



On the ‘Philosophical Foundations’ of Italian Workerism: A Conceptual Approach

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Abstract

This article explores some of the crucial conceptual dimensions of Italian workerist Marxism [*operaismo*], identifying both its underlying impetus and its limits in particular interpretations of Marxian concepts. Particular emphasis is placed on the manner in which the focus of workerists such as Mario Tronti and Antonio Negri on living labour, antagonism and class-composition can be understood in terms of a philosophy of subjectivity founded on a Marxian conception of difference.

Keywords

antagonism, class-composition, difference, Negri, workerism, subjectivity, tendency, Tronti

1. Mapping workerism

This critical note may seem too ambitious. However, I would hope that the very simple aim which characterises my approach does not appear misconceived. In short, with the term ‘foundations’, I am not referring to the multiplicity of historiographical, historical, and philosophical aspects that defined the development of Italian workerism [*operaismo*] in all its complexity. More simply, I would like to discuss what is well-known, and, perhaps more importantly, shared or ‘common’, in workerist thought, in the period from the mid-sixties to 1979: from Mario Tronti’s *Operai e capitale*¹ to Antonio Negri’s *Marx oltre Marx*.² Such a ‘categorical’ choice is obviously based on an historiographical assumption that would require adequate elucidation, because it concerns nothing less than the differences that qualify, in political terms, the ‘distance’ which existed between the beginning of the sixties, 1968, and 1977

1. Tronti 1966 (reprinted in Tronti 1971).

2. Negri 1979a; English translation Negri 1991a.

in Italy. In fact, my starting point assumes as given the ‘long’, Italian anomaly,³ which has been discussed so many times, and, for this reason, I do not intend to insist on it again. However, putting aside the Trontian interpretation of 1968 as a mere conflict about modernisation – as such, not comparable with the workers’ struggles of the beginning of the sixties⁴ – at least two aspects should be recalled here. Firstly, in Italy, 1968 had a long gestation and a long duration, characterised by a socially-hegemonic workers’ struggle. The latter informed and legitimised the theoretical innovation of workerism. Secondly, if it is true that the Italian ’77–movement, in political terms, represented the end of the ‘long’ seventies, it is also true that it inaugurated a new political phase, in which the workerist innovation revealed itself as no longer adequate,⁵ notwithstanding the fact that its instruments were able to decode the changes taking place.⁶

On the other hand, my choice of approach, at least in the first instance, rests upon the simple conviction according to which it would be incorrect to move from an excessively broad *a posteriori* historicisation, thanks to which it would then be possible to trace back to workerism everything that surrounded it. Denigrators and apologists alike have shared this error. For both, workerism

3. Zanini and Fadini (eds.) 2001, pp. 15–9.

4. Tronti 2008a, pp. 30–5.

5. To understand the social and political complexity of the events that occurred in 1977, it is necessary to consider, first of all, the chronology: the ‘long’ seventies produced, in the Italian scenario, a mix of different and sometimes contradictory tendencies which, starting from the radicalism of 1968, gave shape to a diffuse political instability. In macro-political terms, we might say that, because the demands for innovation were utterly ignored by the ruling political class, they produced a social ‘explosion’ whose clearest and most destructive (but by no means most radical) manifestation was terrorism. A new set of countercultural movements, feminism, the intersection between old, political-organisational forms and a fresh approach to the media, definitive detachment with respect to the tradition of the workers’ movement and its parties, the abandonment of their ‘values’, the apologia for the ‘absence of memory’ and the claim for the concreteness of the ‘immediate’ – all this should be considered in order to understand why the movement of ’77 constituted an unrepresentable multiverse, whose new radicalism brought the ‘long’ seventies to an end. However, in the long run, it was unable to face the situation generated by an economic context which was realising its ‘third industrial revolution’, by simultaneously utilising information-technologies, work from home, the destruction of welfare, political repression, and so on. Thus, what, in the first instance, was really a social ‘explosion’ – which could be understood in terms of the experience matured during the seventies – increasingly became an overall ‘implosion’, dominated by fear, cynicism, opportunism. That is, by the ‘ambivalence of disenchantment’ (Virno 1996). With respect to this ambivalence, the workerist approach, as well as every other political instrument belonging to the noblest tradition of ‘die “andere” Arbeiterbewegung’ (the other worker’s movement, as Karl Heinz Roth called it), turned out to no longer be adequate.

6. From markedly different vantage-points, see Negri 1976; Negri 1978; Bologna (ed.) 1978. For a more general overview, see Wright 2002.

is characterised by a (bad) philosophy of history; it has the features of a ‘school’ rather than those pertaining to a current of thought crossed by different intersections. Consequently, its main, lasting characteristic would not consist in the capacity to forge concepts; it would seem instead to lie in a sort of hypostatisation of the mechanisms of reproduction of subjectivity. Certainly, workerism sometimes has been exactly this – but only sometimes.

I do not believe that workerism ended even before the publication of the journal *Contropiano*; but, from that point onwards, the workerists of the first generation made reference to Marx’s thought in very different ways.⁷ While some of them affirmed that Marx’s actuality consisted in the possibility of transforming his critique of political economy into a direct instrument for workers’ struggle (this was the basis on which Potere Operaio⁸ exerted its fundamental political, and theoretical rôle), others addressed their attention directly to the great, European culture of *Krisis*, intended as the real turning-point in Western thought,⁹ of which the tradition of the workers’ movement was assumed to be a fundamental pillar. It was not by chance that the culture

7. After the publication of the first volume of *Quaderni Rossi*, as a result of different judgements concerning the political significance of 1962’s big strike at Fiat in Turin, a rift in the editorial collective of the journal took shape. As a consequence, *Classe operaia* was founded in 1964 by those who – within and around the collective of *Quaderni Rossi* – had argued that the 1962 strike had opened an entirely new revolutionary path in the Italian political scenario. Not by chance, *Classe operaia* was not merely a theoretical journal, but a tool for political intervention. The new periodical lasted until 1967, when a new one was published: *Contropiano*, launched in January 1968. However, soon after the publication of the first volume, a new rift occurred among the founding editors, because of their very different political judgements about the events of ’68. From the very beginning, Mario Tronti was not directly involved in the *Contropiano* editorial board, thus, after Toni Negri’s withdrawal, the journal was directed solely by Alberto Asor Rosa and Massimo Cacciari (see Mangano 1989). According to Tronti (Tronti 2008b, p. 5; Tronti 2008a, p. 609), all of this served to confirm that, in actual fact, the ‘completion’ of the workerist experience had already occurred with the end of *Classe operaia*.

