

Sixth Presentation

BACK TO MARX:

Capital itself is the moving contradiction, [in] that it presses to reduce labour time to a minimum, while it posits labour time, on the other side, as sole measure and source of wealth. Hence it diminishes labour time in the necessary form so as to increase it in the superfluous form; hence posits the superfluous in growing measure as a condition – question of life or death – for the necessary. On the one side, then, it calls to life all the powers of science and of nature, as of social combination and of social intercourse, in order to make the creation of wealth independent (relatively) of the labour time employed on it. On the other side, it wants to use labour time as the measuring rod for the giant social forces thereby created, and to confine them within the limits required to maintain the already created value as value. Forces of production and social relations – two different sides of the development of the social individual – appear to capital as mere means, and are merely means for it to produce on its limited foundation. In fact, however, they are the material conditions to blow this foundation sky-high. ‘Truly wealthy a nation, when the working day is 6 rather than 12 hours. Wealth is not command over surplus labour time’ (real wealth), ‘but rather, disposable time outside that needed in direct production, for every individual. (Marx Fragment on Machine, Grundrisse)

A CRITICAL CONSENSUS ON 'THE RETURN OF THE SOCIAL' IN NEO-LIBERAL DISCOURSE ('THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS SOCIETY' NO MORE?)

What kind of alternative to a (neoliberal/capitalist) society based in commodification and competition?

Is there some kind of alternative potentially arising from the social to the domination of the economic?

The return of the social in the digital economy and neoliberal discourse (Will Davies, Jodi Dean): social production and social networks?

A social suited to neoliberalism? (individuals connected by links); but also social as pertaining directly to production and not only reproduction. Not just social order, social stability, reproduction, generation, bios, but also productivity, innovation, self-organization (social brain)

Social networks: redeploing statistics and social network analysis to combine stability and value-production (Bernhard Rieder); audiences as data-labor (Ebru Yetiskin)

Social production: Yochai Benkler 2002-2006: an economic heresy (Coate's Penguin) based in neoclassical economics (marginal cost revolution); what counts is

the informational commodity (Rifkin); the invisible hand of the social (allocating tasks and motivations, see Alex Pentland Social Physics); social motivations and social capital; only a sector of the economy;

Social cooperation: Marx: capitalism introduces social cooperation in the factory by dividing physical and intellectual labor; the social of socialism: the collective subsumes the individual, the social as benign cooperation; Italian postworkerism: the social factory and bio-cognitive capitalism: social relations become active in the domain of production (the common and commnfare; Hardt and Negri; Vercellone)

SOME QUESTIONS TOWARDS A CRITICAL CONSENSUS ON 'INFLECTIONS OF THE SOCIAL' IN DIGITAL ECONOMIES:

Are the categories of XIXth century political economy (the factory and division of labor) and XXth century neoclassical economics (the market as formal structure of competition) adequate in accounting for the directly productive nature of social relations in digital economies? (but also maybe social always been productive and not just reproductive?) What is it that the social actually produces and not just reproduces (difference and not just repetition)?

How to renew the social in socialism beyond an emphasis on the collective as force which subsumes the individual?

How do we avoid the double pincer of order and war, friend and enemy, consensus and division?

In which way a social economy reconfigures the distinction between use values and exchange values? How do we define social values (such as truth, beauty, justice etc) ?

How do we account for the role of technologies of social automation? (social graphs, social plug-ins , algorithms, interfaces, platforms, etc)

How do we account for the 'anti-social' trend in hacker cultures (Bitcoin as 'anti-social' coin requiring on the other hand a homogeneous 'socialized belief'?)

What is the role of 'spiritual' (subjective, psychosocial) forces such as belief and desire in social (voluntary) cooperation? How does a social economy based in a multiplicity of beliefs and desires work?

How do we narrate the vision of a new society based in a socialised mode of technoproduction (Nick Dyer-Witford's Red Plenty; Francesca Bria''s cybernetic socialist democratic welfare system?) What kind of human being it presupposes in its relationship to others, machines, animal, nonorganic life, the planet etc?