Chapter 15: And now what?

A new Prince, author of strategy, is already emerging in the actions of today's productive and reproductive subjects. It often seems, however, that one needs powers of synesthesia to register it: to smell it in their voices, hear it in their images, feel it in their desire. As a result of our investigations in the last two chapters we are now in the position to identify at least the outlines of the emerging powers of the multitude. Specifically we are ready to articulate how the multitude is capable of generating strategy in today's political field – how it is able to see far, to construct counterpowers able to combat the existing forms of rule, to deploy social forces in lasting institutions, to create new forms of life. This is the key, as we concluded in chapter 1, to solving the puzzle of horizontalism and verticality. The aim is not to dispense with leadership but rather – inverting the roles of strategy and tactics – to relegate leadership to a tactical role, employed and dismissed according to the occasion. This tactical position of leadership can be achieved and guaranteed, however, only by the establishment of the multitude's strategic capacities.

A Hephaestus to arm the multitude. Consider two classic scenes of armed self-defense. In March 1871 women and men of Paris refuse to allow the French army to take away the artillery on Montmartre and declare instead they will use it to defend the Commune. "Paris armed," as Marx writes from London, "is revolution armed." Almost a century later, in May 1967, twenty-six members of the Black Panther Party enter the California State House in Sacramento with loaded weapons and declare their right and intention to defend the black community against police violence.

What arms does the multitude need to protect itself from the myriad forms of violence we sketched in the previous section? Today it's clear to almost everyone that bullets and bombs, in most situations and especially in the dominant countries, will not protect you. In fact, using those weapons is most often self-defeating, even suicidal. What arms, then, can we use to defend ourselves? That turns out, however, to be the wrong question. If you begin by posing the question of defensive arms, you won't get far before running into dead ends. By posing

that conundrum we don't mean to advocate renouncing the use of arms – on the contrary. We don't want any more Guernicas, those scandalous defeats, horrific atrocities whose representations tug at the heartstrings of high-minded individuals everywhere. We want security. We want victories. Rather than renouncing their use we merely insist that the question of arms must be posed correctly.

The use of arms always points in two directions: outward and inward, against the enemy and for the transformation of ourselves. Yes, defensively, our weapons must counter the forms of violence cited earlier – both the "macro-violence" of wars and the "micro-violence" of finance, poverty, racisms, gender oppressions, and environmental degradation. We must protect ourselves and disarm the perpetrators. But our weapons must also serve, inwardly, to build autonomy, invent new forms of life, and create new social relations.

The key, then, is to reverse the order of these two functions. The productive use of arms must have priority and the defense application will follow. If you defer the productive needs to develop autonomy, in other words, focusing on the arms of defense and holding off your enemies, you will quickly fail – or get lost on the way to your goal. We have seen many political militants who were transformed by their arms into mere delinquents. If you focus instead on the "inward" effects of arms, however, solutions to the defensive problems (although they will not follow automatically) will begin to appear. Real defense depends on not only the effectiveness of arms but also and primarily the power of the community. The famous dictum, "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun," gets the order and priority wrong.[1] Real weapons grow out of social and political power, the power of our collective subjectivity.

This inversion gives a different view on the two examples we cited earlier. The real power of the Commune resided not in its artillery but in its daily workings, its democratic governance. The political innovations were prepared, as Kristen Ross brilliantly documents, in the popular reunions and club meetings of the Paris neighborhoods in the years preceding the Commune's establishment.[2] The power of the Black Panthers, similarly, was not in the display of guns but in

its construction of social programs, such as free breakfast programs and free health clinics.[3] The Zapatistas are explicit about this: their power resides not in the weapons and military command structure of the EZLN but rather in the community councils and their experiments in justice and democracy. It is a question of priority. One cannot say we need first to engage the battle to defend ourselves and then, once we establish peace and security, we will have the free space to construct a new society. No, if you begin with war, you will end with it. We must build in the ruins, in the chaos and violence of our present, not ignoring our defense but subordinating it. The efficacy of the weapons of self-defense, then, should be judged first and foremost for how they serve the constructive struggle. Historians might go back and evaluate the artillery of Montmartre, the guns of the Black Panther Party, and even the defensive weapons of the EZLN with this criterion – whether these weapons served or obstructed the construction of a new society – but that is not our interest. Our point is that the search for weapons for today's multitude should focus on their subjective capacities and the effects of weapons to create and maintain (or destroy) new forms of life.

