

# Contemporary Interpretation of the Communism Concept by the Western Left since the 21st Century

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The idea of communism is an important topic discussed by left-wing scholars in the West, and it has gone through a development process from affirmation to negation, and then to reversion. The disintegration of the Soviet Union made the left wing lose its vitality or submerge in the criticism of consumption and entertainment culture, and the international history of communism also fell into a downturn. The disintegration of the Soviet Union made the left wing lose its vitality or submerge in the criticism of consumption and entertainment culture, and the international History of communism also fell into a downturn.

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the concept of communism, attempting to However, since entering the 21st century, especially after the 2008 capitalist economic crisis, left-wing scholars have reignited their research enthusiasm for the concept of communism, attempting to explain the era value and implementation path of contemporary communism from a new perspective. It is of great significance to conduct in-depth research on the practical conditions, and theoretical foundations, and practical paths of the emergence and development of the communist concept by foreign It is of great significance to conduct in-depth research on the practical conditions, and theoretical foundations, and practical paths of the emergence and development of the communist concept by foreign scholars, in order to comprehensively understand the communist concept and promote the development of communism theory in China.

## **CHAPTER I. Practical urgency and positive factors for the return to the concept of communism**

As we enter the twenty-first century, the inherent contradictions of capitalism remain irreconcilable, and confrontation and conflict continue, with a clear tendency to intensify.

Alain Badiou, a prominent left-wing scholar, has been affected by the changing circumstances of the times in which he is currently living, and has ceased to be a defender of the theory of proletarian revolution among traditional Marxists, and has instead become a political theorist pinning his hopes on the idea of communism as well as on the communist movement.

He points out that the four principles that manipulate today's capitalist society are collectivism against privatization, the polymorphous workforce against specialization, concrete universality against closed identities, and free association against the State, and that the contradictions that arise from these confrontations are a constant shock to the world system that capitalism has woven.

On this basis, the left-wing politician Žizek not only affirms the rationality and necessity of Badiou's assumptions about communism, but also places special emphasis on "the urgency that one should locate confrontation in historical reality and make it practical" <sup>1</sup>, revealing four forms of confrontation that are more salient in modern capitalist societies, namely The ecological crisis, the inconsistency between private ownership of property and the sharing of knowledge, the anti-ethical phenomenon of bio-engineering, and the contradiction between the included and the excluded.

After an objective analysis of capitalism's antagonisms, Žižek recognizes the limitations of capitalism and sees these drawbacks as a phenomenal symptom that capitalism is coming to an end. In Žizek's view, although capitalism has entered a new phase in which the conditions of the global market are being exploited and utilized in ever-increasing ways, the risk of a collapse of the financial system is a constant reflection of the functional urgency of capitalist systems that cannot solve problems by themselves.

Thus, Žizek makes it clear that "what is needed is not a moral critique of capitalism, but a total reassertion of the communist idea." <sup>2</sup>

In contrast to Badiou's position against historical determinism, Žižek gives more prominence to a concern with historical reality itself.

When it comes to the study of the real conditions of the emergence and development of communism, the book *The Reality of Communism*, one of the masterpieces of contemporary foreign studies of communism, by Postils cannot be avoided.

In this work, Columbia University professor Bruno Postils takes the ontological perspective as a starting point for an in-depth analysis of the limitations of the speculative left, pointing out that "speculative leftism represents an uncompromising purification of the concept of communism, not so much the abolition of communism, but a complete blanking out of the state, including all its classes, parties, and ideological institutions." <sup>3</sup>

This current, which seeks to purify communism of all ties to the past and present (emphasizing social and political institutions), is typically characterized by the search for a leftist ontology (emphasizing social and political institutions). the complete blanking out of the current state." <sup>3</sup>

Typical symptoms of this current, which aims at purifying communism and eliminating all past and present ties to class, party, and state, include the search

for a leftist ontology (which emphasizes the creation of society while downplaying or even eliminating the fusion of social and political relations), the acceptance of the apolitical nature of politics, and a broader distinction between power and non-power, between political immutability and aesthetic the broad distinction between power and non-power, political invariance and aesthetic pluralism, etc.

Arguing that such neglect of the long history of communism would lead to the demise of genuine emancipatory politics, Postils emphasizes the rationality and reality of pluralistic communism and argues for a reconceptualization of the concept of communism, i.e., a redefinition of its ideological connotations based on the assimilation of historical lessons.

