

**Interview with Rastko Močnik:**

## **There is no theory without the practice of confrontation**

Questions, coffee, chocolate cake: **Jelena Vesić, Vladimir Jerić Vlidi (RT)**

Answers: **Rastko Močnik (RM)**

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**RT:** In this issue of the journal, our aim was to focus on the notion of *dispossession*. At first glance, this term seems to be able to encompass in its various meanings both the bitter reality of loss and injustice of the deteriorating economic and political situation, and the sense of confusion, fear and uncertainty rising across society. All this is being amplified by media technologies in new ways and with a new intensity. Dispossession is a complex term, and we would like to try to break it down to particular fields of operation and use cases. You are among the rare people we know able to simultaneously analyze in depth three of the most prominent domains of the operation of the term - political economy, sociology, and psychoanalysis.

How do you understand the term of *accumulation by dispossession* as introduced by David Harvey? Would you agree that the term describes both one of the central mechanisms of the actual form of capitalism (Harvey: "...the inability to accumulate through expanded reproduction on a sustained basis has been paralleled by a rise in attempts to accumulate by dispossession")<sup>1</sup> and its current and structural problem (Harvey: "...a chronic and enduring problem of overaccumulation since the 1970s")? How exactly does it differ from what Marx examined under the notion of "primitive" or "original" accumulation, and why was the new term necessary?

**RM:** I understand *accumulation by dispossession* as a term that draws from the concept of *primitive accumulation of capital* as outlined by Marx,<sup>2</sup> but not

as a simple expansion or a mere elaboration of it. The so-called primitive accumulation is not primitive at all in the sense of being a certain phase of capitalism that appears only in the very beginning of the process and disappears later, but it is a part of the permanent, or the extended reproduction of the capitalist system. Of course, it is possible to reduce the concept of dispossession to one of primitive accumulation, if you first - somewhat - change the concept of primitive accumulation, and second, if this concept emerges on a high-enough level of abstraction. But, I think it is more interesting to look at why a new term, a new concept, was necessary, what is it that was new in capitalism so as to initiate the need for a new concept to be introduced. I see it like this: the classic primitive accumulation would be the expulsion of farmers from the former common land leading to the proletarianization of the farmer population. And with this being too much of a substantial operation, to say, we, paradoxically, cannot clearly see what actually happened there; that is, that their very mode of sociality had been changed. Before, they were the farmers on the land that was still in a kind of a common possession - not under ownership, which would be a juridical form, but in common *possession* - on the land owned by the community. Then they became proletarians; so, the model of sociality they lived in had been radically changed.

I would say that dispossession represents the privatization of the social *Gliederung*, in the sense of how the term was set it up by Marx in *Grundrisse*,<sup>3</sup> as the certain and particular articulation of the social system in an all-encompassing sense – as “the articulated, hierarchical, systematic combination of contemporary society”<sup>4</sup>:

“The structure [*Gliederung*] of distribution is completely determined by the structure of production. Distribution is itself a product of production, not only in its object, in that only the results of production can be distributed, but also in its form, in that the specific kind of participation in production determines the specific forms of distribution, i.e. the pattern of participation in distribution.”<sup>5</sup>

This is very significant, because he actually says there that the *relations of production* - that is, *social relations*, the relations of production in a wider, more encompassing way - are becoming the *forces of production*. So it represents the end of those dynamics that he, in another text,<sup>6</sup> had proclaimed as the very dynamics of the development of history, as the *contradiction* between the relations of production and forces of production). Those dynamics, those dialectics, appear to be actually finished with, and seem to be exhausted now. That is, there are no more differences between the relations of production and the forces of production, which is, I think, very interesting, because it seems to be true.

So that would be *dispossession* - that *Gliederung* that has been changed now to present a different structure than before. For example, strong trade unions, high wages, ecological standards, social welfare state - this is all changing

rapidly and disappearing very quickly now. But such changes we notice only when they have already happened, because we used to take those things for granted. That was one of the significant reasons for abolishing socialism - people thought it was somehow assured and unquestionable, and took it for granted to have an available and functional education system, health-care system, all public facilities, a social welfare system, and so on; and it was not abolished all at once, but in phases, gradually. There are even World Bank instructions on how to do it: never frontally, but by breaking up the society and intervening into some constitutive elements first. The second instruction is that all opposition should be splintered, by turning the one corporation against another, one trade union against the other... Such mechanisms imposed by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and European Union should be examined in more detail to understand the present state of affairs, because those are actually their demands. They have developed tactics which are quite "subtilized," and there are some quite funny details, when they say: "If the professors rebel, it is not important, and will not last for a long time; but if the students rebel, beware, that might be dangerous," so there we have even one empirical, sociological fact. [laughs] And all that, for example, Eric Toussaint managed to present in a single book,<sup>7</sup> by extrapolating the arguments from the materials published by the World Bank.

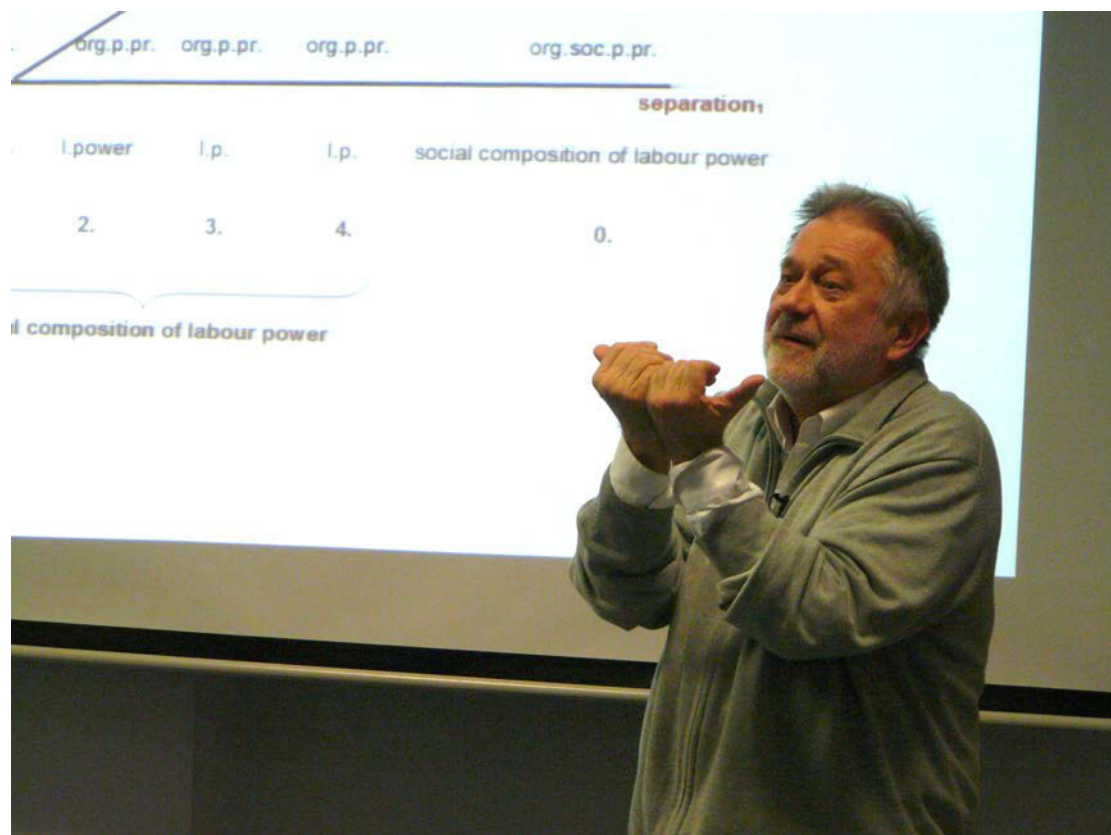
One such mechanism imposed by the current hegemony of power is subcontracting; you had, for example, Mura, a big textile industry located in Slovenia with its own market in Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe, and they would be in the times of Socialist Yugoslavia one "normal," self-managed but also capitalist company. Then they got privatized, and the new owner turned them into a subcontracting company of the large multinational company [Hugo] Boss. This meant that they lost their own market, and lost the type of sociability that had provided them with their own, independent means of existence. Since the very moment of such subcontracting, their production became detached from the conditions of socialization, or, to speak in capitalist terms, detached from the market. Their entire market now is Boss as the only buyer of Mura's products, and it is Boss now who sells, distributes and socializes on the "real" market. Hence Boss takes a kind of monopolistic position towards Mura, known as *monopsony*;<sup>8</sup> the moment Boss decides not to buy their products anymore - as Mura is still in formal, juridical terms, an independent company - Mura will go bankrupt, as the monopsonist will have decided not to buy their products. In the meantime Mura has already lost their own market and can not simply return, because that market was marked by the different type of socialization, by a certain quasi-socialization of their products. So, through the monopsonist relations of the multinational company, the act of dispossession was being committed by Boss towards Mura, because the social relations and the conditions of the socialization of their products had been changed in a radical way.<sup>9</sup>