One might object that in some extreme contexts arms and military action must be given priority. This is only partially true, and the most inspiring examples of armed struggle, even in dire circumstances, manage simultaneously to invent democratic forms. For the defense of Kobane in Rojava (Kurdish Syria) in 2014 against the advances of Islamic State fighters, for example, the Kurdish movement needed guns and bombs. With sporadic and limited aid from the United States, and frequent obstruction from Turkey, the Kurds slowly won the battle with traditional military weapons. We have only admiration for the military prowess and the courage of the Kurdish fighters in this battle. But even in this example, it would be a mistake to view victory only from the battlefield. Kurdish communities in Rojava are also, in the midst of war, creating new social relations, inventing a form of "democratic autonomy," establishing governance councils with, for example, two representatives for each post, one male and one female. Even in this extreme case of chaos and violence, the real power resides in the ability of the community to transform the old social order, to create new, democratic forms of life.[4] The production of subjectivity in these cases is not merely a matter of consciousness-raising but

also a kind of ontological deposit that builds up social being geologically, in a sedimentary way, layer after layer. This is a biopolitical transformation.

The Kurdish example recalls many instances of anti-fascist resistance that integrated armed struggle and the construction of democratic social organization – often of direct democracy – in liberated zones. The poet René Char, nom de guerre Capitaine Alexandre, who led a group of proletarians that held in check the Nazi armada and the forces of Fascist French collaborators, explains how a motley crew of partisans, in their differences, created a democratic dynamic. "The wonderful thing," he writes, "is that this disparate cohort of pampered and untrained children, workers raised up by tradition, naïve believers, boys terrified to have been exiled from their native soil, peasants acting with an obscure imagined patriotism of precocious adventures on horseback with the Foreign Legion, and those lured by the Spanish Civil War: this conglomerate was about to become one of the four or five most extraordinary orchards [verger – **translation?**] that France has ever known."[5] Another poet, Franco Fortini, recalls how Italian partisans in August 1943 similarly constituted in the Val d'Ossola a republic that democratically organized the territory while serving as a base of armed struggle.[6] They succeeded only for a brief time and quickly the republic surrendered to the overwhelming enemy forces, but that experience was a fantastic crucible of invention. "There are no words for that atrocious and true aspect of the Resistance, which was upsetting but had deep effects. The only words for it were those of poetry that, from Dante on, is made from 'what you cannot have understood.' [. . .] History allows those most atrocious but also most human aspects of that struggle. It omits that the only real partisan song that grabbed you in the guts went, 'There is no lieutenant, no captain, no colonel, no general.' It was a violent cry of anarchy, which in those moments was completely true."[7] That song founded a republic. Both in the lower French Alps and the Val d'Ossola, between Italy and Switzerland, in liberated zones, partisans constituted with arms a democratic experience. In retrospect we might call these "Kobane experiences."

The resistance of immigrant Algerian workers in France during the Algerian war of independence provides an analogous example. Among the conspiratorial activities and the

resistance to the terrorism of the French state (in October 1961 protesting Algerian civilians were massacred in Paris, leaving hundreds dead) were constructed political communities that for a time constituted the ethical and political heart of liberated Algeria. Here too the two vectors – the resistance of the multitude that produces armed vanguards and armed vanguards that inspire multitudes – intersect and blend together, so to speak, on par, creating a solid and effective relationship between the constitution of a democratic multitude and the production of combative subjectivities, which nourish and feed off one another.[8]

Don't get too wrapped up, though, in the heroism of antifascist resistance! Yes, as these examples demonstrate, even in extreme conditions one can manage to invent new democratic forms. But most of us are not facing fascist regimes and, clearly, recourse to traditional weapons in our circumstances is counterproductive and suicidal. That does not imply renouncing arms, as we said, but rather posing the problem of force and weapons in a new way.

Our focus on the "inward" effects of weapons and their production of subjectivity, in other words, should lead us to revise the traditional understanding of arms. Just as in the previous section we found it was necessary to broaden the standard understanding of violence – to recognize also objective forms of violence and the deep wounds of micro-aggression – here we need to broaden the understanding of what constitutes a weapon. For example, fixed capital, such as the knowledge, intelligence, and information consolidated in a machine, has long served capital as an effective weapon. "It would be possible to write a whole history of the inventions made since 1830," Marx writes, "for the sole purpose of providing capital with weapons against working-class revolt."[9] Think, for example, of how the standard shipping container, introduced in the 1970s, fundamentally undermined the power of organized dockworkers, one of the traditionally most rebellious sectors of labor.[10] Or, for a more challenging example, consider how computer algorithms employed by giant corporations like Google and Facebook exact a kind of violence on all users through the expropriation of intelligence and social connection. The Google PageRank algorithm, as we saw earlier in

