

The Crisis of Determinate Negation (Chap. 7 of *In Defense of Lost Causes*)

I. Negri and determinate negation (of capitalism)

- A) Negri against Bartleby's "abstract negation" ("I would prefer not to") (353)
cf. Frankfurt School and Agamben's "abstract negation" of capitalism
(utopian longing for "wholly Other," "unmediated Outside") (337)--
- B) The crisis of Hegel's "determinate negation": Different modes of the avoidance of politics as a traumatic Real or negativity
- 1) The discourse of the Hysteric: Critchley's extra-statal anarchic ethico-political agent acts like a superego, comfortably bombarding the state with demands---"ethical commitment to a Good,""the notion of politics as resistance to state power on behalf of this ethical Call" (340) →The superego as the carnival of totalitarianism, as ethical betrayal, as the obfuscation of the constitutive negativity or death drive (342-43)
 - 2) The discourse of the University: Negri's biopolitics—immaterial and cognitive labor (informational revolution) become immediately productive (350-51), open up the possibility of 'absolute democracy'(356), and are directly biopolitical, productive of social life→The duality of capitalism is neglected by Negri (359) —Negri's logic of expression (anti-representation) is a fantasy and perspective illusion, a disavowal of the gap or duality (365-66)

II. Negri's one-side appropriation of Deleuze

- A) Negri leaves out the radical duality of Deleuze's thought : there is "an irreducible gap between material productivity and the virtual flow of Sense" (365).
- B) Alienation is constitutive of social life; Self-transparent society is a utopia with totalitarian potential; no movements without governing (377); a split is constitutive of the represented "people" (378)

III. Deleuze's ontological duality and ambiguity:

- A) Duality
- 1) The duality of the virtual and the actual (366)(De Landa, *Intensive Science & Virtual Philosophy*)
 - 2) The logic of pure becoming as sterile effect versus the logic of pure becoming as productive process (*Organ without Bodies*, 32)
- B) Ambiguity

- 1) Deleuze's "flat resolution" of his ontological duality—"the virtual field is (re)interpreted as that of generative, productive forces, opposed to the space of representations (366)
- 2) Ambiguity of Deleuze's "virtual" — Either the infinite field of virtuality is an immaterial effect of interacting bodies, or the bodies themselves emerge, actualize themselves, from this field of virtuality (368) — Is this opposition of the virtual as the site of productive Becoming and the virtual as the site of the sterile Sense-Event not, at the same time, the opposition of the "body without organs" and "organs without a body"? (368)
- C) Two different kinds of politics derivable from Deleuze's ambiguity (369)
 - 1) The ontology of productive Becoming—the self-organization of the multitude of molecular groups-→multitude is a perspective illusion or a fantastic staging (365)
 - 2) Base/superstructure, a shadow theater, pseudo causes which are crucial in transforming reality (relative autonomy of the sense-event) (370)

IV. Žižek's (Hegel's) determinate negation (as negation of negation) (c.f. p.409)

- A) What, however, if the infamous 'Hegelian determinate negation' aims precisely at the fact that every particular formation involves a gap between the Universal and the Particular – or, in Hegelese, that a particular formation never coincides with its (universal) notion – and that it is this very gap that brings about its dialectical dissolution. (*Contingency, Hegemony, Universality*, 60)
- B) "Negation of negation": instead of directly negating-destroying the ruling power, remaining within its field, it undermines this very field, opening up a new positive space (409)
- C) objet a and politics—parallax view of objet a (distinction between desired object and object cause as the object of drive, as a hole or gap) (from the lost object to loss itself as an object)(328)
- D) A split which always-already cuts from the represented "people" (378) —Leader (universality, true identity, Cause)—the external figure of the analyst (378) —radical change of identity (378)
- E) The focus should be shifted from the utopian goal of full reign of productive expressivity (that no longer needs representation, state order, capital, and so forth), to the question, "What kind of representation should replace the existing liberal-democratic representative state?"(375), and to the status of "totalitarian excess" (378)
- F) Dictatorship of the proletariat (379)—the totalitarian excess as part of no part—to twist the very space of state representation in their direction

- G) The Party(not democratic party) —the movements’ self-sublation, a movement transubstantiated into the form of political universality (377)
- H) Lenin—Lenin’s moment as the vanishing mediator—an “anomaly” (360), “weakest link in the chain”(361), the impossible within the existing framework (310), which can help spotlight the antagonism and point to a revolutionary explosion—the condition of impossibility as the condition of possibility (361)—anti-determinism, anti-evolutionism, hopelessness as chance for freedom, “alternate history”(361)