**RT:** Would you agree with Harvey regarding the definition of the term? And how could such a situation be prevented or repelled? For most people, especially in the case of the dispossessed, the bad news comes when it's

already too late and this process remains largely “invisible” and undiscussed. Why does it happen as such, and can the process of dispossession be made more “visible?” Would its “visibility” in any way be a key for resisting it?

**RM:** As a different example of dispossession, I could present the case of The Erased [those who were erased from the registry of permanent residents of Slovenia in 1992<sup>10</sup>]. It is a mass of people, more than 25,000, perhaps around 30,000, who, suddenly and all at once, by a single administrative operation, lost their status of permanent residence in Slovenia, projecting them into the position of Agamben’s *Homo sacer*.<sup>11</sup> Their documents are valid no more - they cannot open a bank account, or drive a car, so they are being radically dispossessed of their sociability. Then I would interpret Harvey’s term in the sense of a change of conditions of social existence on a massive scale.

And why does this process remain invisible, and only get noticed after the new type of sociality was already introduced? Consider, for example, the public spaces of a city; such spaces within a city are taken for granted to be public, and no one pays any special attention to the fact that they are public, because everybody is using them in such a way; only after those spaces are privatized can you notice that something is different now, that something had changed. But the privatization of public spaces has become normalized over time, and when it happens, there is nothing you can do retroactively to fix it; it seems it cannot be undone.



So, the entire thing becomes obvious only *after* some dramatic event has already happened. Now I will come to why Harvey's term is, after all, correct and justified, and I would connect it with another fragment from *Grundrisse*; it is the continuation of the fragment that speaks of machines, where Marx writes about *General Intellect* and about *Gliederung*.<sup>12</sup> There had been a lot of discussion about the former, while not much attention was being paid to the latter. For Marx, *Gliederung* meant what structure meant for structuralism; the articulation of social relations in the widest possible sense. There he says "now the main production forces are the general intellect, the already socialized heritage of humankind, and social *Gliederung*"<sup>13</sup>, which we, in the manner of Pierre Bourdieu,<sup>14</sup> can also formulate under the term of *social [symbolic] capital*. But it is better formulated as *Gliederung* - that is, as the social environment in which the very relationships within a certain community will become the model of socialization and the condition of its capitalization. In everyday situations it manifests itself as, for example, the problem of whether a certain country is able to draw foreign investments. It will be able to draw foreign investments if there is infrastructure in a material sense - roads, the power grid, the Internet - and then it will also need an educated population, weak trade unions, a deregulated market, low ecological standards... So it means that the very type of socialness has to adjust to the demands of the accumulation of capital.

It is what Marx was anticipating, and *Grundrisse* is significant work precisely because of such anticipations. There were, I am not sure, just 10% of industrial workers in Great Britain at the time, but he [Marx] already anticipated the arrival of automatization, what proves a great ability of such system of thinking. This is also where he cancels his own scheme of forces of production and the relations of production, because as he states: at one point, that is, at the point when a high enough organic composition of capital is being created and the automation follows, when the productive forces actually become socialized, and when private property becomes a kind of obstacle, this is when the social *Gliederung* - not only the organization within the company, but also the wider social *Gliederung* - becomes the force of production itself. So he thinks that this will be the end of capitalism, and after that, the time of free association of labor will arrive.

**RT:** A lot of time has passed since then, but capitalism is still here. Perhaps we should say "barely here," as even what we could call classical dispossession was not able to solve the series of crises of over-accumulation since the 1970's because of, among other things, the growing disappearance of zones "outside of capital," so the financialization and various mechanisms of debt were developed in order to expand the operations not spatially, but temporally and into the future. Then additional tools were developed to do it on an industrial scale over the 1990's, so the majority of world economies started to be absolutely dependent on colonizing the future.

But the current crisis of over-accumulation is now close to exhausting even the future. Inequality is on the rise, and so is automatization; what goes down

are the living standards and political sovereignty of the vast majority of people. Capitalism works great with crises - the bigger the crisis, the faster the rich get richer. Is there a limit to using such technologies?

**RM:** Yes, and there are things to add as, first, capitalism did not come to an end, and, second, management is the organization of the process of work. Technology is nothing else - and now I speak as Althusser would - but the material existence of the relations of production and of certain technological means. Technology for capitalism does not represent a natural innovation, but the already materialized relation of exploitation. Marx, being Hegelian, believed that the internal contradictions of one system would create the conditions for the emergence of another system, and thought "all this is very convenient." It is pure Hegel, and it is not inaccurate; only, it is a point of abstraction. Here Marx actually creates an abstraction out of the political dimension, and claims that an organized social force exists that will direct the said contradiction towards precisely the end of capitalism, and not in some other possible direction. And this is true; there *is* an organized power of capital, its own management; the only problem is that the managers would solve that contradiction *in a specific way* that would be reproducing the very system, the capitalist system.