chapter 2, tracks the links that users construct and on that basis creates hierarchies for web searches. Each link is a small expression of intelligence, and the algorithm, even without users being aware, extracts and accumulates that intelligence in the form of fixed capital. Machinic fixed capital, however, is not just a neutral force: it is wielded by the owners of property as a means to control and command living labor. If we were to reappropriate fixed capital, to take back what was taken from us, we could put the machines that have accumulated knowledge and intelligence in the hands of living labor and free it from the command of dead capital. In this way we can take hold of those weapons and neutralize them or, better, set their operation toward new goals or, better still, make them common and thus open to general use. Biopolitical weapons, such as digital algorithms, might in fact be the most important focus of contemporary struggle.

Hephaestus must forge a shield for the multitude like the one he made for Achilles: not just a protection or safeguard against the violence of the ruling powers, but also an instrument endowed with magical powers. The designs in concentric circles on Achilles' shield represented the composition of Greek society. The concentric circles of the multitude's shield must generate a new civilization, new modes of life, a new figure of humanity, and new relations of care among living species and the earth, up to the cosmos.

A three-faced Dionysus to govern the common. The role of a Prince, above all, is to rule, that is, to make decisions over the organization of social life. We have no interest, of course, in merely substituting one ruler for another while maintaining the structures of government. A truly new Prince cannot simply take its place on the throne. Our task instead is to transform the structures of rule, uproot them entirely, and in their stead cultivate new forms of social organization. The multitude must constitute a new Prince as a democratic structure.

Three primary paths lead toward a new form of governance, each with its own promises and pitfalls. The path of exodus attempts to withdraw from the dominant institutions and establish in miniature new social relations. The path of antagonistic reformism engages the existing

social and political institutions in order to transform them from within. And, finally, the hegemonic path seeks to take power and create the institutions of a new society. It is not a matter of debating which of these paths is correct, but rather finding ways for them to weave together.

The path of exodus is, in certain respects, heir to the strategies of utopian communities. Since the institutions of the dominant society serve to reproduce existing social relations, the logic goes, the means to subvert and transform it must be created outside. On a separate social terrain we can create new ways of doing, new forms of life, producing and reproducing new subjectivities. The rich history of intentional and utopian communities (including monastic orders and urban squats) and theoretical investigations from Charles Fourier to science fiction writers demonstrate the power of creating an alternative outside.

The most inspiring contemporary practices of exodus take the form of prefigurative politics, which create a new outside within the structures of the dominant society. Activists seek to rid themselves of the relations of domination imprinted in them by the ruling social order to create democratic and egalitarian relations amongst themselves – seeking to live the change they want to see. Prefigurative politics is thus based on a moral and political mandate to match means and ends: it is hypocritical and self-defeating, the argument goes, to strive for a democratic society through undemocratic forms of organization. Activists must practice what they preach. The creation and reproduction of the community of activists thus becomes a focus of political action. The miniature society created within the social movement is intended not only in anticipation of a better future society but also as a demonstration of its feasibility and desirability.

Prefigurative politics proliferated in various segments of the New Left, particularly feminist and student movements, which posed participatory democracy as a prime criterion for the internal organization of the movement itself.[11] Occupied social centers, which developed throughout Europe and especially in Italy since the 1970s, experimented with autonomous governance

structures and the creation of communities within and against the dominant society. Experiences of prefiguration have been multiplied and expanded in recent years. The various encampments of 2011 to 2013, from Tahrir and Puerta del sol to Zuccotti Park and Gezi Park, all serve as inspiring examples, establishing systems of free libraries, food, and medical services as well as (and most importantly) experiments in democratic decision-making in assemblies on a relatively large scale.[12] Among the greatest accomplishments of prefigurative politics has been their ability to open broader social debates about democracy and equality. The movements not only demonstrate a desire for a different social order but also open avenues for experimentation in the larger society.

The shortcomings of prefigurative approaches, however, are evident in both their internal dynamics and their social effectiveness. It is difficult to live in a prefigurative community while also being part of the larger dominant society (a contradiction like that of trying to maintain socialism in one country surrounded by a capitalist world). Moreover, the mandates of living differently in the community function largely at the moral level, often contradicting with the production of subjectivity in the dominant society. As a result moralism and internal policing too often mar the experience of living in such activist communities.

