

## 4. Critical Reflections on the Fall Narrative of Communism

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### Abstract:

*The paper critically addresses the fall narrative of the narrative of the failure of the communist experiment. By doing so it makes a conviction that the great fall may have had laid down communism's burial but had not closed the spirit of revolution and emancipation. More than being loathsome to the violence the fall narrative hangs on to liberal-capitalist-democracy's hatred for equality and justice. The paper commits to the claim that if the idea of "return to socialism" makes no sense, equally is senseless the triumphalism debate of liberal-capitalism. Saying so the commitment is for "return to the human self" whose even distant possibility lies in socialism only.*

### Keywords:

*Emancipation, Equality, Justice, Transformation, Revolution*

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# Critical Reflections on the Fall Narrative of Communism

Communism is nowhere but everywhere. Scores have been written and can be written on why the great promise has not been kept by the ones who made the promise. Marx's formula of revolutionary transformation is pushed into the realm of a painful historical past. Those whose hopes are dashed by the socialist/communist experiment itself has no hesitation addressing it as: Once upon a time called Marxism/Communism. The collapse has been addressed variedly and exhaustively within the western world. On the contrary, the event itself had a profound impact on all those societies where the Marxist philosophy manifested as a motivational transformatory-emancipatory rhetoric. The impact of the fall needs to be addressed outside the western world- of those societies that freed themselves from the colonial rule, yet the transition did not appear as transformation. The rhetoric of failure is more indigestive than the facts of failure.

What does the failure symbolize? Roland Boer says that the failure means "that they came to an end, even that they are not eternal." (Boer, 2014) Critics of Marxist philosophy will be outspoken by pointing out that the failure resembles the actuality of communism. The western world representative of Liberal-Capitalist-Democracy hates the idea for two reasons. One, the hatred comes from the aversion to the principle of equality. It takes us back to the very foundational element of the formation of the western world [Europe and North America]. Second, along with suspicion of the equality principle, they also now suspect and look down upon the very idea of revolutionary transformation.

The previous century has been labeled as the most violent century. The reason is that the western metaphysical canon offers an absolutist notion of the knowledge and the world order (Strong, 2013). The general supposition after the experience of totalitarian violence is that any metaphysics of the social world combines both totality and absoluteness. The result of this totalitarian approach [the socialist experiment being one of those totalitarian systems] is violent forms of implementation of the idea. Experience of unbearable violence makes meaningless the idea of a revival of communism and the

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absence of historical repeatability. The violence is the outcome of their inability to estimate what is possible of a transformative politics. Hence, communism must not be completely severed from the question of power. None is an exception to the seduction of power.

In view of this, the previous century is commemorated as the century of disaster. For most parts of the world, the question is 'what is left after communism?' Antonio Negri asks a very important question here: "Can we be a Communist without Marx?" (Negri, 2011: p.5) One way of interpreting the collapse rhetoric is that societies that failed communism had shown their utter disinclination to justice and equality. Upon extrapolation, their reluctance to a just world compliments to capitalism's aversion to a just world in the true sense. Even John Rawls's theory of justice is insufficient to address the deeper sense of justice. An important question emerges here: If communism calls for the overthrow of an oppressive state of affairs [the present], can this abolition, this destruction, or this suppression of the present also bring about the real movement of re-composition? Transition, transformation or re-composition are heavy loaded terms. Marxism is over-deterministic that underestimates the traces of footprints of previous stages' modes and relations of production [This is reflected in Marx's Eighteenth Brumaire that avoids any specters of past revolutions that confronts the indefinite prodigiousness of their own goals (Diefenbach & Battista, 2011).

This over-deterministic approach had been outrun by social-cultural stagnation in much of the world in the twentieth century. The failure also symbolically means the mistaken grounding of the idea of emancipatory politics.<sup>1</sup> If we ill-treat Marx's political stance, we must also be undermining his idea of emancipation itself. Wolfdietrich Schmied-Kowarzik states that Marx's philosophy is committed to the goal of human emancipation connecting political emancipation and economic development - returning of man to himself (Kowarzik, 1985).<sup>2</sup> Revolutionary change and social emancipation aim at liberating the

<sup>1</sup> Diefenbach discusses Marx's idea from The Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right as negation of politics, as anthro-ontological automatism, reflecting the complete loss of man and a re-winning of man again.

