

# Capitalist Domination and Working Class Sabotage

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## Publisher's Preface

Two years after the writing of "Proletarians and the State", whose theses were taken by many as the theoretical manifesto of the area of Autonomy, Negri takes up again a number of the key problems of his theoretical/political interpretation - in particular that of the '*refusal of work*'. Negri considers that the struggles on 1977 have confirmed his position: it represents a broadening and massification of the phenomenon he calls '*self-valorisation*', and which represents the positive aspect of the refusal of work.

Now, rather than stressing class composition and theses relating to the '*social worker*' Negri stresses the processes of *separation* which counterpose the revolutionary subject to the apparatus of bourgeois society. Sabotage is the real action of *destruction* of capitalist domination; the restructuration promised by the Historic Compromise, on the other hand, is an illusory process, which would not contribute anything in the sense of self-valorisation of the class.

## Authors Preface

This booklet should be seen as a fifth chapter. The preceding chapters are the following: *Crisis of the State-as-Planner: Communism and Working Class Organization* (Feltrinelli, Milan, 1974); *The Working Class Party Against Work* (in *Crisis and Working Class Organisation*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1976); and *Self-valorisation of the Working Class and the Role of the Party* (in my book *The State-Form*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1977).

As I say, a fifth chapter. And thus one which requires a reading of the preceding chapters.

While proof-reading this manuscript, I am thinking about how many *things* stand between each of these chapters. However, if nostalgia is possible within the revolution, then mine is not all melancholic.

A. Negri

Carona. 3rd Sept. 1977

*"Crime, through its constantly new methods of attack on property, constantly calls into being new methods of defence, and thus is as productive as strikes are in relation to the invention of machinery."*

*Karl Marx: Theories of Surplus Value.*

*"What strikes me in your reasoning is that it remains within a schema of 'up until today'. Now, a revolutionary undertaking is directed not only against the 'today', but also against the law of 'up until today'."*

*Michel Foucault: A Microphysics of Power*

### **Chapter One: Lenin is supposed to have said...**

Lenin is supposed to have said (a claim made by Keynes) that inflation is the weapon best guaranteed to bring about a crisis of the capitalist economies. The attribution of this statement to Lenin - a statement so much beloved by bourgeois economics and not just by Keynes, as evidenced by their continual repetition of it - is demonstrably apocryphal. This was recently shown by F.W.Fetter in *Economica* 44, Feb.1977, No.173, pp 77-80. The offending phrase is nowhere to be found in Lenin's works. In fact, insofar as Lenin explicitly deals with the problems of inflation, his emphasis is along the lines of a moralistic denunciation of its effects on the poor classes - a denunciation well within the Socialist tradition.

This does not mean, however, that other Bolsheviks did not at various points stress the destabilising effect of inflation in relation to capitalist power. Preobrazhensky speaks for then all with his description of "paper money as a machine gun for the Finance Commissariat to fire at the bourgeoisie, enabling the monetary laws of that regime to be used in order to destroy it". Also I am not implying that such a sentiment would have been uncharacteristic of Lenin: he was, after all, intent on grasping the interconnections between the revolutionary insurgence of the proletariat and the crisis of imperialism.

However, I am convinced that the sense of any such statement by Lenin would have been a complex thing. In fact, in Lenin's teaching, any action that *destabilises the capitalist regime* is immediately accompanied by action that *destructures* capitalist's system.

Insurrectional action against the State is articulated in relation to the task of destroying the State. I am not giving an anarchist interpretation of Lenin's thought. I am simply highlighting the "destabilization-destruction" nexus which is present in a precise and continuing manner in Lenin's thinking, as in all revolutionary Marxist

thinking (with the exception, realistically speaking, of anarchist immediatism). Thus, in this sense, F.W.Fetter is right when he says that the statement regarding the positive effect of inflation for the revolutionary process cannot be unreservedly attributed to Lenin: one cannot allow the destabilisation effect alone to predominate. The crisis of capitalism has to have a direction, which is imposed and controlled by the power of the proletariat. Destabilisation of the regime cannot be seen as distinct from the project of deconstructing the system. The insurrection cannot be separated from the project of abolishing the State.

With this we arrive at the heart of today's political debate. Two different positions are present within working class and proletarian autonomy. Destabilisation of the regime and deconstruction of the system sometimes appear as divergent objectives, and as such they are built into differing tactical and strategic projects. Is it right that this divergence should exist?

Let us start by looking at the problem from capital's viewpoint. For capital there is no problem: *restructuration of the system is a precondition -the stabilisation of the regime*, and vice-versa. The tactical problems arise *within* the relative rigidity of this relationship, and not outside it - at least, ever since capitalist development has rendered undesirable the option of operating force and duress (in the sense of mere physical force against the working class and the proletariat).

For capital the solution of the crisis consists in a restructuring of the system that will defeat and reintegrate the antagonistic components of the proletariat within the project of political stabilisation. In this sense capital is well aware of the importance of having the proletariat as antagonist and is also - often, in fact - aware of the *quality* of that antagonism. Capital has often accepted that the working class struggle is the motor of development - and has even accepted that proletarian self-valorisation should dicta the pace and nature of development: what it needs to eliminate is not the existence, but the antagonistic element of the working class movement. Taken this to (paradoxical) extremes, we could say that for capital there is no possibility of effective political stabilisation (ie no possibility of command and exploitation within a dimension of an enlarged reproduction of profit) except to the extent that it proves possible to take the proletarian movement as the base, the starting point for restructuration. The interests of the proletariat, however, are quite the opposite. The proletariat aims at a critical grasp of the nexus between stabilisation and restructuration, in order then to attack it. To overthrow this relationship and to transform it into a project of destabilisation - and also deconstruction - this is the interest of the working class. In general.

Now, to be particular: today we have two opposed fronts - that of capital and that of the proletariat. The divergent antagonism in the direction of the movement of the two

fronts is absolutely clear. This is due to the singularity of the balance of power between the two classes in struggle. Both the classes have the ability to take action both on the system and on the regime; the actions of both are capable of directly affecting the nexus of the overall relationship. Thus, 'if we do not focus our discussion on this nexus, on the way in which it is affected in an antagonistic manner by the two classes in struggle, we risk dangerously oversimplifying the debate.

For capital, as we have pointed out, the problem exists only in relative form. We could cite one or two examples. During the past 10 years we have seen such a continuous and active interpenetration of these two moments as to eliminate all "catastrophist" interpretations and theories of the crisis. The "crisis-State" has not for one moment ceased to be also a "planned-State". All the elements of destabilisation that working class and proletarian struggle has brought into action against the State have one by one been taken on board by capital and transformed into instruments of restructuration. Inflation in particular, far from being a moment of destabilisation - has been transformed into its opposite - into a decisive instrument of restructuration. At a very high cost, admittedly: albeit within a deepening tendency of the rate of profit to fall, capital has been forced to take planned action which permitted the maintenance of (high) levels of working class valorisation and thus the non-devaluation of (overall) labour power. This notwithstanding, the "catastrophe" appears not to have materialised! Obviously this process has not been free of situations of subjective crisis for the capitalist class. But the constant, continuing operation of *reinforcing the State-form* -ie of the *imposition of the law of value* (albeit in continuously modifying form) as a measure and a synthesis of stabilisation and restructuration - has never faltered. When we speak of a crisis of the law of value, we must beware *the fact that this law is in a crisis does not at all mean that it does not operate*; rather it *modifies its form*, transforming it from a law of political economy into a form of State-command. But for capital there is no such thing as command without a content, and a quite specific content at that - a content of exploitation. Thus the rhythms of exploitation within which the social mechanism of the reproduction of exploitation is to be stabilised, must be dictated by the law of value. "Then the proletariat respectfully declines this invitation to dinner, when all the economic parameters of the relationship explode, then it is factory command (*commando d'impresa*), it is the political transformation of factory-command into the State-form which takes the upper hand in order to redetermine the functional relationship of value, the law of exploitation.