More important than the difficult experiences within such communities, though, is their limited capacities to effect their outside, that is, the inability of prefigurative experiences to transform the broader social order. Generating desires for and posing an example of a new world is already a great accomplishment, but prefigurative experiences in themselves lack the means to engage the dominant institutions, let alone overthrow the ruling order and generate a social alternative.

A second path to a new form of governance engages with the existing institutions and attempts to transform them from within through a strategy of antagonistic reformism. In contrast to what we might call collaborative reformism, which serves merely to compensate for the ills of the current system, ameliorating its damage, antagonistic reformism sets its sights on

fundamental social change. Rudi Dutschke phrase for antagonistic reformism, a "long march through the institutions" (<u>Der lange Marsch durch die Institutionen</u>), is apt in part because it translates the image of Mao's guerrilla war against the Japanese into an internal struggle against the ruling order, a sort of guerilla warfare from within the existing institutions of power. The phrase also expresses the core of the Gramscian idea of a war of position, conducting political struggle in the realm of culture, the forum of ideas, and that of the current structures of power. For Dutschke the goal was to affirm the autonomy of the movements, their strategic power and, thus, to enlist them in the construction of counterpowers. Palmiro Togliatti also interpreted Gramsci to propose a "long march through the institutions," but he had the opposite path in mind: manage the movements, cage them up, and subordinate them to the command of the Party. In order to distinguish between antagonistic reformism and social democratic reformism, between strong and weak reformism, one has to gauge the degree of strategic autonomy: maximum in the case of Dutschke and minimal in that of Togliatti.[13]

The electoral process is one field for antagonistic reformism, with the assumption that once elected a person can substantially and even fundamentally change the structures of power. Innumerable progressive politicians have come to office in recent years with promises of substantial change, from Barack Obama to Ada Colau, and one could draft a balance sheet of their relative success. In some cases the office has proven more powerful than the political project for change, and in others substantial changes have been achieved. Another field of antagonistic reformism, which we engaged in chapter 2, involves legal projects working within the confines of existing property law to counter some of the forces of capitalist hierarchies and alleviate some of the damages of poverty and exclusion. Housing projects for the poor, for instance, and rights for workers can be carved out from within the rights of property. There are numerous other legal and institutional fields of antagonistic reformism in play today, including those engaged in environmental issues, protecting against sexual violence, affirming workers' rights, aiding migrants, and much more. A primary criterion for judging these projects as antagonistic reformism, as we said, is whether the reforms they enact support the existing system or set in motion a substantial transformation of the structures of power.

We have no doubt that some projects of antagonistic reformism make important contributions. Even when they appear in the short term as failures, as they most often do, their long-term effects can be significant: the long march requires patience. The limitations of antagonist reformism, however, are also apparent. Too often the long march through the institutions gets lost, and the desired social change never comes about. This, in part, is explained by the production of subjectivity: even if you enter an institution aiming to change it from the inside, often instead it will change you. This is by no means a reason to abandon projects of antagonistic reformism, in our view, but instead highlights how limited they are on their own.

Finally, a third path leads to taking power and achieving hegemony. In contrast to prefigurative strategies, this path does not aim at the small scale and the construction of communities relatively separate from the dominant society (whether outside or inside). The goal instead is to transform directly society as a whole. In contrast to reformist projects, the existing institutions are not the field of action, but rather the object of a "destituent," destructive enterprise. Overthrowing the existing institutions and creating new ones is the primary challenge.

Each of the three paths implies a different temporality. Prefigurative strategies, although they live the transformation of the activist community in the present, <u>defer</u> social transformation to a future when the analogy of the small democratic community will be achieved on a large scale. Reformist strategies live the slow temporality of <u>gradual</u> change that construct the future one brick at a time. Taking power, in contrast, lives in the temporality of the <u>event</u> and thus brings about swift transformation at the social level.

The immediate satisfactions and political clarity of taking power are obvious. Equally obvious, however, should be its many pitfalls. The first concern of anyone intent on taking power is that the new regime not repeat the primary characteristics of the old. Our discussions of sovereignty and constituent power in chapter 1 highlight the practices and structures of

domination inherent in sovereignty regardless of who wields it.[14] Taking power, therefore, cannot simply mean taking power as it is; taking power requires <u>transforming</u> power. It requires, to use the Marx phrase we explained earlier, "smashing the state," which is to say, in another idiom, that we must create a nonstate public power. Second, taking power (at the national level, for instance) is highly constrained by its environment. The pressures of global capital, the reactions of the dominant nation-states, and the limitations posed by various nonstate external forces, such as the media, all serve to hem in those who take power and reduce to a minimum the room for maneuvering. The drama and the highly constrained choices available to the Syriza government in the summer of 2015 demonstrated some of these limitations, and the agonies of progressive governments in Latin America that came to power in the last two decades provide further scenes of constraint by external and internal forces. Even those who succeed in taking power, in other words, end up having very little of it.