This was examined by the Italian operaist Sergio Bologna, when he explored how pre-Fordist capitalism transitioned towards its next stage of Fordism.<sup>15</sup> His interpretation is rather short; Bologna writes that in Germany of the late XIX and early XX century, German industry was on the way up, heralded by precision optics and the mechanics industries, that is, by the type of production requiring highly specialized and experienced workers, technically capable workers. Those were the *maisters*, the craftsmen with a high degree of internal corporate organization, so already so powerful that capitalism had to replace both the composition of its machinery and the composition of workers - (its technical composition of labor power) - by the de-qualification of Fordist worker and by automatization; then the machine became more significant as it started to dictate the speed and the direction of the working process. That was introduced by Ford so that he could get rid of old workers and be able to import immigrants from Europe, who were mainly farmers before, and did not speak the same language. But there was no need to communicate in the common language anymore, since it was the assembly line itself that dictated the process of work. The added bonus for the capitalist was that it was the very fact that the workers did not speak the same language which made it much harder for them to try and organize within trade unions. So, Fordism represents the process of breaking up the working class, that is, of preventing the class composition of the working class.

**RT:** So far, accumulation by dispossession appears as a relatively straightforward, almost brutal mechanism if observed as the practice of manipulating markets, ownership, and finances. But the social conditions it uses and creates seem to be more complex and much less obvious. Is there anything we fail to see, something more that can be added to its description?

Most non-Marxist economists have no explanation for the origins of the capital, and offer instead what Marx called “fairy tales of Original Sin.” As dispossession is still on the rise, does this repetition of the process provide for a better understanding now? In a world of finite resources, any accumulation has to have a kind of upper limit and cannot be a permanent process, or can it? What can be said about the dynamics of this development?

**RM:** Now, what seems to have been forgotten is that the welfare state was the product of the struggle of the working class, developed precisely during the times of the Fordist economy, when both the management and the workers had a stake in the idea that the existence of the company should be preserved. That meant that a significant portion of the accumulation returned to the company, and the owners themselves received a rather austere return. And that was accurately shown by Duménil and Lévy<sup>16</sup>; that the profits from capital started to fall in the 1930s and 1940s, when it was still considered true that the salaries of bosses were the decisive element of class differentiation. But since the 1930’s, there has been a lot of research on the phenomena of managerial revolution; and ever since a suspicion arose that managers could be actually aligned with the workers, that they have been balancing the books in a way that encourages and provides for reinvesting. So then the idea of *value for shareholder* was being introduced as something that was new at the time, it meant that what is valued as significant is not the production, nor the success on the market anymore, but rather how the stocks of the company are positioned in the stock exchange, as the owners were not involved in production anymore, but in stock exchange speculation.

From that point on, managers faced the task of maintaining both the production capabilities of the company and its stock exchange indexes, a task that proved impossible in the long run. This is when managers understood that they were expected to start cheating, and this is how things such as the “Enron scandal<sup>17</sup>” emerged - an entire practice was being developed through which managers were supposed to “park” [to allocate, “outsource”] their losses in various “bypass companies” that then tend to remain forgotten somewhere in the Cayman Islands. Michel Aglietta, for example, had built the elaborated *regulation theory*<sup>18</sup> observing precisely such practices. He reintroduced the term of Fordism in his important work titled “Regulation and crises of capitalism” [*Régulation et crises du capitalisme*, 1976–1997], where he describes Fordism as “the phase of capitalism that is coming to its end.” And regarding the referential theories, Aglietta was the student of Althusser, while the notion of Fordism, he takes, of course, as it was defined by Gramsci.<sup>19</sup>

I would like to schematize now what I spoke about. I don’t use the notions of cultural or of social capital frequently or with ease, as I consider it a metaphorical expression, and here I would rather speak in operaist terms, about the *technical composition of labor power*. The technical composition of labor power is the product of the corresponding type of capitalist organization

and exploitation; the technical composition always adjusts to the means of production and to the entire model of production of a certain phase of capitalism. Now, whenever a change of technical composition occurs - and there is no absolute rule that it must happen so, but something we always witness happening in practice – this is when the people are losing precisely the existing achievements of the class struggle, what the working class managed to gain in the previous model of capitalism. So, whenever the transition of the technical composition of the Fordist workers into the new, present-day model occurred, or however we call it (the term post-Fordism is, as they say in Slovenian, “mašilo,” slang for “when we have no better word to use,” a false term serving the purpose of filling the conceptual gap), a dispossession occurs of precisely those achievements that the workers managed to gain over time and took it for granted as a permanent state of affairs.

**RT:** Besides political economy and sociology, the term of dispossession was also developed in the fields of psychoanalysis and literature - for example, in the works by Julia Kristeva or Ursula Le Guin - to have a somewhat ambivalent meaning. And it will mean something different and very particular for those engaged with post-colonial studies, like Edward Said or Homi Bhabha. To quote Judith Butler & Athena Athanasiou from *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political*,<sup>20</sup> the term aims to represent both “... a limit to the autonomous and impermeable self-sufficiency of the liberal subject” where “dispossession can be a term that marks the limits of self-sufficiency and that establishes us as relational and interdependent beings,” but also a socially disruptive and life-threatening power (“...yet dispossession is precisely what happens when populations lose their land, their citizenship, their means of livelihood, and become subject to military and legal violence.”). Both cases describe something essential but use the same term for what seems to be different mechanisms. How to approach this duality of meaning?

**RM:** This is the problem of articulation in psychoanalysis, and in historical materialism, and it was always something of a stumbling stone. Those are two heterogeneous fields, and we always find ourselves facing the same problem.

I somewhat departed from this psychoanalytic problematic lately. The quotations from your question, in the sense of subjectivation, in the sense of a certain being becoming the subject, imply a somewhat Freudian position. But then a problem occurs, because if it is subjectivation - which in psychoanalysis it is - then the basic constellation must be created together with the reception, with the internalization of the language itself, which means it has to be finished by three years of age or so. And there we arrive to the following paradox: how is it then possible that people later in life change their ideological beliefs? My former theory of ideology was precisely the reverse of that, it would be the one from the “Althusserian Legacy” I published during the 1990s,<sup>21</sup> where it was said that the real interpellation is subjectivation, while the rest are actually identifications, and not interpellation “proper.” Now, if the



condition for proper interpellation is that subjectivation has to happen at the same time, this can then explain some very strong, radical and fundamentalist ideologies. Because in that case, the condition I have set for real subjectivation—interpellation-subjectivation, as it is called—is that the ideological discourse has to tackle, to meet the individual fantasm.