It is also worth mentioning that the renowned post-Marxist scholar Jodi Dean has taken an alternative approach to address the practical urgency of communism at both the theoretical and practical levels from the perspective of the current neo-communist movement, suggesting that "with our longing eyes on the horizon of communism, we can now begin to work together to shape a world in which we already have something in common" <sup>4</sup> .

In Dean's view, the left had been paralyzed for so long by the negative discourse of communism's inevitable move toward Stalinism, toward decline, and collapse, that a new scholarly theoretical interpretation of it was needed.

Dean makes it clear that it is precisely "because the gross inequalities brought about by the extreme capitalism and desperate financialism of neoliberal state policies are obvious, undeniable, and global" <sup>4</sup> that the theoretical value and relevance of communism needs to be brought back into play.

And Dean, in his latest essay "Communism or New-feudalism" in 2020, is even more direct in pointing out the neofeudalist tendencies of contemporary capitalism, sharply presenting people with the single choice question of choosing communism or neofeudalism, advocating the overthrow of capitalism and moving towards communism.

She argues that the concentration of capitalist monopolies, increased inequality, and the subjugation of the state to the market embody feudalism representations, and that as the accumulation of rents, debt, power, etc., becomes as great as that through commodity production, it argues that more and more capitalists are not using their capital for reproduction but rather for storage or redistribution of rents, and thus Dean states that "Interactional capitalism today is a system that is becoming neo-feudalist because of the intensification and turning of its own processes." <sup>5</sup>

By pointing to four interlocking features of this feudalism: the division of sovereignty, the hierarchy and expropriation of new lords and peasants, the inhospitable hinterland and privileged cities, and insecurity and catastrophe, she argues for an even worse neo-feudalist direction of capitalism: "The multiple dimensions of capitalist productive expropriation, domination, and force become so much more powerful that there is no longer reason to assume that equal actors meet in the labor market, even if this is a dominant fiction".<sup>5</sup> This will lead to new lords and serfs, extreme inequality, power politics, and many other phenomena, and the urgency of the times for the communist struggle is unquestionable.

However, we have seen that the crisis of capitalism, while bringing about an economic collapse, has also generated a new wave of space for the utilization of capital, which has not only stimulated the bourgeoisie to revive the economy with stricter rules of the market, but has also brought about reforms and adjustments that capitalism has made to itself.

Together, they constitute the realities of a capitalism that still exists and develops, creating a fault line linking crisis and revolution.

In this sense, seemingly economic crises, ecological crises, and other contradictions of capitalism's own that cannot be resolved have become important forms of capital's reclaiming of the space of capital, and together they sustain capitalism's survival and development.

Zizek reveals the capitalist nature of this interpretation and calls for greater attention to be paid to such factors as the gradually growing revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat behind the crisis (organizationally, intellectually, and politically progressive), the notion of human beings' liberation from oppression, the pressure of carrying the environment of capitalist development, and the efforts and attempts of communist forces to explore new paths.

In the overall atmosphere of social confrontation and leftist melancholy, the communist element of revolt against capitalism also grew out of the soil of the contemporary social environment.

In his discussion of the four antagonisms of capitalist society, Žižek had already recognized the form and content of the "commons" that exist in culture, natural resources, human biogenetics, etc., and pointed out that the process and degree of appropriation and exploitation of them by the inclusionary is the frame of reference that constitutes the current conception of revived communism.

Dean not only maintains a positive optimism about the new communist movement under the momentum of communism, but also points out the changing state of affairs in the era of new capitalism under networked information technology. She argues that with the expansion and enhancement of information technology in different fields, people's ability to communicate has broken through the traditional limitations of time, space and geography, and that the global "capitalism of communication" is developing rapidly, and that it is possible to organize and implement revolutions on the basis of common collective aspirations under such conditions.

The left-wing theorist Hart discusses the "publicness" of the products produced by this mode of production in terms of "immaterial production". The immaterial goods produced by the specific acts of producing knowledge, disseminating information, and communicating emotions can be used, appropriated, and consumed by others, and the laborer creates value as well as improves himself in the process, which to some extent overcomes the purely exploitative essence of capitalist production of the worker. Hardt argues that communism differs from capitalism as well as socialism in that it is based primarily on the production and distribution of immaterial production.