8. Potere Operaio was the political movement which, starting from 1969, organised – autonomously from and against the traditional parties of the Left – the workerist area on the basis of the so-called ‘linea di massa’ (mass-line). Of course, the new movement was only partially constituted by the workerist activists of the sixties. In the meantime, a newer and younger generation came to the fore. After the dissolution of the movement (at the Meeting of Rosolina in 1973), a part of Potere Operaio remained active – in particular in the Veneto region – and, thanks to the valorisation of the political experience developed by the Collettivi politici in the mid-seventies (see below, footnote 13), it constituted one of the pillars upon which *Autonomia operaia organizzata* rested.

9. Starting from 1964, thanks to the research carried out for the journal *Angelus novus*, Massimo Cacciari advanced a significant rethinking of the themes characterising ‘negativ Denken [negative thought]’ from Nietzsche onwards. His investigations gave shape to a concept of the ‘crisis of modern rationality’, subsequently elaborated in Cacciari 1976. See Cacciari 2008, pp. 831–5.

of *Krisis* became one of the distinctive traits of Italian philosophical research during the eighties, with mixed results.

As is well-known, workerism's pre-eminence arose thanks to a variety of reasons – many of which, perhaps too many, were extra-theoretical¹⁰ – which permitted a (not always) legitimate, but very often incorrect historicisation and homogenisation, in spite of the fact that workerism, in terms of political philosophy, was far from being an homogeneous product.¹¹ For the same reasons, a clearer, historiographical delimitation is necessary. I am not interested in identifying a supposedly 'pure' tradition. I am perfectly aware that we are dealing with an ensemble of common elements. But if we want to talk about a well-defined tradition of thought considered as a part – albeit a very anomalous one – of the Western Marxism of the sixties, we have to keep in mind, not only its specificity, but also the fact that we are talking about a delimited and closed tradition. A similar judgement is not intended to question the theoretical significance of workerist thought. On the contrary, I should like to underscore, for example, the relevance of its 'method'; but its undoubted fecundity is not sufficient justification for saying that, apart from its internal ruptures and the great transformation generated starting from the end of the sixties, there is only one workerist tradition. The very development of so-called postworkerism – which is, in reality, the expression of various lines of thought – stands to confirm what I am saying.

Given these premises, this critical note will simply be devoted to the discussion of some key-concepts that can be traced back to a fundamental 'rational abstraction': that is, difference. This latter, widely present in Marx's work,¹² characterised the complex development of Italian political radicalism. Actually, the 'emphatic use' of expressions such as *autonomia operaia* [workers' autonomy] and *soggettività operaia* [workers' subjectivity] was diffused well before the birth of *collettivi politici* [political collectives].¹³ It is not by chance

10. I am referring to the political persecution which followed the so-called 'Inchiesta 7 Aprile', the massive legal persecution of militants in the so-called area of autonomy (including many ex-members of Potere Operaio), named after the date in 1979 of the police raids that took place simultaneously in Padua, Milan, Rome, Rovigo and Turin, and led to the arrests, among many others, of Negri, Alisa Del Re, Oreste Scalzone, Luciano Ferrari Bravo, and Nanni Balestrini.

11. See the interviews collected by Borio, Pozzi and Roggero (eds.) 2002.

12. See Zanini 2008, Chapter 2.

13. As previously stated, after the dissolution of Potere Operaio, from 1974 to 1975, the greater part of the Veneto-activists started a debate which led to the consolidation of a new political organisation, named Collettivi Politici del Veneto per il Potere Operaio. Their political-organisational structure rested upon a regional territorial rooting, in which a paradigmatic rôle was attributed to the *precariato* [non-guaranteed workers]: that is, the labour-power employed in the new production-cycle of the so-called *fabbrica diffusa* ['diffused factory']. On the other hand,

that those expressions were used by the same *sindacato dei consigli* [councils' union]¹⁴ during the first half of the seventies – and I am referring to the unions to which workerism addressed its radical critique.

From a theoretical point of view, workerism represented, first of all, a new reinterpretation of Marx, formulated without regard to the Western-Marxist tradition, and based on an innovative way of interpreting the dynamics of class-conflict in Italy after the hard transition that followed the end of the Second World-War. In that context, characterised by a severe crisis, a new political subjectivity, even less satisfied with the old rhetoric of the Italian Communist Party, was taking shape.¹⁵ The central nervous systems of these new social processes was constituted by the big industrial cities, upon which converged the transversal migratory influxes coming from the south and the north-east of the country.¹⁶

For different reasons, by that point, the political rôle of the worker-cadres who had managed the passage toward the postwar reconstruction-period was exhausted. Thus, the centre of the political scene was progressively occupied by a new class-composition, no longer linked to the practical abilities previously acquired. Thereupon, a young, migrant, unskilled, labour-power, with its generic capacity to transform its specific use-value into surplus-value, became the main actor of the new mass-production processes, in which the socialisation of labour-power was an indispensable condition.¹⁷

It was within this scenario that Raniero Panzieri and the editorial group of the journal *Quaderni Rossi* focused their attention,¹⁸ by showing how the socialisation of *this* labour-power was directly linked to its experience in the big manufacturing firms, in which labour-power perceived itself as *working class*. It is true that, with regard to this affirmed identity, a rift in the group soon emerged, as a consequence of a different way of understanding the sociological relevance of the same 'workers' inquiry'.¹⁹ Nevertheless, what was

a similar political approach also characterised areas outside Veneto. Although the political nuances were sometimes relevant, it should suffice to recall the research carried out, in the Milan metropolitan area, by the journal *Quaderni del territorio*.

14. In Italy, at the end of the sixties, the expression *sindacato dei consigli* [councils' union] referred to the new workers' struggle organisation, whose main political structure was represented by *consigli di fabbrica* [factory-councils], in particular of the big factories. Factory-councils made possible new forms of political conflict, without determining an irreversible rupture in the tradition of the unions. According to workerist thought, their political limits stemmed precisely from their incapacity (autonomously) to organise workers' autonomy.