Actually, my former theory of ideology, I noticed, explains belief by the sheer existence of belief, which is not a very hard thing to do. For example, some folk myths used certain motives that Slavoj Žižek and myself then used in the 1970's and the early 1980's, and the point here is that you should translate ideology into the field of the unconscious, into unconscious belief. I do not consider it a great theoretical achievement anymore, because then we can say only this: well, what we have here is the system of ideology, in which exists what is conscious, and in there exists a certain illegal core of unconscious belief; and so, belief is being explained by the existence of belief, which is not really an epic discovery... Then I tried to formalize it in a Bakhtinian way, that is, as Voloshinov wrote, as polyphony.<sup>22</sup> But then the theory of the subject behind it has to remain austere, and strictly mechanistic, and to reveal the subject as a certain metaphor, as an exchange of one signifier with another. The entire ideology then transfers to the level of what Freud calls the “semi-conscious”; it is the field “between the unconscious and conscious,” and now it is about “*ich* mechanisms,” that is, “ego mechanisms,” and it is about identification. Because of that I consider the process of subjectivation *a rigid operation without content*.



My existing theory is more Lacanian than Freudian. That the subject is actually a Cartesian subject, I was convinced into that by Jean-Claude Milner<sup>23</sup>; that the subject is colorless and odorless, that it is without content, without predicates. And that the subject is defined by this *break*, the break

between the statement and the act of stating; that would be the orthodox Lacanian approach. He connects it with *cogito*, but I thought connecting it with *cogito* would not be a sufficiently radical approach. I always thought that Lacan was being ironic when he spoke about his science being Cartesian, because I have always thought that if there is something non-Cartesian, then it has to be Lacan. Because he explicitly breaks the subject apart, while the *cogito* is fixed, and precisely something we can rely upon. And I do interpret Descartes as one still insufficiently radical Cartesian.

So here I consider Jacques Rancière, and I take his formula of subjectivation, for example, “we are all German Jews,”<sup>24</sup> and, then, what is the trick with that? The trick is that the predicate seems inconsistent in relation with the subject, in a grammatical, formal, discursive sense. My theory is that here we indeed see the very mechanism of subjectivation in operation, because it asks of the recipient of that message to set a new belief background, or to set a different discourse, to develop a new discourse in a way that such a statement gains some sense of meaning. That is, the recipients of such a statement need to create within themselves the other signifier in which to subjectivize themselves. But *the subjectivation itself is a formal act, a mechanism without content*. The content there is at the level of “*ich* mechanism.” While the other interpellation, the ideological one, is *interpellation without subjectivation*, because it is based on the subjectivation that is already guaranteed in advance, so it unfolds within the rigid and already existing dominant non-alternative discourse.

Therefore I try to correct, that is, I try to complement Althusser here, where he says: ideology is interpellation of the individual, the individual as subject, and I say: yes, but there are *two different mechanisms, the reproductive one and the non-reproductive one*, and the important feature of the non-reproductive mechanism is *the discontinuity of the operation*. That means: ideology interpellates the subject who is already fixed within certain dominant discourses, and this is where identification happens through classical Freudian mechanics, through the ego mechanism; that goes rather automatically as if under hypnosis, meaning, this is what reproduces the existing ideological constellation, and what draws the subject into the position of the passive one. But if the other kind of interpellation is in question, where the subject is supposed to subjectivize themselves, to self-subjectivize, so to say, then of course the identification occurs later, and it could also be an identification within a certain alternative discourse that perhaps did not even exist before. And that is how Rancière sees it.

I tend to see it this way: if you have a subject-predicate [relation] *a la* Rancière, then some discourse should exist that enables the non-consistent predicate to become a consistent predicate of this new subject. I am a formalist, and I think in rather austere terms. This is Lacan’s graph, his “*cogito : ergo sum*,” “I think - I am” [draws]. So, the first part is the statement, while the other represents the act of stating. Now, Descartes considers this fixed because he assumes the identity between this statement in the first person

speech (*ergo sum*) and this ego, which is the ego of the act of stating, to be the same. That would be one minimal, natural, spontaneous motivation for the unity of the subject, and not at all something radical. While Lacan says: “look, there is the break, and precisely there the subjectivation happens”.

And then we can carry it over to the theory of discourse, to get back to Rancière - “we are all German Jews.” Here, another discourse is to be found, the one able to connect the predicate “German Jews” with the subject of “we,” which again means, there is identification, and there is subjectivation [draws the diagram and underlines the relations]. That is, it is either a double inscription of the same signifier, or one signifier standing for another signifier, which would be a metaphor, which is a Lacanian pseudo-definition of the subject. And concrete discursive analysis is easily able to prove it. I have some nice real life examples.

For the mechanism of identification in which such double inscription does not happen because you have a certain discourse where the subject is already guaranteed, consider how the TV news presented the occupation of Acropolis in Athens, when the protesters spread the banner “Peoples of Europe, rise up!” That is what you could see on the picture, while the caption was saying “the protesters took over the Acropolis, *but* the police did not react”; now, this use of BUT can be proved through discursive analysis to present the assumption that it would be *normal* for police to intervene, *but*, there, as you can see, *they decided not to*. It can be reduced further towards identification, so that you identify with the discourse within which this becomes an unusual event, in which it is simply extraordinary that the intervention *did not* take place.

Then you have this other case in which the mechanism turns disruptive, as Rancière observed, where you have to imagine an entirely new discourse that will provide for identification. For example, there is the ingenious statement by the [late] Slovenian president Drnovšek,<sup>25</sup> who in a certain interview used the following parole to outline his politics: “This is the choice between Europe and the Balkans.” So, you are free to choose then, and it also becomes one liberal discourse: will your choice be the Europhillic or the Balkanophobic; so you do have that choice, but in both cases one ends up in the same position. This really proved to be quite amusing [laughs].

**RT:** Let’s stay with the example of Yugoslavia, as it may be observed as one of the most complete cases of “total dispossession” in the sense of the fundamental change of social conditions. The people were not dispossessed only from their ownership and control over the means of production and from any power of decision regarding the economy, but also from having emancipatory politics, from their own history and ideological heritage. The economy was being taken away, taken over by the “usual suspects,” while socialism, self-management, non-alignment, common language, and even the very name of the country - it was all dispossessed from the populations, but not repossessed, so to say, by someone else.

Here we can test another thesis by Julia Kristeva, and to try to look for certain *abjects* - “radically excluded, jettisoned objects<sup>26</sup>” - that would point to what was being rejected, and witness about the very act of rejection. (Kristeva: “And yet, from its place of banishment, the abject does not cease challenging its master. Without a sign (for him), it beseeches a discharge, a convulsion, a crying out. To each ego its object, to each superego its abject.”) What would be the *abject* or *abjects* created by this chain of dispossessions marking the dissolution of Yugoslavia?

**RM:** Indeed, we can speak of a certain *dispossession by abjection*; and for us in former Yugoslavia, all we need is just to look around. Just yesterday I was taken to record a TV special here in Belgrade and I found myself passing through an abandoned factory, like a scene from some dystopian graphic novel, a post-catastrophic environment similar only to what I saw once in Russian Novosibirsk. So it would be precisely that, an *abject*: something that was dispossessed, and then discarded later. It is the realization of that destructive element of capitalism, of the mass destruction of the means of production which is the condition to enter the transition to the next phase.