Recent studies '(Lapo Berti in *Primo Maggio*, or Christian Marazzi and John Merrington's presentation to the *British Conference of Socialist economists* in 1977) have broadly confirmed and documented this process, with particular regard to monetary questions - questions which today are undeniably fundamental to any consideration of the transformation of the law of value. This has led 'to a correct

insistence upon the theorisation of the capitalist State (and of its development) as the authoritative form of the capital relation (eg John Holloway, Sol Picciotto, in *Capital and Class* No.2, Summer 1977, pp 76-101). Thus, within the critique of political economy an understanding of the structural relation of capitalist development (and of the capitalist crisis) has been developing, in Opposition to existing purely objectivist notions.

But all this is not enough. The working class consciousness within the critique of political economy must transform itself into awareness of the revolutionary project. The proletarian opposition has no choice but to consolidate itself into practical overthrow, into subversion. But it is the *whole* relationship which, both in its political aspects and in its structural foundations, is to be subverted. It is not possible to simply eliminate the complexity of the relation imposed by the State form of the organisation of exploitation; we cannot escape - either via subjective voluntarism or via collective spontaneism - the difficulties, the problems, the determinations which arise from this form. We have come perilously close to this during the last phase of the struggle. The divergence has, as I stated earlier, involved a tendency for strategic and tactical projects to diverge. Is it right that this divergence should exist?

In my opinion it risks proving fatal for the entire movement. And in this situation I am really not sure which is preferable - a rapid decease brought about by the plague of subjectivity, or the long, slow agony and delirium of the syphilis of spontaneism. However, counter-indications do exist; a constructive project is possible. It is to be found and is being developed through the articulations of the *mass line*, in the dialectic that the proletariat continually puts in motion, the dialectic between its ability to consolidate itself structurally (the strengthening of that mass counter-power, which, in itself, tends to disorientate and throw out of balance capital's plans for restructuration) and its capacity for political attack, (a destabilising capacity which shatters the nodes of the enemy's power, which emphasises and shows the emptiness of the spectacular nature of that power, and destroys its force). This dialectic is internal to the mass movement, and we need to deepen it further. As I have stated, the project of deconstructing the capitalist system cannot be separated from the project of destabilising capital's regime. The necessity of this inter-relationship is revealed at the level of the power-relationship between the two classes, today, inasmuch as the mass line has been completely developed into a *project of proletarian self-valorisation*.

I should explain: *the concept of proletarian self-valorisation is the opposite of the concept State-form* - it is the form that power assumes within a further-developed workerist standpoint. Proletarian self-valorisation is immediately the deconstruction of the enemy power; it is the process through which working class struggle today attacks directly the system of exploitation and its political regime. The socialisation of capitalist development has permitted the working class to transform the diverse

moments of communist strategy (the insurrection and the abolition of the State) into a process and to unify them into a project. Proletarian self-valorisation is the global, mass, productive figuration of this project. Its dialectic is powerful inasmuch as it is global, and global inasmuch as it is powerful. Elsewhere (in *La Forma-Stato* - "The State Form" - Feltrinelli, Milan 1977, pp 297-342) I have tried to demonstrate the *formal conditions* whereby the Marxist critique of political economy reveals the independence of the working class as a project of self-valorisation. Now we are forced by the constructive polemic that is going on in the Movement to think out the real and immediate political condition's for this independence of the proletariat. And within the Movement we shall have a battle on two fronts: against the diseases of insurrectionism and subjectivism on the one hand; and on the other - most importantly - against the opportunism, streaked with pacifist Utopianism, which mythologises the gentle growth of an impotent "movement" of desires and nothing else.

It is clear that the polemic within the Movement can only develop if it takes as its practical and theoretical starting point *the deepening of both the concept and the experiences of proletarian self-valorisation*. This is something I shall attempt in the course of this book. But it may be useful to anticipate one particular polemical point of departure, in relation to two recent propositions: that of Lea Melandri (*L'Infamia Originale*, Milan 1977) and that of Furio di Paola (*Quaderni di Ombre Rosse* No.1, Rome 1977). In both these cases the discussion is built around a radical initial mystification, from which we must free ourselves right from the start. It is a mystification that arises from a radicalisation of the polemic against "power", in which the specific and determined nature of power is denied. In fact, for these comrades power can be - in the words of the old philosophers - predicated only univocally - ie defined and qualified solely as an attribute of capital or as its reflection. This position is false, even if it does correctly pose the problem of the non-homologability of the concept of power as between its capitalist usage and its proletarian usage (ie the untranslatability of the term). But, precisely, this is a problem of method 'which cannot be answered with a reply that is radically negative in its content. From this point of view you end up playing into the enemy's hands - ie you maintain that the only meaningful linguistic horizon is that pertaining to the structure of capitalist power (a position which, apart from anything else, is contradictory with the spirit and the method of approach to the analysis of self-valorisation within women's autonomy and youth autonomy which forms the substance of both these essays).

And it is this which is false. Power, party: Panzieri used to say "that in such conditions the party will become something wholly new, and it even becomes difficult to use that term". Very true. But elsewhere, and in the same sense, he adds: "no revolution without a party". And we might further add: "without power, no proletarian

self-valorisation". And then we could even change the terminology, if you like! But first let us reconquer the dialectical unity of the process of proletarian self-valorisation, its tendency towards the deconstruction of the enemy power as a project for its own liberation, as a powerful and effective struggle for its own proletarian independence.

One final note, as a prelude. It is not hard to understand how important it is *at the level of militancy* to stress the necessary relationship between action that is materially destructuring and action that politically restabilises the enemy power. Here in fact, that slender but strong thread that feeds subjectivity with a *mass-content*, which transforms proletarian love into struggle against the enemy, which gives a joint basis and a bonding of class hatred and the passion for freedom, finds again its unifying wellspring. The personal is political, through this collective mediation. It is the collective praxis of proletarian self-valorisation that determines the unity of the subjective awareness. It is this dynamic and productive being that constitutes our dignity as revolutionaries. Thus, both objectively and subjectively, we have no choice but to fight to re-establish the complexity of the revolutionary proposition, in relation to the independence of proletarian self-valorisation.

## **Chapter 2 Parenthesis no.1: Regarding Method**

When I theorise an independence of the process of proletarian self-valorisation, and when I examine the possibility of its having an internal dialectic of continuous recomposition between structural functions and attacking functions, I am bound to draw certain methodological conclusions. First, it seems to me fundamental to consider the totality of the process of proletarian self-valorisation as *alternative* to, and radically *different* from, the totality of the process of capitalist production and reproduction. I realise that I am exaggerating the position, and oversimplifying its complexity. But I also know that this "intensive road", this radical break with the totality of capitalist development, is a fundamental experience of the movement as it stands today.

*Today the process of constituting class independence is first and foremost a process of separation.*

I am emphasising this forced separation in order to clarify the overall meaninglessness of a capitalist world within which I find myself constituted in non-independent form, in the form of exploitation. I thus refuse to accept the recompositional dialectic of capital; I affirm in sectarian manner my own separateness, my own independence, the differentness of my constitution. As H.J.Krahl understood (in his book *Constitution and Class Consciousness* -a book which, with the passing of the years, becomes increasingly important), the totality of class consciousness is first and foremost an

intensive condition, a process of intensification of class self-identity as a productive being, which destroys the relationship with the totality of the capitalist system.

Working class self-valorisation is first and foremost destructuration of the enemy totality, taken to a point of exclusivity in the self-recognition of the class's collective independence. For my own part I do not see the history of class consciousness in a Lukacsian sense, as some future all-embracing recomposition; on the contrary, I see it as a moment of intensive rooting within my own separateness. I am *other* - as also is the movement of that collective praxis within which I move. I belong to the *other movement* of the working class. Of course, I am aware of all the criticisms that could be levelled at this position from a traditional Marxist viewpoint. For my own part, I have the sense of having placed myself at the extreme limits of meaning in a political class debate. But anyone who comes with accusations, pressing me with criticism and telling me that I am wrong, must, in turn, accept the responsibility of being a participant in the monstrosities we have seen in the development of "socialism" - with its illicit dealings with the most disgusting results of the capitalist mode of production. It is only by recognising myself as other, only by insisting on the fact of my differentness as a radical totality that I have the possibility and the hope of a renewal.

