Sisyphus and the Labour of Imagination: Autonomy, Cultural Production, and the Antinomies of Worker Self-Management

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Abstract

Is there any radical potential left in the notion and practices of worker self-management? What I want do in this essay is to try and see if it is possible to distill something of a radical kernel from the many difficulties and complications that confront it, particularly within fields of cultural production. How can self-management contribute to what Jacques Ranciere describes as a movement not of slaves filled with *ressentiment*, but of people living and embodying a new time of sociability and cooperation, creating resources and skills that can spread out from this, rather than being caught and contained by the conditions of is own creation? Drawing from my own experiences working in Ever Reviled Records, a worker owned and run record label, I want to ferret out--conducting something akin to an organizational autoethnography--hints as to whether or not self-management could be useful for radical social struggles today.

Introduction

Let us imagine, for a change, an association of free men working with the means of production held in common, and expending their many different forms of labour-power in full self-awareness as one single social labour force…. The total product of our imagined association is a social product…. This, however, requires that society possess a material foundation, or a series of material conditions of existence, which in their turn are the natural and spontaneous product of a long and tormented historical development.

~ Karl Marx[2]

How can one establish, in the intervals of servitude, the new time of liberation: not the insurrection of slaves, but the advent of a new sociability between individuals who already have, each on his own, thrown off the servile passions that are indefinitely reproduced by the rhythm of work hours? The absence of the

master from the time and space of productive work turns this exploited work into something more: not just a bargain promising the master a better return in exchange for the freedom of the workers' movement but the formation of a type of worker's movement belonging to a different history than that of mastery. So there is no paradox in the fact that the path of emancipation is first the path where one is liberated from the hatred of the master experienced by the rebel slave.

~ Jacques Ranciere[3]

Sisyphus is a paradoxical figure. He is said to have been both the wisest of mortals and to have practiced the trade of a highway robber. Sisyphus stole the secrets of the gods, cheated death, and for this was condemned to an eternal life of pointless labour: the pushing of a boulder up a hill only to never be able to reach the summit with it. For each time he neared the top the boulder slipped away, and he was forced to see it roll down again, and cursed to return down the hill to begin the task again.

It may seem odd to begin a discussion of self-management with the image of Sisyphus. Or maybe not. As Albert Camus informs us, Sisyphus was indeed the proletarian of the gods, one both powerless and rebellious. Sisyphus is the absurd hero, one who is condemned to his position by his scorn of the gods, hatred of death, and passion for life: condemned to an eternal labour of no accomplishment or end. And just as the dreadful nature of Sisyphus' punishment is a condition of eternal, futile, hopeless labour, so is the position of the working class: trapped in dynamics of seemingly eternal repetition of the same tasks, one that "is tragic only at the rare moments when it becomes conscious."[4]

And it is this way that the figure of Sisyphus opens up an interesting avenue for thinking about worker self-management.[5] Self-management, as a demand, practice, and concept long circulating within the various milieus of radical politics and labour organizing struggles, all too often finds that the gains made by various campaigns and struggles slip beyond grasp before ever reaching that glorious plateau of the end of capitalism. The forms of intervention (unions, the party, networks) escape the conscious intents for which they were forged, often dampening the energies of social insurgency. Thus they roll back down the hill yet again, through moments of counterrevolution and recuperation. Despite this, if it is still held to be a desirable goal to move through and beyond capitalism, to create a new world of self-determining communities and socialities, the problems posed by the question of self-management are all the more pressing: namely, the creation of new selves in this world that further enable moving through it and on to the creation of another world.

So, why raise the question of self-management again, now? In many ways this might be absurd (perhaps almost as absurd as Sisyphus)--and because of

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that, necessary. After all, if we live in such a period of intense globalization, is there any sense thinking through an ethics of the liberation of labour at the local level or at a single organization? In other words, if the intense amount of competition and pressures created by global economic flows (through processes such as outsourcing, downsizing, the creation of regional trade blocs, the power of corporate conglomerates, etc.) mean that it is largely futile for governments to act as bulwarks against economic pressures, how can one really think through trying to remove oneself from these conditions on a comparatively much smaller scale? Would not even the best-thought campaigns and forms of self-organization, subjected to such pressures, become fodder for another renewal and regeneration of capitalism? One can see this dynamic in the ways that demands for flexibility at work were realized as the imposition of precarious labour. The demands for self-management and self-determination at work raised during 1960s and 1970s came to be implemented, in a perverse form, through the rise of new management strategies--quality groups, "responsible autonomy," total quality management, and other implementations that can hardly be described as liberation. In the workings of the heavily symbolic post-Fordist economy there are many tasks that have come to be taken on as self-managed, but more often than not constitute the self-organization by the workforce of the means of its own alienation. Again, hardly liberating (even if arguably potentially containing some of the necessary tools for liberation). These pose weighty questions and concerns for the seemingly Sisyphean task of the liberation of labour and creativity, in the composition of non-alienated life within the confines of the present to create ways stretching through and beyond it.

What I want do in this essay is to try and see if it is possible to distill something of a radical kernel, or part of the notion and practices of worker self-management, that can be salvaged from the many qualms, difficulties, and complications that confront it, particularly in regards to its potentiality within fields of cultural production. That is, to see how self-management can contribute to what Ranciere describes as a movement not of slaves filled with *ressentiment*, but those living and embodying a new time of sociability and cooperation, creating resources and skills that can spread out from this, rather than being caught and contained by the conditions of its own creation. Drawing from my own experiences working in [Ever Reviled Records](#), a worker owned and run record label, I want to ferret out, conducting something akin to an organizational autoethnography,[6] hints as to whether or not self-management could be useful for radical social struggles today (and if so how).

The most immediate concern that arises in considering the subversive potentialities of forms of self-management is essentially a definitional one: Just what is meant by self-management? If the modifier *worker* is added, how (and around whom) are the boundaries of what is considered work drawn? There is a wide variety of phenomena that have at times been

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described as a form of worker self-management (WSM), varying from workers occupying factories--seizing the means of production and running it themselves--to schemes of codetermination where workers are given slightly more voice in the operations of their workplace--within boundaries and parameters still beyond their control--for a slightly better deal in the divvying up of the wage pie. WSM has also been used to describe broader revolutionary conditions where the economy is collectivized as a part of a general radical reorganization of social life (for instance as in Spain in 1936), or the takeover of production by workers during an economic downturn where businesses have been abandoned by their owners (such as the classic example of Lip factory and some factories in Argentina more recently.[7] WSM can be oriented toward an eventual goal of getting rid of the capitalist market altogether, or it can be a partial socialization and amelioration of some of the more odious aspects of it, paradoxically possibly strengthening the rule of the market over social life.

