## AT: Empire

### Alt Fails - Multitude

#### Alt fails---the multitude doesn’t assume religion in the real world

Ian K. McDaniel 2009. department Of Philosophy, Oklahoma State University, Usa 9. . “Multitude against Empire: A sin of omission.” SAGE Journals. 8-18-2009. https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/abs/10.1177/0191453709106241 //NM

Given the small population of American atheists as a percentage of the total population, the question that now concerns us is this: where are all these atheists who must constitute the suffering multitude? Assuming the highest estimate for the atheist population of each country, the top 10 atheist countries are Sweden, Vietnam, Denmark, Norway, Japan, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, South Korea and Germany. The atheist population in these nations ranges from a low of 49 per cent in Germany up to a high of 85 per cent in Sweden.14 At this point it is important to note that the majority of these nations, indeed many of the nations with significant atheist communities, reside within the European Union. If Hardt and Negri are correct, then these ‘atheist nations’ should have deplorable economic suffering among their populations and worse income inequality than the United States. Yet this is not the case. In fact, only Vietnam comes close to the USA in terms of income inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient. All the others have a Gini coefficient below 0.34 and only Japan dips below 0.25, meaning that the income distributions of these nations are in the optimal ranges for growth and prosperity. It would seem that prosperity, not an increase in exploitation and suffering, leads to a decline of religion Let us now consider several nations with Gini coefficients that are more unequal than the United States; perhaps there we can find a preponderance of atheists to support Empire’s dismissal of religion. Mexico,Brazil and Argentina (indeed most of South America), South Africa, Namibia and Botswana all have Gini coefficients in excess of 0.50, yet only Argentina appears among the top 50 nations in terms of atheist populations (in the 45th position, a scant two spots behind the USA) with 8 per cent of the total population as atheists. The rest of these nations have less than 7 per cent of their total population as self-described atheists.15 Greater inequality and suffering on the part of the multitude 797 McDaniel: Multitude against Empire do not seem to result in a lack of faith within the multitude as Hardt and Negri imply. On the contrary, those countries that are experiencing greater inequality have higher proportions of religious persons than those with greater equality and prosperity. While individual religions act to unite portions of the multitude together under the banners of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, etc., at the same time, however, religion acts as a divisive force, separating Christians from Jews, Muslims from Christians, Hindus from Buddhists and so forth. Religions identify themselves so as to create a sense of unity, but this same labeling also creates a division among the multitude. By labeling themselves ‘Christian’, a third of the world’s population has at the same time labeled two-thirds of the world’s population as ‘Other’ (to use Hardt’s and Negri’s terminology); that is to say, other than us, i.e. non-Christian. So while it has the attractive power of unity and immobility to draw people to it in a time of crisis, change and uncertainty, religion also divides up the multitude along these lines of faith. This division not only makes seeking a unified community outside their religious affiliations difficult for most practitioners, the continuing notion of different faiths as inherently ‘other’ makes the seeking of such a unity undesirable for many religious persons. Herein lies the problem for Hardt and Negri: religion must be destroyed in order for the multitude to exist as a unified force capable of overcoming Empire; so long as the multitude remains divided along religious boundaries, the multitude will not be fully mobile, unified or, most importantly, capable of making the social demands necessary to overcome Empire. Bringing our current argument together at this point, we see that Hardt and Negri’s notion of the multitude as a unified force capable of standing in opposition to Empire requires an end to the various religious belief structures that separate and divide the multitude. At the same time, the economic forces that exist within Empire of exploitation and suffering among the multitude indicate an increase of religious belief and acceptance among the multitude. Simplifying the argument, to create multitude economically means to create more religious belief, but to create more religious belief means to deny the creation of a unified multitude. Within their discourse on the creation of Empire, Hardt and Negri ‘object to social contract theorists who pretend “that the subject can be understood pre-socially and outside the community”’ and yet they also claim that ‘no subjectivity is outside’.20 Religious beliefs, while perhaps not a major aspect of the European community at present, are very much a part of the global community. By omitting from their discourse the influence of religion on the multitude, Hardt and Negri have placed on 799 McDaniel: Multitude against Empire the ‘outside’ an important subjectivity of the multitude. It is this contradiction of their own construction in Empire that results in their contradictory notion of the creation of the multitude as a unified force capable of opposing the capitalist Empire.