Furthermore, in my insistence on this radical methodological rupture I am in good company. The *continuity* of the *history of the working class revolutionary movement* is the *history of the discontinuity of that movement*, the history of the radical ruptures that have characterised it. The revolutionary working class movement is continually being reborn from a virgin mother. The hacks of continuity are still alive and well in the History Institutes of the labour movement. But luckily militant historiography is undergoing a renaissance too, spurred by the experience of the ruptures in our present movement - and in our history-writing we are now confident enough to present the notion of the "other workers' movement". Thus the methodological precondition of an initial radical rupture (which we consider fundamental for any renewal of the social practice of the proletariat) is empirically corroborated by an extensive documentation (limited, perhaps, in scale, but remarkable in its intensity). When Karl-Heinz Roth (*Die Andere Arbeiterbewegung* - "The Other Workers' Movement", shortly to be published by CSE Books), or Gisela Bock *La Formazione dell'Operaio Massa ne li USA* - "The Formation of the Mass Worker in the USA" - Feltrinelli, Milano, 1976 tell the formidable story of how the working class in struggle has continually destroyed its own traditional organizations they are certainly not animated by a spirit of iconoclasm: rather, they are highlighting the radical, irreducible differentness of the revolutionary movement. This is a perspective which could also provide us with a feel for other historical revolutionary experiences of the proletariat - experiences that have proved victorious and have (therefore) been betrayed and destroyed.



So, I must assume this radical "otherness" as a methodological precondition of the subversive case we are arguing - namely the project of proletarian self-valorisation. But what about the relationship with the totality of history, the relationship with the totality of the system? Here I must now face up to the second methodological consequence of my assumption: *my relationship with the totality of capitalist development, with the totality of historical development, is guaranteed solely by the force of destructure that the movement determines, by the global sabotage of the history of capital that the movement enacts. There is only one way that I can read the history of capital - as the history of a continuity of operations of self-re-establishment that capital and its State have to set in motion in order to counter the continuous breakdown process, the permanent provocation-towards-separation that the real movement brings about. The present state of things is built upon a continuity of destruction, of abolition of transcendence that the real movement brings about.* I define myself by separating myself from the totality; I define the totality as other than me - as a net which is cast over the continuity of the historical sabotage that the class operates.

And thus (here is the third methodological implication) - there is *no homology*, no possible immediate translatability of languages, of logics, signs, between the reality of the movement as I experience it and the overall framework of capitalist development, with its contents and its objectives.

Let us now pause and consider the question from another angle. The fundamental point, however you look at the question, is obviously still the nexus between the process of self-valorisation and its effects in destructure. I have taken this nexus to extremes, and I have defined it as separation. Basing myself on the experience of the movement, I have stressed first and foremost the subjective element. If I now approach the question from the objective point of view - the viewpoint of the Crisis-State (*Stato-crisi*), the position is no different. When the State, faced with the crisis in the functioning of the law of value, attempts to reimpose that law by force, mediating its own relation to capital in relation to the commodity form, it registers upon itself, in effect, the crisis of all homologous functions. Force does not substitute for value, but provides a surrogate for its form.

The law of value may be forcibly reintroduced, in spite of the crisis of that law, and its operations may be imposed in modified form - but this does not remove the void of significations that Power is forced to register. The Crisis-State is a power which lives in a vacuum of significations, a void, a logic of force/logic which is itself destructured. This logic, this critical form, is a "dark night in which all cows are white": in other words, the meaning of the whole is not in any way provided by the perfect connection of the parts. The State's investment in the totality is purely negative, in terms of meaning. The rule of total alienation is the only possible content

of this project. The totality is a void, is structured as deconstruction, as a radical lack of value. Thus it becomes clear what we mean in this case by a lack of homology. All the elements of the whole are unified in a *technical* sense; they only hang together in their mutual untranslatability; only in the form of a forced relationship. So, from an *objective* viewpoint too, the system can be seen - *must* be seen - as deconstructed.

However, while our consideration of the objective aspect of the situation confirms our analysis of the subjective aspect, the objective aspect has neither the same logical extension nor the capacity to substitute for the subjective. One cannot move from the understanding of deconstruction as an effect, to the identification of the process of self-valorisation as the cause. This is particularly clear in the analytic principles of Michel Foucault (and in particular his methodological treatment in *La Volonte de Savoir*), which have caught my attention because of the way they strain after a notion of a productivity, a creativity of an unknown quantity located beyond the cognitive horizon.

This is also clear - and, furthermore, scandalous - in the various surreptitious attempts that are being made to reimpose a sense of conclusiveness on this deconstructed horizon. (These attempts, be they humanistic in inspiration, or conceived in terms of *Wille zur Macht*, do nonetheless start from a correct perception of the blind objectivity of the development of capital's system. Regarding Cacciari's *Krisis* - Feltrinelli, Milan 1977 - see my review in Nos.155-156 of *Aut-Aut*). But this surreptitiously-restated homology this "revolution from above" in the absence of radical significance - can be seen clearly, in the light of what we have said, for what it is - a fraud.

The above considerations lead me now to confirm my original hypothesis of *the prevalence of the subjective* in the explanation of the present-day dialectic of capital. Taking the subjective viewpoint to extremes does not negate its methodological validity. Rather, it confirms and extends it. It permits me, in the articulation between self-valorisation and deconstruction, to avoid both premature reductivist foreclosures of the problem (because in fact it is the productivity of the proletarian subject that structures the deconstruction, ie negatively determines its own opposite); and, on the other hand, totalising dialectical extensions of the discourse, because, in this case, there are no longer any homologous functions.

We are not suggesting that methodology in any sense resolves the problems that face us (although a correct framing of the solution is greatly facilitated). We know that the methodological hypothesis requires confirmation from class analysis. It is only the theoretical-political determination of the composition of the working class that can offer a sound basis for a methodological hypothesis such as ours. And in fact the following methodological approximations, without pretending to be exhaustive, confirm our initial methodological assumption that, today, the establishment of

working class independence takes place first and foremost in its separation. But *separation* in this instance means *breaking the capital relation*. Separation also means that, having reached the highest point of socialisation, the working class breaks *the laws of the social mediation* of capital. Marx in *Capital* Vol.11, 1, calls for "another mode of inquiry" in the analysis of the metamorphoses of overall social capital. Is this to be a logic of separation? Is it to be a *Darstellung* built on carrying to extremity this independent proletarian subjectivity, built on the movements of proletarian self-valorisation as such?

I think that these questions are important for the further development of this essay. However, before going further, they can be further articulated at a formal and methodological level, in order to constitute a framework for the ensuing debate. Let us look more closely. As I have said, the separateness of the proletarian subject is organised in the dialectic between self-valorising productivity and functions of deconstruction. I know, however, that this dialectic does not produce effects of homology and of totalisation, because it is a dialectic of separation. But, equally necessarily it is inherent in The complexity of The events that are being determined. How? In particular, how does this articulation of a separate subject relate to the constitution of capitalist domination? Secondly and conversely, how precisely does the constitutive process of the collective subjectivity proceed, in all its radicality and intensity?

In short, *what are the laws that govern* (albeit in a situation of separateness, of lack of any homology) *the parallel and opposed processes of the State-form and of proletarian self-valorisation?*

The further development of this book will be dedicated to answering these questions. But in defining the problems we can now add a couple of further notes - first in relation to the *self-valorisation/deconstruction nexus*. In the history of socialist thought and practice. The sense of proletarian self-valorisation has often been expressed with original intensity. (If Gramsci's teachings can be retained in any useful sense today, it is certainly in this regard). But it is never expressed in terms of separateness - rather it is always expressed in a dialectical sense in relation to the totality. Reciprocation takes the place of opposition. In the social-anarchist tradition this reciprocity, this correspondence, has been played out in terms of the dialectic between centralisation and decentralisation. Thus it is not difficult, in a critique that starts with Marx and stretches through to Foucault's edition of the *Panopticon*, to demonstrate the perfect compatibility of Proudhon and Bentham. But this compatibility also exists in the tradition of "scientific socialism" - this time not extensive (between centralization and decentralisation), but intensive between the general working class interest and the general interests of society, between socialism and democracy). This compatibility, of the process of self-valorisation with the

productive structuration of society, is a myth. It is not Proudhon and Bentham, but Rousseau and Stalin who are the fathers of this much-loved synthesis. personally, I have no time for the so-called "nouveaux philosophes", but I must say I am rather disconcerted when I see representatives of the historical parties of the working class, who have always been enamoured of the link between rationalism and productive Stalinism, insulting these young philosophers for having drawn attention to this mystifying connection".