One could carry on, indeed for some time, continuing to list the widely varying and discordant forms of social organization that have been described at one point or another as WSM.[8] The varying manifestations of WSM can be differentiated (although this would not be the only way to do so) by how particular forms of social organization configure the interactions between socialized labour and state power.[9] This sort of a conceptual distinction helps to explain the difference between WSM as a form of market/social democracy,[10] versus the formation of cooperatives, or compared to nationalization of production in a top down fashion as directed by a party in a centrally-planned economic system or a military regime. However, I'm not particularly interested in trying to create an airtight definition of WSM, but rather in the ways such varying phenomena can contribute to furthering an overall and much larger anticapitalist and anti-statist project intended to reduce, deconstruct, and abolish the many and varying forms of social domination that exist.

Ever Reviled and the building of imaginal machines

Ever reviled, accursed, ne'er understood, thou art the grisly terror of our age.

~ John Henry McKay[11]

Ever Reviled Records (ERR) was started in 1998 by Darren "Deicide" Kramer, first as a venue to release 7"s and albums by a band he was in at the time. It was named after a line in a poem by late 19th century anarchist John Henry McKay. Shortly after starting the project Darren decided that it would be a better idea (and more consistent with the political ideals behind it) to run the project as a workers' collective, and that such a project could provide a useful model for self-organization in the various overlapping communities center around punk and radical politics. For the first several years of Ever Reviled Records' existence I was not directly involved in the running of the

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project, although I had met Darren and several of the people involved in the project at various shows and events. We also distributed each other's releases and helped promote shows and other events (at the time I was involved in running a my own attempted record label, Patriotic Dissent, whose main activities was putting together various compilation CDs and shows that brought together multiple genres of music in unexpected ways and combined art events such as poetry readings and exhibitions with musical events).

I became involved in ERR in December 2002, which was around the time that the collective was starting to shift from being a label that only released music by punk bands (such as the Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, Rational Solution, and Give Us Barabbas) to one that was considering releasing a broader spectrum of music united by a focus on radical politics rather than any specific musical genre. Or, as it was often phrased in meetings and discussions, to go about taking part in building a radical democratic counterculture. As this idea was taken up further ERR would subsequently come to release political folk music, hip-hop, and blues. The particular path that I took in becoming involved in the project was by coordinating a radio show and interview for David Rovics (a well known political folk singer that the collective was interested in working with) and Graciela Monteagudo from the [Argentina Autonomista Project](#) to discuss the one year anniversary of the Argentinean economic collapse and the various social movements in Argentina that were springing up at the time. ERR was at the same time planning a show to take place in New York City that David Rovics and other artists would be performing at. So I ended up taking part in planning and running that show, and thus became more interested in the direction the project was taking, and discussed joining the project.

During the years I was involved with ERR (2002-2006) I participated in many of the tasks of running the collective. Indeed, one of the main principles characterizing ERR was that anyone could and should be involved in any of the aspects necessary for its continuing operations. In other words, to try and consciously avoid the emergence of a fixed division of labour and the forms of implicit hierarchies that can be contained in such divisions. Having said that, the majority of activities I was involved with for ERR consisted of design related tasks (such as designing CD inserts, flyers, updating the website and promotional materials, etc.) and writing the ERR newsletter, as well as planning promotions and distributions, deciding which artists to sign, as well as the more mundane tasks such as moving around boxes, posting flyers, and filling orders and taking them to the post office.

Despite the attempt to avoid the emergence of a division of labour, which is common among many such projects (and usually attempted by means such as rotating tasks and other measures), there was a tendency in ERR that solidified into certain roles based upon the experiences and skills of the various members of the collective. For instance, the work of filing taxes and

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other legal forms most often fell upon Uehara, not because he particularly enjoyed such tasks, but because he was the only member of the collective who understood the tasks well enough to get them done. Similarly I ended up doing much of the design work not necessarily because I wanted to do the majority of it myself, but because I was the member of the collective that had the most experience with these sorts of tasks. It seemed that the greatest fluidity of tasks and who took part in them were those related to jobs that were relatively unskilled, or the "grunt work," as it was often referred to, such as moving packages around and stuffing envelops. But these tasks, too, were subject to a division of labour based on who had access to the physical resources (several members of the collective lived in Colorado, and in 2004 I moved to the UK).

Cultural subversion & laboratories of cooperation

The goal of ERR can be understood as an attempted form of cultural subversion in multiple senses. It is both to create a vehicle, a platform, for the dissemination and circulation of political ideas through the cultural field (by releasing music and planning events that express radical political ideas), but also through the propagation of itself as an incipient model of post-capitalist production and relations. In other words, to conceive of Ever Reviled's internally democratic structure and propagating it as a model of prefigurative politics. *This is what is meant by the idea of creating a radical, directly democratic counterculture: to embody and practice the possibilities of cooperative social relations in and through the means of subversion, to not separate the end goals of radical politics from the means created to work towards them.* These efforts are concurrently constrained by the conditions under which they occur (the existence of the market, dealing with the state, constraints on time, etc.)--but the idea is to create methods of moving through and beyond these conditions from within them. For instance, to take the practices of DIY as experienced in various punk communities and find ways to extend them to other areas of life in the present.[12]

At its best such a project becomes a laboratory for the creation of forms of social cooperation and subjectivities that arguably would form the basis of a post-capitalist world, and cultivate them in the here and now. I found that this argument resonated greatly with my personal experiences of working, which by and large are not designed to extend and deepen forms of autonomous cooperation and workers self-activity. Indeed, I can remember clearly the reason why I started to wonder about alternative forms of work organization, which was spurred on by working in a gas station and mini-mart for several years. It seemed obvious to me that the organization of the workplace was utterly absurd and there must be more sensible ways to organize people's lives and labour--from the alienation I felt going about what seemed like absurd tasks, arranged and coordinated in bizarre ways dictated by company policy, to the disenchantment I could palpably sense

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from almost every person who wandered into the store on their way to work at 6 a.m.