On the one hand, the products produced through non-material production have their own social sharing, which can realize the equality of distribution; on the other hand, the process of non-material production, while creating value, also completes its own growth, generation and perfection. This definition is seen by Hart as an important manifestation of the communist character of modern society, which marks the communalization of the product of individual labor. Non-material production is therefore an area that can be directly socialized, and the realization of the sharing of such commons becomes an important element in arriving at a future communist society.

Negri goes even further by stating that communality is already present in the organism of contemporary capitalist society and refers to the present society as communist capitalism. Negri argued that the core of communism is the realization of the "commonwealth", i.e., the process by which a plurality of subjects, through revolution, overthrow private ownership, realize the commonwealth of property and, on the basis of this, build a completely new community.

He vividly described the revival of the communist idea and the development of the communist movement as "the seed has been sown, and if we cultivate the soil well, the harvest will follow. "6

## **Chapter 2**

## **Logical schema of Western left-wing scholars' conception of reversion to communism**

In the face of opportunities and challenges, as an important force in radical politics, Western left-wing scholars have begun a new journey to explore the concept of reversion to communism. They continue to accumulate experience and push the envelope, trying to find a global alternative to capitalism by guiding practice through the theoretical results they arrive at.

### **(i) Theoretical level**

The current shortcomings of capitalist society have put forward new requirements for solving the problem of "common goods" under the wave of globalization, and how to re-interpret communism from the existing theoretical foundations, so as to establish the universal emancipation principle of communism, has become the core of the focus of the Western left.

Western left-wing scholars mainly make logical arguments for reversion to communism at three levels: the theory of the subject, the theory of immaterial production, and the theory of egalitarianism.

First, the Western left has favored envisioning the political form of communism from a subject-theoretic perspective.

Badiou's hypothesis of communism is a vision of social development that achieves the universalization of the idea of communism, relies on new subjects for the relevant revolutionary movements, and realizes a new form of regime organization. He saw the conception as "the subjectivization of the interplay between the process of truth and the reproduction of history." <sup>7</sup>

The conception of communism, in turn, involves the same process of subjectivizing communism, which allows the individual to grow up as a subject of politics in the midst of events and to be integrated together into the whole of history.

When Badiou envisioned communism, it was mainly based on his own grasp of the "subject", with little consideration of economic factors. He argued that true communism should be a future society in which people with the consciousness of the subject pursue a happy and ideal life on the basis of collective ownership of the means of labor and collective sharing of the fruits of their labor, a community society that is very different from the capitalist money-

oriented and pleasure-oriented way of life, and a society of equality that realizes the greatest degree of freedom of the subject.

This is a non-discriminatory community society that is very different from the capitalist money-oriented and hedonistic way of life, and it is an egalitarian society that realizes the maximum freedom of the subject. It is important to note that the theoretical basis of Badiou's critique of contemporary capitalist society is the "philosophy of events".

While the "event" breaks or destroys the existing order, the imprint left after the outbreak of the event marks the existence of truth, and the subject is the force that activates the imprint and reproduces the truth, and in the process realizes the generation of the subject and the reproduction of truth.

For example, he argues that events have contingencies and ruptures, and that the change of state of affairs from nothing to something, as embodied in the Paris Commune as an event, and the process of the proletariat generating itself as a subject in this event, is a communist event with a contingent historical rupture at the stage of the development of human society in the course of capitalist society. Badiou uses this to argue for the important role of the subject as mediator to contingent events, and the idea of communism as a condition for the individual to become a political subject.

Zizek makes realistic assumptions about communism within the context of practical rationality, emphasizing the importance of changing existing social confrontations, and treating the subject's appropriation of the commons as a process of the ongoing proletarianization of humankind, which in this case includes both material resources, such as natural resources and land, as well as spiritual resources, such as language and culture. Zizek pointed out that the process of proletarianization is a process of intense confrontation between the excluded and the included, with the included occupying a "private" position in the social order, while the excluded, though representing universality in society, do not qualify as "private", and are not only deprived of a material base, but also have difficulty in realizing true democracy in the democratic political space. They are not only deprived of their material base, but also find it difficult to realize true democracy in the political space of democracy.

Thus, Zizek argues that with the expansion of the excluded subject, the proletariat in the traditional sense is no longer relevant, while the confrontation of capitalist society makes more people "excluded." He called on the new "proletarians" to unite and take concrete action to secure possession of the commons.



