



The Next Idea of Communism

KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT *This article introspects social and political events through the lens of communism as a remedy for historical failures forming basis for future humanity bringing happiness and satisfaction in our lives.*

1. Communism deals with our needs and desires

Terry Eagleton's main Marxian thesis revolves around communism that offers no rivalry, competition or inequality organizing social life so that individuals realize themselves to appreciate others.

2. Communism as a process of Adikia

Alain Badiou and Costas Douzinas considers communism as an idea of a struggle that inculcates a universal equality or a reformist idea of a human condition that radically changes the world.

3. Advent of Biopolitical Communism

Adrian Johnston studies communism as a biopolitical subject offering a remedy for the capitalist critique creating new human status as "hybrid subject-objects" in a diverse order.

4. Its all about Love

Slavoj Žižek underlines communism in terms of love and affection between individuals, between communities, and between states. He clearly aims at making communism as the voice of people.

This century has brought many challenges to the Marxist critical thought experiencing major change enlivening and re-visioning modern concepts including socio-political freedom in the present times. On a larger plane, this development is oriented towards the vital concept of "class-conflict" by inducing new political subjectivities like "radical action" that leads to new political experiments. It brings more freedom and equality, tracing events in the entirety of global capitalism that, in Marxist terms, brought disappointment in various spheres. Contemporary world witness struggling theories, including Marxism, that introspect revolutionary events through socialism and communism as a remedy for historical failures. This essay deals with the idea that considers communism in the light of future humanity, and its potential as an emancipatory system in society and politics.

Of Needs and Desires

Terry Eagleton, a British critic, in *Why Marx was Right* is apprehensive to capitalism and studies it as a major threat of the time as it has created major social and political problems around the world. He states that the capitalist society generates enormous wealth in its industrial sphere, but in cannot help its distribution among most of its citizens. Even so, that wealth can always be brought within reach of the individuals but to achieve it should be invested in the community as a whole, and should be used

to restrict disagreeable work to the minimum. (59) It will therefore release men and women from the chains of economic necessity, into a life where they are free to realize their creative potential. It furthers the main Marxian thesis that under communism there will be no rivalry, selfishness, possessiveness, competition or inequality; and nobody will be superior or inferior to anyone else. Communism therefore organizes social life so that individuals are able to realize themselves and appreciate others. As Marx puts it in the Communist Manifesto, "The free development of each becomes the condition for the free development of all." In this light, communism does not simply reject liberal society with its passionate commitment to the individual. Nevertheless, it modifies and therefore completes it and show how some of the contradictions of the liberal order, in which freedom flourish only at the expense of others, may be resolved. (86) Communism, therefore, is about the fulfillment of everyone's needs and desires.

In "Communism: Lear or Gonzalo?" in *The Idea of Communism*, Eagleton states that Communism is a sort of classical or beautiful work of art that works to bring "by measure – justice, equity, equality, to each according to his labour" and it addresses the "crisis of representation" brought in by capitalism. To him the capitalist order:

... is like a shoddy work of art, at once too abstract (the commodity form, the alienation of the state) and too myopically particular (bourgeois individualism, raw appetite). It is both an orgy of anarchic desire and the reign of a supremely bodiless reason. (105)

As communism is a sublime form of Marxist thought, it is argued that Communism sets aside the concept of superstructure, then because communism caters to the needs/mobilization of superabundance, it represents the millions of people and meets their needs and desires. It is a sort of dominant vision that communism acquires when it deals to cater the need of many who are less represented in a socialist order. Further, Eagleton discusses the function of communism by stating that it converts "desire in its 'linear', unstoppable sense...with material particulars, to an unending exploration and enjoyment of the world...". (107) This means that communism helps an individual to acquire material comforts in order to bring transcendence (from material to immaterial) that frees us from those wants and desires that hampers our growth. It also points to a system that brings freedom, equity, and equality by realizing the material conditions of the universe.

Individual: a Process or Adikia

Alain Badiou in *The Idea of Communism* states that communism must accommodate the necessities of the contemporary society and the aspirations of its individuals. It is not just a political truth or an implicit function of a particular society. As he states, "Three basic elements- political, historical, and subjective- are needed for the operation of the idea of communism". (1) Further, he implies that communism is independent of any of the three elements because an individual undergoes "subjectivation" that synthesizes him into a political, historical or an ideological being. The modern version of the idea of communism constitutes the becoming of a political subject, and at the same time it becomes a historical entity and simultaneously behaving as an ideological being. (4-5) Thus, Badiou understands the idea as the subjectivation of the individual by the three elements mentioned earlier. In simple terms, communism takes an individual as a process by which politics, history, and ideology affects him.