In short, they are addressing themselves to a problem which no longer has any real basis. Class self-valorisation has nothing to do with the structuration of capital. But it has a lot to do with its de-structuration. The whole of capitalist development, ever since the working class reached its present high level of composition, has been nothing other than the obverse, a reaction to, a following-in-the-footsteps-of proletarian self-valorisation -a repeated operation of self-protection, of recuperation, of adjustment in relation to the effects of self-valorisation, which are effects of sabotage of the capitalist machine. Tronti is correct in his latest utterance that the modern State is the political form of the autonomy of the working class. But correct in what sense? In the sense - for him too, with his revamped socialism - of compatibility and convergence? Not at all, comrade: here the methodology of the *critique of political economy* has to be modified, taking as its starting point proletarian self-valorisation, its separateness, and the effects of sabotage that it determines. In particular it is within *this* perspective that we must frame our analysis of the State-form.

If our analysis of the nexus between self-valorisation and State structure leads us along a path of causality that is negative and destructuring, the situation is different when we come to consider our methodological approach to the *nexus of self-valorisation with itself* in its separateness. Here we shall have to stress and adequately analyse the synchronous dimensions of the process. But here, too, there can be no recourse to models of "continuity", to functional determinations! What can be said straightaway -because it constitutes the heart and substance of the methodological proposition itself - is that the separateness of proletarian *self-valorisation* itself appears as a *discontinuity*, as a conjoining of leaps and innovations. The method of social transformation that derives from the self-valorising separateness of the proletariat has nothing in common with the homologies of rationalist or historicist progressivism. Proletarian self-valorisation is the power to withdraw from exchange value and the ability to reappropriate the world of use values. The homologies of progressivism relate to exchange value. The rupture and recognition of the class's own independent productive force, removes any possibility of a resolute dialectic. The dialectical positivity of method in the separateness of proletarian self-valorisation is wholly and solely innovative.

### Chapter 3 The Form of the Domination

Having outlined our polemical methodological premises, we can now start on the substance of the matter. Facing us stands the State; among us -and sometimes within us - stands the form of the domination. To struggle means that we must recognise the monstrous nature of the power that stands facing us, recognise it with the same immediate clarity and on the same level as we have seen the relationship between self-valorisation and destructuration. Now, *this monstrous nature of power is the effect of our sabotage*; it is the negative result of our actions:

"Crime," says Marx, "through its constantly new methods of attack on property, constantly calls into being new methods of defence, and thus is as productive as strikes are in relation to the invention of machinery". (K.Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value*)

This is no paradox - Marx does not like the paradox label, not even in the case of Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*; this pleasure he leaves to the "philistine apologists of the bourgeois school". It is, rather, a key to understanding. In point of fact, the more we sabotage the State and the more we give expression to the self-valorisation/destructuration nexus, the more the rules governing the development of capital's State-system become ferocious, monstrous and irrational'. So now let us look at how the State and the system of social domination respond to the social sabotage which results from self-valorisation, and let us look at the logic that they express - a logic which is internally coherent, but which is nonetheless negative; a logic of destructuration which can never be sublimated, but only precipitated further.

Capital's continual restructuring is its response to working class sabotage. *Restructuration is the empty but efficacious content of the State-form*. Empty, because it lacks any rationality save that accredited by working class sabotage; efficacious, because the form of the restructuring is command. But bourgeois economy's critical consciousness is obliged to fill the vacuum of its own process by spreading a wafer-thin (recuperated and mystified) formal rationality, over the timings set by working class and proletarian struggles. Let us look at how it proceeds.

Within the critical consciousness of bourgeois political economy, the evolution of the logic of co=and has taken place in at least three distinct phases, following on the great Crisis of the 1930s. Each one of these phases is matched by a particular quality and intensity of working class and proletarian struggles. Elsewhere (in the articles published in *Operai e Stato* ("Workers and the State"), Feltrinelli, Milan 1972) I have indicated the fundamental characteristics of the *Keynesian epoch*. In that epoch, control of working class struggle was to be achieved in global terms. Keynes replied to the formation and the struggles of the mass worker with an overall balancing - in

progressive terms - of supply and demand. But Keynes based himself on a political proposition that was pure and general - he had stressed the overall *trend*. But when the trend comes into contra-diction with the actual progress of the cycle (because working class conflictuality does not respect finalized equilibria), the Keynesian state goes into crisis. Who commands in the crisis? The Keynesian-bred politicians try to invent a "political trade cycle", try to form "intermediate regimes" etc: in practice, control is little by little slipping out of their hands -the control-dimension no longer matches the dimensions of proletarian and working class conflictuality. A *second phase* opens. Alongside the theoretical progresses" that lead Sraffa and his ilk to a dissolution of the aggregate categories of Capital, more concretely we can observe that the working class struggle has a continuity that is discontinuous, and that the apparent continuity of the struggle is the outcome of an infinite series of individual crisis-points. The economic and political sciences of restructuration must take account of this. It is no longer possible to invent indeterminate macro-economic equilibria which are independent of short-run variations and independent of the micro-economic components which are variable within the unforeseeable timing determined by the struggles of the collective worker. Based on this necessity, we now see the formation of the State-as-Crisis, the Crisis-State (*Stato-crisi*), on the following lines: to divide up the overall thrust of the working class; to control it from within the mechanisms of its own accumulation; and to forestall it, by attacking it in its class composition. Keynes' broad equilibria are replaced by an internal operation of decomposition, within the class, in an attack that is precisely orientated towards dealing with single and particular class crisis points - a microphysics of political economy. "The long-term trend is nothing other than a component - which alters slowly - of a chain of short-term situations" ... "it is not an independent entity". (Michael Kalecki, in *Trend and Business Cycles Reconsidered*, in *Economic Journal*, July 1968, pp 263 seq.). Thus it becomes impossible to produce a model of development unless it takes explicit account of the interruptions that occur in the process of production and reproduction, and thus a fresh foundation is laid for a theory of development based on the theory of cyclical fluctuations, incorporating the dynamics that occur at the microeconomic level.

A long phase of bourgeois economic theory now develops around these premises. Michael Kalecki is the leading light in this movement (see Joan Robinson in *New York Review of Books*, 4th March 1976 - and in particular George R. Feiwel, *The Intellectual Capital* of M.Kalecki, Knoxville, Tennessee, 1975). But this theory also falls short. Crisis-State theory is, after all, a *reformist* theory. It faces up to the emerging productivity of the mass worker, and tries to construct an "economy of oligopolies" - on two fronts: on the one hand the capitalist entrepreneurial oligopoly, and on the other hand the working class-trade union oligopoly in the factory (M. Kalecki, "Class Struggle and the Distribution of National Income", in *Kyklos* XXIV,

1971, pp 1 seq.) But in the meantime, the struggle has advanced; the action of the mass worker has gradually laid siege to the whole of society. We now see the worker developing as a "social" worker - even (and particularly) if still remaining a "workplace worker". The worker responds to the Crisis-State even more violently than previously to the State-as-Planner (*Stato-piano*). If this latter went into crisis because of its inability to control the quantities of working class demand, the Crisis-State is forced into an internal self-criticism of what is now a socially inescapable (and immediately efficacious) extension of working class action. The *Crisis-State* is not only a State-form that is reformist to its roots - it is also, and above all, a State-form that is still linked in to the dimensions of direct production, to factory command over living labour. But when working class sabotage extends to invest the whole of society, the entire mechanism of circulation, forcing aggregate social capital into a confrontation over the rifles governing the reproduction of the system, at that same moment the consciousness of bourgeois political economy - which had actually been consolidating itself up to that point - goes into a further stage or crisis and disintegration.