Being aware of the very real disenchantment felt by almost everyone I knew about their jobs--the workers, to borrow Erik Petersen's words, whose "song weighs a thousand pounds"--there was much focus in ERR on building links and forms of solidarity between various projects and networks that shared goals similar to ours. The idea was not just to develop sociability within forms of autonomous self-organization, but also to build solidarity in between and amongst them. And to connect organizing and struggles around what might be more clearly recognized as economic, workplace, and labour issues with broader concerns about sexuality, race, state oppression, and other concerns. And perhaps even more importantly, to create links between projects working on creating forms of self-organization and directly democratic relations usually separated from more directly contestational forms of political action.

Thus ERR at various times worked on events and campaigns with groups such as Food Not Bombs, New Jersey Anti-Racist Action, Palestine Solidarity, the New Jersey Indymedia Center, and various unemployed workers unions and community groups in Argentina. An important part of creating this web and networks of solidarity and cooperation was organizing and planning workshops, events, conferences, and *encuentros* (gatherings) where people could meet, exchange information and experiences, and find common grounds from which various struggles could cross-pollinate. Among these events was the Festival del Pueblo, multiple years of National Conference on Organized Resistance, the Life After Capitalism gathering, and Enero Autonomo in Argentina.

Forms of autonomous self-organization and self-management in the workplace operate as *immanent critiques* of existing forms of work organization as they stipulate, in practice, that there exist other possibilities for how workplaces might operate. They function in ways that could be described as (even if this is not usually done) forms of "propaganda of the deed" and as direct action.[13] This is not to say that they are in any way violent or confrontational at all, as is often assumed about such practices, but rather that they embody a form that follows this spirit and inspiration, namely that of taking political action without recourse to the state as a locus of making demands. For example, the idea behind acts of "propaganda of the deed" is that they will inspire others to take part in forms of political action and organizing that they would not otherwise. Worker self-management then can be understood as overturning the violence of dispossession and command instilled in wage slavery from the founding acts of originary accumulation to the myriad methods of discipline, control and surveillance often deployed on the job directly. Similarly, direct action does not necessarily indicate any form of violence at all, but rather acting outside the mediation and forms designated by the state or other bodies. So, while this

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can take the form of a blockade outside of a questionable financial meeting or military base, or intervening in situations based on notions of the illegitimate authority of the state, it can equally be understood as the creation of spaces and methods for autonomous self-organization and community without appealing to the authority or assistance of those that are not directly involved in the process of co-creation.

Problems of self-exploitation

In the days of Marx, the main problem was the liberation of the working-man from the capitalist. The contribution of Yugoslavia to socialism is the liberation of the working-man from the state. But socialist labour-management cannot assume the position of leading the world system, which belongs to it, until it liberates the working-man from himself as a collective capitalist.

~ Jaroslav Vanek[14]

Worker self-management, at its best, takes part in creating times and relations that are, at least partially, outside of the existing reality of capitalist work. But, perhaps not surprisingly, not all is sunny and sweet in the land of creating forms of self-management. Indeed, this is perhaps not all that surprising, because as much as self-managed spaces aim to create the incipient forms of organization and sociality that forms the basis of a more liberatory society, they also exist within the confines of the present, and thus have to work against the ways in which current conditions constrict these possibilities. And this conflict leads to many tensions, ambivalent dynamics, and other problems that cannot just be wished away. This wishing away occurs not necessarily through obvious and visible means, but rather through the assumption that self-directed creative labour is inherently other to alienating and exploited labour. This is a widespread assumption that is often found in many places that are otherwise very critical in analyzing the workings of capitalism. In an issue of *Capital & Class* on the cultural economy, Gerard Strange & Jim Shorthouse draw a sharp distinction between artistic work (which they see as an expression of creative capacity through self-determined labour) and managed creativity (which they see as reduced and alienated work within orthodox capitalist relations of production), from which they argue that "artistic labour is inherently linked to autonomy and self-determination, if it is to be a real and genuine expression of creative labour power."[15]

The problem with such an argument isn't that artistic labour and creativity cannot be part of creating conditions of autonomy and self-determination, but that they are not as nearly discrete or separated as this kind of distinction would have it. The assumption that artistic labour is inherently tied to autonomy and self-determination, reduced to managed creativity within capitalism, overlooks the ways in which self-directed forms of artistic labour are always tied up within various fields of power which complicate things

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even within self-managed forms of cultural production and economic arrangements. This is a point explored by Jacques Godbout, who notes the common desire for artists to want to constitute some form of lost community composed only of producers (for instance in the avant-garde call to merge art and everyday life, to create situations with no spectators, i.e. all producers). The goal of this process is to assert this autonomy based on its perceived connection with artistic creation. The irony is that within actually existing capitalist production artistic labour acquires a valorized but undervalued status, a "kind of mythic negation of the fact that the real production system destroys the producer."[16] This finds its expression in the form of the struggling artist. Through holding together creativity and authenticity, the struggling artist fulfills a useful role for capital in how this renewal of "authenticity" underpins willingly self-exploited labour. Andrew Ross, in his excellent study of no collar workers, refers to this dynamic within circuits of artistic labour as "sacrificial labour," one that is essential to the continued workings of the cultural economy. Artists (and also those involved in forms of labour that come to take on aesthetic qualities in the labour process)

> are predisposed to accept nonmonetary rewards--the gratification of producing art--as partial compensation for their work, thereby discounting the cash price of their labour. Indeed, it is fair to say that the largest subsidy to the arts has always come from art workers themselves, underselling themselves in anticipation of future career rewards.[17]

When I first heard the idea of self-exploitation being discussed in workshop on self-management at the Festival del Pueblo in Boston in 2002 it struck me as being absurd. After all, if one's labour is not alienated by being commanded by a boss, if it is self-directed and self-organized, then surely it could not be alienated labour, at least not the in the usual sense. And, if one is organizing and directing one's own tasks during work, then the answer to self-exploitation would seem quite easy as one could just reduce, alter, or transform the way in which one was working. Maybe simply just work less. But silly or not, self-exploitation is indeed a real problem and concern precisely because of how easily the pleasures of self-directed labour (especially creative labour) and forms of self-exploitation can mingle and overlap. Self-exploitation is also--in a strictly Marxist sense--directly linked to selling one's labour-power in the market and producing for the market a commodity, two realities that still plague self-managed firms or projects that compete in any form of marketplace. That is, both the labour-market and the commodity market means that one's labour is commodified, that surplus labour is being (self)exploited because both depend on socially necessary labour time.[18]