More incisively, Costas Douzinas, in his essay "Adikia: On Communism and Rights" in the same work, invokes the Heidegger's term "adikia", a term that concentrates the epicenter of power, violence, and conflict. "Adikia is the cause and effect of dike", as Douzinas states, it "is both the unending struggle between "techne" and "dike". (88-89) Thus, in simple terms, adikia represents a struggle, i.e. between political (an overpowering power viz. dike) and theoretical and subjective (the historical evolution of humanity viz. techne) facets of an individual. He further states, "The idea of communism is a response to capitalism, the modern form of adikia". (91) This means that communism is an idea of a struggle that inculcates a universal equality. Now the question arises: Why not democracy? The answer lies in the dichotomy of rights and duties that democracy offers in principle. Douzinas, despising democracy, states:

"Democracy is presented as the exercise of a series of rights; policy priorities and decisions take the form of extensions or expansions of rights; criminal law protects the rights of victims, commercial law the rights of customers, public law upholds the rights of citizens. Rights become negative protections against state power of all kinds... every individual desire and want can be dressed in the language of rights: for the affluent middle class, rights are the public and legal recognition of an unlimited and insatiable desire". (93-94)

We can visualize that rights operate on a dual platform, first they conceal and affirm the dominant structure of the society, and secondly, they highlight inequality and oppression. In a democratic setup, freedom and equality constitutes a set of prerogative principles called "human rights". Human rights are thus not the innate feature of individuals, but a set of political predicaments. As Douzinas exemplifies the functions of human rights, "They stabilize inter-subjective relations by giving minimum recognition to multiple identities; they codify the liberal ideology...they express and promote individual desires..." (95) He further states that democracy is actually a litmus test of freedom. The most formidable claim of democracy is to provide human rights in its true spirit, but rather than becoming a social product, it becomes a juridical-political product forcing the idea of equality of men and of citizens in their relation to the constituted juridical-political sphere. The law in turn, acts as a monotonous institution that rejects and deletes the right to resistance and revolution. This, i.e. the democratic setup, becomes a major concern for commu-

nist ideology, as it denounces the development of an individual into a political responsible citizen, breaking away from the ideology of a liberal-state. Communism is actually a reformist idea of a human condition and its exposure to the event that radically changes the world. The human condition brings radical action, and brings revolution and equality for the eternal dialect of Adikia, due to the confrontation of techne and dike.



Figure 1

Biopolitical Communism

Adrian Johnston studies communism in his essay "From Scientific Socialism to Socialist Science: Naturdialektik Then and Now" in *The Idea of Communism-2*. He states that "biopolitics" is the next big thing to offer as a remedy for the capitalist critique. To be more precise, the scientific renditions of human nature are arguably permutations of a democratic materialism that is characterized by mechanical exchanges between wholly freestanding inner essences and external existences. In a biopolitical communist study, people are seen as motivated by a natural need of socially constructed choices between contending goods and services. (110) But for the capitalist biopolitical order, the life of humanity is reduced to an ongoing concession between the two isolated self-governing parties of permanent desires and liquefied providers of their satisfactions. Thus, to understand the present complexities of social and political order, we must interlink the histories of the sciences and materialism, i.e. the emergence of Bio-Marxism as the next area of study in contemporary theory. It would bring consistency with the historical sensibilities of Marxist materialism, in the light of crucial developments in the life sciences that has made possible the transition from non-dialectical to dialectical materialist order. (113)

However, in the lines of Darwinian evolutionary process, precise modes of historicizing nature motivates Marxists to adopt a 'bio-plastic order' comprising human and non-human components. This bio-plastic order is a pivotal component of a specifically materialist dialectics of human beings as self-transformative subject-objects. Nevertheless, the interpenetrating factors responsible for the success of Marx's historical materialism solves the contemporary problems facing humanity. (118) In simple terms, human society arises out of social organization, and creates new needs that define subjective and objective processes of human life like love, care and hatred raising the human status as "hybrid subject-objects" in a diverse order.

Its all about Love

Slavoj Žižek underlines the real idea of communism in terms of love and affection with each other, between individuals, between communities, and between states in his essay "Answers Without Questions" in *The Idea of Communism-2*. He states "The underlying problem is here the one of loving one's neighbour..." that maintains it is difficult to conceive of the social and civil strives in the Marxist terms of the emerging "revolutionary subject". The reason behind this is that these subjects we generally call

terrorists, or nihilists, are “left” outside the organized social space and prevent them from participating in social production. “This is why both conservative and liberal reactions to the urban unrest clearly failed”, as Žižek clearly maintains, and elucidates that man is not just a social being, but also a territorial animal and it must be part of socio-political agenda that satisfies those basic instincts of “tribalism and territoriality”. (183) An ideal communist order should address the conflict between the two groups of the underprivileged people i.e. between those who succeed in functioning within the system and those who are too frustrated to go on doing so. It should bring equality in representation and labor and thereby avoid “the conflict between non-society and society”. (185) Therefore, he clearly aims at making communism as the voice of people’s faithful subjects. It is a socio-political program that recognizes the interrelation of different forms of domination and exploitation viz. class, gender and colonialism liberating humanity from the bondage of all vices pertaining to society. Communism is not just a specific historical regime in a specific area but it is an idea of a vast institution that will bring transformative and affirmative modes of representation for all.

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