Second, the Western left is keen to analyze the dominant economic form of contemporary capitalist society in terms of the theory of "immaterial labor."

Hart and Negri analyze in depth the Marxism of Italian autonomism and, on this basis, propose a theory of "immaterial production" or "life-political production" with immaterial labor as its logical core, in an attempt to explore the contemporary reality of the path to communism. On the basis of this theory, he put forward the theory of "immaterial production" or "vital political production", which is centered on the logic of immaterial labor, in an attempt to explore the contemporary realistic path to realize communism. According to Hart, "vital-political production" is the production of social life itself, which includes all political, economic, cultural and social relations, such as thoughts, information, language, genetic code, etc. This process not only produces commodity objects, but also produces the corresponding social relations, and it is the immaterial production of the subject itself accompanied by the tendency to gradually detach itself from the development of capital. It is the subject's own immaterial production, accompanied by a tendency to develop gradually away from capital, with obvious political significance and vitality, and this form of production has become the dominant form of production in modern society.

The immaterial production of products, which can take on a virtual state and an affective representation, can be specifically distinguished from the large-scale industrial production of labour, which incorporates communication technologies and is computerized. Productive labor that incorporates an intelligent component that automates production; labor that incorporates an emotional component that enables virtual or physical interaction.

Hart and Negri state that the labor force change toward the information economy, including the content and form of labor, "is the most direct sociological and anthropological connotation of the economic paradigm process."<sup>8</sup>

Hart analyzes two new forms of property struggle in contemporary society, material and immaterial production. Due to the private nature of the material production and the communal nature of the immaterial production, he further places the struggle between exclusive and shared property, suggesting that it is precisely because they are so easily shared or copied that it is difficult to manage ownership.

The renewability of shared property breaks the logic of scarcity, so that "today the immaterial triumphs over the material, the renewable over the non-renewable, and the shared over the exclusive" <sup>9</sup>. While restricting the sharing of "commons" reduces their productivity, the shared nature of shared property dictates that it must act in a manner that ensures and develops its productivity by expanding its reach and impact, and by increasing the audience for its use.

In Hart's eyes, there is an unstoppable trend toward shared property, which includes both natural commons such as land, forests, and water, as well as man-made commons such as ideas, information, and language, and which runs counter to capitalism's private ownership of property. After a series of analytical arguments, Hart concludes that "while the production of shared-property producers is increasingly becoming the center of the capitalist economy, capital cannot intervene in this production process, but must remain external to the deprivation of value in the form of rents (through financial and other mechanisms), " <sup>9</sup> and thus, as far as possible, for these producers to create areas of autonomy and increase productivity.

The nature of public property, such as its shared nature and openness to use, is detrimental to capitalist property relations and contrary to the capitalist mode of appropriation, and the process of its gradual development and replacement of the dominant economic position of private property is also a process of emancipation of capital beyond itself. Finally, the Western left tends to use egalitarianism theory as a logical basis for explicating the idea of communism.

Badiou argues that communism is founded on three main axioms, one of which is the idea of egalitarianism, that is, the idea that human beings are equal by nature, and the intention is to create a world that is no longer structured by unequal social relations such as wealth, division of labor, segregation, persecution by the state, and gender differences.

The second is the disappearance of the coercive, transcendent State, which emphasizes that people's political action can be organized without being subject to notions of power, national representation, elections, etc.; and the third is that "the organization of labor does not involve a division of labor, specialization of tasks, and especially an oppressive distinction between intellectual and manual labor." <sup>10</sup>

Speaking of communism, Bardieu uses today's communism as a "common name", arguing that "it points to a general vision of a society and a world dominated by the principle of equality, a world no longer constituted by traditional social relations - wealth, division of labor, racial segregation, national persecution, gender differences, etc." <sup>11</sup>

Bardieu also refers to communism as a "common name". -Wealth, division of labor, apartheid, state persecution, gender differences, etc.".

He has incorporated the concept of equality throughout his communist ideology, emphasizing equality of occupation and the pursuit of income fairness, and advocating that the principle of equality can eliminate the weight of power, wealth and other relations on people.