Then, another form of dispossession can be found in the language itself. Here Serbo-Croatian is a good example, and I believe the one in favor of my interpretation of Harvey. There you can find the privatization of what was once a public asset. Serbo-Croatian was the universal language within Yugoslavia, and as such it was capable of tolerating all the different variants of writing, of pronunciation, all the various localizations. For example, you can now retroactively recognize all those new languages within Serbo-Croatian in the books published during the times of Yugoslavia. In my teaching, I use *Accumulation on a World Scale: A Critique of the Theory of Underdevelopment* by Samir Amin [1975; translated as “*Akumulacija kapitala u svjetskim razmjerima*,” Komunist, Belgrade, 1978], but, the language - it is

only now, and in hindsight, that one recognizes it was translated to the Bosnian language. Now we see that particular language, while before it would be about the differentiation of some details that were then considered insignificant, in terms of phonetic variations that Roman Jakobson speaks about.<sup>27</sup> He considers those as kind of variations that bear no significance for the phoneme. That means that phoneme, as the “ideal voice,” remains the same, while in some particular rendition it may have different variants. So, that was the common language, open to everybody - to those with dialects from Zagreb, from Belgrade, from Novi Sad. It was even open as a kind of “pidgin” language for those who were not proficient speakers, as for example for us from Ljubljana, or for somebody from Skopje - and here I deliberately list the cities, and not the former Yugoslav republics. [Slovenia and Macedonia had its own and distinct languages; Serbo-Croatian was a common language of Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Montenegro.] But today the language is being nationalized, that is, it becomes a form of private property, so via the language your national belonging is immediately being displayed. Furthermore, it shows that we from Ljubljana are not able to speak these new languages, so we were dispossessed from the common language; we were being rejected as competent speakers of that language.

So we can prove this now that the development of the situation in Yugoslavia after 1974 can be thought about and theorized in terms of dispossession. This is something I recently spoke about with Catherine Samary.<sup>28</sup> She thinks that it was a great mistake by the intellectuals - and their great responsibility - not to use the opportunity after the new constitution of 1974 gave new rights to the workers; on the contrary, the intellectuals in a way distanced themselves even further from the workers. And that was the crucial moment; if we think in terms of dispossession, what is typical for bureaucratic socialism is that the working class gets expropriated from any political dimension, because the politics of the working class are considered to be already embodied in the apparatus of the Party. Yugoslav communists did try to declaratively break with this approach, but the operation remained incomplete. That is, they gave the economical rights to the workers collectives in 1974, but yet did not provide for their capacity building in political practice.

From that point onwards the whole system of self-management went the route of collective capitalism, what meant that companies suddenly started to act as individual capital. This is why I consider that in the Yugoslav model the most successful form of management was the so-called social management, and especially of public services like education or health-care, in which monetization existed and everything was thought of in financial terms, but there was no market. In that way, money acted as the moment of the rationalization of the particular operation, but the operations themselves were conducted through the agreement between the agents of the schooling or hospital system and the people who used the services, or were negotiated within the local councils and then up to the higher instances, so it was genuine bottom-up planning.

To return to 1974: the workers were provided with economical sovereignty, but not with political sovereignty. And then it went like this: the intellectuals started with pursuing human rights and introducing the ideology of civil society, and the workers were left with spontaneous strikes and with the “wild” theorization of their own practice that they had to conduct, of course, through the jargon of bureaucracy. Regardless of the fact if they were more or less successful in that, the workers negotiated with the authorities on their own and with what devices they had; without the support of intellectuals they remained within the hard horizon of bureaucratic discourse.

It should also be said that the discourse of civil society had some advantages for activists at the time; I always thought of it as a rather tactical move that sought to find support in the existing juridical system, so that people would not be afraid of a certain campaign or a certain action if it was based on the existing laws and regulations. In that case, all that you ask for is something that the system has already guaranteed, you ask for something already inscribed in the agreement. It puts you in an advantageous position, and provides for a legitimate action. I thought that was very significant, because the people indeed were not afraid and could mobilize themselves in larger numbers. And we were all aware of what legal fetishism was, Evgeny Pashukanis<sup>29</sup> was being read and examined since the first year of studies, the commodity fetishism and all the rest. We were not the fetishists of civil society as it went later into the 1990s, when the principles of civil society were introduced in a different way - as the ideology of capitalism.

Being the practical subject of such a massive chain of dispossessions as was the case with Yugoslavia, what I learned is this: the structures such as welfare state, public education and similar are being preserved through the permanent class struggle, and are not achievements that could be considered as ‘this is what we made so far, and we can only progress further.’ That was my attitude towards socialism in the 1980s, and it was very wrong, I would say. My colleagues and I were thinking within the horizon of socialism, and we thought that if all this was already achieved, there could be no stepping back, it could not be lost. So we were thinking further, about what should come next, about freedom of expression, freedom of association, how to prevent the bureaucratization of self-management, about personal and cultural issues, and so on. That was how the 1980s went - the worse it was getting with the economy, the better it was with human rights.

**RT:** Despite the sophisticated contemporary forms of dispossession (for example, using computer networks and advanced algorithms, introducing new laws and regulations, even inter-continental agreements without any public interference), what we witness today are mainly the forms of resistance that appear as “old-fashioned,” so to speak: awareness campaigns, petitions, marches, protests... At the same time, the corporate-State complex of today is amassing arsenals of advanced weapons and intelligence tools able to overwhelm any possible resistance by the common people; it seems to be

able to cope with any number of human bodies and “primitive” technologies that might pose a threat to the regime.

There has been a lot of debate about how the present-day media manipulate and prevent public debate. The media environment is dramatically changing, so the images of resistance can hardly count on the integrity and influence they may have had. What tends to still draw some attention are the occasional “hacks” and “leaks,” however confusing and controversial, or precisely because of it.

Is what, for example, Assange or Snowden do a useful example of contemporary resistance to power? What were the old ways of confronting and resisting dispossession, if any?

**RM:** Yes, but nothing *actually* happened after WikiLeaks and Snowden did what they did. I mean, something did happen, but on the level of morality. At the beginning it was a big media and political affair, but not anymore; these days they publish that the USA spied on French presidents, including the current one, Hollande,<sup>30</sup> and who cares? Today it is a piece of news without much consequence, maybe Russians made some profit from it, but it is far from changing the system. And this is what is actually terrifying about WikiLeaks: the first is that this issue of spying on officials is being presented as a scandal, as an excess, which means if there was not an excess then everything would be just fine. That is to say, it would mean that it is OK for the citizens to be surveilled and spied upon, but not Hollande. And, second, even worse, is the way it is being presented - these are all individual cases, and you can't see the pattern. Hence it doesn't provide for any systematic resistance, meaning you can not attack the system on its own terrain. And, third, what does it assume? It assumes the existence of secret, hidden politics. Why can't you wiretap Hollande? Because he conducts, as the President of the State, some secret politics, the politics that are not public, not what he was elected for but *something else*. Not to allow a wiretap on Hollande means that he is in possession of some secret politics that need to remain secret and which are different from what he speaks about publicly. I think that the dialectics of WikiLeaks and all that is, actually, a reproductive one.