#### Alt fails---the multitude doesn’t know what it’s fighting.

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Michael Walzer, reflecting in a 2002 Dissent article ~vol. 49, Spring! upon the compelling issues in world politics, asked “Can there be a decent Left?” After reading Atilio A. Boron’s impassioned and derisive critique of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s Empire ~Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2000!, one wonders whether today there can be an empirically sophisticated, coherent Left. ~Negri, by the way, spent seventeen years in Italian prisons for his involvement with the Red Brigade and the murder of Italian politician Aldo Moro.! Boron, a professor of political theory at the University of Buenos Aires claims, no doubt rightly, that the last three decades, embracing the end of the Cold War, the impact of neo-liberal policies on the “periphery” and sweeping technological changes, have necessitated a reformulation of leftist thinking. The influential Empire, which advances a root-and-branch restructuring of socialist thought, though hugely popular among anti-globalization groups and already translated into over a dozen languages, is to Boron emphatically not it. While paying obeisance to Hardt and Negri’s “noble intentions and intellectual and political honesty” ~4–5!, the author proceeds to shred virtually all their main contentions. At least the general reader surmises as much, for Boron fails to provide an account of Empire adequate for those who are learning about Empire for the first time to judge. At the same time, summarizing the over 500-page and all-butunintelligible Empire is no mean task inasmuch as the book consists of an impenetrable mix of postmodern theory and systems analysis. What does seem clear, however, is that Empire—the forces of globalization, including the unobstructed flow of information, capital and labour—provides a complete contrast to imperialism because it has no centre and is not under anyone or anything’s control. Absent, too, are hierarchy and sovereign nation-states for it is Empire that is now sovereign. Opposing Empire is the “multitude,” which seems to include humanity, notably those who resist, from subsistence farmers to knowledge workers and jihadists, who are characterized simply as “being against.” Precisely against what, however, is unsatisfactorily explained. Dissidence in Empire is metaphorically depicted by the authors as a snake, undulating about Empire looking for opportunities to attack. It is small wonder to Boron that the authors are wrong-headed since their analyses are grounded in “French postmodern philosophy, Italian politics and US economic science” ~8! rather than the socialist canon of Rosa Luxemburg and Vladimir Lenin. Boron considers the most egregious of Hardt and Negri’s mistakes to include the asserted end of imperialism, the disintegration of the state and the notion of independent multinational corporations. Premised on a Chomskyesque critique of US foreign policy, Boron insists that an American empire, together with the multinational corporations incorporated under its laws whose interests are American interests, continues to dominate the world and despoil vulnerable countries looting their natural resources, thereby refuting Hardt and Negri’s notion of the insignificance of states. Although Boron maintains that “the atrocious 9011 attacks,” which were “momentous and spectacular” ~6!, undermine Hardt and Negri’s thrust, he does not return to terrorism, but persists in the assumption that social injustice continues to be the world’s most pressing problem. No doubt Boron comes by his fury honestly. Latin America’s economic and political distress is as intractable as in any other part of the “periphery.” There is widespread economic suffering, civil insecurity and social disintegration. How many of these misfortunes can be laid at the door of neoliberal restructuring is, however, 280 Recensions / Reviews surely debatable. Some neoliberal reforms have misfired, causing hardship and dislocation, but more have been constructive. Much of Latin America’s misery can be laid at other doors, especially the weakness of democracy and other political institutions. Boron concedes that he not only wants to provide a theoretical context within which the world economic and political problematique can be analyzed, he also wants to facilitate political change. This admission does not inspire confidence in the unconverted; nor does the author’s reliance on pragmatic arguments. For example, Boron attacks Hardt and Negri’s conception of a deterritorialized space on the ground that “the classic distinction between centre and periphery...vanishes into thin air” ~11!. What is at issue here, however, is not how much of Boron’s preferred conceptual apparatus Hardt and Negri displace but what approach emerging realities will support, a matter that must be settled empirically. Flawed arguments along with the overwhelmingly polemical tone of this volume will be troublesome for those for whom understanding the world is more than enough. Unless readers already agree with Boron’s political orientation, they will remain unconvinced by his analysis. If the Left is to be revitalized, it will not, unfortunately, be at the hands of Boron, Negri or Hardt.