In addition, Badiou further pointed out that the politics of communion is an inevitable requirement for the realization of equality in the true sense of the word for each individual, which is manifested in the attitude of each subject to actively participate in politics, the enjoyment of the right to participate in politics, and the virtues of taking the initiative to participate in politics. Identity politics would have disappeared with the revolutionary tradition of internationalism, because the egalitarian emancipation pursued by communism implies the conversion of objective institutions into subjective rights, and the disappearance of identity differences between subjects, which inevitably leads to political emancipation.

Zizek similarly adheres to the egalitarian concept in communism, which holds that the outcasts in society, those who are excluded from the existing capitalist order, are liberated and that they should be granted equal rights as social subjects.

#### (ii) Practical level

For one thing, left-wing scholars focus on expanding the range of resistance subjects and relying on new revolutionary subjects to realize the practical path of the communist hypothesis.

Badiou points out that the core of communist politics is never the official ideology of state power, but rather the operation of continuity between the awareness and action of the people. In his view, the idea of relying on capitalist society itself to abolish private ownership and establish collective ownership was absurd. Based on his new understanding of the revolutionary subject, Badiou points out the phenomenon of the gradual marginalization of the power and role of the proletariat as a revolutionary subject in the historical stage of contemporary capitalism, which is constantly achieving adjustment and improvement, and emphasizes that the scope and number of subjects should be expanded to achieve a breakthrough of class, ethnic, and gender boundaries, so as to achieve the posture of the periphery regions encircling the center.

Influenced by the “philosophy of event” and the theory of the subject, Badiou emphasized the necessity of assuming and reasoning about the reality of the communist conception in terms of events, proposing that the subject “is nothing less than the human ‘creativity’ of the proletariat in restoring absolute equality from absolute poverty through revolution”<sup>12</sup>, arguing that they are able to realize the communist ideal of transforming the world through hard practice based on adherence to communist beliefs. While the real subject was able to become a direct driving force for the realization of the communist hypothesis under the guidance of theory, the historical tendency to argue for the inevitable arrival of communism from the perspective of material dialectics and political economy is not favored by Badiou.

On the basis of Lacanian psychoanalysis “triadic model”, Žižek divided the class structure of the current capitalist society into the intermediate class (industrial workers), the symbolic class (those who are mainly engaged in mental labor), and the real class (the ghetto group) according to the similarity of the imaginative realm, symbolic realm, and real class, and advocated that the purpose of fighting against capitalism could be achieved through the union of the latter two groups. to achieve a confrontation with capitalism. Hart and Negri, on the other hand, shifted their focus to the study of the “multitude”.

They argue that the working class, engaged in traditional material production, can no longer play an absolute leading role in the global economy, and that “today's production has to be considered not only in economic terms, but more broadly as social production - not only the production of material goods, but also the production of exchanges, relations and forms of life”<sup>13</sup>, i.e. the “life-political production” that includes forms of ideas, images, influences and relations. “<sup>13</sup> i.e., “life-political production” in the form of ideas, images, influences and relations.

In contrast, the “multitude”, unlike the working class, is a more open and inclusive concept that includes all subjects engaged in socio-economic, political and cultural social production, all communist subjects resisting oppression, including the working class, without identity restrictions, and capable of realizing exchanges and cooperation that transcends geographic limitations.

Negri analyzes the anti-human character of capitalist production in the realm of life politics, and takes “individual dissatisfaction-multitude resistance-promoting constitutionalism” as a logical line of reasoning to elaborate on the current manifestations of class struggle and revolutionary aspirations. Negri analyzes the anti-human character of capitalist production from the field of “life-politics”.

Secondly, left-wing scholars encouraged the development of social movements and innovative forms of struggle, thus opening up a path to communism that was more in line with the realities of the situation.

After the 1968 May Storm, Alain Badiou, the heir to Marx's revolutionary ideas, not only regarded the Communist Manifesto as the greatest work of the nineteenth century, but also steadfastly continued the cause, seeing communism as a realistic movement to eliminate the existing state of affairs.

Badiou argues that examining the contemporary concept of "communism" requires the organization of small-scale local political experiments, and that it is necessary to refer to current mass movements and their demands.

He recognizes the "one world" as an axiom and advocates that, on this basis, we should go beyond the characteristic attributes of identity and strengthen the universal content of identity, so as to gather the greatest possible number of social forces and to ensure the conditions for the existence of the communist hypothesis in both theory and practice.