You see, I have great sympathies for any form of resistance, even the archaic ones. When people put their bodies at stake it is, after all, a pathetic act because it is a great risk, they risk all that they have. I was often myself the participant in such actions because I really do have a fundamental sympathy towards the idea of resistance. But on the other hand I agree, and you are very right to say that today it seems archaic, as too localized; it can at best efficiently defend a single park or a square or something similar, but is incapable of resisting the strongest and most systematic examples of dispossession.

It is true that today we have this technological inequality on an astronomical scale, but it is also true that today you cannot successfully occupy Iraq or

Afghanistan or other countries in which even do not have a significant technological development. Today you cannot invade a country in the old way anymore, because today it is not about the occupation of the territory but of the people, and today... Today you have these precisely manufactured bombs that provide for the possibility of electronic occupation, all the drones and whatnot. But, after all, we should not overestimate the power of these bombs coming from the stratosphere. As I have said, I am a pacifist and have no sympathy for the militaristic perspective, but even so, even from that perspective the resistance is possible, although with horrific casualties.

Back to the technologies of information and communication we spoke about, to conclude: guerrilla warfare is as possible today as it was possible before. What is WikiLeaks, or what did Snowden do? A guerrilla operation. What is interesting is that today you have these *individual* heroes, you have an *individual guerrilla*, and who yet managed to make a big mess, and shake the globe. Of course, I maintain significant reservations towards all that. But it still proves that guerrilla warfare is possible. I call it “the Antigones’ gesture.”

The thing is, why is it even possible that Antigone became a liberal heroine? This would be my “evil footnote” on Žižek. About Antigone, it went like this: I could not believe that Antigone could be a liberal heroine because she denies and she dismantles the State and the Rule of Law. Even worse, she promotes the premodern, nepotistic blood relations against the anonymous construction of the polis. This has to mean that Antigone is conservative, so how could she be a liberal heroine? But then Žižek started to deal with the matter and begun affirming Antigone,<sup>31</sup> so then I said “well, it seems that Antigone could be liberal, because she is being supported by liberals” - this is how I call him, “a liberal,” because he used to be with LDS, with Liberal Democratic Party of Slovenia [laughs]. Then I was thinking about how such a thing could be possible, and my idea is as follows: it is possible because her gesture is *moralistic* and *inefficient*. This is what liberals need - grand gestures, dissident gestures, gestures that prove the liberalness, the openness, the freedom of expression and so on, but gestures that never represent a collective act of resistance. That means that the system is not under threat, quite the contrary, that’s simply ideal for the system – and that would be Snowden and Assange. After all, they are inefficient.

**RT:** It seems that today the people are being dispossessed from the most important remaining few things that may help with any understanding, orientation, strategy, or course of action. What is being taken away in this turn is whatever is left of emancipatory politics, the power of organized knowledge and science, and finally, all things public. It is hard to imagine the possibility of any recovery and resistance if this process continues, and even harder to imagine the world it may create; hard, but not impossible. So our last question, as you might have guessed, would be about the possibilities - or impossibilities - for the future to arrive: what are the options for emancipatory politics, or left politics? What theories could help with insight, orientation, and organization? Is critique possible under the circumstances?



**RM:** So here it is, and this is currently my favorite topic - why do we need theory? We need theory so that we can read the details, any details at all, and especially because details are frequently of a fragmentary nature. And details are important.

One of my sons is physicist. He says that everything that is being said about the exactness of science is a myth, because what this empirical, “hard” science does is to return a lot of numbers. And then you always have to have some background theory in order to interpret it. The stronger theory will be the one able to encompass and rationalize the bigger volume of data, but the exact approach to the organization of the particular data is not prescribed. You can do it based on aesthetics - for example, Galileo [Galilei] had an aesthetic approach, so he thought that the Universe must be symmetrical. Well, my son is working on the premise that it is not symmetrical. I don’t understand any of that [laughs], but it is something that can be extrapolated from the details.

The situation in natural sciences seems to be identical with social sciences. First, you have a filter that determines how you will measure, what you will measure - the same as with sociology - and then some numbers get returned so that you can interpret them, what will depend pretty much exclusively on what your theoretical background is. That is to say, how the numbers will be organized is a matter of theory, and is not predetermined...



For example, at first glance it appears that we have all the statistics regarding, say, the economy, but it is assembled in a way that does not correspond with, is not adequate for our theoretical conceptions. We have no statistics on the surplus value, but we have all the statistics of the newly created value which is calculated in a different way, and where the unproductive actors are also indexed as contributors. Or what we have is the GDP, or the Gini index [coefficient], where there is no classical distribution of value involved. So there we end up with a lot of numbers that need to be translated into some other theory. The first and most important thing is that the confrontation with the system needs to go through theory.

And, second: there is no theory without the practice of confrontation. I believe precisely in this: “German Ideology,”<sup>32</sup> the theory and the theorization of practice. That means if you are a manager of some company, a technocrat ruling the society, it will be your particular perspective that will create your theory, and your theory will be a theory of domination. And that means it will have some very strong ideological components. While if you are on the opposing side, you should create an independent theory of the system you confront with, and not only of the system but of your own position; it is one “Bourdieu moment” to say, to reflect on the own position, because people can believe they are outside of the system while actually they are not.

And all that means that *the theory is a part of practice*, and that *there is no theory without practice*. There is no such thing as “theoreticism,” as they used to speculate about in the XVIII century, there is no such kind of enlightenment, it is not as simple as to create a theory, then apply it, and then everything works. No such thing, no - I noticed the same on my own example - the more significant part of my theoretical development, as much as there was any, comes from the practical work. That is, it comes *from the failure of the practical work*, as this is when you obtain the very subject matter. Only when it is shown where the point of resistance is, then you know you have encountered something real. And this is what you should then theorize.

This is how I, for example, made the difference between the ruling ideology and the ideology of the rulers,<sup>33</sup> addressing the problem of double codification; it appears in different variations in various different theories, but I developed it in a concrete manner and through political struggle. This is what Catholicism, for example, has practiced since the very beginning: there is the pastoral ideology (Franciscans), and the internal ideology (Jesuits). Stalinist political parties operate the same way.

Today everything is being instrumentalized in a different way and on a certain technical level, as everything goes through the filter of the mass media where the attention is being paid either to some incident or excess or to some obscene detail, so that any affair ends up being reproductive regardless of the content. So, what should be attacked is the very system in which the existence of WikiLeaks is possible - that is, the system in which a secret politics exists, different from the one the person has been elected for.

**RT:** Will left politics recover? What possibilities you see?

**RM:** My theory about the left movements is that it is unavoidable that they split into factions. Because when you enter the left movement, you sacrifice, you personally give up a lot of things. So you have to have a very firm, affective bond with your thing, and further, it means that you firmly believe, and that you won't tolerate those who walk in the same direction but think slightly differently. Because one's affective investment is too strong, splitting into factions is inevitable in such a movement. But what is important is the question: could splitting into factions be productive? That is exactly what

happened in Lenin's times. The well-known Menshevik-Bolshevik split was productive both in a theoretical and an organizational sense. While under Stalinism it was not - during Stalinism, those who lost were liquidated, so, no productivity but elimination and loss, and the campaign of fear against the people who dared to even think about it at all.