The quandary of worker self-management is that in self-directed projects it is quite easy to put much greater amounts of energy, effort, passion, commitment, time, and work, all the while often expecting far less from it, or

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excusing it if it does not happen otherwise. This is to integrate much more of one's creative capacities and abilities than normally one would if it were being directed by someone else (and this is similar to the way that many small businesses manage to succeed, because those initiating them are willing to put immense amount of work beyond the usual into starting up precisely because the endeavor is self-directed). To put it in autonomist terms, the formation of the social factory involves the dual movement of capitalist work relations outside of the workplace and greater energies of social creativity into the workplace. For instance, while working with ERR I often would work many more hours, at not terribly convenient times, and for amounts of money so low that if it were any other job I would most likely be throwing a fit. Why did I do this? Why does anyone? There are many reasons, most of them involving a desire to see the project succeed, an agreement with the political aims and objectives of the project, and the very real forms of pleasure and enjoyment that often characterize self-directed projects. Another was the notion, which we often reminded ourselves, that as the conditions improved in the project (in terms of generating revenue) we would have built the conditions for ourselves to be involved in a form of work that was enjoyable, politically satisfying, and so forth. In other words, that it was building towards something worthwhile. It should be readily obvious that it is extremely unlikely that any of us involved in the project of ERR would have accepted the less satisfying aspects (low pay for the hours, etc.) were it not for these other aspects.

At its worst WSM can become little more than the self-organization and management of one's own misery and exploitation, gladly taken on and exalted as a positive thing. This is not to say that all projects of self-management go in this direction--as indeed many do not--but that does mean that the potential (and usually the tendency) towards such a direction is present. After all, ultimately it is impossible to create conditions of self-management in an unrestricted sense under capitalism because one is still subordinated by the demands of market forces, of having to generate profits, etc. As p.m. argues in his classic text *bolo'bolo,* as long as the planetary work machine continues to exist, self-management and autonomy "can only serve as a kind of recreational area for the repair of exhausted workers."[19] Creating a haven of internal economic democracy does not necessarily by itself do anything to change the large macroeconomic conditions, contribute to ecological sustainability, or even guarantee that what is produced by the particular project is desirable.

Forms of self-management tend as they persist under capitalism to increasingly take on characteristics of more typical capitalist forms. This is perhaps not so surprising, for dealing with certain forms of market pressures over time (for instance the basic imperative of keeping costs low enough so the project remains viable, etc.) can easily erode the desire for self-management, especially as the initial impulses and political drives which often led to the foundation of the self-managed project get forgotten or laid

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by the wayside (or perhaps there are new people involved in a project who do not necessarily subscribe to the core notions that brought it together).[20] This can be seen in the way that many cooperatives after enjoying a period of success are sold out by their original members and come to take on the structure of a much more traditional capitalist firm.

It has been noted, by Harold Barclay for instance,[21] that forms of worker self-management and cooperatives are much more likely to appear historically during periods of economic crisis and generally instability and for these same projects to tend toward more typical forms of capitalist organization once this period of crisis is completed. As Hajime Miyazaki has argued, how this process occurs is largely dependent on the particulars of the interactions between different projects and the political, economic, and social environments they exist in.[22] In this way one can distinguish between forms of self-management emerging out of moments of crisis or rupture--for instance through factory occupations or after business have been abandoned by their owners as in Argentina in recent years--versus those that are created and inaugurated as cooperative enterprises from their inception. This is supported by the work of Ann Arnett Ferguson, who makes the argument, drawing from an ethnography of a cooperative bakery in the Bay Area of California, that when considering the longevity of collective projects one cannot separate the particular project from the social context in which it exists.[23] This is particularly important for understanding the long term success of cooperatives in places like the Bay Area, which can easily form vibrant networks to support each other, exist in a community where there is a great deal of support for this kind of work, and have a steady supply of highly motivated or politically sympathetic employees.[24]

Perhaps one of the sharpest critiques of self-management, even if a bit overstated, was produced by the Negation Collective in response to the worker takeover and management of the Lip watch factory in France in the early 1970s.[25] The takeover of the factory, which occurred after it was abandoned by its former owners, was argued not to represent a positive stage in the socialization of the productive apparatus, but rather the socialization of the Lip workers themselves into the role of collective capitalists.[26] Based on this, it was argued that Lip (and similar forms of self-management) was potentially counterrevolutionary in that the crisis was limited to one industry (or one firm for that matter), and thus did not represent any real break with the logic of capitalist command. Thus the actions of Lip workers could inadvertently end up functioning as means of shoring up a temporarily flagging sector of the economy, securing rather than rupturing capital's valorization as a total process. There is some truth to this, embedded in the ambivalent character of self-management, although perhaps the better question is building upon the social energies unleashed through such moments and struggles so that they are not trapped and confined into a self-limiting position and into the roles of collective capitalists.

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Another potentially unsettling dynamic that can emerge with self-management is found in patterns of self-surveillance. To take an example that is perhaps fairly well known, there is one scene in the documentary on self-managed factories in Argentina *The Take*, where during a discussion with some of the workers from a plant, it is mentioned that while the factory was under the control of the previous owner it was acceptable for the workers to look for ways to take extra breaks, to slack off here and there, and to find ways to make a little space for themselves in the work day. But now that the factory is owned and run by the workers and that they are all responsible for the project, to do so would be too bourgeois; now everyone was to watch everyone else to make sure that no one was slacking off or neglecting their tasks. I experienced a similar dynamic in Ever Reviled as we came up with better-developed accounting and labour tracking methods. Although the situation was much different it yielded a similar dynamic: a willingly embraced form of self-surveillance and discipline. This, of course, is not to dispute that there were not valid and useful reasons for why these sorts of dynamics occur (for instance in order to know how to effectively plan and for everyone to do one's fair share of work). Nevertheless, that doesn't change the fact that even the best intentioned and thought out self-managed plans and projects can develop dynamics and practices that can indeed run counter to the intent of the project.[27] The higher levels of time and concern that often goes into a self-directed project--part of the amorphous webs of what Tiziana Terranova describes as "free labour"--eventually exhaust themselves.[28] Perhaps this process has created greater possibilities for creating new forms of sociality and politics based upon the wealth of this free labour, but oftentimes this simply does not occur in a significant way when the vast social wealth of the common is held back via privatization by capital and the mechanisms of the enclosure of that wealth.

