



The End of Reality

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Abstract

In this article, I argue that in the age of neoliberal (postindustrial) globalization human relations to the environment have been “enframed” by capitalist ideology leading to the end of reality and the rise of human worldviews and ethos based on overconsumption and resource exhaustion as the determinants of existence over and against the environment and nature. Identity politics, the reification and commodification of (serial) identity practices, cultures, and “all of the accoutrements of the economy of spectacle and the manufacturing of images and fetish desires,” on the one hand, and the continuous atomization of the human subject in (neo) liberalism on the other are mechanisms for creating surplus-value and continuing capitalism’s domination over the world in the era of climate change. These two dialectical practices represent two fascist attempts to perpetuate capitalist relations of production and accumulate surplus value amidst its deleterious effects on all life on earth due to climate change, resource exhaustion, and pollution. I conclude the work by calling for an antihumanist philosophy and psychology with emphasis on subsistence living and maintaining a balance between nature and the environment as keys to planetary and human survival in the age of climate change.

Keywords: Ideological domination, Intersectionality, Embourgeoisement, Black underclass, Black bourgeoisie, Social class language game, Dialectic, Antidialectic

Introduction

If the nineteenth century was marked by the death of God, the twentieth by the death of man and the end of history subsumed under the logic of liberalism, the twenty-first century, I propose here, will be defined by the end of reality. By end of reality, I mean the destruction of our natural environment and relations to it, and the rise of ideologies grounded in (neo-liberal) fantasies and myths with no connections to the material resource framework of the earth, which leads to its demise and our own. In this article, I argue that in the age of neoliberal (postindustrial) globalization human relations to the environment has been “enframed” by the fantasies and myths of capitalist ideology as the determinant of existence over and against the environment and nature. Identity politics, the reification and commodification of (serial) identity practices, cultures, and “all of the accoutrements of the economy of spectacle and the manufacturing of images and fetish desires,” on the one hand, and the continuous atomization of the human subject in (neo) liberalism on the other are mechanisms for creating surplus-value and continuing capitalism’s domination over the world in the era of climate change. These two dialectical ideas and practices represent

two fascist attempts to perpetuate capitalist relations of production and accumulate surplus value amidst its deleterious effects on all life on earth due to climate change, resource exhaustion, and pollution. All is not lost, however. I conclude the work by calling for an antihumanist philosophy and psychology which decenters the human subject and emphasizes subsistence living and maintaining a balance between nature and the environment as keys to planetary and human survival in the age of climate change.

Background of the Problem

Since the 1960s, identity and consciousness constitution in the US derives from the class divisions of the American industrial/postindustrial capitalist social relations of production/overconsumption and its ideological apparatuses (which it exports globally through the IMF, World Bank, etc.), which created (and creates) two structurally reproduced and differentiated social class language games, a bourgeoisie of educated professionals, owners, and high-level executives juxtaposed against the material conditions, practices, language, body, and ideology of a working and underclass

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segregated in the ghettos of (gentrified) cities where industrial work was beginning to disappear to developing countries following the end of World War II to make room for postindustrialism.^{1,2} Postcolonial, postmodern and post structural theorists have looked at the social relations of production of this transition, from industrialism to postindustrialism, and, against Marxists understanding of the conjuncture, attempt to offer an intersectional approach to the constitution of identities and consciousnesses, which emphasizes the different levels (vectors of oppression and privilege) of domination, class, race, gender, global location, age, and sexual identity, by which other communities and consciousnesses get alienated, marginalized, and constituted within the process of deindustrialization and globalization.³⁻⁵

This postcolonial, postmodern, and post-structural theorizing, epistemologically, dismisses the dominant ontological status (class) of the Protestant capitalist system/social structure by which the masses of others attempt to practically live out their lives for the theoretical assumptions of the indeterminacy of meaning and decentered subject of postcolonial, post-structural, and post-modern theorizing. They attempt to read back into the historical constitution of other identity and community life within and by the dialectic of a global capitalist social structure of class inequality the indeterminacy of meaning and decentered subject of postcolonial, post-structural, and post-modern theorizing to highlight the variety of intersecting ways or vertices, i.e., standpoints, race, class, age, sexual identity, etc., individual other subjects were and are alienated, marginalized, and dominated. As if the intersecting standpoint theories they are promoting offers an alternative form of system and social integration by which to constitute society and practical consciousness against capitalist relations of production. It does no such thing, however. These theorists fail to realize that bourgeois intersectionality is a socio-political by-product of a postindustrial (Protestant) capitalist landscape or social structure, equated to or with the nature of reality as such, seeking to decenter the bourgeois (white) subject and allow a diversity of bourgeois "other" identities to emerge (around their class positions) within the class division and social relations of postindustrial (Protestant) capitalist production so as to accumulate surplus-value. The latter, surplus-value, they accumulate by catering to the entertainment, financial, and service needs of these new and once discriminated-against identities and their constructed "fictitious" class-based communities who's reified (marginalized) "cultural" contents they exploit for financing and surplus-value.

