

Pity, Manifestos, and the Left

The left is dead; it died of pity for itself. Questions of where the ‘radical’ non-liberal left is going, of where it needs to go, of where it could go if only any given line of programmatic measures were applied, all are the staples of any properly rounded left-academic polemic which may appear in the spectacular of today. One might think that after decades of aimless reiteration, that this endlessly predictable ideological parade of elementary neo-Kautskyite commentary might have lost some of its initial shine, but, as is the case with any socially iterated necessity, the presentation is always rapid enough in its evolution to stay afloat in the myth of originality—so long as the need remains for the castration of theory, this will remain an unquestionable trend of our times. The continued development of bourgeois production, long since realized as spectacle (too often are additives fixed to the phrase for reasons far too poorly constructed to pass as valid), has persisted in preparing heightened numbers of would-be discontents with the heightened intricacy of its various new reiterations on the classical theme of representation in the false, ‘discontents’ which it needs to protect purely as ‘discontents’.

Like any worthless consumer product, the left has been built up with promises in every presumable field of falsely dreamed desire, promising to fulfill every modern dream of the modern consumer that capitalism has simply failed to imbue all with, promising a capitalism without capital, consumption without work, a final synthesis of reality with its fraudulent depiction of commodity-induced utopia. With its aging, it has only become more diverse, more diffuse, with numerous additions in flavoring, coloring, and packaging having been tacked onto the same tired ideological currents upon which the commodity has always been founded upon.

Inevitably, the corollary is not absent from this pseudo-debate either, making the coup of the left all the more convincing, as it has what appears to be a good and proper oppositional force in the swelling markets of the intellectual. Every imaginable left party bureaucracy, the skeletal corpses of every blend of Leninism, all are clamoring in rapid opposition to any article for left unity and to any outfit making a pass at the phrase; these debates are not anything new to the history of the ideology, they wrote the battleplan well over a century ago and are quite fully capable of conducting themselves both defensively and offensively in this still entirely predictable organizational dichotomy. As far back as the organizational split in the question of inclusivity vs exclusivity that split the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, the more self-conscious

bureaucrats of the left have realized that a strong correlation exists between group size and ease of maintenance, with regards to their own power. Not averse to such self-serving sentiments themselves, the careerists of the opposite camp of traditional mass leftist organizing, the lingering vestige of Kautsky's SPD, have since proven themselves entirely capable of making a spectacle of the mystical call to unity in party organization in an époque which has long since killed the mass party. It's a useful ordering of the question for both sides, however, despite the fact that they wouldn't dare risking the exposure of the illusory notion to the light of day. They all want the force of power associated with mass, but they all want to be the exclusive bureaucrats residing over said power, so goes the conflict between the mass and cell based party.

The Democrats depend on the Republican menace for negative self definition, vice versa, so follows the ordering of modern leftist ideology. No one is quite sure these days of the differences present between the 50 or so leading Trotskyite parties competing for the title of America's next top vanguard except the leading members of said groups. Such is beneficial, it gives them all something terribly important to kill time with, providing them with the always valued sentiment of having completed some model of political labor. And, in the ranks of a recomposed modernist ideology, an ideology still thoroughly beholden to the myth of labor's naturally imbued positivity, this is a factor not to be scoffed at for its purposes of delusion.

Regardless of whether or not they consider revolution to be a spectacle created at the behest of a few, or they consider it to require a mass 'proletarian' party of sorts, the end results all exist within close ideological proximity. The more hardened neo-Bolsheviks of today may consider the process on a sliding scale, with more leverage towards rapid transformation towards the myth of their respective rise to dictatorial power, while the holders of the mass line consider these efforts to require more overtures towards the political of today, but the aim is yet a complete realization of a centralized spectacle continually perfected. The baggage maintained by most that inner party democracy will keep a mass political grouping in line isn't of much note in this process towards a more thoroughly controlled state management of capitalist production, the notion of critiquing the image of modern democracy with the corollary of a mystified 'economic democracy' exists only to provide the worker with yet another brand of illusive poverty. Yes, the left of today will employ all with fair wages, provide all with centralized healthcare, furnish our department stores with the 'fairly' produced commodity, all the while eliminating the tyranny of the integrated diffuse with a return to a more modern and equitable tyranny of rationally planned

alienation. Militant reformism remains reformism in the society of the spectacle, citations of Lenin and Marx aside.