It is interesting to note the formation of a *third phase* of theoretical development in the political economy of the Keynesian epoch. It is in the process of formation today, and draws on the elements of crisis in the previous schemas. In particular it tries to operate in a more generalised way on the social movements of the working class. Its central arena of interest is the question of *circulation*. The simple transition from global control of production (Keynes), to dynamic control of production (Kalecki) is insufficient. The problem is that of the functional control of circulation, of the dynamic nexus linking production and reproduction. And here the problem of *time* becomes fundamental. Keynes never concerned himself with the temporal determination of equilibria and secondary equilibria. Kalecki, on the other hand, stressed the necessity of determining Keynesianism via the redefinition of phenomena within individual "time units". And now, today, the temporal dimension is being extended to the whole of the process. In analytic terms, the new approach is a sort of Einsteinian theory of relativity: it involves the insertion of another dimension of analysis, in order to relativise the contents of that analysis. But this is indeed a strange kind of relativity: it is above all a relativity of time, the reduction of time to an *indifference of command*. In practical political terms we have an analytic mechanism which assumes circulation-time as a terrain of both theory and control. The totality of circulation-time is drawn into the economic analysis; the totality of circulation-time is to be controlled by economic policy: the hypothesis of the simultaneity of functions and operations within the cycle is not assumed in advance and abstract (a la neo-classics), but operational and political (a la Milton Friedman and his monetarist bedfellows). The Kaleckian interruptions of the short cycle are still mediations between the trend and the overall cycle: here science does not become separated in its

application, does not waste its efforts in forecasting, but intensifies its analysis on every moment, every transition. It is a physics of elementary particles - and science stands watchful, like a policeman, over everything.

It is not the Marxists' job to observe that the temporal dimension is decisive in the relation between circulation and reproduction, and in general within the relation as it impinges on the class struggle in the sphere of reproduction (although Geoff Kay draws attention to the problem in his very useful *Development and Underdevelopment*, Macmillan, London, 1975). It is not surprising that the problem is arising again. Rather, what is surprising is the fact that the proposition arouses so much passion. The philosophers are well aware of the problems associated with the dimension of time: infinitely sub-divisible and infinitely extendable. So how should we grasp the analytic proposition in operational terms; how are we to concretise the political project? It is not our job to answer this: suffice it to draw attention to the indeterminateness of the project. Rather, our task is to note how *the process of deconstruction within the logic of political economy* is taking a further step forward. (See, apropos, the fine essay by A. Graziani, introducing R. Conventevole's book *La Dinamica del Salarid Relativo* ("The Dynamic of the Relative Wage"), republished in *Quaderni Piacentini*, No.64, pp 113 seq.). In its anxiety to keep up with the process of working class attack against the general dimensions of exploitation, bourgeois political economy strips even the appearance of coherence from its logic, and forces itself into the role of a technical instrument against the emergence of the destructuring power of the working class; it extends itself over the indefinite discontinuity of the movement of self-valorisation state restructuration becomes increasingly an indiscriminate succession of actions of control, a technical apparatus that is effective, but which has lost all measure, all internal reference-points, all internal coherent logic.

Good working class theory rejoices at this. But, being responsible people, we must recognise the enormous weight of suffering, of inhumanity, of barbarities that all this brings with it. This revelation of the internal void of capitalist restructuration, this successive self-destruction of the moments of capitalist control, and this *dissolution of theory into a technique of power*, bring closer the final outcome of the revolutionary struggle. But at the same time it makes it hard to endure the harshness of the daily struggle and the cruelty of capital's continued existence. (Note that certain theoretical positions that exist within the official labour movement, and which have nothing to do with Marxism - such as the famous theory of the "autonomy of the political" - ape these bourgeois affirmations). And yet it is still the action of the working class that brings about these effects -to The extent that *the destructuring tendency of these struggles has a direct effect on the very rationality* of capitalist restructuring, and removes this rationality, even in its formal aspect, and leaves us with a whole that is deconstructed, technical and repressive. The varied and combined modality of working



class action is respected in every moment of the restructuration of capital: from the actions of the mass worker, and from those of the social" worker, arise effects that are then matched, in the sense of a subsequent radical destructuring of the enemy power.

Thus it is no accident that today the big forces of capitalist reformism have adopted - at a world-wide level - *a terroristic strategy of savage deflation* (or "dis-inflation", if you prefer). On the basis of the experience of the fiscal crisis of the American cities this political line has been correctly described as a "regressive distribution of income, of wealth, and of power" (see the articles by Robert Zevin, and Roger A. Alcaly and Elen Bodian in *The Fiscal Crisis of American Cities*, New York, 1977).

The destructured logic of the economic compatibilities must in fact be extended downwards, to reach single individual social groups, in such a way as to destroy any consolidation of proletarian self-valorisation. At every level. Generalised control must be deepened and intensified, to act on every point of linkage in the process of reproduction; it must allow the destruction of every rigidity; it must fluidify, in a new manner, the cycle of capitalist reproduction. But - you say - this has always happened! This is one of the laws of capital! Certainly. But what makes the present situation specific is the depth, the intensity, the extensiveness of the control. Capital has been subjected to a class pressure at the social level, which has definitively destructured its terms of reference. Right down to the level of factory-command (*commando-impresa*), command is in crisis. Restructuration, at this point, is pure form-of-domination. It aims to be effective even at the level of the individual unit of production, the single social group, the single individual. Thus it is no accident that, acting at such a depth and within such micro-economic dimensions, State power is once again, for the first time in several decades, resurrecting the ideology of Freedom!

At this stage, the capitalist determination (whose articulations attempt to follow the social emergence of The processes of proletarian self-valorisation, and which has to face up to the destructuration effects that these engender), reaches a high point of its logical vacuity: *here the reimposition of the law of value within restructuration is violence and is logically founded on criteria of indifference*. However, this in no sense diminishes the efficacy of the project of restructuration. The specification of the indifference starts from command. If the social struggle of the working class has driven the capitalist brain into a position of formal indifference, then capitalist command tries to specify itself materially on this possibility. It is important to emphasise this transition. It is important because with it comes a fundamental shift in the development of the contemporary form of the State. That very *social-democratic* project, which since the time of Keynes has been at the centre of capital's interests within the restructuring process, is now *subsumed to the indifference* of the possibilities of capital. This is perhaps a splendid example of how working class and proletarian self-valorisation has destroyed an instance of the enemy. The social-

democratic project is beginning to disintegrate, and from this point of view, the euphoria that is accompanying the present development of the various Euro-communisms is slightly macabre.

So, concretely speaking, what is the centre of the capitalist restructuration project today? How is the form of domination being realised? The fact of command over living labour taking the upper hand over the law of value is not something new: but *what is specific to today's restructuration is the conjuncture of command together with the indifference of the contents of command and of its articulations.* This capitalist conclusion derives from the powerful socialisation of the revolutionary movement of the proletarian class; it is the obverse of this. In this situation, capital's initiative becomes regressive - in other words, it has to base itself on a logic that is as empty as it is separate. Once again a premise which, to us, is fundamental - ie the separateness of the cycles of capital and its State-form from the cycle of working class self-valorisation - is verified. But at this point a whole series of problems re-emerge. In particular, if we want to identify not so much the centre, as the specific content of capitalist restructuration. This terrible void and indifference, this terribly weak and at the same time ferocious freedom of capital - how is it determined today?

For the moment I know only one thing. That from the working class point of view - having arrived at this level of awareness - the effects of the destructuring action that I have set in motion force me to confront - in a destructive manner - capital's powers of stabilisation. And this means, above all, confronting that power which provides the breeding ground for the multiple indifferent possibilities of domination. Destructuration of the enemy system involves the immediate necessity of attacking and destabilising its political regime.