#### Alt fails--- materialization is impossible

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Baffled by the ‘logic’ of one of Empire’s central arguments, Wolfe observes: ‘Thus one has to read Hardt and Negri’s question many times over, so flat out wrong are its assertions and assumptions, in order to judge whether they can possibly be serious’ (2001: 2). The task the authors set themselves was serious. But the big picture outlined in Empire, eclectically combining elements of Marxism, managerialism and postmodernism, remains unconvincing and often incomprehensible. The book is neither a robust guide to the realities and challenges of global governance, nor to the potential for Downloaded from cnc.sagepub.com at UCSF LIBRARY & CKM on December 7, 2014 92 Capital & Class #86 social challenge and change. With respect to the latter, Wright argues that the recurrent problem of Negri and operaismo has been a penchant for all-embracing categories, and ‘the unrelenting preoccupation with the technical composition of labour power as a key explanation in the explanation of behaviour’ (2002: 226). This reached its peak with the socialised worker concept, which flattened differences instead of opening out contradictory dynamics and tendencies. There is much truth in this observation, but the problem runs deeper. Hardt and Negri largely ignore the real insights that can be generated from Marxist political economy, but reproduce what is, arguably, its weakest point—the gravedigger thesis. This search for an economic actor inside the hidden abode of production, who is then required to be a transcendent political subject with the responsibility of changing the whole society, creates an impossible practical and theoretical burden. Even within these terms, the multitude—‘all the subjugated and exploited’—is not a meaningful political subject. Instead of the difficult task of actually mobilising labour, we are presented with a picture of a multitude already formed and victorious. When faced with the reality that potential revolutionaries in various struggles did not recognise either themselves or others as part of an expanding chain of revolt, Hardt and Negri can only take refuge in the banal argument that this was a failure of communication (p. 54-5). Which leaves us, finally, with their own conclusion. For all the talk of postmodern republicanism, the underlying logic of Empire is an infantile vanguardism. The labour, whether immaterial or multitudinous, in whose name the book speaks is labour to which the communist militant, lauded in the postscript, imputes motives, labels struggles, allocates roles, and proclaims unity of purpose and outcome. Intellectual militants become the means of communication, except that what they are communicating is a fantasy that exists only in their own heads. This is absolutely consistent with the history of Negri and Italian workerism. For all its earlier insights, from its inception this current was distinctive for its view that what labour actually thought was secondary to its position as a particular category of labour (the mass worker, the social worker, immaterial labour, and so on). As Negri remarked of the social worker, ‘At the political and social level, this subject presents a complete materialization of consciousness within the structure of its own existence.

#### Alt fails---the neg fails to address gender norms that make the multitude impossible

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If one wants to do justice to this claim, one would have to push the organization of the boundary between paid and unpaid labor into the center of a critique of political economy\*/and this in order to comprehend the very shifts in this boundary. The thesis of a dissolving boundary between production and reproduction treats this boundary as an historical relic, an object of anachronistic research agendas, and thus no longer a valid subject of study. In Hardt and Negri, the division between productive and reproductive work only appears in the form of the distinction 9 Hardt and Negri, op. cit., p. 364. 10 Frigga Haug, ‘‘Zur Theorie der Geschlechterverha¨ltnisse,’’ Argument, 243, 2001, pp. 761/787. 11Hardt and Negri, op. cit., p. 274. 80 SUSANNE SCHULTZ Downloaded by [Erciyes University] at 05:18 22 December 2014 between direct and indirect forms of capitalist exploitation.12 This may be read as a vague reference to longstanding debates about the role of household work in the generation of surplus value, debates which Hardt and Negri do not engage with explicitly. Certainly, the thesis on the dissolution of boundaries makes it impossible to critique the hierarchies that are produced in the process of dividing paid from unpaid work. This does not mean, however, that the division between productive and reproductive labor is not shifting. This becomes particularly clear when one considers hegemonic models of ‘‘‘female’’ wage labor, notably the attractive model of the ‘‘successful’’ professional woman in the fields of culture, finance or advertising. Empire correctly thematizes how qualifications acquired during so-called free time through cultural or political groups or through private relationships become valorized in the labor process. The division between work and leisure has become more mutable as a result of flexible working time. Certainly, the housewife model\*/ the hegemonic model of femininity under Fordism\*/no longer applies (and was never a reality for many women, in any case). In light of these displacements, one should not lose sight of the fact that these boundaries shift in significantly uneven ways. Women’s workforce participation faces extremely stable gender divisions of labor in the so-called sphere of reproductive work, notably in child and elderly care. One only has to recall that that a mere 1.5 percent of people who take official parental leave in Germany are men. In this sense, the convergence model of production and reproduction reflects less the reality of labor relations than an increasingly hegemonic image of female subjectivity, where reproductive labor disappears into the holes and gaps of the patchwork that is the neoliberal working day. The delegation of reproductive labor to underprivileged women, particularly migrant women, is certainly to be understood as a displacement of the boundaries between productive and reproductive labor as well. This case expresses everything but the dissolution of (unpaid) reproductive labor, however. One factor accounts for the extreme social and financial devaluation of this work. It is not seen as skilled and qualified labor, but rather as something that women and girls are ‘‘naturally’’ socialized to do. Also, reproductive labor remains structurally close to unpaid labor, with its extreme flexibility of hours and tasks as well as the mechanisms of emotional dependence and familial loyalty. This domestic worker model, which depends on high wage differentials, cannot be universalized. It is logically untenable for a domestic worker to pay yet another domestic to look after her own reproductive work. Finally, the thesis of a shrinking divide between production and reproduction appears absurd when one thinks of the neoliberal cutbacks to public services such as kindergartens and health care, which (re)privatize reproductive labor and force unpaid women to pick up the slack in the system. 12Ibid., p. 53. DISSOLVED BOUNDARIES AND ‘‘AFFECTIVE LABOR’’ 81 Downloaded by [Erciyes University] at 05:18 22 December 2014 How unpaid reproductive labor should be organized is no longer a question when its disappearance is quietly presupposed, as in Empire. Rather than speaking about a dissolution of the boundaries between production and reproduction, it would make more sense to analyze the restructuring of reproductive labor along the categories ‘‘race, class, gender’’ on an international level. This would be the only way to realize a materialist approach to the ‘‘production of life,’’ something Hardt and Negri promise but do not carry out. Because Empire offers no basis for a critique of the political economy of gender regimes, its claim to subvert dominant models of subjectivity must fail.