<sup>2</sup> "Every emancipation is a restoration of the human world and of human relationships to man himself. Human emancipation will only be complete when the real individual man has absorbed into himself the abstract citizen; when as an individual man, in his everyday life, in his work, and in his relationships, he has become a species-

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oppressed from the existing social evils. It is obvious that the revolutionary struggle may not be able to encompass all social and cultural evils. However, the liberation of individuals from one evil may lead to evaporation of a few others. What is the implication of Marxist revolutionary struggle? The actuality of politics and its relation to philosophy will explain whether the change is transformative or not. Revolution and its impact on the everyday life, an assessment of it is always important. The economic backwardness has its roots in the sorrowful plight of the oppressed people. This is the reason why economic justice only does not transform the social condition though it is one of the necessary measures. For most of the people, esteem and dignity is still a condition to be achieved; rather, a distant goal – people living in the state of hopelessness.

Marx's emancipatory politics does not contain an impoverished political ontology. This allegation seems to be emerging, George Lukacs clarifies, from the supposed ontological hierarchy of base-superstructure relationship placing economic over all other factors. He further defends Marx stating that the ontological priority of the economy does not mean the hierarchical relationship (Lukacs, 1978, 152).<sup>3</sup> An economic determination is not a brute hierarchy of economics over other social values. Here lies the interesting aspect. Lukacs is confident that Marx's rejection of an ontological hierarchy explains how economic value is linked to other social values. The very term social makes a preliminary demarcation [from the economic], of abstract and declarative nature (Lukacs, 1978, 154). This preliminary demarcation does not create the ontological divide. The connection explains the material foundations of sociality and the reproduction of human life, transforming natural objects into social values. The misunderstanding arises from the supposition that the economic reality 'permanently' produces and reproduces social reality [like the relations of production]. The implication of this is that a non-economic value does not produce a social being [in the Marxian sense] but need not be the case as such – as it takes the social being as given. Our concern here is the way modes-of-production reflects a social condition. Marx was confident about the changes in non-economic value experiences with the change in the

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being; and when he has recognized and organized his own powers (forces propres) as social powers so that he no longer separated his social power from himself as political power." Marx/Engels.

<sup>3</sup> "the social existence of the superstructure always ontologically presupposes that of the process of economic reproduction ... ontologically inconceivable without the economy."

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mode of production (Lukacs, 1978, 154). This point needs a deeper discussion. Societies that are characterized by profoundly complex social strata defy such clear-cut schematic delineation of a causal mechanism [reference to India]. This defiance gives a sense of the movement from the heterogeneity of these values to the level of opposition.

The condition of inequality is reflected in the kind of relationship between economic and other values. Lukacs states that the latter is not an orderless diversity of transient values. The relationality or the unity reference depends on the understanding of individual(s). We have seen that in the case of Marx individual is seen in her/his individual existence at the same as a social being (Marx & Milligan, 1988: p. 102).<sup>4</sup> Self-realization is possible with communism's transcendence of private property, as human self-estrangement. Though Marx is not explicit about psychoanalysis his understanding of human nature is reflective. It comes from the understanding that human beings can be not only understood in terms of economic, anthropologically but also psychologically. Hence, individual consciousness is the outcome of a social life. The return of the human to one's own self, brings the person to a natural state. Is there an echo of Rousseau in Marx, being romantic about the human beings' natural condition?<sup>5</sup> We cannot deny it. Achieving that state means humans are freed from all forms of alienation/estrangement [human-to-human] - religion, family, state etc. The return is to the social mode of existence - we can interpret it as a community. How is social existence understood? The social mode of existence contains in it 'natural existence as human existence' and vice versa. The element of the life-world explains human-qua-human - in a non-exploitative sense. The social character is the determining force of all the movement - in this; society produces the humans, not the other way. The reason, to infer from Marx himself, is even to carry on the

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<sup>4</sup> Marx explains the relationship between man to man, and man to woman while addressing man as a species being. Though Marx reduces everything to a natural given relationship we need not agree on everything that he had stated [for instance, "man's need has become a human need; the extent to which ... the other person as a person has become for him a need ..."]

<sup>5</sup> This point is addressed in a more elaborate manner in the works of Rousseau and Rawls. In all these philosophers, the 'natural' state is treated as sacrosanct, having had expressed the desire to have its mirror reflection in the social condition.