The most important question to be asked of self-management for considering its relevance and usefulness for radical political projects is really quite simple: What kind of selves does the particular arrangement of self-management tend to produce? In other words, as a process of socialization does it tend to create forms of subjectivity and interactions that provide building blocks for a larger revolutionary social process? This is an important and often difficult question to ask for self-management projects precisely because of the historical trends for self-management to appeal to more particular compositions and strata of workers: namely those with higher levels of skill and technocratic knowledge who often already possess greater degrees of job autonomy to begin with. Or, as Sidney Verba & Goldie Shabad put it, self-managed projects can bring about conflicts between "egalitarian and technocratic values, between democratic and meritocratic criteria for participation, and between tendencies towards "workers' solidarity and tendencies towards functional and status differentiation based on expertise."[29] Vladmimir Arzensek argues that in situations where unions are not autonomous from the structures of self-management this tends to reinforce the bias of workers' councils toward highly skilled and professional

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workers.[30] Similarly Rudy Fenwick & Jon Olson claim that those with *perceived* higher levels of job autonomy tend to be more supportive of worker participation and forms of self-management.[31] While Robert Grady points out that forms of possessive individualism can be used to further self-management and industrial democracy.[32] The question for Grady, then, is how self-management could unfold in a way that does not recreate the same patterns of power it is attempting to move beyond. That is, how can it *not* lead to a further reinforcing of the dynamics where those who already possess more empowering and rewarding forms of work tend to argue for greater forms of participation and those who do not, don't. These astute observations obviously pose problems for more revolutionary projects of self-management. If, following the Comrades of Kronstadt, it is held that "the concept of worker's autonomy bases itself on a qualitative change in human relations, not simply changes in the ownership of the means of production," then the existence of tendencies of self-managed projects towards favouring the participation of a particular strata of workers over others creates the implicit reinforcing of certain questionable forms of power dynamics and hierarchies within the workplace *despite* increasing degrees of democratization.[33]

Movement of the imaginary away from self-management?

Capital affords us to project ahead, work it from within, knowing all too well that it will be quick to instrumentalize any creative move, turning it into binary opposition, however radical they claim to be, proven recipes that failed repeatedly because they have become inadequate to think the complexity of the contemporary reality.

~ Sylvere Lotringer[34]

While worker self-management played an important role in the imaginary and formulation of demands during the late 1960s in the New Left,[35] since then there has been a general shift away from a focus on self-management as a locus of revolutionary energies. While it has been argued that one of the reasons for this shift post-1968 was due to the division between an artistic and social critique and their differential trajectories--Boltanski & Chiapello's suspect distinction--this is highly questionable because of how fused together these elements of radical thought were in the radical imagination of the time.[36] For example, the Situationists heavily stressed WSM and council communist ideas, and they more or less borrowed a large chunk of these ideas from *Socialsme ou Barbarie* when Guy Debord was a member. Despite that, the Situationists are used as the very emblem of an artistic critique that had already forsaken class dynamics! In reality, the actual reasons for such a shift in the composition of the radical imagination from a focus on self-management are multiple and complex. One explanation for this shift includes the increased importance throughout the 1970s of various other struggles not strictly based on class distinctions, such as feminism, student

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movements, struggles against racism and homophobia, and so forth, which broke down the hegemonic imaginary of the industrial worker as the central and most important locus of struggles. Another explanation for the shift away from self-management for the radical left is the fact that many of the aspirations for self-management were *actually realized* during the 1970s--in a form, however, nearly inverse from the desires of those struggling for them from below, and in directions that can't be described as particularly liberatory.[37] As an example, proposals to use state subsidies to fund workers taking over their workplaces--a proposal which is still sometimes touted as a radical project (for instance currently by some movements in Argentina)--was actually advocated for by parts of the World Bank and the Wharton Business School during the late 1970s and early 1980s as one way to regenerate the economy. It was even argued that this represented a new form of industrial policy even if it might be marked by some overtones of class struggle which, in any case, was seen by these elites as no longer posing much danger.

Similar to the way that demands for flexibility at work and the widespread refusal of work came to be realized as imposed forms of precarity, energies of social insurgency channeled through demands for self-management came to be realized in inverse form through managerial schemes and methods that were about co-opting and even mobilizing these dissatisfactions. "Responsible autonomy," "co-determination" schemes, "work quality studies," "total quality management," "employee participation," and a whole host of other terms and practices developed during the 1970s to address the very real dissatisfactions and complaints which were causing massive industrial unrest.[38] This is not to say that these responses to the "blue collar blues" and the discontent with people's working lives did not address some real concerns in occasionally positive ways (because, almost despite themselves, such measures sometimes did). The relevant point to make here, rather, is that these efforts addressed real worker concerns in ways that, by partially but not totally addressing these sources of discontent, provided necessary forms of social stabilization in the post-Fordist plant while at the same time harnessing increased forms of social wealth and creativity brought into the workplace by these participatory schemes.

It also has been argued that this period and its transformations ushered in an era where the social forces congealed around the potentiality of living labour were no longer sufficient to provide social insurgencies and the radical imagination with the fuel for inspiring continued resistance and revolt. Jürgen Habermas, for instance, describes the situation where we find ourselves as "the New Obscurity," a condition, while seemingly characterized by the retreat of utopian energies from historical thought, reveals rather the end of a particular configuration of utopia based on the potential of a society rooted in labour. For Habermas, these social energies no longer have the same social resonance

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not only simply because the forces of production have lost their innocence or because the abolition of private ownership of the means of production has clearly not led in and of itself to workers' self-management. Rather it is above all because that utopia has lost its point of reference in reality: the power of abstract labour to create and give form to society.[39]

While it is true that the twentieth century is littered with remnants of revolutions showing that simply eliminating private ownership of the means of production does not necessarily guarantee a revolution that goes all the way down to address the multiple forms of social domination, this is nowhere close to meaning that all potentiality for revolt through the labour of the imaginary--the imagination of labour--has disappeared.