#### Alt fails and TURNS impacts--- The neg interpretation of Empire leads to more existential risks like war and economic collapse

Colin John, Michael Roberts 11. Brunel university, professor of sociology and communications. “Postmodern Left-Liberalism: Hardt and Negri and the Disavowal of Critique.” SAGE Journals. 2-28-2011. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0896920510379442 //NM

Our charge against Hardt and Negri and other similar left-liberal theorists, then, is twofold. First, they misinterpret Marx’s labour theory of value by regarding immaterial labour as historically and constitutively distinct from the relations of capital that Marx analysed. Second, and consequently, they fetishize protests whether antagonistic of capital or not, ideologically Marxist or not, strategically effective or not. Whereas Deleuze and Guattari distinguish between movements of flight and movements of interest, Hardt and Negri do not. Their use of both Marx and Deleuze and Guattari is selective at best. This has important consequences for understanding the nature of capital and formulating strategies for resisting capital. Indeed, it is with some irony that Capital and AntiOedipus are prescient of the current financial crisis of capitalism. A reading of Capital through Anti-Oedipus should have provided Hardt and Negri with the means to develop a historically important critique of finance capital and to develop ideas on resistance that are currently absent in left thinking. Instead, we get a theoretically inventive but ultimately left-liberal tome masquerading as political radicalism. In his recent book on violence Žižek makes the point that ‘the threat today is not passivity, but pseudo-activity, the urge to be “active”, to “participate”, to mask the nothingness of what goes on’ (Žižek, 2008: 183). Quoting from the same source, it is better, as Badiou argues, ‘to do nothing than to contribute to the invention of formal ways of rendering visible that which Empire already recognizes as existent.’ This is what Hardt and Negri’s work has amounted to. A misrecognition of power is present to the extent that they can celebrate the ‘carnivalesque’ king-for-a-day spectacles of protest while the capitalist class relentlessly attack forms of proletarian solidarity. The consequences are clear: when there is no depth to power, as in Hardt and Negri’s analysis, then we can all be made to feel equally guilty for poverty, oppression and environmental devastation. We each become responsible for global warming (consuming in a sustainable way), the war on Iraq (joining in global protest), and capitalist crisis (calling for better regulation of the market to stifle our desire for easy credit and quick returns on share investments). Politics becomes a vocal and spectacular demonstration of our opposition to poverty and violence, an aggregate of interpassivity. Downloaded from crs.sagepub.com at Glasgow University Library on October 12, 2014 Cremin and Roberts 195 Hardt and Negri have failed to recognize in their analysis the essential logic that drives capital to seek new ways to appropriate surplus value and therefore their ideas on social change appear unconvincing. Their ideas in this respect share a consistency with those claiming there is no alternative to the market given that there is no empirical singularity of exception to capital in their analysis, nor therefore the potentiality for contingent movements to find expression through a common or universalized cause. This has the effect of displacing critique of the market, regardless of their intentions, by focusing on the individualizing symptoms of economic liberalization through its ideological mediations. In other words, Hardt and Negri are guilty of amplifying a language of immateriality that merely reproduces what in less critical ways free-market ideologues would like to imagine: that there has occurred a decisive break with the political economy that Marx so lucidly deconstructs thereby rendering his analysis obsolete. Thus unintentionally but rather carelessly their arguments fall into the territory the left-liberal occupies. We therefore argue for a return to the Deleuze and Guattari of Anti-Oedipus, the basis for their subsequent writings such as A Thousand Plateaus. They were able to identify in the capitalist axiomatic its tendency towards financialization and the possibility for lines of flight from commodifying capture through temporally assembled desiring machines of generalized subtraction. Badiou’s subtractive (evental) politics is methodologically distinct from Deleuze and Guattari’s, but his ideas sketched out in this article are a useful reminder that difference is a politically denuded category however empirically different we are. For Badiou politics is the subtraction, in Lacanian terms, of the obscene supplement or substance that an order both depends on and disavows. It is a politics articulated through a subjective fidelity to the event, say a revolution, or truth procedure that is at once singular and universal. Given the magnitude of the current crisis of free-market capitalism, it is all the more important that a line is drawn between Marxism, inclusive of post-structuralist insights into subjectivity and desire, and those left-liberal theorists of informational post-industrial capitalism. Hardt and Negri’s analysis was false before the crisis. If their ideas continue to hold sway among theorists of the left, it will prove an obstacle to understanding the nature of crises but also undermine attempts to develop an ideologically and strategically coherent response at a time when such a response is most needed. Our starting point is to return to, repeat, and affirm our commitment to what Žižek (Butler et al., 2000) describes as ‘politics proper’ as the possibility of global emancipation that contrasts with the impossibility of substantive transformation under Hardt and Negri’s logic. Anxiety about the world in which we live from the knowledge made available to us through new means of communication will simply reinforce our interpassivity unless we are prepared to confront the real conditions underlying interpassivity. Only then can we begin to transform our post-political gestures into properly political actions.