#### **Chapter Four. Parenthesis no.2: Regarding the wage**

I find myself in a complex theoretical position. I must, at one and the same time, show how the form of capitalist domination is subordinated to the process of working class and proletarian self-valorisation - and at the same time show the resulting determinations in the destructured separateness of command. This, in fact, is the sense of the question that I posed earlier: how does one specify and determine the *indifference of command?*

As regards the first proposition, I think I have already gone some way towards proving my point. In short, at the same time as capital is living through the complete socialisation of the productive power of the working class, you find that the (Keynesian and/or Kaleckian) instruments that it had at its disposal for controlling the relation between production and reproduction (based on a balancing of supply and demand, on the twin basis of an expanding employment base and an expanding

production base) fail. Why do they fail? *Because the mechanisms of capital's reproduction and the mechanisms of reproduction of the working class are no longer operating synchronously.* The social self-valorisation of the working class accentuates, in an antagonistic sense, both the quality and the quantity of working class needs. It radicalises the aspect of *simple circulation*, over against the *global reproduction of all the dimensions of capital*. At this point, as we have seen (and as Christian Marazzi describes so well in his *Intervention on Public Expenditure*, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris, April 1977, mimeo, "the needs of social expenditure have to be met, inasmuch as they *have* to guarantee a continuity of production and reproduction of aggregate labour power. This Therefore sets in motion a State monetary phenomenon which, unlike Keynesian deficit spending, must make possible a *simultaneity* of both capitalist and working class reproduction").

Thus all the channels of administration - and not merely the monetary aspect - must work to provide possibilities of reducing to zero the relation between supply and demand. Given the actual strength of the working class, the problem is thus to reduce the autonomous reproduction-time of the working class. Thus the *separateness* of capitalist command could not be clearer. Its *destruction* springs from capital's realisation that every attempt to match up to the given articulation of the working class and the proletariat fails, for this very reason of the split timings of capitalist and proletarian reproduction. Only command, conceived as indifference, conceived as a capacity for separate self-reproduction of itself -only this command can hope to succeed. Capital is driven to daydreams of self-sufficiency. It is no accident that, at this extreme, we see the re-emergence of economic theories that we Thought long dead and buried -theories of the self-sufficiency of capital and its money - memories of neo-classicism, and quantitative monetarist practices.

But dreams are only dreams for all that: that noisy alarm clock of the class struggle is still there to wake you up. So the capitalist State now has to rearticulate in positive terms the separate essence of its command. From a practical and theoretical point of view, there has certainly been a profound and significant advance: here *the destruction of the value-terms of the capitalist social relation is no longer a result, but a starting point*; it is no longer a "result suffered", but a proud and arrogant "act of will". Indeed, never before has the capitalist State been so politically autonomous! It still remains necessary for capitalist command to be articulated, but henceforth its parameters will be based on this separateness. The source and the legitimation of power are no longer the law of value and its dialectic, but the law of command and its hierarchy. Having been forced into the most radical *material* destruction, capital's State must now restructure itself *ideally*. The free productive State characteristic of the capitalist revolution is now reduced to a *corporative, hierarchical* form - to the organisation of appearances. This is the only logic of the so-called "autonomy of the

political". Henceforth neither political economy and the critique of political economy, nor the analysis of class and class composition, can adequately explain this destructured reality: only descriptive sociology is fitted for following this phenomenon!

This is the *State-based-on-Income-as-Revenue*, the State-of-Revenue (*Stato-rendita*). A State of political income. The one absolute value against which all other hierarchical values must measure themselves is political power. And this one absolute value is the foundation for the construction of a rising ladder of *differential incomes*, whose value is calculated on the basis of one's greater or lesser distance from the centre, from the point of production of power. (In addition to The work of Romano Alquati, see the article by G.Bossi in *Aut-Aut* No.159-160, pp 73 seq.). Power is the simultaneity, the point of perfect compatibility of the mechanisms of production and reproduction, and it is from this that circulation must proceed, accepting its authority. One's location in the hierarchy, the nature of the corporative structure, and the respective positions of the various "separate bodies" (*corpi separati*) - all these are articulated according to this logic. These differential incomes are distributed according to the variability of one's insertion within the hierarchy, within the articulation of command. This, then, is the only form within which the "indifference" can be determined. The party-State (*Stato-de-Partiti*) and the system of public administration tend to guarantee this specification of differential income as the form and the content of political power (see Sergio Bologna ["The Tribe of Moles"](#), in *Primo Maggio* No.8, Spring 1977) (page 67 in this book).

Now, all of this is of direct relevance to *productive labour*. What, in short, is the nature of productive labour within the *State-of-Income-as-Revenue*? From capital's point of view we can define it as that cart of social labour which has been trade-unionised, corporatised, placed and located within the "separateness" of the State hierarchy. From this point of view, the extent of your faithfulness to the system is watched more closely than the actual value you produce. The *labour market* - ie aggregate labour power in its relative independence - is sectionalised according to the hierarchical values advanced by the system (see Glen a Cain "The Challenge of Segmented Labour Market Theories to Orthodox Theory: A Survey", in *Journal of Economic Literature*, December 1976). Of course, every time the State mechanism intervenes in the reality of The class struggle in a direct manner, the game becomes harder. In particular, when the intensity of the approach cannot be mystified, when the intervention takes place at the point of greatest contradiction. To take an initiative against the labour market in order to divide it, to sectionalise it, to hierarchise it (*when it is precisely at this level that productive labour has made itself general*, and where "small circulation" has made itself independent, and where reproduction seeks to be self-valorisation. See, apropos, the useful notes by M.Aglietta: "Panorama et

nouveaux développements sur les théories de l'emploi". mimeo, INSEE 14/1/1977 MA/SP 320/ 3564) - to take such an initiative, as I said, against this concrete reality guarantees a maximum of violence and mystification. Because here the two extremes of the process that we are describing, meet: on the one hand the unified material base of the processes of proletarian self-valorisation, and on the other The active, repressive figure of the State-power that has been deconstructed by the struggles.

It is worth pausing for a moment to consider this central moment, and to emphasise some of the consequences of what we have been saying, as regards the theorisation of proletarian self-valorisation. Now, two elements are immediately clear. The first is that *the wage is no longer* at this point, in its economic identity, an *independent variable*. It is completely subordinated to the entire dynamic of power, to the entire framework of the political autonomy of the State. The wage is reduced to the hierarchy of command, in a process which is the counter-part, the obverse of, the repression of the unity of the proletariat at the social level. This leads us to the second consequence: the centre of the working class and proletarian struggle consists in the *recognition of the general aspects of the wage as a cost of reproduction of the unity of the proletariat*, of its self-valorisation. The problem is political, on both fronts - even if, as in this case, it is obvious that the meanings of the term "political" are not homologous - because we are dealing with meanings that are mutually opposed, completely and precisely antagonistic. For capital, politics is division and hierarchy, for the proletariat it is unity and equality; for capital it means the subordination of labour, for the proletariat it means the process of self-valorisation; for the State it means the simultaneity of the processes of production and reproduction, for the proletariat it means developing the ~independence of its own processes of reproduction, its dissymmetry, its discontinuity.

At this point, therefore, the problem of the wage (as the pivot-point of the antagonistic capital relation) has to be seen in a different light. The logic of separation - which flows from the process of self-valorisation, and which capital undergoes in a deconstructed and idealised form - leaves no margins of compromise in this respect. So it becomes obvious by the capitalist reaction to the development of the class struggle has expressed - itself particular'y around the problem of *public expenditure* - understood as the terrain on which the thrust of the working class struggle was reshaping the thematic of the wage, in effective terms of an offensive, bringing it up to the level of the project of self-valorisation. In the struggle over public spending, capitalist hierarchisation, the differential incomes accorded by State power, the corporative mystifications of the trade unions, were coming under heavy attack, while the unity of social productive labour as the basis of the process of self-valorisation was increasing. This was indeed a "battle for production"! It gave the working class the possibility of regaining its own productive dignity, its unity, outside and against

the mechanisms of State income, of State parasitism, which the trade unions and the forces of State power sought to impose on it. It gave the working class the possibility of finding a material base for its own productive unity - a possibility of opposing exploitation by self-valorisation.