What occurred following the revolts of the 1960s and 1970s, leading up the present situation, was not a total transformation or withdrawal of the subversive potential of labour's imagination, but a series of transformations and permutations in how these imaginaries, movements, and practices were conceived. These reconceptualizations meant a displacement of a hegemonic imaginary by a diffuse, multiple, and often contradictory and conflicting array of imaginaries. In other words, it's not that there were class movements and forms of labour organizing (existing as unified, hegemonic wholes) that were replaced by a series of fractured and diffuse movements (i.e. the so-called movement toward identity politics, environmental politics, feminism, questions of cultural and ethnic difference, etc.). Rather, beneath the image of the unified and coherent class movement already existed a series of multiplicitous subjectivities, that, while they indeed embody varying forms of class politics, are not simply reducible to them. Rather than there now being "new" concerns which were different than those found within "old social movements," ones that because they might at first seem quite different and distinct from previous politics might even be looked at with suspicion, it's a question of seeing how those "new" demands and desires were already there but lumped together and erased by the false image of a necessary unity that could not accommodate difference within it. This embrace of *difference* within a radical labour imaginary was not something new, as the history of the IWW and the movements of migrant labour and the multitude of workers who have always been precarious show. One can also see, for instance, the older embrace of difference beyond the workplace in Gerald Raunig and Gordon Clark's explorations of the varied forms of neighborhood self-organization and constituent practice underlying the Paris Commune of 1971.[40] Rather, it was these very movements that had been erased by the enforced imaginary of the institutional left, the very imaginary that was shattered post-1968. This isn't to deny that there *has* been transformation in the internal composition of the radical imaginary, but rather that this is a constant and on-going historical process. No, the embrace of difference was not a new phenomenon by any means. What was new was

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the recognition of a transformation in the imaginary rather than a sharp or sudden break.

Perhaps self-management is a fish that is only well suited to swim in the struggles of Fordist waters. That is, one that is suited for struggles occurring in a productive context based on the necessity of certain forms of dead capital (machinery, equipment, factories and so forth) that are worth struggling over. To the degree that post-Fordist labour is founded on forms of social creativity, on forms of imagination and labour that are already and immediately collective, struggling to possess them in common makes little sense because they already are in common (because as much as management may wish it was possible to colonize and harness all the cognitive labour, this is simply not possible). That is not to deny that there are still great proliferations of mechanisms, laws, and procedures to ensure capitalist valorization from this productive common because, whether intellectual property laws or forms of legal enforcement and government funding of new forms and institutions for these forms of production, there clearly are. Rather it is to indicate that the imaginary that used to fuel drives to self-management--for instance, that we can take over the factory and use the tools in a liberatory way now that they have been collectivized--makes less and less sense because the tools are already owned in common, are founded in cooperation. The struggle then must become one of subtracting oneself from actual forms of capitalist valorization, the parasitic rent on the productive commons,[41] without recreating the collective self as yet another form of collective capitalist. This is the problem that Jarsoslav Vanek identified in his analysis of self-management, and in many ways it remains the problem of worker self-management today.

The question then is not trying to restate a notion of WSM or labour radicalism as a hegemonic imaginary that could exist within present conditions, but rather to consider to what degree the ideas and practices of self-management can take part in constructing a form of social resistance that, much like the potentiality of labour itself, is always predicated upon an ability to go beyond itself, to be *super-adequate to itself*--to not let its constituted form inhibit the continued expansion of its constituent potentiality.[42] This would be to reconsider self-management not as creating a set and stable economic arrangement to be defended against the pressures of the capitalist market, but rather developing such spaces with the intent of creating resources and possibilities to expand and deepen other struggles as well. This is not a restatement of the usual "spillover" or "contagion" argument, or that forms of industrial democracy and worker participation would tend to lead to other forms of democratic renewal in other spheres of life. Not to say that spillover cannot happen; that liberatory transformation in one area of social life is closely connected to other areas makes a good deal of sense. But that does not mean that this necessarily occurs in any easily predictable or mechanical manner. In other words, projects of WSM divorced from broader based social reorganization and movements tend to

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reinforce market-based behavior rather than subverting them, which is almost the direct opposite of what a "spillover" model would expect.[43] Constructing a form of WSM super-adequate to itself necessarily means that this would be a self-management of constant self-institution, of the collective (and individual) shaping of the imaginary in ways that create resources for expanding radical forms of social movement, such as squatting, the autoreduction of prices, and other forms of labour struggles spreading beyond recognized work places all over the social field. It is these labour struggles outside the recognized factory spaces that congealed during the 1970s into the autonomist's notion of the struggle of the socialized worker and Raoul Vaneigem's call to move from wildcat strike to generalized self-management.[44] In other words, to retain the subversive core of labour struggles and movements towards to self-management, but stripped of their narrowly workerist focus.

Between Sisyphus and self-management

And so where does this leave the conceptual territory and practices of self-management? Best consigned to the dustbin of history? Tempting, perhaps, although to do so would be a bit hasty, and likely an instance of throwing out the baby with the bathwater of our discontent. WSM can play a vital role in social resistance, but one that is more limited than I thought several years ago when I started thinking about this more deeply. WSM can play an important role in creating networks of knowledge and cooperation laboratories for experimentation and the development of resources and skills for "building the new world within the shell of the old," to use the old Wobbly phrase. But it is important to never forget that this new world is being built within the shell of the old, within the iron cage of capitalist rationality, which is far more likely to impinge upon its growth than to be torn asunder by other forms of social life developing within it. Practices of WSM exist in a cramped position as a form of "minor politics" and composition. Their radicality rests in this position, in WSM's capability to create resources and time, and in consciously avoiding becoming a "major" or representative form.[45] In other words, WSM can help to create space and time that foster the cultivation of other possibilities--for other possible worlds emerging. But that does not mean that we can just "buy back the world" from the capitalists, or that WSM can serve as a means to overcome without difficulties the vast arrays of power that still exist. WSM is not an unambivalent outside to the realities of capitalism. But it can create time that partially is one.

It is also fundamentally important that self-management, as an affirmation of the creative potentiality of non-alienated labour, does not unwittingly find itself sliding back into an affirmation of "the dignity of work" that has haunted various forms of labour organizing and radicalism from times immemorial and that has been the target of radicals more prone to celebrate the refusal of work and argue for its reduction, from Paul Lafargue to the Italian autonomists, Bob Black to the Situationists. The idea would be rather to

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extend and deepen the relation between the refusal of work and its self-management, as when Vaneigem called for the unity of workers' councils and the refusal of work.[46] This is not nearly as paradoxical (or silly) as it might seem at first. Rather it is an argument based on the realization that socialized labour's potentiality is revealed most clearly by its absence, which is the basic concept underlying strikes after all. Therefore, the way to affirm such potentiality is not under conditions which limit it absurdly within the present but by the constant immanent shaping of a collective imagination and creativity that will not allow itself to ever be totally bound within a fixed form.