It's a shame, surely, to think of the casualties suffered in wasted ink on this question since shown to be productive only to aims counter to those of revolt, but, once again, it's a shame which does not at the same time stimulate surprise. The left of today replicates all the pseudo-debates and false inquiry as the left of yesterday, in much the same manner the spectacle repeats itself to a point where the repetition is simply recognizable by virtue purely of multitude. Neo-liberalism is the final enemy of the left today; every article must cite it for legitimacy, that is how we know that liberalism remains our enemy. Liberalism, in all its varied forms, is in power, it must temper its promises in action- whereas the left is the shadow government of liberal thought, free of such constraints in its speech and thus prepared with the allowance to generate what false divisions between itself and liberalism proper that it may please. Neo-liberalism serves to remind all that differences exist between the radical left and the liberal left, that radical leftist organizing still yet has a justification for its continued existence to the spectacle.

Once it could be said that the struggle of organized labor, and its hoards of leftist collaborators, was one of some historical salience, when it occupied something of a discernible relation to then popular conceptions of class struggle, but these lessons of revolt have remained entirely static in an époque of class dominance marked by fluidity. The pendulum of capital versus labor has become so thoroughly recuperated into the discourse of the spectacle that today most any argument hinged on the premise automatically finds itself a victim of unconscious self-castration. Use value no longer exists, production no longer exists in relation to organic social demand, all the production that appears today does so simply for the ends of expansion in the field of production. Modernist ideology has run amuck with the creation of increasingly intricate desires and their correlative commodities, this is *the* reality of what passes as the mystic 'neo-liberal' adversary. Questions of revolution today are not questions of how to create an eco-friendly capitalism under the guise of socialism, of designs for communal living to be applied today, but rather questions of how to do away with this complete totality.

The affairs of organizational trifle are now to be viewed as they are, the marginalized fringes will now be given critical inquiry into the cause of their marginalization, revolution demands nothing short of such action. *Around the inventors of new values the world revolves*. The question of negating the image of revolution by party is certainly not one of

original qualities, the history of anarchism is laden with appearances to just such conflict, but their fetishistic love of negation without negation is yet another ideological barrier to the end of a revolution made for the total destruction of the society of spectacle. “Ideology is the falsehood of language and radical theory its truth.” spoke Vaneigem in his *Revolution of Everyday Life*, in a phrase yet relevant to the struggle for truly revolutionary organization today, which is to say, in the struggle for negative revolutionary organization, or, a fully expressed *style of negation*.

What is demanded of ones understanding of revolution is thus not a strong eco-consciousness, not a illusory villain with no bearing in the class struggle (the chimera of neoliberalism), not another manifesto on repackaged reform, but rather, an acceptance that *we know nothing of modern revolt*. The knowledge of revolution will come with the creation of revolution, until that time, our efforts as revolutionists can only lie in the aim of detonating just such a process. Radical separation from the world of separation, such is the only act one can turn to as fertile ground for the discovery of such detonations, as embodied in this model of critique is a critique of the totality. This critique does not entail physical isolation from the centers of modern production, such an illusion has crippled far too many self-assumed anarchist ideologues, but rather an integrated comment against the integrated. A detournement of all that is at once presented within the field of capital's vision necessary must be predicated on the presence of some model of engagement, rarely are battles won through a procession of retreat maneuvers.

He who has knowledge walks among the left today *as* among animals. Dead are all ideologies, now we want to live...let this be our last will.

-R.-M. Rogers

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