15. Lanzardo 1979.

16. Alasia and Montaldi 1975.

17. Alquati 1975.

18. See Various Authors 1975.

19. See Rieser 1965; Asor Rosa 1965 (reprinted in Asor Rosa 1973).

explicitly stated both by Panzieri and Tronti was the conviction that they were facing a new process of capitalist development (a ‘planned’ process),²⁰ one of whose inescapable elements was a fresh round of workers’ socialisation.

From this conviction, a judgement was derived, according to which workers’ struggle was first of all characterised by its irreversible autonomy. It was obviously given *within* capitalist development, but the latter was described as if it were subordinated to the dynamics triggered by the working-class struggle. In Tronti’s words:

And now we have to turn the problem on its head, reverse the polarity, and start again from the beginning; and the beginning is the class-struggle of the working class. At the level of socially developed capital, capitalist development becomes subordinated to working-class struggles; it follows behind them, and they set the pace to which the political mechanisms of capital’s own reproduction must be tuned.²¹

Within this reverse-temporal sequence, which was defined on the basis of the theoretical experience of *Quaderni Rossi*, we can simultaneously observe all the merits and defects of workerism interpreted as a Marxist current of thought placed outside Marxism itself. We can also locate within this ambit the ‘posthumous’ quarrel on the ‘autonomy of the political [*l’autonomia del politico*]’ – as we shall see later. In short, regarding this complex scenario, I am only interested in focussing on the traits which, putting aside the reasons that caused the political rupture within the *Quaderni Rossi* group, the birth of *Classe operaia*, etc., paved the way towards a new historical and political *koiné*.

2. Future-past

The fundamental idea from which we have to start is that of *separation*,²² *difference*; that is, we have to begin by considering the idea according to which the working class – as it is the only holder of living labour, ‘the only living, active, and productive element of the society’²³ – expresses, from an historical point of view, an *ab-solute* (from the Latin, ‘to make separate’) interest, which cannot be mediated.

20. Panzieri 1973 (reprinted in Lanzardo (ed.) 1973); Tronti 1963 (reprinted in Tronti 1966).

21. Tronti 1971, p. 89.

22. Mezzadra 2000.

23. Tronti 1971, p. 19.

Introducing *Operai e capitale*, Tronti wrote:

The possibility and the capacity for synthesis is still in the hands of the workers. The reasons are easy to grasp. *Synthesis* today can only be *unilateral*; it can only be a self-aware class-science, the science of *a* class. On the basis of capital, the whole can only be understood by the part. Knowledge is tied to struggle.... The fact is that being on the side of the whole – man, society, the state – can only lead to a partial analysis; it can only allow you to understand detached parts, losing overall scientific control.²⁴

Such a *unilateral synthesis* is understandable on the basis of a particular process, whose nature rests upon the specific ability to transform *in actu* what is only *in potentia*. If we analyse, in Marxian terms, the capital/labour-power exchange, what emerges is that the worker's use-value is not materialised in a product, it 'does not exist apart from him at all, thus exists not really, but only in potentiality, as his capacity [*Fähigkeit*]'.²⁵ What is common to all commodities is objectified labour, and their common denominator is represented by their being exchange-values. In this sense, the only thing distinct [*der einzige Unterschied*] from objectified labour 'is *non-objectified* labour, labour which is still objectifying itself, *labour* as subjectivity', 'as the *living subject*, in which it exists as capacity, as possibility; hence as worker'.²⁶ However, the fact that non-objectified labour is one of the components of exchange generates a specificity that exchange cannot explain. Exchange cannot explain the anomaly according to which, as a result of the specific transaction occurring between capital and labour-power, the use-value of the latter, its potential capacity, creates a difference that cannot be recognised before its manifestation as multiplication, produced by labour-as-subjectivity [*Arbeit als Subjektivität*]. Therefore, between an exchange in general and the specific capital/labour-power exchange, there is an *Unterschied*, a difference, whose interpretation requires the *unilateral synthesis* mentioned above.

In the exchange between capital and labour, the first act is an exchange, falls entirely within ordinary circulation; the second is a process qualitatively different from exchange, and only by misuse could it have been called any sort of exchange at all. *It stands directly opposite exchange; essentially different category.*²⁷

24. Tronti 1971, p. 14.

25. Marx 1993, p. 267.

26. Marx 1993, p. 272.

27. Marx 1993, p. 275.

What renders the capital/labour-power exchange a qualitatively different category, a non-exchange, a merely apparent exchange, is a sort of indispensable oxymoron. It is assumed that the proprietor of the labour-power is ‘the free proprietor [*freier Eigentümer*] of his own labour-capacity’, that he will always sell ‘for a limited period only’. Hence, it is assumed that the proprietor of the labour-power and the proprietor of the money are ‘equal in the eyes of the law’. At the same time, however, one should admit that the former is ‘compelled to offer for sale as a commodity that very labour-power which exists only in his living body’.²⁸ The separation [*Trennung*] of property from labour appears as the necessary law of the exchange between capital and labour-power. Labour ‘is not-raw-material, not-instrument-of-labour, not-raw-product’; rather, it is ‘the not-objective itself in objective form’, that is, ‘only an objectivity coinciding with his immediate bodily existence [*unmittelbaren Leiblichkeit*]’:

Labour not as an object [*Gegenstand*], but as activity [*Tätigkeit*]; not as itself *value*, but as a *living source* of value. [Namely, it is] general wealth (in contrast to capital in which it exists objectively, as reality) as the *general possibility* of the same, which proves itself as such in action. Thus, it is not at all contradictory, or, rather, the in-every-way mutually contradictory statements that labour is *absolute poverty as object*, on one side, and is, on the other side, the *general possibility* of wealth as subject and as activity [*als Subjekt und als Tätigkeit*].²⁹

What is particularly interesting to underline here is the fact that, as it is the expression of a living body [*lebendige Leiblichkeit*], labour-power exists as commodity. That is, not in spite of, but because it is labour-as-subjectivity. Thus, a qualitatively different process implies the natural capacity inherent to living labour, which transforms *in actu* what is only *in potentia*. Such an ability expresses a difference, upon which a historically determined multiplication [*Vervielfältigen*] is founded; it expresses a valorisation-process that stems from labour-as-subjectivity.