Where does this leave us? Does identifying the pitfalls of all three options mean we have nowhere to go? The first response, which is partial but nonetheless important, is that we must cease viewing these three strategies as divergent and recognize their (potential) complementarity. This involves not just taking a different perspective but also and most importantly transforming practices. The taking of power, by electoral or other means, must serve to open space for autonomous and prefigurative practices on an ever-larger scale and nourish the slow transformation of institutions, which must continue over the long term. Similarly practices of exodus must find ways to complement and further projects of both antagonistic reform and taking power. This three-faced Dionysus is the coordinated formation of counterpowers and the real creation of a dualism of power, within the existing ruling system. This is the realism that Machiavelli teaches us.

A second, more profound response requires that we expand our question from the political to the social terrain. We have insisted throughout this book that viewing politics as an autonomous terrain leads to disasters. The puzzles of democratic governance can be solved only through the transformation of social relations. We traveled this path in chapter 2,

recognizing, for example, how property can be opened to the common. The rule of private property is one of the primary mechanisms that maintains social inequality and prevents equal participation in social life. The establishment of the common not only removes the barriers of private property, but it also creates and institutes new democratic social relations based on freedom and equality. Expansion of our focus from the political to the social terrain allows us to grasp, furthermore, the widespread capacities for organizing social cooperation. The entrepreneurship of the multitude, which we articulated in chapter 2, is one prominent face of the expanded capacities of social and political organization. The ability of people to organize together their productive lives and to plan and innovate future forms of cooperation demonstrates the necessary political capacities. And in the biopolitical context, social organization always spills over into political organization.

Gramsci's concept of hegemony defines something like the path we are describing here. Hegemony, for Gramsci, is not a purely political category (as if it were merely a translation of Lenin's concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat) nor is it purely sociological (as if Gramscian hegemony = Hegelian civil society).[15] Hegemony in Gramsci instead comprises both the party moment (or, rather, the production of subjectivity and the constituent power that gives it flesh) and the dynamic of class and social struggle that transforms society (including modifications of the legal order through trade union counterpowers, for example, and appropriations of machinic knowledges) – and into all of this are interwoven constituent powers. When Gramsci writes in "Americanism and Fordism" that in the United States rationalization has resulted in the need to create a new human type in conformity with the new type of labor and the new productive processes, we can only conclude that this new human type, the Fordist worker, is able to redirect and deploy in struggle what it has learned from the economic crisis and the technological transformations. The ontological deposit of resistance and struggle then becomes the more essential to revolutionary praxis the more it approximates the social figure of the common and interprets, as we will see, the paradigm of "general intellect." This superposition of the political and the social, and of antagonistic reform and

taking power, offers us a clear image of how today the construction of a multitudinous democracy of the common can be understood.

At this point, we can now recognize the importance and the possibility of the inversion of strategy and tactics that we advocated in chapter 1. Crucial is the establishment of the multitude's capacity for strategy – to interpret the structures of oppression in all their forms, to form effective counterpowers, to plan with prudence for the future, to organize new social relations. The multitude is gaining the capacities to be a political entrepreneur. The relegation of leadership to tactical deployments follows from the strategic capacities of the multitude. The utility and necessity of the action of leadership, especially in emergency conditions, is clear. What must be established are safeguards that leaders don't outstay their welcome. The strategic power of the multitude is the only guarantee.

A Hermes to forge the coin of the common. Many of those who critique the power and violence of money in contemporary society under the rule of finance, as we do, argue that our primary task is to limit its power: get money out of political elections, restrain the financial power of the wealthy, diminish the power of the banks, and even distribute money more equitably across each society and across the globe. Yes, all that is crucial – but it is only a first step.

The more radical argue that we should abolish money altogether, but they confuse capitalist money with money as such. Money itself is not the problem. As we argued in chapter 3, money institutionalizes a social relation; it is a powerful social technology. The problem then, as is the case too with other technologies, is not money but rather the social relation it supports.