Zizek's analysis of contemporary revolutionary struggle begins with a "restatement of Lenin," in which he highly values Lenin's keen awareness of imperialism's weakest link and his courage to carry out a revolution at a time when political parties in other countries were choosing to submit to the tide of social patriotism, and argues that the current environment of struggle is similar to that of Lenin's time, arguing that Lenin's spirit and attitude of daring to make revolutionary program is especially needed today as global capitalism continues to expand. capitalism continues to expand, Lenin's spirit and attitude of daring to make revolutionary program/tactic is especially needed today. On this basis, Zizek emphasizes the power of action, agrees with Marx's qualification of the connotation of communism as a "movement for the elimination of the existing condition", and argues that the choice of the path of communism in the current political and economic context should be based on the main content of the movement of resistance against the confrontational nature of the reality, and proposes that, even if there is no guarantee for the success of the action, the political action, "action that is a redefinition of the rules and contours of the existing order 'in excess' beyond strategic intervention. "14

Of course, Zizek also maintains a cautious approach to the current social situation, arguing that before taking action "we would have to risk taking steps into a new abyss in a totally inappropriate situation. We will have to redesign aspects of the new thing in order to keep the good things of the old thing (education, health care, etc.) "15 and wait for the time to come.

In pursuit of a new society of democracy, equality, and freedom, Hart and Negri take class struggle as a modern model for the pursuit of legitimacy, and advocate the construction of new circles of communication, new forms of social collaboration, and new modes of interaction with the help of information systems and networked structures, i.e., the realization of resistance and struggle "of the many" by means of more democratic forms of networked organization - mass networked struggles. --The realization of a "multitude" of resistance and struggle, "This new force will of course resist and attack the enemy in the same way as a military force, but it will be increasingly internally focused. -It produces new subjectivities and new forms of expansion within the organization. "16

On the one hand, the multitude is the common subject of labor and an important object for capital to achieve global development, and the development of capitalism requires a new round of capital multiplication through the form of life political production. On the other hand, the shared character of the political production of life inevitably resists the process of capitalist globalization, so that the multitudes can be released from the repression of empire and achieve autonomous expression and domination. To his credit, Negri draws an analogy between Lenin's analysis of the relationship between imperialism theory and insurrectionary strategy as a paradigm for the path of revolutionary thought, arguing that the study of class composition should also take full account of the relationship between struggles and the development, crisis, and restructuring of capitalism, and in particular an in-depth analysis of the relations of power that make up the composition of the class. He argues that in the current capitalist society the path to the liberation of the proletariat lies in the use of all weapons, pointing out that "we must add that Marx and Lenin's definition of our task of destroying the state for the sake of communism is given only in the context of a renewed strategic plan, recognized in the subsequent cycle of the international workers' struggle. "17

Third, left-wing scholars all emphasize the importance of organizations to varying degrees, yet there is a debate over the perception of political parties. In the face of the current situation where the working class is highly suppressed by capital, Negri emphasizes that "communism begins to take shape when the proletariat renews its aim of appropriating society (the community) and turning it into the order of a new society. "18 And the creation of community depends on the redefinition of exchange value.

On the one hand, the globalization of capitalism has greatly expanded the production space of capital, a phenomenon he calls "capitalist right to life", and such phenomena as real estate rents, machinery and equipment, and communication networks have all achieved a "commonality" that transcends

geography, especially capital itself, which has become a universal vehicle for the development and expansion of global capitalism. "In particular, capital itself has become the universal vehicle for the development and expansion of global capitalism, and is constantly driving the global expansion of these "commons".

On the other hand, with the changing technological composition of the workforce and the gradual increase in the consciousness of the workers' subjectivity, Negri encourages the proletariat to organize a mass movement for the appropriation of property and the construction of a free political structure, the community, at a time when the appropriation of capital is gradually reaching its zenith, so as to bring about a real metamorphosis of the workers against capital. Premised on the possibility of revolution, Dean highlights the importance and necessity of building a political party, which she sees as capable of strategizing, planning, and organizing itself with a revolutionary vision, noting that people's orientation toward the future depends on the party's ability to coordinate its actions by planning for the future, hoping to lead the people toward communism through the creation of "a party committed to abolishing private property and making production, circulation and reproduction at the service of the people, rather than subordinating them to the demands of capital accumulation",<sup>19</sup> in the hope of leading the people to revolution and communism.