Nevertheless, following some careful interpretations,³⁰ it is important to note here a textual ambiguity in the *Grundrisse* (which was later removed from *Das Kapital*), also because, starting from *Operai e capitale* (1966), the theoretical structure of workerism rested, in a significant sense, exactly upon this supposed ambiguity: namely, the identification between living body and labour-as-subjectivity. In short, workerism would have carried out a doubly equivocal interpretation of Marx: firstly, by assuming that ambiguity; secondly, by ignoring its correct solution. And all this would have led to emphasising

28. Marx 1990, pp. 271–2.

29. Marx 1993, p. 296.

30. See Bellofiore 2008, p. 28.

the identification or, better still, the unacceptable ‘flattening’ intrinsic to the same ambiguity.

Provided that the existence of such an ambiguity could be admitted, I limit myself here to observing that workerists were quite conscious of this supposed ‘flattening’,³¹ but they implicitly laid claim to it by famously attributing to the *Grundrisse* immense relevance, if not even a primacy with respect to *Das Kapital*. Surely an adequate re-examination of this question would require the awareness that, in saying this, we are simplifying theoretical paths which, over the years, were re-formulated and re-thought in very different ways.³² Nonetheless, what I would stress is that in the workerist interpretation, the ‘natural capacity’ inherent to ‘living labour’ is *not only* an aspect that characterises the labour-process as such. Living labour, its being a living body, implies labour-as-subjectivity, *not only* because the difference expressed by living labour transforms *in actu* what is only *in potentia*,³³ but also because it is supposed immediately to be able to express its own collective, political essence within the capitalist valorisation-process. This is why workerism was charged with being a ‘philosophy of history’,³⁴ whereas it was more precisely a political philosophy of modernity, in which capitalist development becomes subordinated to the working-class struggle.³⁵ In this, workerism manifested its innovative character – including its limits, of course.

It is exactly from here that stems Tronti’s aforementioned reverse-temporal sequence, according to which it is labour-as-subjectivity that generates capitalist development. The subjectivity of living labour appears to be adequately explicable once capitalist development has reached its apex. As Tronti wrote:

The point at which the degree of political development of the working class, overtook, for a set of historical reasons, the economic level of capitalist development, remains the most favourable site for the swift opening of a revolutionary process. On condition that we are dealing with working-class and capitalist development in the scientific sense of two social classes, in the epoch of an already-attained maturity.³⁶

This affirmation makes clear why workerist theorists argued for the paradigmatic value of US-workers’ struggles (it should be sufficient to recall their

31. This is clearly underlined by Tronti 2008a.

32. See Negri 2008; Tronti 2008a.

33. See Virno 1999.

34. Tronti 2008a, pp. 601–2.

35. Tronti 1971, p. 89.

36. Tronti 1971, p. 23.

numerous writings on the topic), although Tronti's own 'theory of the middle-point' relativised that affirmation, when he asserted the possibility of catching, starting from a point itself in movement, the point situated further ahead – intending this latter not as an extrinsic *telos*, but, rather, as the intrinsic tendency of things to come.³⁷

It is important to note here the way in which the concept of difference shows itself as explicitly linked to the concept of tendency. Both of them give rise to a crucial relationship, on which, for example, Negri insisted repeatedly between 1971 and 1979. 'Antagonism of the tendency', 'method of antagonist-tendency': these are the key-words which describe a historical hermeneutics, devoted to identifying in the 'determined abstraction' what is definable as 'practically true'³⁸ – that is, what tendentially comes true. In a different way, we could say that capitalist development always prefigures its own crisis, which is, in turn, constantly produced by workers' struggle. The medium between development and crisis is represented by the money-form: it constitutes the precondition that makes it possible to acquire the specific use-value of labour-power. M–C means, first of all, 'money as wage', because it implies, from the very beginning, 'the laws of appropriation or of private property', and thus the social and historically determined exclusion reaffirmed by the 'semblance of exchange' between capital and labour-power.³⁹ As a consequence, according to the workerist point of view, the commodity-form is primarily interpreted as the representation of the relationship between objective and subjective conditions of production, separate from the heuristic (but very problematic) account of the nexus between 'theory of value' and 'commodity-money'. In fact, if it is true that, on the one hand, the commodity-analysis makes it possible to emphasise the particular use-value of living labour,⁴⁰ on the other hand, the same analysis seems to be no more than a tacit assumption within the M–C–M' process, whose result (namely, the difference between M and M') constitutes the true starting point. This is clear in Negri's reasoning:

the contradiction that money registers is the one between labour-value as the general equivalent of commodity-exchange and the conditions of social production dominated by capital – on the one hand, money as the determination and particular measure of the value of labour-power sold on the free market; on the other, opposed to it, the social character of the production that capital has appropriated and which it has transformed into its own power over social labour,

37. Ibid.

38. Negri 1974b; Negri 1979a.

39. On this theme, the comparison with the so-called 'theory of monetary circuit', developed in Augusto Graziani's seminal works, is very interesting. See Graziani 2003.

40. Tronti 1971, pp. 162ff.

the totality of social movement become autonomous, power autonomised and standing above individuals. . . . The ‘chapter on money’ tracks this tendency until it shows that money – after having mediated its private figure in the general process of production – as the index of an antagonism which, having emerged dialectically from exchange, posited as a function of exchange and as its general mediation, is now intensified into an irresolvable, violently critical relation between the socialisation of production and the arbitrariness of its representation in terms of measure, equivalence, delegation [*rappresentanza*].⁴¹

Here, we can note the decisive importance of the *Grundrisse* in workerist thought.⁴² Nothing seemed to explain better than the money-form the very essence of the capitalist mode of production and, therefore, the development/crisis nexus within the world-market. As Sergio Bologna noted, the pace of the expansion of the monetary system was faster than that of the diffusion of the industrial system, and the monetary system appeared in Marx’s eyes as the embodiment of the world-market in its concrete materiality.⁴³ To come quickly to the point, in the crisis/monetary-form nexus, the law of value could be interpreted ‘from the viewpoint of a stage of capitalist development now in its maturity’.⁴⁴ (Incidentally, it is worth noting that the most accurate analyses concerning the monetary storm of the seventies had been produced precisely by Sergio Bologna and the journal *Primo Maggio*, in particular with regard to the themes concerning the evolution and composition of public expenditure in Italy). As Negri wrote:

The exceptional importance of this attack of the *Grundrisse* on money, considered as an eminent form of the expression of the law of value, is not nevertheless bound only to the immediate character of the critique. There is another point to be considered right away; it is that the social relation underlying this making extreme of the relation of value is not envisaged from the point of view of synthesis, but from the point of view of antagonism. . . . Under the form of money, the law of value is presented (1) in crisis, (2) in an antagonistic manner, and (3) with a social dimension.⁴⁵

Thus, the nexus between crisis and money-form is not only fundamental, but also foundational, because it shows, starting from M–C, the crisis of the law of value intended as ‘measure’. As Tronti underlines, it is the existence of the class-relationship which makes possible the transformation of money into

41. Negri 1974b, pp. 8, 11–2; and see Negri 1979a.

42. See Negri 1979a.

43. Bologna 1974 (English translation in Bologna 1993, p. 64, n. 14).

44. Bologna 1974, p. 31, n. 13.

45. Negri 1979a, pp. 35–6; English translation in Negri 1991a, pp. 24–5.

capital; and this transformation entails the critical relationship between development and crisis.