What we need is to establish a new social relation – based on equality and freedom in the common – and then (and only then) can a new money be created to consolidate and institutionalize that social relation. Local currencies can certainly play a role but we want new

social relations that are equally general and equally strong as are capitalist social relations today.[16] How can we imagine money that is grounded the common, instead of being constituted by property relations? This money would not be anonymized title to property (as Heinsohn and Steiger rightly describe capitalist money) but rather plural, singular social bonds in the common. The creation of a new money must proceed hand in hand, then, with the passage from property to the common.

We can begin to imagine a money of the common through concrete shifts in monetary and social policy. A modest proposal, which points in this direction, is a quantitative easing (QE) for the people. Traditionally QE is a monetary policy by which a central bank, through large-scale purchases of government bonds, commercial debt, mortgage-backed securities, and other assets from financial markets, increases the money supply, effectively printing money in the hope of incentivizing consumption and production. This money, which Milton Friedman sarcastically calls helicopter money, that is, money dropped down as if from a helicopter, is distributed according to the monetary needs of consumption but goes primarily to businesses. Several radical economists today, including Christian Marazzi and Yanis Varoufakis, propose instead a quantitative easing for the people. The idea is to print money (as the current form of QE does) but distribute the money to the people and, specifically, in the most radical versions, to small and large autonomous initiatives and experiments of social production and reproduction.[17] This proposal creates a useful platform of political training and management of the construction of a real counterpower, but it is only a first step.

Proposals for a guaranteed basic income take us closer to a money of the common. Carlo Vercellone proposes that the establishment of a guaranteed basic income as a primary source of income would be the cornerstone for forging a money of the common by separating income from waged labor and instead linking shared wealth to the cooperative circuits of social production and reproduction. A basic income would recognize the value of unwaged social production and reproduction. Vercellone calls this a money of the common insofar as it grants (a limited) autonomy from capitalist command to existing forms of social production in and of

the common: the income gives freedom and time to produce and reproduce social life. Weakening the link between income and labor also undermines the relation between wealth and property, opening spaces for shared wealth in social life.[18] Moreover, a basic income opens possibilities of new forms of social cooperation outside of the wage system and fosters imagining a social life beyond capital. Kathi Weeks emphasizes how simply demanding a basic income has anti-ascetic effects: "Rather than preach the ethics of thrift and savings, the politics of concession, or the economics of sacrifice, the demand for basic income invites the expansion of our needs and desires . . . [and] points in the direction of a life no longer subordinate to work."[19] In itself a guaranteed basic income, even if it were achieved, would not be sufficient to transform capitalist money, eliminate private property, and institute social relations of the common, but it certainly alludes strongly in that direction.

To grasp the importance and carry further such policy proposals in the direction of a money of the common we should take up the results of our investigations in chapter 3 on the nature of money and try to update them. That means constructing a politics of money that grasps dynamically the new relationships of production and reproduction, interprets the needs that run throughout them (Spinoza would call this an ethics), and combines the analysis of this tendency with a recognition of the forces that traverse and modulate it. We need to identify, first, the monetary form of the relationship among producers and reproducers, as it arises in the regime of finance capital and social production; second, the diverse forms of income that correspond (or should correspond) to the development of this mode of production; and finally, the "regime of virtue" that corresponds to each monetary form. Our problematic is to transform property into the common while grasping the primary social transformations of the passage from industrial command to that of finance capital.

Contemporary capitalist production and its modes of extraction, as we argued in chapter 3, rely on social cooperation. Surplus value is appropriated through financial technologies that organize the extraction of social value. In certain respects, the dissolution of private property and the recognition of the common are, paradoxically, assumed as the basis of the current

mode of production by "collective capital" itself.   In this context, the immediate object of social and class struggles is to reduce inequality and break with the regimes of austerity. Today, however, this is presented in a particularly dramatic way because in the multitude that resists capitalist power the old and the new live together in a kind of interregnum: an old, unraveling political composition and a new emergent technical composition. Social strike, which combines the traditions of syndicalist and social movements, is the privileged form of struggle on this terrain. Ultimately, the refusal of austerity and inequality must express the demand for a money of cooperation and thus forms of income that correspond to the productivity of social cooperation, income that has both a wage element and an element of welfare. A money of cooperation extends beyond a guaranteed basic income to create a terrain on which new coalitions of social production and reproduction are able to impose a "political income," one that becomes incompatible with capitalist development and the mediations of class relations. The virtue affirmed here, from the standpoint of the struggles of social producers and reproducers, is equality. To all according to their needs, as the old slogan goes, corresponds to the fact that all are in equal measure engaged and exploited in social production and reproduction.

