present-centred expressions of ideological and political struggle. Seen in this light, the 'what is history?' of Carr and of Elton 'is not only ideological, but ideological nonsense' (p22). But given the

ideological nature of historiography, the choice of Rorty and White as an answer to the 'what is history?' question appears limiting. As Jenkins notes, Rorty and White are susceptible to criticism from a Marxist standpoint. Nevertheless Jenkins notes that these writers constitute a good beginning in the move from Carr and Elton.

Rorty's focus on language allows him to privilege metaphor and to see metaphor as the political means for achieving liberal democracy. Change is to be achieved through the novel use of metaphor. But as Roy Bhaskar has pointed out, it may well take a lot more than a shift in language to begin to shift capitalist social formations along the lines of Rorty's aspirations. White too is against revolutions. For him all that is needed is a change in the *form* of historiography. The picture that emerges from a modernist historiography which sanitises and disciplines the past is not conducive to such change; what is required is an historical narrative which reveals the fact that disruption and chaos are our lot. For him, it is only through a feeling of repugnance for, and negative judgement on, the condition to be superseded that change will occur. But during the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, radical (ie Marxist) and liberal and conservative ideologies all variously disciplined the past into the forms suited to them; that these disciplinisations were basically aestheticisations of the past that snuffed-out the sublime. Postmodernism allows for histories of discontinuity and difference based on a rearticulation of the past as sublime. For White, insofar as any history renders the 'manifest confusion' of the past comprehensible to either reason or aesthetic sensibility, then such ideological closures deprive history of that openness and meaninglessness that can alone goad living human beings to make their lives different for themselves and their children. Marxism is anti-utopian insofar as it shares with its bourgeois counterpart the conviction that history is not a sublime spectacle but a comprehensible process of various parts, stages, epochs and even individual events which are transparent to a consciousness endowed with the means to make sense of it in one way or another. But White's views can be questioned. If disruption and chaos are revealed to be our lot, then this could lead to apathy, not the will to change. Furthermore, not all versions of Marxism aestheticise the past, nor fail to instil feelings of repugnance for our present lot.

White goes further, however, and argues that the historical narrative is a general ideological instrument of anti-utopian closure. It is therefore necessary in these postmodern days to imagine a 'deconstructive' history which would signal its resistance to bourgeois ideology by refusing to attempt a narrativist mode for the representation of its truth. This refusal to effect narrative closures would signal a recovery of the historical sublime that bourgeois historiography repressed in the process of disciplinisation and it would also act as a necessary precondition for the production of a historiography charged with avenging the people. But as Jenkins comments, unfortunately (or fortunately!) White has not gone on to explain how either his politics or his history of discontinuity would actually work in detail. What we do have is a general understanding of

what White thinks historiography *ought* to be, namely a series of discontinuous histories the content of which is as much imagined/invented as found, but which acknowledges the presence of the sublime as a 'useful fiction' on which to 'base' movements towards a more generous emancipation and empowerment than is currently in place in order to realise a radical, liberal utopia (p145).

We may not agree with Jenkins' ideological positioning, but this book deserves to be widely read. Jenkins captures the essence (if I dare to use such a concept) of the debates in a very readable style and raises a number of issues that need to be pondered by Marxists.

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