From the Occupy Wall Street movement, she drew lessons about revolutionary forms, recognizing the revolutionary advantages of political parties, namely, clear collective advocacy and accountable organizational structures, the ability to recognize differently-abled individuals, and the preservation of intra-organizational solidarity. On this basis, she emphasized the party's ability to provide an organizational form for strategizing, planning, and generating and executing political power, and that "discipline and preparation enable the party to adapt to its environment rather than being shaped or determined solely by it"<sup>20</sup> and advocated for the creation of a party guided by the principles of communism.

The party was able to prepare for a revolutionary situation, define revolutionary goals, and develop a new international communist movement that would change the facts of elite privilege, working class slavery, and environmental catastrophe, and realize the vision of a better future for communist society. Badiou, however, is opposed to the creation of political parties, believing that the centralization and militarization of parties would not be beneficial to the organization of a communist society, and emphasized that the organization of communist forces in society should rely on "the mass movement, the organization that is constantly forging the slogans and the will of the movement, the state that will remain in existence for a long time and that has

to be brought under the constant supervision of the organization and the movement". "21 Three aspects.

### Chapter 3

## **Correctly Understanding the Reinterpretation of the Concept of Communism by Western Left-Wing Scholars**

On the whole, the epochal interpretations of communism by Western left-wing scholars are all courageous attempts to adhere to the intention of reverting to communism on the basis of analyzing the changes in objective reality, and they have carried out a number of quite useful explorations of communism, but they also still have some limitations. On the one hand, the notion of reversion to communism is a reflection on and challenge to the existing capitalist order by Western left-wing scholars, many of whose ideas are quite innovative and inspiring.

For example, Badiou divides the history of the development of the communist hypothesis from the very beginning of its establishment to the present day into three periods, the first of which, from the French Revolution of 1792 to the Paris Commune of 1871, is the period of the establishment of the communist hypothesis, with the theme of the workers' movement and uprisings. Then, after an interval of more than 40 years, it entered its second phase, from the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 to China's "Cultural Revolution" of 1976, whose theme was party building and which emphasized the importance of discipline; and from 1976 to the present time is the third phase, the second period of passive stabilization.

Badiou points out that now the third stage of communism "it will involve a new relationship between the political movement and the ideological level - a relationship that was already foreshadowed in the 'Cultural Revolution' or the May Storm of the 'Revolution of Ideas'", calling for the courage to re-establish this hypothesis in the ideological field and to start the preliminary work of this phase, improving the ways and means to concentrate on the conditions of existence of communism. This historical staging is highly relevant to our thinking today about the stages of development and future trends of communism. Of course, how to study the communist hypothesis from the perspective of world history also needs further exploration by scholars.

Hart and Negri's examination of the capitalist mode of production in terms of "immaterial labor" is equally valuable. The concept of "immaterial labor" can be traced back to Marx's discussion of "fixed capital and the development of the productive forces of society" in the Economic Manuscripts of 1857-1858, and



the Italian autonomist Marxists argued for the increasing importance of such immaterial factors as "knowledge, technology, and social intelligence" in the development of the productive forces, starting from the concept of "general intellect" that can control and transform the productive forces of society. Starting from Marx's concept of "general intelligence", i.e. general social knowledge that can control and transform the productive forces of society, the Italian autonomist Marxists argued for the increasingly important contribution of non-material factors, such as "knowledge, technology, and the social intelligence", to the development of the productive forces.

They recognize that the traditional labor worker once played a central role in production, but now "this role has been increasingly replaced by intellectualized, dematerialized labor power in the field of communication and interaction,"<sup>23</sup> and that the capitalist's exploitation and oppression of laborers in the production of immaterial labor becomes more difficult to detect and discern due to the ambiguous definition of the form and duration of labor. become more imperceptible and indistinguishable, so it becomes particularly important to stimulate workers' subjective consciousness and critical behavior. It is on the basis of these understandings that Hart and Negri developed their "theory of vital political production" and defined "a new image of the collective eco-political body".

They suggest that while capitalist industry and finance produce commodities, they also produce producer-subjects of action in an eco-political environment, but that the empire utilizes a "master narrative" to produce its so-called "justice" and especially ideological defenses in the form of language to validate its legitimacy. But the empire uses the "master narrative" to produce its so-called justice, especially its ideological defense, in the form of language, in order to confirm its legitimacy. With the development of communication, the wave of globalization, the "legitimacy" narrative and the production of communication go hand in hand, and the empire maintains its legitimacy by means of this "globalized eco-political machine" - the machine of communication. With this "globalized eco-political apparatus" - the apparatus of communication - the empire maintains its indelible position of power, while the immaterial labor that produces immaterial commodities such as knowledge, culture, information, and feelings is expanding globally.