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individual activity the raw material is provided by the society only (Marx & Milligan, 1988: p. 105).<sup>6</sup>

If an individual is the social [species] being, then how are individuals related to each other under the condition of society itself? What about the natural differences that Rousseau talks about in his Discourse on Inequality? Species being brought forth the humaneness to humanity equally. Only a unified conception can apply equally to all. Let us not contest this for the time being. Human relationships are also explained by the appropriation of the world - the operation of the principle of the golden rule. The challenge here is to see how these ideas fared in the twentieth-century socialist experiment. The social condition has become far greatly complex since the days of Marx. Marxist philosophy is much telling about the ill-fate of the society driven by those private desires of possession and appropriation. These two had created several contradictions within the bounds of capitalist production conditions. These contradictions cannot be justified under the pretext that human nature is fundamentally selfish and that which is fundamental is implicit to all conditions, natural as well as social. These facts of human nature will not forever seal the fate or the nature of the human condition. That human nature is selfish and partial, and repulsive to socialist and egalitarian principles is only a specific understanding of humanity by liberals/liberalism (Brown, 2003).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> "my own existence is social activity, and therefore that which I make of myself, I make of myself for society and with the consciousness of myself as a social being."

<sup>7</sup> The fundamental supposition of liberalism is that individual holds high moral value than the society; hence, the implication of this is methodological individualism. This supposition is paradoxical in the sense that even the substance of human nature is no permanently fixed or metaphysically given [like the Constantian supposition that human nature is unchangeable]. It settles with the helplessness of communes or collectives to in hence the shaping of human character. In moral philosophy, the connect between the choice morality and character morality, and thick and thin morality deals with this problem. Liberal-capitalism lacks in its discourse any transformation by revolution - it is other name for fear of revolution. It is reflected in the formulations of justice and fairness in Rawlsian liberalism, Habermas's discourse ethics or Scanlon's reasonable reason. Wendy Brown makes an interesting remark here in the context of neoliberalism: "In ordinary parlance, neo-liberalism refers to the repudiation of Keynesian welfare state economics and the ascendance of the Chicago School of political economy — von Hayek, Friedman, et al. In popular usage, neo-liberalism is equated with a radically free market: maximized competition and free trade achieved through economic de-regulation, elimination of tariffs, and a range of monetary and social policies favorable to business and indifferent toward poverty, social deracination, cultural decimation, long term resource depletion and environmental destruction."

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All revolutionary and emancipatory paradigms believe in the will of the people. The will to change/do is not to be literally measured in terms of the actuality of the event. Wendy Brown makes an interesting reflection here: emphasizing the pathology of neo-liberal rationality, she makes an apt remark that liberalism does not focus on the human capacities for “ethical and political freedom.” It eliminates the possibility and realization of the true realm of freedom - works as the expression of life (Brown, 2015, 43).<sup>8</sup> It is important to see how this bigger ideal influence everyday life - especially, the plight of the oppressed and equally significant or more than the economic life, the culturally oppressed people. David Estlund mentions an interesting point here: if every event is estimated by its causal antecedents indicating the futility of doing anything extra, “then the issue about justice and human nature aren’t of any further interest (Estlund, 2011, 210). This view can differentiate a radical revolutionary and emancipatory appeal from all other approaches that operate within the bounds of standard-normal human capacities. Estlund opines that people can do other than what they do. This needs to be interpreted in terms of a concerted forceful collective act. The condition of capitalist production will itself ignite the spirit of such a revolutionary change, even speaking in the non-Marxian sense.

The emancipation condition is the realization of freedom and morality. The difference between capitalist freedom and socialist freedom is by now clear to many. This difference itself sets the stage for human emancipation. What is sought in human emancipation? With specific reference to Marxism, human emancipation is liberation from

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<sup>8</sup> “The realm of freedom actually begins only where labor which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases; thus, in the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production. Just as the savage must wrestle with Nature to satisfy his wants, to maintain and reproduce life, so must civilized man, and he must do so in all social formations and under all possible modes of production. With his development this realm of physical necessity expands because of his wants; but, at the same time, the forces of production which satisfy these wants also to increase. Freedom in this world can only consist in socialized man, the associated producers, rationally regulating their interchange with Nature, bringing it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind forces of Nature; and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favourable to, and worthy of, their human nature. But it nonetheless remains a realm of necessity. Beyond it begins that development of human energy which is an end, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can blossom forth only with this realm of necessity as its basis. The shortening of the working-day is its basic prerequisite.”