Nevertheless, once the issue is posed in these terms, it raises a crucial question. If it is in fact true that workerism constantly underlined the centrality of the ‘workers’ inquiry’⁴⁶ – namely, the research on the organisation of the labour-process within the big manufacturing firms, from which the definition of technical class-composition was derived – how can we explain the emphasis put on the valorisation-process and political class-composition, very often stressed apart from the concreteness of the labour-process? In workerist jargon, technical class-composition was the result of the relationships between labour-power, machinery, production-times, as grasped from the workers’ point of view, in an analysis that viewed the factory-system in terms of its contradictions. Was it not that technical class-composition which had made possible a specific, political class-composition – that is, the inner relations of labour-power and the ways in which they autonomously organised themselves against the limits and constraints of capitalist production – as a result of the workers’ struggles that had matured within the Fordist firm?

Surely, we can explain the ever-more explicit emphasis put on the valorisation-process and political class-composition by taking into account workerism’s insistence on the so-called ‘high points’ of capitalist development, which would be characterised by the presence of a labour-power directly conceived as working class (it was from here, not by chance, that derived the endless dispute about political and organisational forms, and, as a result, the repeated emergence of different evaluations of the Leninist tradition).

Although this insistence may seem simplistic – in particular, when it is founded on the primacy of Marx’s unpublished works as against his published ones – it is perfectly consistent with the rôle played by the money-form in workerist theory, in particular in what concerns the monetary character of the non-equivalent exchange between capital and labour-power. In short, all this requires a specific way of understanding the immediate, political significance of the struggle against wage. Tronti wrote:

Therefore for Marx it is beyond doubt that the class-relation already exists in-itself [*an sich*] in the act of circulation. It is precisely this which reveals, which brings out, the capitalist relation during the production-process. The class-relation [*Klassenverhältnis*] precedes, that is to say provokes and produces, the capitalist

46. As Sergio Bologna wrote: ‘Romano Alquati is the main figure behind a Marxian approach to workers’ enquiry. He laid down the methodology of *conricerca* [joint research] with Romolo Gobbi and Gianfranco Faina.’ (Bologna 2003, p. 135.)

relation [*Kapitalverhältnis*]. Or rather: it is the existence of the class-relation that makes the transformation of money into capital possible.⁴⁷

From an historical point of view, the class-relation is the result of so-called primitive accumulation. As Marx points out, the ‘capital-relation presupposes a complete separation between the workers and the ownership of the conditions for the realization of their labour. As soon as capitalist production stands on its own feet, it not only maintains this separation, but reproduces it on a constantly extending scale’.⁴⁸ According to Tronti, this is a crucial point:

Because usually Marx is made to say exactly the opposite, and it is in current ‘Marxist’ usage to say the opposite: that is, that only *from* the capitalist relation of production there emerges the contrast, the antagonism of classes... so it is capital that makes classes, or rather, that transforms the old classes into contrasting agglomerates that are at once new and always the same... Is it therefore as sellers of labour-power that waged workers constitute themselves for the first time into a *class*? We believe it is possible to answer ‘yes’.⁴⁹

In sum, ‘*a social mass forced to sell its labour-power* is also the general form of the working class’.⁵⁰ All this had already been explained in the first book of *Capital*, starting from the twofold character of labour-power⁵¹ given that ‘the first antagonistic figure taken by the worker is that of seller of labour-power; but it also true that in this figure that of producer of surplus-value is already presupposed’.⁵² Hence, within the capitalist process of production – as Marx points out – the ‘process between things’ manifests itself for what it is: a relation of exploitation of living labour on the part of dead labour – the capitalist form of commodity-production.⁵³ The labour-process is no longer distinguishable from the valorisation-process, as the labour socially necessary to pay the wage is fused, from the beginning, to an additional quantum. The capacity of labour-power makes possible what in the interaction between objective and subjective conditions is only *in potentia*. The potential capacity of labour-power generates a valorisation-process that is historically determined, as a result of the subjectivity of living labour. This is a ‘multiplication’ constituted by ‘one single, indivisible labour process. Work is not done twice, once to produce a useful product, a use value, to *convert* the means of

47. Tronti 1971, p. 149.

48. Marx 1990, p. 874.

49. Tronti 1971, p. 149.

50. *Ibid.*

51. Tronti 1971, p. 123.

52. Tronti 1971, p. 148.

53. Cf. Tronti 1971, pp. 162–8.

production into products, and the second time to produce *value* and *surplus-value*, to *valorise value*.⁵⁴ Here, two different results are simultaneously reached, through a singular labour. Obviously, the ‘twofold nature of the result [*Doppelseitigkeit*]’ can only be explained by the twofold character [*Doppelcharakter*] of labour:⁵⁵

There is, however, the following specific distinction [*spezifischer Unterschied*] to be pointed out here: Real labour is what the worker really gives to the capitalist as equivalent for the part of the capital that has been converted into wages, for the purchasing price of labour. It is the expenditure of his life force [*Lebenskraft*], the realisation of *his* productive capacities, his movement, not the capitalist’s. Viewed as a personal function [*persönliche Funktion*], in its reality, labour is the function of the worker and not of the capitalist. Viewed from the point of view of exchange, the worker is what the capitalist receives from him in the labour process, not what the capitalist represents towards him in the same process. This therefore stands in contrast to the way the objective conditions of labour, as capital, and to that extent as the existence of the capitalist, confront the subjective condition of labour, labour itself, or rather the *worker* who works, within the labour process itself.⁵⁶