Being the practical subject of such a massive chain of dispossessions as was the case with Yugoslavia, what I learned is this: the structures such as the welfare state, public education and similar are being preserved through permanent class struggle, and are not achievements that could be considered as 'this is what we made so far, and we can only progress further.' That was my attitude towards socialism in the 1980s, and it was very wrong, I would say. My colleagues and I were thinking within the horizon of socialism, and we thought if all this was already achieved, there can be no step back, it cannot be lost. So we were thinking further, about what should come next, about freedom of expression, freedom of association, how to prevent the bureaucratization of self-management, about personal and cultural issues, and so on. That was how the 1980s went - the worse it was getting with economy, the better it was with human rights.

And it's a pity that in Yugoslavia the critique was not utilized more. The critique from the right was shabby and nonsensical, we called it "drunken criticism," and it was useless. The important, that is, the relevant critique in Yugoslavia was the one from the left, from the various left positions. Within Yugoslavia the critique was tolerated, but not accepted by default; it did or did not enter the establishment according to what the apparatchiks allowed and vetted as appropriate.

I guess I should say something more now, something to give hope, to end this long conversation we had about very hard and serious matters on a positive note. Details are important, theory is important, but hope is also very important.

I think it is taken for granted that the resistance to dispossession is a matter of class struggle. But in the Hegelian scheme of things this particular moment is not accentuated; that the contradiction exists is, of course, stated, but how that contradiction is going to be resolved is not given in advance, it remains a matter of class struggle. Now, in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, it all goes, of course, linearly, since what Hegel actually does is making a reinterpretation of the history of philosophy, where he shows that the each subsequent stage cancels, that is, simply overcomes and erases the contradictions of the previous stage. Within society, things do not work like that - in society, there is the class struggle through which this contradiction is being resolved. This is why I keep on saying that communism was as much possible in the mid-XIX century as it is possible today. Because it is the matter of class struggle, not technology, or I don't know what... And, of course, there is always the contingency. But any contingency is always already connected with the concrete moment, with some concrete conjecture of the concrete society.

**RT:** Thank you!

**RM:** No problem. Now, is there some more of that cake?



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*This interview with professor Rastko Močnik was made in Belgrade in June 2015. The transcript of the three hours of conversation in Serbo-Croatian is abridged and edited for clarity.*

#### ENDNOTES:

<sup>1</sup> From David Harvey, “New’ Imperialism: Accumulation by Dispossession”, *Socialist Register* 2004 (Vol. 40): The New Imperial Challenge, <http://www.socialistregister.com/index.php/srv/article/view/5811>; see also David Harvey, *The New Imperialism*, Oxford University Press, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital Volume One*, Part VIII: Primitive Accumulation, p. 506, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Capital-Volume-I.pdf>

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<sup>3</sup> “*Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie (Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy)* is the huge manuscript Karl Marx wrote during the winter of 1857-8 as part of his preparation for what would become *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859) and *Capital* (1867). The manuscript became lost in circumstances still unknown and was first effectively published, in the German original, in 1953. A limited edition was published in Moscow in 1939 and 1941. Do note, though, Marx did not intend it for publication as is, so it can be stylistically very rough in places.”

Marxists.org, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1857/grundrisse>

<sup>4</sup> “Marx [...] clearly says that we must elucidate the knowledge of *Gliederung* (the articulated, hierarchical, systematic combination) of contemporary society if we are to reach an understanding of earlier forms, and therefore of the most primitive forms.”

From Louis Althusser, “From Capital to Marx’s Philosophy”, in Althusser, Étienne Balibar, *Reading Capital*, NLB, 1970, p. 64.

<sup>5</sup> *Grundrisse*: Introduction, (2) The general relation of production to distribution, exchange, consumption, Distribution and production (b1),

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1857/grundrisse/ch01.htm#loc2>

<sup>6</sup> “Just as one does not judge an individual by what he thinks about himself, so one cannot judge such a period of transformation by its consciousness, but, on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the conflict existing between the social forces of production and the relations of production. No social order is ever destroyed before all the productive forces for which it is sufficient have been developed, and new superior relations of production never replace older ones before the material conditions for their existence have matured within the framework of the old society.”

Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Preface, par. 6, (1859),

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm>

<sup>7</sup> Eric Toussaint, *La finance contre les peuples: La bourse ou la vie*, Editions Syllepse, 2002

<sup>8</sup> Wikipedia: “In economics, a monopsony is a market structure in which only one buyer interacts with many would-be sellers of a particular product. In microeconomic theory of monopsony, a single entity is assumed to have market power over terms of offer to its sellers, as the only purchaser of a good or service, much in the same manner that a monopolist can influence the price for its buyers in a monopoly, in which only one seller faces many buyers.”,

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monopsony>

<sup>9</sup> That the chain of this type of dispossession can be extended so to affect the workers in distant places not apparently connected with what “the main event” is speaks the destiny of the 1<sup>st</sup> of May textile company from Pirot (Serbia), which after for decades being one of the leading textile manufacturers in the region underwent the unsuccessful transition and was bought by Mura in 2012. Precisely during the week this interview was done, the news arrived that the 1<sup>st</sup> of May company will be declared as bankrupt and closed as the consequence of the bankruptcy of its new owner, Mura. Together with 1200 workers in the Mura factory in Slovenia, all of the remaining 1300 workers of the 1<sup>st</sup> of May factory have lost their jobs.

<sup>10</sup> See e.g. “Slovenia: 20 years later – Issue of the erased remains unresolved”, Amnesty International, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/press-releases/2012/02/slovenia-20-years-later-issue-erased-remains-unresolved>

<sup>11</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford University Press, 1998 (published in Italian in 1995)

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<sup>12</sup> “Machinery appears, then, as the most adequate form of fixed capital, and fixed capital, in so far as capital’s relations with itself are concerned, appears as the most adequate form of capital as such. In another respect, however, in so far as fixed capital is condemned to an existence within the confines of a specific use value, it does not correspond to the concept of capital, which, as value, is indifferent to every specific form of use value, and can adopt or shed any of them as equivalent incarnations. In this respect, as regards capital’s external relations, it is circulating capital which appears as the adequate form of capital, and not fixed capital.”

*Grundrisse*: Notebook VI / VII – The Chapter on Capital (Surplus value. Production time. Circulation time. Turnover time),

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1857/grundrisse/ch13.htm>

<sup>13</sup> “To the degree that labour time - the mere quantity of labour - is posited by capital as the sole determinant element, to that degree does direct labour and its quantity disappear as the determinant principle of production - of the creation of use values - and is reduced both quantitatively, to a smaller proportion, and qualitatively, as an, of course, indispensable but subordinate moment, compared to general scientific labour, technological application of natural sciences, on one side, and to the general productive force arising from social combination [Gliederung] in total production on the other side - a combination which appears as a natural fruit of social labour (although it is a historic product). Capital thus works towards its own dissolution as the form dominating production.”