#### Alt fails and TURNS---Empire is a self fulfilling prophecy, doing the alt creates many other empires which doesn’t address the root cause.

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The arrogance of the “international community” and its rights of intervention across the globe are not a series of arbitrary events or disconnected episodes. They compose a system, which needs to be fought with a coherence not less than its own.33 Desertion is not a particularly socialist (or even political) value, yet it occupies a central place in Hardt and Negri’s conception of change in Empire. To desert, as the Oxford English Dictionary states, is “to abandon, forsake, relinquish, give up (a thing); to depart from (a place or position),” It signifies failure and a violation of an oath or allegiance. Desertion is wilful abandonment of duty or obligation. There is also a condition of being deserted, desertedness, which, interestingly, in a theological register, signifies spiritual despondency: “A sense of the dereliction of God (Johnson).” Empire is premised on the power of desertion and nomadism. Having in one breath criticized postcolonial theory for being outmoded, Hardt and Negri go on to privilege its most recent theoretical trope in the next: the migrant as bearer of truth, as symbol of a new world and its liberatory potential. Through migrancy, the multitude anticipates and invents Empire: “The deterritorializing power of the multitude is the productive force that sustains Empire and at the same time the force that calls for and makes necessary its destruction” (61). At the same time as being controlled by Empire, the multitude determines its development: “it is always the initiatives of organized labor power that determine the figure of capitalist development” (208). Which turns Marx on his head. In Capital, proletarian migrancy or nomad labor is a symptom of the power of capital: “They are the light infantry of capital, thrown by it, according to its needs, now to this point, now to that. When they are not on the march, they ‘camp.’”34 Undermining Marx’s emphasis on the rule of capital over labor, the struggle between capital and labor comes then to be defined through desertion, exodus, and refusal. Hardt and Negri substitute political passivity for challenge and opposition to capital. Class struggle becomes about disengagement. The politics of refusal becomes, in anarchist mode, a refusal of politics. It is quite ironic, therefore, that after presenting Empire as a realm “beyond politics,” Hardt and Negri end up advocating a reformist sort of politics—like the right to global citizenship, a social wage, and the right of reappropriation. But then such a contradiction between revolutionary rhetoric and reformist practice is itself a dominant feature of some brands of anarchism. For Hardt and Negri, migration becomes the new vanguard activity—even though they reject vanguardism as a political form. Evoking the Communist Manifesto, they state that “A specter haunts the world and it is the specter of migration. All the powers of the old world are allied in a merciless operation against it, but the movement is irresistible” (213). “Migration” is here substituted for Marx and Engels’s original “Communism.” The shift is emblematic. A social process is substituted for a political party/subject. And this has also been the dominant logic of social movements since the 1970s, as James Heartfield has observed: “The real meaning of the ‘new social movements’ is a move away from the idea of an agent of social transformation altogether. The novel forms of organization are a break with the idea of collective agency.”35 The decline and defeat of the working class as a political force from the late 1970s onwards has indeed been the primary precondition for the rise of social movements like “direct action,” environmentalism, feminism, indigenism, NGOs, and, today, the anticapitalist movement. Empire is quite explicit, therefore, in its rejection of proletarian forms of political organization. Internationalism is a case in point. Hardt and Negri are particularly eager to dispel the notion that internationalism has any role to play in contemporary politics. “Today we should all clearly recognize,” they state, “that the time of such