The expenditure of vital energy, its movement, its being a personal function, are so because the living labour ‘is a *fluid magnitude*, in the process of becoming – and therefore contained within different limits – instead of *having become*’.⁵⁷ The juxtaposition between objective and subjective conditions subsequent to the exchange generates the subsumption of a fluid-magnitude, which is the manifestation of the vital function [*Lebensäußerung*] of labour-power. What in the labour-process is a means to a determined aim, in the valorisation-process becomes a means that subsumes the vital manifestation of labour-power:

It is not a matter of living labour being realised in objective labour as its objective organ, but of objective labour being preserved and increased by the absorption of living labour, thereby becoming *self-valorising value*, capital, and functioning as such. The means of production now appear only as *absorbers* of the largest possible quantity of living labour. Living labour now appears only as a means for the valorisation and therefore capitalisation of existing values.⁵⁸

54. Marx 1975, p. 400.

55. Marx 1990, p. 307.

56. Marx 1975, p. 391.

57. Marx 1975, p. 393.

58. Marx 1975, p. 397.

The objective conditions are not mere passive *instrumenta*, but, rather, the means that command living labour. They make possible its involvement in the process of its objectivation; but to the extent that past labour valorises itself, it becomes a process in itself.

To the extent that past labour sets living labour to work, it becomes a process in itself, *it valorises itself*; it becomes a *fluens* that creates a fluxion. This absorption of additional living labour is past labour's *process of self-valorisation*, its real *conversion into capital*, into self-valorising value, its conversion from a *constant magnitude of value* into a variable magnitude of value, *value in process*.⁵⁹

In this process, the manifestation of the vital energy of living labour and its movement manifest themselves as capital. 'Only through the conversion of labour into capital during the production process is the pre-positing quantity of value, which was only *δυναμει* capital, realised as *actual capital*'.⁶⁰ The transformation of money into capital (M–C–M') is therefore possible as the result of a specific transformative action that the use-value of living labour – an ensemble of physical and intellectual attitudes – exerts upon the dead labour that, in turn, from thing becomes process, a *fluxio* within the sphere of the valorisation-process, since it is the result of the manifestation of the vital function of living labour.

Therefore, we can trace back to the workerist interpretation of this theoretical passage in Marx the different questions concerning the relationship between technical and political class-composition. Certainly, this relationship has very often been simplified, if not hypostatised. In particular, it generated the endless discussion that, inside and outside the workerist line of thought, followed Negri's definition of 'social worker',⁶¹ at the moment in which, after 1973, massive layoffs of labour caused a global disarticulation of the previous technical class-composition and a consequent territorial redistribution of valorisation-processes. Surely, Negri's definition disregarded many of the causes and effects which followed a well-defined, historical defeat of the Western working class. However, his definition interpreted, although in a very forced way, an incipient and genuine tendency, which, in subsequent years, would be widely discussed – even if in a very different way and, it goes it without saying, apart from any 'subversive' ends.

At any rate, if we attribute to the same old *cattivo maestro* [bad teacher] every merit and blame, we will never understand the question. Regarding this,

59. Marx 1975, p. 402.

60. Marx 1975, p. 423.

61. Negri 1979b.

it suffices to recall the debate that followed the Italian translation of Harry Braverman's *Labour and Monopoly Capital*.⁶² For much of the Italian Left, that book seemed to be a very decisive work, which deserved the greatest approval; in workerist eyes, *vice versa*, it appeared as a clearly dated book – the very idea of monopolistic capital seemed inadequate – unable to understand the rôle of workers' subjectivity.⁶³ Briefly, the limits of Braverman's book were traced back to the underlying interpretation of the 'degradation of labour' intrinsic to the capitalist labour-process; a perspective from which it became impossible to explain, within the valorisation-process, the 'feedforward-function' played by the workers' struggle.

Put differently, when we admit the identity between living labour and the working class, notwithstanding some relevant interpretative differences, the primacy of the valorisation-process follows. The rôle played by the labour-process is not disregarded. More simply put, it is affirmed that the functioning of the capitalist production-process as a whole requires, not so much the degradation of labour (implied by the labour-process), as the socialisation of labour (implied by the valorisation-process). From the same reasoning is also derived the political character of the antagonistic relationship between relative surplus-value and the relative wage; a relationship which, following in the footsteps of Roman Rosdolsky's interpretation,⁶⁴ played a fundamental rôle in workerist thought.⁶⁵

Thus, fundamental is the conceptual deepening that such a relationship requires and that only the theory of surplus-value as 'a measure of difference' allows one to spell out. The evaluation of this 'measure' is possible only on the grounds of expanded reproduction, which involves what Marx defines as the derealisation-process of labour [*der Entwirklichungsprozeß der Arbeit*]. It is here where living labour 'posits itself objectively, as its own not-being [*als ihr eignes Nichtsein*] or as the being of its not-being [*oder als das Sein ihres Nichtseins*] – of capital'.⁶⁶ In short, there is a strict interconnection between difference and excess; and this connection is established by a separation, a division inherent to a specific social relation of production. This explains why Marx insisted upon the fact that 'the laws of appropriation or of private property, laws based on the production and circulation of commodities, become changed into their direct opposite'. In effect, the semblance of exchange between capital and labour-power – its being mere form [*bloße*

62. Braverman 1974.

63. Gambino 1979.

64. Rosdolsky 1968.

65. Negri 1974a; Negri 1979a.

66. Marx 1993, p. 454.

Form], non-exchange [*Nicht-Austausch*] – is not only confirmed, but it confirms, in turn, that the fundamental precondition of the social relation of production can only be represented by the separation between property and labour.⁶⁷ When this social relation is traced back to the relationship between relative surplus-value and the relative wage, the latter shows its antagonistic nature.

For the same reason, according to workerist theory, the law of value expresses, not a measure, but a dismeasure. Since its essence is political, it establishes a pure and simple command. This is clearly stated by Tronti:

‘Explicating *how* the law of value imposes itself’: according to Marx’s indications, this remains the task of working-class science [*scienza operaia*]. On one condition: that this explication not be ensnared in the phoney contradictions of economic science. *How* the law imposes itself is a problem of the political organisation of the class-relation.⁶⁸

Similarly, Negri wrote:

But, having reached certain scales of accumulation, this process [the relative wage] is no longer measurable, its parameters are no longer based on the law of value but on the times and forms of its extinction. . . . [C]apital is forced to nullify proportion, that is to determine it only through its command. All the other ‘objective’ determinations of the setting of the wage fall away . . . only command remains.⁶⁹

The wage-struggle, sustained by the mass-worker’s refusal of work, becomes political struggle.