This is to understand and learn from WSM such that it acts, to borrow the argument of Maurice Brinton, *as a means to liberation rather than liberation itself*.[47] One could extend this argument further, as the Comrades of Kronstadt do, to argue "the only valid self-management activity for the workers is therefore that of self-management of struggle, that is direct action."[48] But not just any old direct action, but direct action as an open-ended activity that consciously avoids closure and fixity within any given form. Perhaps this is quite close to what John Asimakopoulos, meant when he called for a "new militant working class strategy of direct economic civil disobedience," one linking radical actions with real outcomes.[49]

And this is why Sisyphus is paradoxically a quite appropriate image to think about the nature of worker self-management. The tragedy of Sisyphus is that he is fully aware of the impossible nature of his condition. Sisyphus is cursed by the awareness of the futility of his position, much in the same way the proletarian condition is cursed by an awareness of ultimate futility of trying to create forms of non-alienated life and self-determining community that can continue to exist under the current conditions of capitalism. The boulder is pushed up the hill, only to roll down again, yet another round of enclosure, counterrevolution, recuperation, or whatever your preferred name for the process might be. This of course does not mean that there is no value in the pushing, as absurd as it might often seem. The resilience of Sisyphus' insurgent spirit, his overcoming of his position, is found within his capacity to find joy and possibility in walking back down the hill: through this he overcomes his cursed position and defies his fate, for "at each of these moments when he leaves the heights and gradually sinks towards the lair of the gods, he is superior to his fate."[50] Indeed, there is no fate that cannot be overcome by scorn.

The labour of the imagination, or the imagination of labour, is based on the realization that self-determination within existing conditions is ultimately absurd. But that does not mean that practices of self-determination and the building of autonomous communities are useless, rather that the conditions preventing the emergence of such are infinitely more absurd and deserve to meet their destruction. Perhaps it is useful to understand it in the way that Boltanski & Chiapello describe the absorption of critique by capital, which they also describe using the image of Sisyphus: "But the effects of critique are

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real. The boulder does indeed go up the full length of the slope, even if it is always rolling back down by another path whose direction most often depends on the direction it was rolled up."[51] Between the changing directions of the boulder's role and the grimaced face of Sisyphus pushed against it is the space of an absurd freedom. And so with the machinations of the gods and the weight of the heavens pressing down upon us. It very well might be time, then, for another storming of the heavens.[52]

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Endnotes

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[2] Marx, K. (1973). *Capital, Volume I: A critique of political economy*. New York: Penguin (pp. 171, 173).

[3] Ranciere, J. (1989). *The nights of labour: The workers' dream in nineteenth century France*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press (pp. 67, 83).

[4] Camus, A. (1983) *The myth of Sisyphus and other essays*. New York: Vintage Books (p. 121).

[5] For some general writings on worker self-management, see: Blumberg, P. (1968) *The Sociology of participation*. New Haven: Yale University Press; Cole, G.D.H. (1972). *Self-Government in industry*. London: Hutchinson Educational Ltd; Vanek, J. (1975). *Self-management economics: Economic liberation of man*. Hammondsworth: Penguin; Chaplin, B. & Coyne, J. (1977). *Can workers manage?* Sussex: Institute of Economic Affairs; Wright, D. (1979). *Cooperatives & community: The theory and practice of producers Cooperatives*. London: Bedford Square Press; Thornley, J. (1981). *Workers' cooperatives*. London: Heineman Educational Books Ltd; Mason, R. (1982). *Participatory and workplace democracy*. Carbdondale: Southern Illinois University Press; Berman, M. (1984). *Workers' self-management in the United States*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press; Greenberg, E. (1986). *Workplace democracy: The political effects of workplace participation*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press; Gunn, C. (1986). *Workers' self-management in the United States*. Albany: State University of New York Press; Jansson, S. & Hellmark, A.B. (Eds.). (1986). *Labour-owned firms and workers' cooperatives*. Hants: Gower Publishing; Wiener, H. & Oakeshott, R. (1987). *Worker-owners: Mondragon revisited*. London: George Over Ltd.

[6] For a recent argument for the importance of such an approach, see the special issue of *Culture and Organization* on organizational autoethnography: Boyle, M. & Parry, K. (Eds.). (2007). *Culture and Organization, 13*(3), 185-266.

[7] See, for instance: Vanek, J. (1970). *The general theory of labour-managed market economies*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press; Dolgoff, S. (1974). *The anarchist collectives: Workers' self-management in the Spanish revolution 1936-1939*. Montreal: Black Rose Books; Negation. (1975). *Lip and the self-managed counter-revolution*. Detroit: Black & Red; Sitirin, M. (Ed.). (2006). *Horizontalism: Voices of popular power in Argentina*. Oakland: AK Press; Lavaca. (2007). *Sin patrón: Stories from Argentina's worker-run enterprises*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.

[8] See, for instance: Bayat, A. (1991). *Work, politics, and power: An international perspective on worker's control and self-management*. New York: Monthly Review.

[9] For more on this, see: Burawoy, M. (1983). Between the labour process and the state: The changing face of factory regimes under advanced capitalism. *American sociological review, 48*(5), 587-605.

[10] For more on this, see: McNally, David. (1993). *Against the market: Political economy, market socialism, and the Marxist critique*. London: Verso.

[11] McKay, J. H. (1999). *The anarchists*. Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia. For a recent assessment of McKay seen from a GLBT perspective, see: Highleyman, L. (2007). A john of all trades. http://anarchistnews.org.

[12] Holtzman, B. et al. (2004). Do It Yourself…and the movement beyond capitalism. *Radical Society*, *31*(1), 7-20.

[13] Flynn, E.G. et al. (1997). *Direct action & sabotage: Three classic IWW pamphlets from the 1910s*. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr.

[14] Vanek, J. (1977). *The labour-managed economy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press (p. 48).

[15] Strange, G. & Shorthouse, J. (2004). The new cultural economy, the artist and the social configuration of autonomy. *Capital & Class,* 84, 43-59 (p.47). For an excellent consideration of artistic labour see William Morris, whose work is particularly good in elaborating the potentiality of craft and labour without falling into fetishizing any reductive version of working class culture or a static notion of authentic working class labour.