Since common production is also multitudinous, composed of a set of singularities, the reproduction of the labor force cannot be achieved through forms of massification. Social differences and their powers of innovation have become essential to social production and reproduction. A money of cooperation thus must be accompanied by a money of singularization and what we might call an income of singularization, which underwrites a right to difference and sustains the plural expressions from below of the multitude. From all according to their abilities might thus be translated to from all according to their differences, affirming the virtue of singularity. The income of singularization would have to promote the self-valorization of social producers and reproducers. It is not enough to repropose the neo-Keynesian governance structures and the creation "from above" of effective demand (whatever its measures), but rather it is necessary to subjectivate the social forces of rupture. On this terrain one can create an ample front of what Pascal Nicholas-Le Straat calls "labor of the

common," cooperative and democratic platforms of production and services, as well as the creation of experimental currencies for local communities.[20] Moreover, the emerging economic capacities of the multitude autonomously to produce and reproduce social relations are immediately political capacities: self-valorization implies political autonomy and capacities for self-governance. Finally, whereas the modern bourgeois constitutions were founded on and guaranteed the relations of private property, as Pashukanis argued, the constitution of autonomous social production must be founded on and guarantee the common. This is the leap over the abyss we spoke of in chapter 2, beyond the rule of private property, which can maintain its power even in regimes of equality.

The first two monetary figures interpret the qualities and capacities of the emergent entrepreneurial multitude in the age of social production and general intellect, but that is not enough. We also need a money of social and planetary investment. In the process of growing autonomy we need money to guarantee, on one hand, the expansion of society through education, research, transportation, health, and communication, and, on the other, to preserve life through relations of care, for all species as well as the earth and its ecosystems. The question here is not income but the dedication of social resources for a democratic planning for the future. Capital has proven unable to plan for the flourishing or even survival of social life on the planet, and states have fared little better: the rule of the private and the public have failed.[21] The common, which expresses the virtue of prudence, is the only path that leads to a better future.

In chapter 3 we sketched some of the characteristics of the social relations of capitalist money in three historical phases: primitive accumulation, manufacture / large-scale industry, and social production. In order to flesh out the potential social relations of the money of the common it might seem logical to add a fourth column to our table so as to describe its temporalities, its forms of value, its governance structures, and so forth. This could be a helpful exercise as long as we keep in mind that the money of the common, since it is a noncapitalist money and its social relations are nonproperty relations, does not belong on that table: in order

to institute new social relations, the money of the common will imply a real historical rupture and thus understanding it will require new analytical tools.

Is it utopian to propose a money of the common, which promotes equality, difference, and prudence – a money of cooperation, singularization, and social/planetary investment? Maybe. But political realism consists in recognizing the tendency animated by the movements of contemporary society, illuminating the desires embedded in them, and then bringing the future back to the present. Ultimately, a money of the common will only become the order of the day when the social relations of the common, which it can serve to institutionalize, have been fully articulated in practice.

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[1] Mao Zedong, Problems of War and Strategy, 2nd edition, Foreign Languages Press, 1960, p. 13. Mao quickly add that the Party controls the gun and the gun will not be allowed to control the Party.

[2] Kristen Ross, Communal Luxury, Verso, 2015, pp. 11-29.

[3] On the Black Panther health clinics, see Alondra Nelson, Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fights against Medical Discrimination, University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

[4] On the experiment in democratic autonomy in Rojava in the midst of war, see the dossier of essays edited by Bülent Küçük and Ceren Özselçuk, "Struggling for Democratic Autonomy in Kurdistan" in The South Atlantic Quarterly, 115:1, January 2016, pp. 184-196.

[5] René Char, Dans l'atelier du poète, ed. Marie-Claude Char, Quarto Gallimard, 2007, pp. 373-374.

[6] Carlo Vallauri, ed., Le repubbliche partigiane: Esperienze di autogoverno democratico, Laterza, 2013.

[7] Franco Fortini, Un dialogo ininterotto, Bollati Borighieri, 2009, pp. 63-64.