This perspective of analyzing non-material production on a global scale and thus arguing for the growth of the communist factor provides us with a new way

of thinking to understand the present situation. Of course, there are still a lot of things that can be learned from the logical schema of Western left-wing scholars, such as the subject theory and the establishment of political parties, etc., which need to be further compared and studied to explore their theoretical and practical significance. On the other hand, there are many shortcomings in the reinterpretation of the concept of communism by Western left-wing scholars.

Specifically, in terms of form, they all ignored, to varying degrees, the revolutionary character of communism, limiting their content to theoretical discussion or philosophical interpretation, and failing to put forward global action strategies and programs to resolve the inherent contradictions of the capitalist mode of production and to transcend capitalist society. For example, the idea that Badiou intended to take a new, rather than revolutionary, approach to subvert the existing ruling order remains to be explored. On the one hand, Badiou argues that the subject of revolution no longer exists in contemporary times, so the revolution of the proletariat is out of the question; on the other hand, the real-life improvement of capitalist society and the deepening of the globalized economic market are pushing capitalism to achieve new developments, and the communist movement is still at a low ebb.

The theoretical application of the contingent and sudden character of events in the philosophy of events, to some extent, provides theoretical support for Badiou's claim of "a new form of political organization", but it is precisely because of his dependence of the subversion of the real social order on the sudden events that his communist hypothesis is illusory, and it cannot be explained what kind of political organization should be established. What form of political organization and how it should be realized cannot be explained. In terms of methodology, their communist ideology has reduced the status of Marxism and underestimated the important role of materialistic dialectics and the materialistic view of history by their mingling of other theoretical perspectives.

For example, Western left-wing scholars' one-sided emphasis on the purely egalitarian category of communism is contrary to the conditions of reality. Badiou's blurring of the line between the concept of communism and the abstract concept of equality, and his belief that the first principle of emancipatory politics is the "egalitarian axiom," not only cuts down the revolutionary and combatant power of communism, but also, to a certain extent, creates a regression in history that is not in line with Marx's conception of communism, and cannot achieve a complete transformation of capitalism or open up a true communist society by relying on the subjective power of the subject's will.

The power of the will of the subject cannot realize the complete transformation of capitalism, nor can it open the way to a truly communist society. Although Badiou recognized the value of the eternal truth of communist theory in the present age and the importance of guiding real practice, he is still unable to conceive of an effective program leading to a future communist society. In terms of the path to realization, their definitions of both the revolutionary method and the revolutionary subject lacked the realism to create the ultimate impetus that would truly drive the realization of communism.

For example, in the four antagonisms emphasized by Žižek, the common as shared - culture, natural resources, human genes, etc. - is privatized by a few, while the majority is progressively "proletarianized" and becomes the subject of dispossessed entities, i.e., the excluded. "proletarianized", as subjects deprived of entities, i.e. the excluded. Žižek does not deny the possibility that the excluded may protect or reclaim the commons by means of violence, but it remains important to note that the concept of the proletariat here is fundamentally different from Marx's proletariat and does not have its own revolutionary connotations. Therefore, the choice of whether the excluded must be qualified to share in the commons by means of a proletarian revolution still needs to be made according to practice. In addition to this, in terms of content, they all lacked the scientific tools to analyze the mechanism of capitalism's operation in economic terms, and thus the resulting communist advocacy could only remain at the hypothetical level and could not be widely accepted by the people. In their role, some of their views are still suspected of consciously or unconsciously justifying capitalist society and fail to reach the heights of Marx's human emancipation.

To summarize, the efforts of Western left-wing scholars to revitalize the concept of contemporary communism from different perspectives, based on the theory of "post-industrial era" with its advanced network information technology and immaterial production, are of great significance to us today in expanding the global vision of communism and deeply understanding its contemporary value.

We need to correctly make use of Marx's materialist conception of history and material dialectics to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the views of the Western left-wing political scholars is also the proper meaning of the study of the Western left-wing scholars' conception of the reversion to communism.

marginal notes

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