

Introduction

For Deleuze: Political Economy, Materialistic Dialectics and Speculative Philosophy

"Perhaps one day, this century will be known as Deleuzian": this well-known statement by Michel Foucault today appears to be confirmed by the overall development of contemporary thought. The philosophy of Gilles Deleuze is irrefutably in the spotlight today. Many theoretical movements emerging in recent years have proclaimed Deleuze to be their predecessor and inspirer. The critique of all transcendental instances, the abandoning of dialectical mediation, and the joyful affirmation of an unlimited immanence have become a literary *topos* within contemporary philosophy and beyond.

However, is not this popular version of Deleuzianism a philosophy of yesterday? It seems that a number of objections against Deleuze's thought have pointed to this in recent years. On the one hand, despite its radical rhetoric and the influence it has exerted on left-wing (primarily anti-globalist) politics, this philosophy of immanence appears virtually indiscernible from the ideology of late capitalism, with its own utopian horizon. This explains the increasing rejection of Deleuze among authors associated with the Marxist tradition and a modern rethinking of materialistic dialectics. They identify his philosophy either with a cynical justification of the political status quo or with a mystical escape from real and acute problems.

On the other hand, many representatives of the speculative turn consider Deleuze's thought to be a striking example of correlationism—a standpoint that asserts the impossibility of conceiving the Absolute without its "domestication" by one or another human faculty. In this regard, for the new speculative thought that proclaims the possibility of a new Absolute and new truth, Deleuze's philosophical legacy also serves as a ballast that must be thrown off the ship of modernity together with all philosophy after Kant.

However, Deleuze's philosophy is worth fighting for. It cannot be reduced to the ideology of late capitalism and contains within itself the possibility for alternative interpretations that reveal the paradoxical ties of Deleuze's ideas with materialistic dialectics, as well as with analyses of political economy. Similarly, it can be reduced neither to a semi-mystical vitalism — which equates existence with the flow of life formation — nor to the philosophical critique of culture, and its treatment of the problems

posed by cinema, literature, and psychoanalysis. This issue presents an array of interpretations of Deleuze's philosophy, all of which tease its revolutionary kernel out from an either mystical or cynical shell.

In the first section of the issue, Andrew Pendakis, Guillaume Collett, and Daniel W. Smith raise a question concerning the political significance of Deleuze's philosophy. Continuing the long tradition of Marxist criticism, Pendakis links Deleuze's ontological reflections on the "middle" with politics on the other side of the opposition of the right and left. This allows the author to argue that appealing to Deleuze's philosophy in pursuit of an ontological justification for left-wing politics is an ill-conceived strategy.

The subsequent article by Collett argues against the tradition of the Marxist critique of Deleuzianism. This tradition insists that Deleuze does not sufficiently distinguish politics as an autonomous field and ultimately always subordinates it to philosophy. In contrast to this, Collett contends that Deleuze's philosophy is trans-disciplinary and therefore can only exist within politics and not vice versa.

Daniel W. Smith also addresses politics within the context of Deleuze's philosophical legacy. His historical and philosophical analysis shows that Deleuze's critique of libidinal (Freud) and political (Marx) economy is necessarily rooted in a Spinozist affirmative ontology, which imbues politics with a more democratic character.

The articles of Andrew Culp and Alexander Pogrebnyak are dedicated to the renewal of political economy attempted by Deleuze and Guattari. Culp associates the possibility of such a renewal with the fact that Deleuze and Guattari create an idiosyncratic critical anthropology of capitalism. Political economy, seen through the prism of anthropology, allows Culp, firstly, to abandon the (post-)operaist identification of the driver of revolutionary development with productive forces and, secondly, to justify the need for the transition to an anarchist theory of "revolution from the outside."

Pogrebnyak emphasizes the uniqueness of Deleuze and Guattari's interest in political economy, as contrasted with the general opposition of politics and economy that is characteristic of modern left theory (Balibar, Rancière, Badiou). Tracing the origins of Deleuze and Guattari's political economy to the marginalism and Fourierism of the nineteenth century, he interprets marginalism in the utopian revolutionary sense, as distinct from the right-accelerationist reading proposed by Nick Land.

Yoel Regev, Ksenia Kapelchuk and Anton Syutkin conceptualize the relationship between Deleuze's philosophy and materialistic dialectics. Regev sees Deleuzianism as a development of Althusserian materialistic dialectics. While in traditional Marxism the object of materialistic dialectics is reduced to practice, and to the "givenness of the non-given" in post-1968 left theory, Deleuze, according to Regev, makes possible a non-re-

duced understanding of this object. Such an understanding should help to avoid the political failures that have befallen previous iterations of materialistic dialectics.

The common perception of Deleuze as an anti-dialectical thinker is also refuted by Kapelchuk. She demonstrates that in a number of his works, Deleuze does develop a dialectical philosophy, albeit not one of the Hegelian type. If Slavoj Žižek carries out the Hegelian interpretation of the Deleuzian philosophy, Kapelchuk, entering into a debate with Žižek, prepares the ground for a future Deleuzian interpretation of Hegel's dialectic.

In Syutkin's article, Deleuze's philosophy constitutes a field of confrontation between materialistic dialectics and neovitalism. Although Deleuze is criticized by materialistic dialecticians (Badiou, Žižek) and remains a source of inspiration for neovitalists (Grant, Bennett), Syutkin insists on the paradoxical proximity of Deleuze precisely to materialistic dialectic. In particular, Deleuze's theory of the subject — as constructed around the concept of contractualization — goes far beyond neovitalist problems. Working with the dialectical dimension of Deleuze's philosophy, according to Syutkin, can prevent its depoliticization.

Nikita Safonov and Nikita Sazonov place Deleuzianism within the context of speculative philosophy. Safonov sees Deleuzianism as the basic theoretical wellspring of contemporary sound studies. It is Deleuze who enables sound researchers to go beyond a positivist understanding of technology and a phenomenological description of sound that binds sound to the human. In this sense, Safonov's essay is a sketch for a Deleuzian speculative “sound thinking.”

In his essay, Sazonov examines modern speculative thought through the prism of meteorology and photography. He considers the philosophies of Deleuze, Meillassoux, and Laruelle as theories of light (flash) piercing the dark. Exceptional attention to light, however, is fraught with the danger of philosophy's relapse into metaphysics or ideology, which in turn encourages the author to develop an “anti-manifestational” project for avoiding this possibility.

Editors of the issue: Anton Syutkin, Yoel Regev