[8] Jean-Paul Sartre, in various points in his work, poses the problem of the relationship between figures of subjectivity and their existential, situated, historically determinate production – a relationship generally between the subjectivity and historicity of the organizational processes of revolutionary movements. The theme of "totalization," which is so dear to Sartre, is correctly and effectively posed as the key to the synthesis of the possible differences of this dialectic. The analysis of the transformation of individual praxis and its totalization, as many have noted, constitute the heart of Sartre's problem. But the more interesting part, at least for us, is

Sartre's reasoning when he discovers the residues or products of alienation that can disturb and destroy this process. Inertia undermines it and terror can destroy it. Here we are faced with a process that remains bogged down in difficulties and has no happy ending. But isn't this the real situation we always face – when, in the process of totalization, we grasp the inevitable aporias and recognize that there is no subject that can realize that process? Which means that only struggle can lead to a solution. When Sartre analyzes the failure of that repressive and/or counter-repressive process "from series to fusion" in the Algerian Revolution, he confirms this conclusion: the relationship between the production of subjectivity and its social constitution remains open. See Jean-Paul Sartre, <u>Critique of Dialectical Reason</u>, vol 1, trans. Alan Sheridan-Smith, ed. Jonathan Rée, New Left Books, 1976, on individual praxis and totalization, pp. 79-94; on alienation and inertia, pp. 228-252; and on the Algerian Revolution, pp. 721-734.

[9] <u>Capital</u>, vol. 1, p. 563.

[10] On the introduction of the standard shipping container, see Deborah Cohen, <u>The Deadly Life of Logistics</u>, pp. 31 and 40-42.

[11] On prefigurative politics in the New Left, see Wini Breines, <u>Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968</u>, 2nd edition, Rutgers University Press, 1989, especially pp. 46-66.

[12] On prefigurative politics in Occupy Wall Street, see David Graeber, <u>The Democracy Project</u>, Penguin: 2013.

[13] One might object that the historical situations of these two cases were so different that they cannot be compared in this way. That is indeed what the "Togliattians" claimed every time they were confronted by struggles based on autonomous strategic projects. They justified, for example, their submission to the formal rules of constitutional democracy on the basis of insuperable international conditions, such as the Yalta Treaty, which left the Italian Communist Party (as well as the French) at the mercy of NATO. How could one deny it? That was not the problem, however, but rather the refusal of the "Togliattians" to confront this necessity with honesty and truth: the honesty to continue to produce communist subjectivity not subordinated to bourgeois rule and its economic pact, and the truth that reveals critically the reasons for that obstacle to <u>praxis</u>. They instead subordinated the truth to a perpetual regime of mystifications and falsifications. If they were to have acted honestly, the "Togliattians"

would have probably been able to bring together (even in a fragile way) the relationship between the social formations of the movements and the production of subjectivity, and they would have in the successive years been able to hand down their terrific antifascist and democratic legacy to the next generation of activists, creating a continuous line in the history of European revolutionary movements.

[14] We recognize the validity of some of John Holloway's critiques of the practices of taking power, although we do not endorse his conclusions, in Change the World Without Taking Power, Pluto Press, 2002.

[15] Peter Thomas provides excellent critiques of the dominant interpretations of hegemony in Gramsci, particularly those of Laclau and Mouffe, and Perry Anderson. See The Gramscian Moment, Haymarket Books, 2010.

[16] For one important local currency proposal, see Eduardo Garzón Espinosa, "Ventajas y riesgos de la moneda local qua propone crear Barcelona en Comú," El diario, 13 June 2016.

[17] See, for example, Marco Bertorello and Christian Marazzi, "Un "quantitative easing" per il popolo," Il manifesto, 22 September 2015; and Marie Charrel, "Da la monnaie pour le peuple," Le monde, 20 February 2016.

[18] Laurent Baronian and Carlo Vercellone, "Monnaie du commun et revenue social garanti," Terrains/Théories, 1, 2015, http://teth.revues.org/377 ; DOI : 10.4000/teth.377.   For our earlier proposal of a guaranteed basic income, see Empire, pp. 401-403.

[19] Kathi Weeks, The Problem with Work, Duke University Press, 2011, p. 146.

[20] See Pascal Nicolas-Le Straat, Le travail du comun, Éditions du commun, 2016. For an range of excellent discussions of a money of the common, see Emanuele Braga and Andrea Fumagalli, eds., La moneta del comune, DeriveApprodi, 2015.

[21] Marx argued that capital's inability to plan for social needs leads continually to disaster. "The matter would be simply reduced to the fact that the society must reckon in advance how much labour, means of production and means of subsistence it can spend, without dislocation, on branches of industry which, like the building of railways, for instance, supply neither means of production nor means of subsistence, nor any kind of useful effect, for a long period, a year or more, though they certainly do withdraw labour, means of production and means of

subsistence from the total annual product. In capitalist society, on the other hand, where any kind of social rationality asserts itself only _post festum_, major disturbances can and must occur constantly" (_Capital_, vol. 2, p. 390).