Let’s be clear, we’re not speaking here of the general tendencies that the understanding of necessary labour impose upon capitalist development in the direction of the fall of surplus-value. We’re speaking of a surplus of refusal to directly valorise capital which today can be identified in a general manner . . . from within class-behaviour.⁷⁰

The reference to Marx’s ‘Fragment on Machines’ is fundamental here and, at the same time, very problematic.⁷¹ Nevertheless, at least for the first generation

67. Marx 1990, p. 729.

68. Tronti 1971, p. 225.

69. Negri 1974a, pp. 134–5.

70. Negri 1974a, p. 123. What in this text was only sketched out – self-valorisation – would later become crucial for Negri. See Negri 1978.

71. See Zanini 2008, pp. 191–200.

of workerists, the Marxian ‘Fragment’ was, first of all, if not merely, a fragment on machinery interpreted as fixed capital; and its importance derived from the problems raised by the relationship between development (of fixed capital) and crisis (of the law of value). The ‘general intellect’ itself was essentially understood as the outcome of a manifest ‘disproportion’ in the organic composition of capital, a catastrophe, even as communism in the making,⁷² but always following the hermeneutic path disclosed by Panzieri (albeit neglecting his own perplexity and circumspection).⁷³ Hence, the basic ‘motto’ (and, according to the most severe critics, the ‘epitaph’) of the first generation of workerists was the following statement from the *Grundrisse*:

The *theft of alien labour time, on which the present wealth is based*, appears a miserable foundation in face of this new one, created by large-scale industry itself. As soon as labour in the direct form has ceased to be the great well-spring of wealth, labour time ceases and must cease to be its measure, and hence exchange value [must cease to be the measure] of use value.⁷⁴

Therefore, taking in due account the limits of this critical note, we may summarise the historical-analytical path of workerism in two main points.

i) As it is the only holder of living labour, the working class manifests an ‘absolute’ or separate interest, a unilateral synthesis, the only one which is, historically, thinkable. This foundational statement legitimises the workerist insistence on the so-called ‘high points’ of capitalist development, characterised by the presence of a labour-power that is *already* working class, since class-relations exist *already* in the sphere of circulation, *an sich*, in themselves, given that, in Tronti’s words, which we have already cited, ‘*a social mass forced to sell its labour-power* is also the general form of the working class’. As a result, nothing better than the evolution of the money-form (M–M’) can unravel the essence of capitalist class-relations, and, consequently, the nexus between development and crisis.

ii) If it is true that labour-power exists as a specific commodity since it is a living body, this happens, not in spite of, but because it is labour-as-subjectivity. Therefore, the identity between living labour and the working class seems to be *a fortiori* correct. From the same deductive chain descends the primacy attributed to the valorisation-process and political class-composition, starting from the money-form. And, once this primacy is synthesised in the relationship between relative surplus-value and relative wage, the (dis)proportional nature

72. Negri 1971, pp. 27–9.

73. Panzieri 1964, pp. 285–6, n. 76 (reprinted in Lanzardo (ed.) 1973).

74. Marx 1993, p. 705.

of the latter reveals its antagonistic political essence. As a result, the law of value is codifiable as simple political command. Albeit with different nuances, both Tronti and Negri would come to this conclusion. Subsequently, the story would turn out to be a different one.

Were one to say that, only from this point onwards, workerist theoretical research was focused on the ‘problem of the state’ – and I am referring, of course, to the Italian events following 1977 and the debate devoted to political repression, etc. – this statement would be partial, if not incorrect. Let us simply recall the earlier works concerning the crisis of the planner-state,⁷⁵ Keynesianism, and the constitutionalisation of labour.⁷⁶ And, even before that debate, one would have to consider that, in the workerist tradition in the mid-seventies, a pivotal rôle was played by the discussion concerning the relationship between the new class-composition, public expenditure, and wage-form;⁷⁷ a discussion that followed the territorial redistribution of the valorisation-processes generated by the great layoffs mentioned above.⁷⁸ From then on, in fact, the wage-form was related, no longer to the refusal of labour expressed by the mass-worker, but, rather, to the right of income-as-revenue claimed by the growing number of non-guaranteed workers.⁷⁹ Nonetheless, if it is true that the Italian ’77-movement, in political terms, represented, simultaneously, the end of the ‘long’, Italian seventies and the beginning of a new political phase, it is also true that all this gave rise to ‘another story’, because the experience of the first workerist generation had, in the meantime, already ended.

Nevertheless, although with a little strain, one could affirm that there was a point of synthesis, which represented also a sort of obligatory, although ‘posthumous’, passage.⁸⁰ I am referring here to the comparison between the so-called ‘autonomy of the political’ – as theorised by Tronti at the beginning of the seventies⁸¹ – and the ‘autonomy of the social’, theorised in the meantime by Negri. Whereas the first concept of ‘autonomy’ – coherently with the prior idea of ‘entryism’ in the Italian Communist Party (PCI) – affirmed that the working class, and thus its *difference*, should have had to transform itself into the leading class within the capitalist state (to become-state, *farsi Stato*); the latter, on the contrary – through the idea of ‘displacement of subject’⁸² –

75. Negri 1974b.

76. Various Authors 1972; Negri 1977, pp. 27–98. See Zanini 2009.

77. Negri 1978, pp. 31–5.

78. Magnaghi 1976.

79. Bologna (ed.) 1978; Various Authors 1981.

80. Tronti 2008a, pp. 15–6.

81. Tronti 1977 (the texts collected in this volume were written in 1972).

82. Negri 1979a, and Negri 1980a.

pursued the social radicalisation of the same class-autonomy.⁸³ Surely, considering the transformations that had occurred in class-composition, that ‘displacement’ ran the risk of producing an entity devoid of any relationship – as Negri himself acknowledged soon afterwards.⁸⁴ Nonetheless, from the Trontian perspective, and within the relationships now established between party and class, the rôle of ‘class-autonomy’ appeared absolutely undetermined. What did it really mean to ‘put politics in command’? Did it mean the postponement of the ‘economic’ with respect to the ‘political’, in order to achieve a political hegemony over capitalist innovation?