*Public spending and the wage are themes to which the analysis, the theory and the practice of revolutionaries will continually have to return, because in a situation of discontinuity in the cyclicity of the class struggle, the problem of public spending will, in the coming years, assume the same importance as the wage, narrowly defined, has had in years past. But we must be clear here: in the discontinuity of the movement, once again, no homology, no equation of terms is permissible. In other words, the theme of fighting public spending cuts is not simply an extension, a completion of the theme of the wage-struggle. The problem of public spending is not that of the social wage. It is rather the recognition, the imposition of the recognition that the unity of social labour, of the whole of social labour, today constitutes the only possible' definition of the productivity of labour: this is the base for which capital must pay. It must pay for it, giving regard to its quality, its articulations, its determinante nature. It must recognise the independence of working class self-valorisation.*

But, as we have seen, this does not happen. Rather, the contrary happen - the whole of capital's attention is directed to the operation of differential income (restructuration) and to the consolidation, in absolute terms, of its political basis (stabilisation). *Now, the mechanism of income-as-revenue must be destroyed: the struggle against public spending cuts is a struggle that directly attacks the mechanisms of command and the determination of income, and destroys those mechanisms. It destroys them by quantitatively raising public spending to the point of making it incompatible with the maintenance of command over reproduction, and by blocking qualitatively the relative choice of options. But this is not enough. There is also the question of a need for direct action. As follows. Some groups of workers, some strata of the working class, remain tied to the dimension of the wage, to its mystified terms. In other words, they are living off income-as-revenue Inasmuch as they are living from income-as-revenue (even some who work in the big factories), they are stealing and expropriating proletarian surplus value - they are participating in the social-labour racket on the same terms as their management. These positions - and particularly the trade union practice that fosters them - are to be fought with violence if necessary. It will not be the first time that a march of the unemployed has entered a large factory so that they can destroy the arrogance of salaried income! (See the accounts in Wal Hannington's *Unemployed Struggles*). This was what the unemployed were doing in Britain in the 1920s - and quite rightly so.*

Here, however, it is no longer simply a matter of the unemployed. Here we are dealing with all the protagonists in the social production of value who are rejecting and refusing the operation that capital has set in motion in order to destroy their unity: *the workers of the large factories need to be brought back again into the battle-lines of this struggle*. This is fundamental. The *social majority of the proletariat*, of socially-productive labour power, must impose the theme and practice of unity, resubmitting it to the attention of the workers in the large factories. The *mass vanguards* of the large factories must struggle, in conjunction with the proletarian movement, in order to destroy the blue-eyed boy syndrome, guaranteed by the trade unions in the big factories. This is fundamental. Here, in fact, we are dealing with the project - the living, effective project - of working class self-valorisation, which refuses, and must destroy, the vacuity of the *rentier* logic of capital, and all of its apparatuses.

Now, at this point I should answer those jackal voices that I already hear howling: I am not saying that the Mirafiori worker is not an exploited worker (this is the extent to which you have to go, in order to polemicise with jackals!). I am saying that the "Party of Mirafiori" must today live the politics of the proletarian majority, and that any position which is restricted purely to the necessary struggle in the factory, and which is not linked to the wider majority of the proletariat, is a position that is bound to lose. *The factory struggle must live within the wider majority of the proletariat*.

The privileged place of the wage in the continuity of proletarian struggle must, today, be extended to the struggle over public spending cuts. Only this struggle can enable the full self-recognition of the proletariat; can fix the bases of self-valorisation; can attack directly the theory and practice of income-as-revenue. On the other hand, the capitalist practice of political income defined according to the hierarchy of power is utterly fragile - fragile because it is completely ideal, in the sense of being political. Here the problem is no longer that of income-as-revenue, but that of its political foundation. Now, this "absolute" foundation is itself ideal - it is the point at which the threat to the whole machinery of capitalist development becomes manifest, to the extent that it has registered the crisis of the law of value. It has, therefore, an absolute limit. And thus it is nothing more than an attempt at overall mystification of the system of exploitation.

When Marx criticises Ricardo's theory of absolute rent, he admits nonetheless that its tendency must be to disappear: the 'toverestimation' of Ricardo's differential rent would in this context become plausible. But here we are already in the situation where the survival of moments of absolute rent has already given way to the global domination of the capitalist mode of production. Mere the re-appearance of income-as-revenue no longer has any material foundation. It is a phantasma. The State-of-income-as-revenue develops *two mystifications*. The first is the one which joins differential income and its mechanisms to a generic emergence of the law of value

(which, as we have already said, has been transmuted into the form of command over living labour); the second is that which seeks to consider the absolute nature of income at the level of the source of power it self, as its fundamental condition. But this too, as it happens, is pure and simple mystification: here we are not seeing the expression of an historical necessity tied to the period of development of the law of value - we are seeing simply the expression of the extreme limit of mystification, of forced reimposition of a law onto a proletarian world which otherwise would be impossible to dominate. At the same time, this proletarian movement represents the *extreme dissolution of the very concept of power*. And now enough of tirades on the nexus between Lenin and Wax Weber! Here, as in the thought of Lenin, thought and practice go in two opposite directions - working class freedom and bureaucratic indifference are two polar opposites -with the first being rational, the second irrational; the first being struggle, the second mere formalisation of income-as-power.

The indifference of command, therefore, is specified in a sort of political practice of income-as-revenue, whose absolute foundations lie in political authority, and whose differential lies within the system of hierarchy. This situation brings about a conception (and a reality) of the wage system which differs radically from the experience of wage struggles conducted by the "other" workerist movement in other historical epochs. Today, in fact, the *wage struggle* cannot be other Than immediately *political, general and egalitarian*. The principal terrain on which it moves is that of *public spending*, of the self-valorising overall reproduction of the proletariat. This terrain has to be rebuilt, together with the workers in the factories; this struggle must re-unify the terrain of the proletariat. And it can. And anyway, there is no alternative: or rather - there is an alternative - it is to accept subordination, to plunge into the whirlpool of destructure, to abandon ourselves to destruction.

## **Chapter 5 and Nietzsche went to Parliament**

Now, once again, the only point that we are interested in pursuing is *the relationship between self-valorisation and destructure*. *Reformism fundamentally denies this relationship rather it asserts that self-valorisation is compatible with structuration - not destructure*. Valorisation, for reformism, is univocal: there is only capitalist valorisation. The problem is how to gain command over it. Everything else is Utopian. Eurocommunism sets itself up as a candidate to represent the developed working class, as a party that mediates' the process of proletarian self-valorisation with the restructure of capital. Eurocommunism is the party of restructure -it is the party of the synthesis between proletarian self-valorisation and capitalist valorisation. Raving picked out of the mud the banners of democracy that the bourgeoisie had let drop, Eurocommunism now sets about gathering the banners of the economic development which capital had destructured. Thus any discussion about power is based, is organised solely within the virtuous circle of restructure. And as for



Eurocommunism's objectives, they are more than clear: the conscious extension of the capitalist mode of production to the whole of society, and its ("socialist") State-management.

Our intention here is not to demonstrate that this project is wicked, nasty etc. Rather, we believe we can show it to be *impossible* - undesirable, in fact, because it is not realistic but mystified. We believe it can be shown that the working class is moving - increasingly so, as it becomes more socialised - in terms that are antagonistic to this project. The battle is on, and it is a battle between the true and the false. And to conclude, we believe it can be shown that Eurocommunism, inasmuch as it moves on these lines, presents no alternative whatsoever to capitalist development, but rather is the representation of a catastrophic subordination of the class to capital, a fragile and transitory element of capital's State-form.

So, self-valorisation and restructuration. In reality, the decision as to whether or not these two terms are compatible is not merely a question of fact. Eurocommunism is innovatory in terms of Marxism, not because it denies the empirical conditions of the process of *self-valorisation*, but because it denies the *working class and proletarian nature*, the *radically antagonistic potential*, and the *political relevance* of that self-valorisation.

First, *the working class and proletarian nature*. Eurocommunism does not use the term self-valorisation, but rather the term "hegemony". This term allows the processes of socialisation of the working class struggle *from below* to be interpreted along the lines of the dissolution of the class into "civil society". It substitutes for a Marxist, class terminology, a Hegelian and populist one. Operating through this framework, Eurocommunism shifts the focus from the class struggle and the antagonism within the reproduction process, the terrain of class recomposition in the crisis, to "society" understood generally, and "politics" as the sphere of institutional power. By this means the terrain of self-valorisation is robbed of its class content. For Eurocommunism it becomes a marginal "frontier zone", meaningful only in the terms of the reconstruction of a social totality.