*Grundrisse*: Notebook VII, The Chapter on Capital (continuation), par.3

<sup>14</sup> See: Pierre Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital”, in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by J. Richardson, Greenwood, 1986, p. 241-258

<sup>15</sup> See e.g. Sergio Bologna, “Workerism Beyond Fordism: On the Lineage of Italian Workerism”, in *Viewpoint Magazine*, December 15, 2014, <https://www.viewpointmag.com/2014/12/15/workerism-beyond-fordism-on-the-lineage-of-italian-workerism> and Sergio Bologna, “The Sense of Coalition”, in *Post-Fordism and its Discontents*, edited by Gal Kirn, published and distributed by lulu.com, 2010, p. 167, [http://p-dpa.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Kirn-post\\_fordism\\_and\\_its-discontents.pdf](http://p-dpa.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Kirn-post_fordism_and_its-discontents.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Gérard Duménil, Dominique Lévy, *The Crisis of Neoliberalism*, Harvard University Press, 2013

<sup>17</sup> Wikipedia: “The Enron scandal, publicized in October 2001, eventually led to the bankruptcy of the Enron Corporation, an American energy company based in Houston, Texas, and the de facto dissolution of Arthur Andersen, which was one of the five largest audit and accountancy partnerships in the world. In addition to being the largest bankruptcy reorganization in American history at that time, Enron was cited as the biggest audit failure.”, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enron\\_scandal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enron_scandal)

<sup>18</sup> See: Michel Aglietta, “Capitalism at the Turn of the Century: Regulation Theory and the Challenge of Social Change”, *New Left Review* 1/232, 1998, <https://www.unc.edu/courses/2005fall/geog/160/001/GEC'05/Aglietta.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> *The Gramsci Reader, Selected Writings 1916-1935*, edited by David Forgacs, p. 275, Chapter IX: Americanism and Fordism, New York University Press, 2000

<sup>20</sup> Judith Butler, Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political, Polity*, 2013, Chapter One: “Aporetic dispossession, or the trouble with dispossession”, p.2, p.3

<sup>21</sup> Rastko Močnik, “Ideology and Fantasy”, in *The Althusserian Legacy*, edited by E. Ann Kaplan and Michael Sprinker, Verso, 1993, p. 139-157



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<sup>22</sup> See e.g. Gary Saul Morson, Caryl Emerson, “Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics”, Chapter 6: “Polyphony: Authoring a Hero”, Stanford University Press, 1990, p. 231, and Valentin Voloshinov, “Marxism and the Philosophy of Language”, Harvard University Press, 1973 (published in Russian in 1929).

<sup>23</sup> See e.g. Jean-Claude Milner, “The Doctrine of Science”, in *Umbr(a): A Journal of the Unconscious: Science and Truth (2000)*, The Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and Culture, p. 37, [http://www.umbrajournal.org/pdfs/Umbra-Science\\_and\\_Truth-2000.pdf](http://www.umbrajournal.org/pdfs/Umbra-Science_and_Truth-2000.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> “This explains why the political subject can, or even must, claim an identity it does not have as an ontological subject. For instance, it can claim to be a proletarian without being a worker, or conversely to be a poet without being a bourgeois. Rancière gives political meaning to the 1968 catchphrase: “nous sommes tous des Juifs allemands” (“we are all German Jews”). In his later articles, Rancière bemoans the fact that today one can no longer claim that one is, say, a woman victim of prejudice, if one is not a woman. He sees this contemporary impossibility as the symptom of the world of postdemocracy, in which the political has been finally ejected and political subjectivation made finally impossible, where the fight for emancipation has been reduced to the fight for identity.”

Jean-Philippe Deranty, “Jacques Rancière’s Contribution to The Ethics of Recognition”, in *Political Theory*, Volume 31, Issue 1, February 2003, p. 146

<sup>25</sup> Janez Drnovšek, the former President of Slovenia (December 2002 – December 2007), died 2008.

<sup>26</sup> See Julia Kristeva, “Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection” in *European Perspectives Series*, Columbia University Press, 1982, (published in French in 1980), <http://users.clas.ufl.edu/burt/touchyfeelingsmaliciousobjects/Kristevapowersofhorrorabjection.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> See e.g. Roman Jakobson, *Selected Writings Vol. 2: Word and Language*, Mouton, 1962, p. 413, p. 598

<sup>28</sup> Catherine Samary is a lecturer at the Dauphine University, Paris, and the author of *Le marché contre l'autogestion: l'expérience yougoslave (The market against the workers' self-management: Yugoslav experience)*, PubliSud/La Breche, 1988.

<sup>29</sup> See e.g. Evgeny Pashukanis, *The General Theory of Law and Marxism*, Chapter 4: Commodity and the Subject and Chapter 5: Law and the State, from Evgeny Pashukanis, *Selected Writings on Marxism and Law*, edited by Piers Beirne and Robert Sharlet, Academic Press Inc, 1980,

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/pashukanis/1924/law/ch04.htm>

<sup>30</sup> “Top-secret documents provided by WikiLeaks to two media outlets, Mediapart and Libération, showed that the NSA had access to confidential conversations of France’s highest ranking officials, including the country’s current president, François Hollande; the prime minister in 2012, Jean-Marc Ayrault; and former presidents Nicolas Sarkozy and Jacques Chirac.”

Martin Untersinger: “If You Can’t Beat ’Em: France, Up In Arms Over NSA Spying, Passes New Surveillance Law”, *The Intercept*, June 24 2015,

<https://theintercept.com/2015/06/24/france-protests-nsa-spying-passes-new-surveillance-law>

<sup>31</sup> See Slavoj Žižek, *Antigone*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2016.

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<sup>32</sup> *The German Ideology (Critique of Modern German Philosophy According to Its Representatives Feuerbach, B. Bauer and Stirner, and of German Socialism According to Its Various Prophets)*, (German: *Die deutsche Ideologie*) is a set of manuscripts written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the Spring of 1846. Full text: [https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/Marx\\_The\\_German\\_Ideology.pdf](https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/Marx_The_German_Ideology.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> “The ideology of the rulers should be distinguished from the ruling ideology. The *ruling ideology* is the one that exists, in material terms, within the institutional network, and the current glue of the institutional network is *the ethnic state*. On the other hand, the *ideology of the rulers*, the ether of self-understanding of the ruling class, or at least the greater part of its factions, is the ideology of pacts concluded between the political class and other power groups (in the economy, administration, the machinery for producing public opinion, and only partially in "culture"). It is also, which is of particular importance - a tool for establishing short-term "civic" consensuses *on the horizon of the nationalist 'grand narrative'*.”  
“Extravagantia II: How much fascism?”, A selection from the book by Rastko Močnik, Red Thread, Issue 1, 2009, <http://www.red-thread.org/en/article.asp?a=19>