Undoubtedly, what was under discussion was not (only) the old question concerning the rôle of the PCI, but, rather, the possible articulations of different political meanings of ‘class-autonomy’ after the ‘long’ Italian 1968. Whilst Tronti reasserted that the transformation, via the PCI, of working-class autonomy into class-leadership was the ultimate, only and positive way out from the *siècle ouvrier*⁸⁵ – because a different, political escape appeared as unthinkable and working-class defeat seemed more than probable – Negri, by insisting on the transformation of the ‘mass-worker’ into the ‘social worker’, was outlining, in terms of self-valorisation, the last step to be reached by a political class-composition formed within/without the final scenario of the Fordist big firm.

Both perspectives tended to define a coherent outcome for an idea that, in reality, had only remained the same until the mid-sixties. In fact, afterwards, the meaning of ‘class-autonomy’ was understood in very different ways – as testified by the fragmentation that characterised the evolution of the groups comprising the extra-parliamentary Left, including Potere Operaio.⁸⁶ For this reason, in my opinion, we may see in this final contrast the ‘posthumous’ closure of the experience of the first workerist generation, at the moment in which the outcomes of the capitalist counter-revolution were mature, and the historical defeat of the Italian working class accomplished.⁸⁷ It is not by chance that, from here on, Negri’s Spinozist concept of the multitude⁸⁸ became, firstly, synonymous with the ‘displacement of subject’, and, secondly, ended up by absorbing and substituting it.⁸⁹ All this paved the way for a new conceptual story, fierce in its continuity, but unavoidably different. Here, we

83. Negri 1980a.

84. Negri 1980b.

85. It is important to recall here the works published by Tronti, beginning in 1980: Tronti 1980; Tronti 1992; Tronti 1998.

86. See the critical remarks by Bologna 2008, p. 728.

87. Polo and Sabattini 2000.

88. Negri 1981.

89. See Zanini 1982, pp. 71–87.

may surely find the wealth of a ‘long’ tradition of thought: the workerist style.

3. A political philosophy of modernity

In a very synthetic form, and on the basis of the periodisation proposed herein, I think it is reasonable to assert that, starting from the concept of difference, the theoretical evolution of the thinking of the first workerists may be understood according to three Marxian conceptual couplets: namely, commodity-form/money-form, labour-process/valorisation-process, and relative surplus-value/relative wage. The interpretation of living labour as working class (which expresses the Marxian labour-as-subjectivity) makes it then possible to introduce a fresh, conceptual couplet: technical and political class-composition.

Taking into due account the Italian historical scenario, what emerges is an argumentative line, that, starting from the money-form, reaches the wage-form. The focal point of this argumentation is represented by the valorisation-process, expressed by a changing, political class-composition, which characterises the core of the ‘high points’ of capitalist development. Given the above, the law of value is nothing other than a form of command, because the valorisation-process consists of a process of exploitation of the specific difference that qualifies labour-power. This exploitation involves the de-realisation of labour. It is here that living labour ‘posits itself objectively, as its own not-being or as the being of its not-being – of capital’.⁹⁰ However, all this does not compromise the ‘essence’ of living labour itself, which is necessarily assumed, by capital itself, as a living body, as an epochal, political subject: the working class.

Thus, the point of arrival reasserts the starting point – and the parabola of the first workerist generation is accomplished. It is not by chance that in the middle of the events of 1977 – an historical context very different if compared with the city-factory theorised by Tronti in the sixties – at the moment in which the reasoning about the new forms of social conflict required an explicit, fresh, political stance, the cleavage within the old workerist group went well beyond the well-known divergences stemming from the entryist strategy.⁹¹ What appeared to be untenable was the previous interpretation of the concept of difference when compared with the new class-composition, within which

90. Marx 1993, p. 454.

91. Grotesque, and exactly for this reason absolutely significant, is Asor Rosa 1977.

the working class was no longer the Trontian ‘rude razza pagana [rough pagan race]’.

Regarding the workerist tradition of thought, can we talk about ‘philosophical foundations’? In spite of everything, my answer is positive, even if it may seem contradictory. In fact, if it is true that workerism was, first of all, a well-defined, historical form of political militancy, both radical, as well as intellectually sophisticated; nonetheless, it produced and solidified a non-contingent, modern, political philosophy of social conflict. This is the reason why its intellectual influence has been and remains so long-lasting; just as it has been able to change over the years, evolving and becoming a globally acknowledged theoretical and political point of reference.

What is the key-point in this matter? I think it is represented by the constitution of an antagonistic philosophy of subjectivity (not of the subject), based on an immanent concept of difference, non-reducible to ‘an(other)’ history of philosophy. There is nothing better than Tronti’s recent retrospection to clarify the point in question:

Panzieri accused me of ‘Hegelianism’, of ‘philosophy of history’. This reading, and the accusation that underlies it, will often return; after all, Hegelianism was a real factor, it was effectively there, always had been; while this idea of a ‘philosophy of history’ absolutely did not. . . . Ours was not a theory that imposed itself from outside on real data, but the opposite: that is, the attempt to recover those real data, giving them meaning within a theoretical horizon.⁹²

Therefore, those ‘real data’ were not traced back to an impossible ‘philosophy of the working class’, but to the contingency that characterised the figure of the mass-worker,⁹³ to its historically determined difference, interpreted according to a particular reading of Marx, freed from historicist fetters, drawn from a specific, but epochal, historical context, maintained and generalised, although that concept eventually faded away. Possibly, all this may sound today like yet another way of chanting the ‘magnificent and progressive fortunes’ of the ‘Working Class’ intended as the ‘Hegelian Spirit’. In reality – Tronti says – the mass-worker was not a ‘bearer of history’, but of politics. The ‘difference’ stemmed from here.

Nonetheless, according to many critics, this philosophy of subjectivity would later reveal the ambiguity of workerist thought, regardless of its lasting (dis)continuity: from Fordism to post-Fordism, from the working class to the multitude. This is not my opinion, provided that one recognises, first of all,

92. Tronti 2008b, pp. 601–2.

93. Tronti 2008a, p. 10.

that, starting from a certain point in time, we are faced with a many-faceted thought: not only because workerism has never existed as a monolithic group, but also because it followed different theoretical paths over the years. A serious and balanced assessment has to evaluate to what degree workerism constituted a radical, political action founded on a truly innovative Marxist perspective. And in doing so, one also has to consider that fifty years ago, a large part of Italian Marxism was indeed a ‘dead dog’, which an injection of generous Gramscianism would not have been sufficient to revive. Exactly for this reason Panzieri’s work has shown itself to be so fundamental, just as – from a philosophical, political, and economic point of view – an updated concept of difference remains absolutely.

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