Second: *the denial of the radically antagonistic potential of the processes of working class self-valorisation* is the dynamic consequence of the first negation. Once it is seen only as an ephemeral emergent phenomenon, it can only be expressed dynamically by way of its suppression within the social totality. This is the totality that is determined by the society of capital. So we are not dealing with an *antagonism*, according to Eurocommunism, but with an organic and functional dialectic between the classes, the terms of whose solution are provided by the balance of power and by relative compatibilities within the general interest. And the general interest is the development of capitalism.

And finally, *the political relevance of working class self-valorisation* will only be able to be restored by a general function, external, such as to be able to discriminate the functions within the project of the globality of development. Immediately, no political relevance can be given to working class and proletarian self-valorisation, all the more so since it is interpreted as on the extreme margins of the phenomenology of the "productive aphere". Its movements do not contain a generality; its separateness is to be politically mediated through society, with society, in society; and the particularity of its interest is to be articulated with the generality of capital's development.

Now, from negation to the affirmative. Only restructuration - say the Eurocommunists in addition and in conclusion - will provide the possibility of restoring the formal conditions for proletarian self-valorisation, within the capitalist mechanism of development. Restructuration reorganises the logic of capitalist development and structures it in relation to the needs of the proletariat: it goes therefore from the general to the particular, and only by proceeding in this direction can it give meaning to the emerging movements of the proletariat at the margins of "society". The only way that the particular interests of the proletariat can be repaid in economic terms (of course, in a different manner, a manner which is organic and compatible with development), is by destroying those touchy, antagonistic points of particular interests that arise along the road that leads to the centrality of the function of restructuration. The social brain of the working class - the reformists continue - is the centre of the process of restructuration: it negates the economism of its stimuli, and transforms them into political direction; it negates the political direction and moulds it into a force to manage capital. In the more refined versions (Trans: Cacciari and others in the PCI) the insistence on the centrality of the political functions of restructuration vis-a-vis the class mechanism of self-valorisation reaches an extreme form of essentialism: functional formalism of the bourgeois tradition (Weber, Nietzsche) is recuperated and inverted into a pure autonomy of workers' political power.

I think I have done justice to Eurocommunism in expounding its theory in these terms. In reality the operation is so clear-cut that there is little point in descending to polemic. And in fact, as has quite often been demonstrated, quite apart from the debasement of Marxism that this conception entails, it is shown to be false simply by the reality of the movement. When we say self-valorisation, we mean that the working class sets in motion an alternative on the terrain of production and reproduction, by appropriating to itself power and by re-appropriating wealth, in opposition to the capitalist mechanisms of accumulation and development.

We face a point where the process of proletarian self-valorisation has begun to invest the entire terrain of the socialisation of production, and of the circulation of commodities (every-increasingly subsumed within the mechanism of capitalist reproduction). We face, in short, an extension of the processes of valorisation

(inclining essential modifications that are inherent to the concept of productive labour). And at this point every possibility of bestowing an antagonistic or "generalising" political function (on the party as the working class "brain", on an "independence of the political" however conceived) - *outside* the process of self-valorisation itself, becomes less and less viable. Certainly, it is true that, *in line with working class socialisation, capitalist society has been permanently restructured:* infrastructures, services, education, housing policies, welfare policies etc multiply and determine an ever-wider context for the processes of self-valorisation.. But *precisely this process reveals the characteristics of that self-valorisation:* in fact it reproduces within itself - the more so the further it extends - the antagonistic characteristics of working class power. The working class struggle imposes a reorganisation of society, a capitalist restructuration. This restructuration must prove capable of matching a series of needs that are imposed by the struggles themselves. It is the quantity and the quality of the struggles that determine the reforms. But these still remain *capitalist* reforms, and the effect of the working class struggle on them is immediately a double effect: it reopens the struggle within this restructured fabric; and - through the subsequent extension and generalisation of the struggle - it destructures capitalist command at this level too, at this degree of extension. Working class self-valorisation does not find a possibility of continuity within restructuration: in restructuration it sees only an effect of its min strength, an increase of its own attacking possibilities, an extension of its own power capacity for overall destructure of capital. *So, there is no mediation possible at this level, either in institutional terms or in terms of economic re-structuration.* Eurocommunism, seen from this angle, is living a lie: it claims a continuity with the processes of self-valorisation, which is not given - and consequently it is forced to mystify and to fight the effective movement of self-valorisation on the terms in which that movement actually expresses itself - as a potential of destructure.

So it is no accident that the positions within Eurocommunism which have laid claim to a correct institutional mediation of the processes of self-valorisation, have also ended by being overturned by the illusion of mediation. From the factory struggles to the struggles for reforms, they said; then, from the struggle for reforms to a campaign to restructure capitalist~ initiative, to restructure the State. Was this a necessary continuity? Only as a step along the road of mystification! In fact, after a short while, we then saw these bright sparks returning into the factory: of necessity, the continuity which had led "from the struggles to the State" had now been put into reverse. Now they were speaking from within the logic of the State, and the antagonistic content of the worker's' factory struggles and the struggles for reforms, were totally subordinated to The State. The 'processes of self-valorisation were now to be seen as "functions" of the capitalist State.

Let us now look at the working class viewpoint (*il punto di vista operaio*). It extends and spreads from the factory to the society; it forces capital into the organisation of social productive labour; it re-opens on this terrain a struggle that is continuous and increasingly efficacious. In valorising itself socially, the working class destructures capital increasingly as capital is increasingly forced to extend its direct command over society. Within this framework, the action of reformism and of *Euro-communism* is an element of the State-form of capitalism - but, we should note, in a *subordinate and threadbare form*. It does not succeed - in effect it cannot succeed - in ensuring that the rationale of self-valorisation prevails within capitalist restructuration. It remains prisoner of a destabilised, destructured rationality which cannot be recomposed; it is hemmed in by the indifference of power, the transcendent nature of its unity. The bargaining tempo which is proper to the practice of reformism in the Keynesian State has become dissolved into the new process of distribution of political income. In this context the only credibility of reformism today takes the form of corporativism, as a subordinate articulation of the State-form. The sole compensation for this subordination is the mystified "bad faith" of belief in a political will and vocation, which takes the path of repression of the struggle, terroristic suppression of working class and proletarian self-valorisation. But at what a price! The historical lesson of Germany is once again demonstrated.

So this Nietzschean presence in Parliament is something to rejoice at. The situation is such that *every failure of mystification is a victory for the working class*. Faced with the impetuosity and the force of the process of working class self-valorisation, *the coalitions that have determined the State-form of late capitalism are necessarily surrendering to the working class antagonism*. Oligopolies, trade unions, the "middle classes" have for half a century - and certainly since the Rooseveltian revolution - dominated the framework of the State-form and have determined its constitutional foundations in the whole of the Western world. The working class is *now* emancipating itself from the institutions, imposing a continuous investment in public expenditure which is now purely and simply appropriation, a fact of power, dastri deconstruction of the enemy. The capitalist response is disinvestment, is the flight from the confrontation with the class. There is no alternative to the fall of the rate of profit in this situation: whatever road is followed - that of the defence and maintenance of employment, or that of public spending - come what may, the rate of profit is decreasing. (see W. Nordhaus, "The Falling Share of Profits", in *Brooking Papers on Economic Activity*, No.1, 1974).

The *relation of self-valorisation to restructuration* - which is the only basis for any remaining dignity of reformism and Eurocommunism - thus has no standing whatsoever, from any point of view. Neither as regards the working class, nor as regards capitalism. From both standpoints, the relation appears antagonistic. And yet,

because Power recognises that mystification can be efficacious, it can still be part of the State-form. Up to what point can this reformist participation in the State have a stable existence? From the moment where its function has been totally subordinated, the point will be determined by the struggle between the classes over the question of power. For The moment, reformism and Euro-communism are living an opaque, subordinate role within the framework of The State-form of capital. Corporativism and parasitism are the qualities of their existence.