In essence, the sociocultural practices of the identities and "all of the accoutrements of the economy of spectacle and the manufacturing of images and fetish desires" are commodified and come to serve as both a form of use and exchange value for the (elite) "other" to accumulate surplus value: an embourgeoised elite other is atomized and accumulate surplus value (wealth, status, and money) from the reification and commodification of their cultural/serial identities and practices, which they market to those similarly situated in order to extract surplus value for themselves and the corporate elites they are sponsored/financed by Harvey. This com-

modification process of the "other" as a serial community in the form of diversified consumerism is juxtaposed against its contradictory counterpart, which dates to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the continuing atomization of the individual subject in capitalist relations of production as laborer and consumer.

Patriarchy, heteronormativity, etc., within the systemicity of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, in other words, are not the product of individuated competing systems, which are offering an alternative systemicity within which to constitute society and subjugate the human subject. Instead, as presently constituted, they emerge within one (mythical) system, the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism, initially constituted by rich, white, heterosexual men, and its current manifestation or structure of the conjuncture, i.e., intersectionality, constituted by rich, multicultural, multigendered, etc., others fighting for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the former, within the systemicity and differentiation of (postindustrial) Protestant capitalism, so as to accumulate capital as an individual other through social labor, i.e., the commodification of culture and cultural practices (diversified consumerism).

Theory and Method

Building on the structuration theory, phenomenological structuralism, of Paul C. Mocombe,⁶ which posits the constitution of society as the product of five elements or systems (mode of production, language, ideology, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourse) that interpellate and subjectify the human actor and gives them their practical consciousness, which they recursively organize and reproduce in their daily activities as practical consciousness, the argument here is that the social phenomenon of postcolonial, postmodern, and poststructural theorizing in the language of intersectionality, hybridity, double consciousness, etc., i.e., serial identities, occur in relation to the (neoliberal) state and its ideological apparatuses and class divisions of postindustrial capitalist societies.⁷⁻²⁴ They have their basis in the relations of production, exploitation, and organization of the state following the failed diverse student revolutions of the 1960s, which gave rise to local formations and heterogeneity as the theoretical theme for the new philosophers and social scientists of the late twentieth century who sought equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution for the diverse groups (standpoints) of the student movements within the class division and global social relations of capitalist production and organization, which became triumphant with the fall of communism or state capitalism in Eastern Europe. Intersectional discourses have their basis in the fantasies and myths of globalization, financialization, and the postindustrial relations of production and exploitation as organized under the hegemony of the American nation-state following the civil rights and hippie movements of the 1960s, which diversified and fragmented subjectivities and social movements for the philosophy of the person, individual human rights, and freedoms to (speak, assemble, etc.).²⁵ These standpoint theories emerged amidst the continuous atomization of the human subject within a postindustrial capitalism that fosters identity politics for exchange value and capital accumulation via financialization

and cultural consumption: an atomized (elite) “other” gets financed in the form of credit by finance capital to reify and commodify their “othering practices”, which are promoted via advertisement and commercials to the reified other communities in order to accumulate surplus-value for both the other and finance capital.¹

In other words, on the one hand, neoliberal globalization (1970s-to the present) under American hegemony represents the right-wing attempt to homogenize (converge) the nations of the globe into the overall market-orientation, i.e., private property, individual liberties, and entrepreneurial freedoms, of the capitalist world-system.²⁶⁻⁴⁵ This neoliberalization project is usually juxtaposed, on the other hand, against the narcissistic exploration of self, sexuality, and identity of the left, which converges with the neoliberalizing process via the diversified consumerism and embourgeoisement of the latter groups as they seek equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with agents of the former within their market logic. Hence private property, individual liberties, diversified consumerism, and the entrepreneurial freedoms of the so-called marketplace amidst atomization become the mechanisms of system and social integration for both groups despite the fact the logic of the marketplace is exploitative and environmentally hazardous.⁴⁶⁻⁵⁷

Discussion and Conclusion

In the twenty-first century, this age of neoliberal globalization, identity politics, and the continuous atomization of the human individual, is marked by the destruction of our natural environment and relations to it, and the rise of ideologies grounded in fantasies and myths about consumerism, identities, and individual practices with no connections or relations to conserving the material resource framework of the earth. The latter, the natural environment, is overexploited, devastated, and destroyed for integration of the atomized elite others into the exploitative ideas and practices of the former, neoliberalism, identity politics, consumerism, and exploration of the self.⁵⁸

The “other” power elites emerge within this structure of the neoliberal global framework as structurally differentiated embourgeoisied “other” agents of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with their white counterparts as either “other” right-wing conservatives or “other” left-wing identitarians amidst the deleterious effects (exploitation, pollution, climate change, consumerism, etc.) of the (economic) humanistic values they desire whites to live up to by recognizing their humanism. An embourgeois elite “other” emerges in postindustrial capitalism, in other words, as an atomized other whose individual wealth and status derives from the social labor amassed through the commodification and marketing of their culture and cultural practices, diversified consumerism, amidst their clarion call to integrate within the austerity, privatization, etc., of the neoliberal fascist state. In the age of climate change, ecological devastations, resource exhaustion, and economic exploitation to sustain the emerging embourgeoisied others and their white counterparts, this is a mythical recipe for disaster. The only solution as

I see it, is to decenter the current neoliberal capitalist social structure, institutions, and practices in favor of decentralization, subsistence living, conservation, and reforestation.⁵⁹⁻⁶²

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Author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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