proletarian internationalism is over” (50). Globalization is a response to internationalism rather than a result of its failure. Again, workers have “anticipated and prefigured the processes of the globalization of capital and the formation of Empire” (51). Global capital emulates international struggles, they claim. Having prefigured Empire, proletarian internationalism has become outmoded, its tactics and strategy “completely irretrievable” (59). As “struggles have become all but incommunicable” (54), they “do not link horizontally, but each one leaps vertically, directly to the virtual center of Empire” (58). In a reversal of the shared antagonisms and resemblances of proletarian internationalism, difference rules in struggles today: “Enlightenment is the problem and postmodernism is the solution” (140). But what sort of solution is it? Have the problems of inequality, exploitation, and binary antagonisms generated by capitalism really been resolved in postmodernity? Empire seems to have resolved these problems away by performing a double evacuation: both of structure and of agency. With the dilution of an objective power structure comes the liquidation of a subject of liberation. If Empire is centerless, then so is counter-Empire. Hardt and Negri’s rejection of internationalism is therefore premised on the flawed assumption that the nation-state has disappeared, when, in fact, it has only been restructured. If state power has not evaporated in Empire/globalization but only been reconfigured, then their politics of difference is an evasion of political action. Which means that the moment of “the missed opportunities of international socialism” has not become redundant.36 Neither has the strategy of capturing state power as the main objective of revolutionary movements. As Marx and Engels put it in the Manifesto: “Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie.”37 But who in postmodernity is to counter and overcome “American internationalism,” and guarantee that “neoliberal cosmopolitanism”—its equally imperialist EU competitor—is defeated as well? The real question is slightly different, as Ralph Miliband observes: who is structurally capable of transforming global capitalism and overcoming the logic of its domination? Miliband had no doubts that it can only be the working class, the subordinated majority. If the working class does not overcome the rule of capital, then, quite simply, nobody else will: [T]he “primacy” of organized labor in struggle arises from the fact that no other group, movement or force in capitalist society is remotely capable of mounting as effective and formidable a challenge to the existing structures of power and privilege as it is in the power of organized labor to mount. In no way is this to say that movements of women, blacks, peace activists, ecologists, gays, and others are not important, or cannot have effect, or that they ought to surrender separate identity. Not at all. It is only to say that the principal (not the only) “gravedigger” of capitalism remains the organized working class. Here is the necessary, indispensable “agency of historical change.” And if, as one is constantly told is the case, the organized working class will refuse to do the job, then the job will not be done.38 Put differently: only the “particularized universalism” of socialist internationalism can counter the “universalized particularism”39 of postmodern American internationalism. The postmodern left has deserted this position and, in so doing, has refused to acknowledge the unprecedented power of global capitalist domination. Capitalism, it turns out, is not at all as all-powerful as Marxists thought it was before the days of deconstruction. It is actually “a paper tiger”40 and has no essential identity. Between such denial and Hardt and Negri’s euphoria, capitalism is left unchallenged. Part of today’s necessary “uncompromising realism” is an appreciation of the force and truth of Miliband’s statement above. Only by “refusing any accommodation with the ruling system, and rejecting every piety and euphemism that would understate its power”41 can a real appreciation of the tasks ahead be achieved. Idealism and mystification will only undermine any re-emerging potential for real transformation in the future.