[16] Godbout, J. (1998). *The world of the gift*. Montreal: McGill-Queen University Press (p. 87).

[17] Ross, A. (2003) *No collar: The human workplace and its hidden costs*. New York: Basic Books (p. 142).

[18] For more on this, see: McNally.

[19] p.m. (1995). *bolo'bolo*. New York: Semiotext(e) (p. 50).

[20] This is central to the critique of why coops might fail when the fervor that motivated the project is in the distant past, or when the crisis that spawned them is long over, or with the passing of time and the incorporation of new members and the leaving of the founders. See: Craig, J. (1993). *The nature of co-operation*. Montreal: Black Rose Books.

[21] Barclay, H. (1997). *Culture and anarchism*. London: Freedom Press.

[22] Miyazaki, H. (1984) On success and dissolution of the labour-managed firm in the capitalist conomy. *Journal of Political Economy*, *92*(5), 909-931.

[23] Ferguson, A.A. (1991). Managing without managers: Crisis and resolution in a collective bakery. In Burawoy et al. (Eds.), *Ethnography unbound: Power and resistance in the modern metropolis* (pp. 108-132). Berkeley: University of California Press.

[24] The Bay Area provides an excellent example of how networks of cooperatives can support and benefit each other. For more on how this dynamic see the work of Network of Bay Area Worker Cooperatives, or NoBAWC (pronounced "no boss"): www.nobawc.org.

[25] Negation.

[26] For more on this dynamic in the eastern European context, see: the Barricade Collective.

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27 For more on the dynamics of self-surveillance in self-management, see: Martin, R. (1994). *Socialist ensembles: Theater and state in Nicaragua and Cuba*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

28 Terranova, T. (2004). *Network culture: Politics for the information age*. London: Pluto Press.

29 Verba, S. & Shabad, G. (1978). Workers' councils and political stratification: The Yugoslav experience. *American Political Science Review, 72*(1), 80-95 (p. 82).

30 Arzensek, V. (1972). A conflict model and the structure of Yugoslav society. *International Journal of Sociology*, 2, 364-383.

31 Fenwick, R. & Olson, J. (1986). Support for worker participation: Attitudes among union and non-union workers. *American Sociological Review*, 51(4), 505-522.

32 Grady, R.C. (1990). Workplace democracy and possessive individualism. *Journal of Politics, 52*(1), 146-166.

33 Comrades of Kronstadt. (1990). *Worker's autonomy*. London: Elephant Editions (p. 6).

34 Quoted in: Virno, P. (2004). *A grammar of the multitude: For an analysis of contemporary forms of life*. New York: Semiotext(e) (p. 17-18).

35 Katsiaficas, G. (1987). *The imagination of the new left: A global analysis of 1968*. Boston: South End Pres.

36 Boltanski, L. & Chiapello, E. (2005). *The new spirit of capitalism*. London: Verso.

37 See, for instance: Keith Bradley and Alan Gelb's two books (both from 1983) on the Mondragon collectives and worker managed capitalism as a tool of industrial renewal and regeneration (Bradley, K. & Gelb, A. (1983a). *Cooperation at work: The Mondragon experience*. London: Heineman Educational Books Ltd; Bradley, K. & Gelb, A. (1983). *Worker capitalism: The new industrial relations*. London: Heineman Educational Books Ltd.). See also: Boltanski & Chiapello. Another interesting and bizarre example of this style of thought has been the argument for both creating increased forms of employee participation and self-management along with a general neoliberal restructuring of the state. For this unique piece of ideological mish mash, see: Biagi, M. (Ed.). (2002). *Quality of work and employee involvement in Europe*. The Hague: Kluwer Law.

38 For more on this, see: Bass, B. & Shackleton, V.J. (1979). Industrial democracy and participative management: A case for synthesis. *Academy of Management Review*, 4(3), 393-404; Fenwick & Olson; Vallas, S.P. (2003). Why teamwork fails: Obstacles to workplace change in four manufacturing plants. *American Sociological Review*, 68(2), 223-250. One could also connect this to other currents and concepts with management and organization studies, such as Andrew Friedman's notion of "responsible autonomy" and the work of the Tavistock Institute.

39 Habermas, J. (1989) The new obscurity: The crisis of the welfare state and the exhaustion of utopian energies. In S.W. Nicholsen (Ed.), *The new*

conservatism: Cultural criticism and the historians' debate (pp. 48-70). Cambridge: MIT Press.

[40] For more on this, see: Clark, G. (1984). A theory of local autonomy. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 74*(2), 195-208; Raunig, G. (2007). *Art and revolution: Transversal activism in the long twentieth century*. New York: Semiotext(e)

[41] Vercellone, C. (2008). The new articulation of wages, rent, and profit in cognitive capitalism. *Generation Online*. http://www.generation-online.org/c/fc_rent2.htm.

[42] Spivak, G.C. (1985) Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value. *Diacritics, 15*(4), 73-93.

[43] For more on the "spillover model," see: Greenberg, E. et al. (1966). Industrial work and political participation: Beyond "simple spillover." *Political Research Quarterly, 49*(2), 305-330.

[44] Vaneigem, R. (n.d.). From wildcat strike to total self-management. In *Collection of desires* (pp. 51-82). Richmond, VA: Paper Street.

[45] Thoburn, N. (2003). *Deleuze, Marx, and politics*. London: Routledge.

[46] Vaneigem, R. (1994). *The movement of the free spirit*. New York: Zone Books (p. 277).

[47] Brinton, M. (2004). *For workers' power*. Oakland, CA: AK Press (p. 33).

[48] Comrades of Kronstadt, p. 33.

[49] Asimakopoulos, J. (2006, February 27). Loot the rich: Economic civil disobedience. *Infoshop.org*. http://news.infoshop.org/article.php?story=2006loot_the_rich.

[50] Camus, p. 121.

[51] Boltanski & Chiapello, p. 41.

[52] This image is first used by Marx in 1871 in a letter to Dr. Kugelmann about the Paris Commune. It has since been picked up and used within varying contexts, such as in the Italian autonomist milieu of the 1970s (and was then used as the title for Steve Wright's book on the history of Workerism). It is also alluded to in Ellio Petri's 1971 film *Classe Operai va in Paradiso* (*The Working Class Goes to Heaven*).

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