those practices of human beings that causes alienation of social relations - restoration of the human world by the way of a return of the human to oneself - "to the world of human beings, to the conditions of people themselves" (Kowarzik, 1985). Individuals are, in the process of liberation, brought back to the proper consciousness of social practice. The elevation of economic conditions is the elevation of the human social condition. This, now, seems a more restricted way of understanding human emancipation. One form of emancipation leads to the other is only one side of the story. Cultural and social freedoms matter more when we talk about people, communes and their ways of life. The return to the human world implants in us the empathy for the other(s). This automatically transforms the nature of production function itself. The return will also symbolically mean that there will not be exploitation [rather ought not, though it sounds very idealistic] - as sensed by Bertold Brecht (Brecht, 2013).<sup>9</sup> The not so convincing issue with Marx and his strands is the creation of a vanguard of revolution - the proletariat is the carrier of the revolutionary spirit, thus, laying the burden in the hands of an oppressed that gains consciousness of self-emancipation and humanity at large.

The paradox is that we cannot have serious skepticism on the collective consciousness of the revolutionary class. Nevertheless, there are serious concerns some of which are already addressed by many of scholars. The fall narrative itself is an incomplete not fully worked out critique of the Utopian project. Many things that Marx proposed, embraced by his followers in several forms - the beginning of world history after the end of prehistory, the first true total revolution, no natural poverty, no longer a class of serfs, no intrasocial oppression, social nothingness, emancipation, the end of every class struggle, and the liberation from the materialism of class interests as such (Bloch, 2000, 240) - have not happened the way it was hoped to happen. Critics may advance the argument of fallaciousness of both the philosophy and the experiment. We can have a differing view here.

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<sup>9</sup> In his poem, "In Praise of Communism," Brecht makes a poetic expression of the very idea of communist transformatory politics in this manner:

*The End of Madness.  
It is not the riddle But the Solution  
It is the Simple thing So hard to achieve.*

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The essay commits to the idea that, in the current times, we must have a more holistic approach to the understanding of individual, society, and state. It is one thing to assert that every individual is requisite of dignity and a place in the world - not to be treated as excrement. All the three above are in unison, not just carrying out [material] production and reproduction of human life, more importantly, the production and putting to strife - the most dangerous of all identity. Zizek and many others very well address this. Post-communism is not a condition of *jouissance* but the beginning of even more heinous sorrowful religious, ethnic, genocidal violence happening on wide-ranging scales of intensity. Huntington writings may not have, just like Fukuyama's, intellectual rigor - but the world has been the way they described in their writings. The fall narrative very complacently shoulders the guilt [by focusing on certain events that affected only Europe] on the totalitarian programs. Contrarily, owing to the escalation of violence on a gigantic scale after the Soviet collapse, we can estimate how the world fared in the name of the superior virtue of capitalism. In other words, Liberal-Capitalist-Democracy has generated dangerously harmful complex orders of domination (Brown, 2015, 95).<sup>10</sup> These complex orders are indicative of the moral decadence of the collective life, further creating the paradigm of 'eternal oppressors and eternally oppressed'. No ideology or a political formation is an exception to this. This is the reason despite liberal-capitalism faring even worse and given the fact that hegemonic fields within the institutional framework cannot be completely done away with, the transformation is sought.

'The socialist ideology' met its miserable death. There are many for whom it is difficult to digest this. The socialist cause needs a strong justification after the collapse. It means that they lost all moral right to say that socialism is still a legitimate social-political philosophy. This would undermine the radical nature of the revolutionary spirit itself. The loss of this moral right has changed drastically the nuances of emancipation. How are

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<sup>10</sup> Wendy Brown mentions Rousseau besides many in explaining this point. "For Rousseau, humans are the only creatures capable of generating complex orders of domination from their needs, of enslaving themselves by giving free rein to *homo oeconomicus*, by letting it overtake their personalities, social relations, and politics: this is the essence of Rousseau's critique of emerging liberalism. Thus, for Rousseau the deliberate and erce cultivation of *homo politicus* (and it is most de nitely not *homo juridicus* or *homo legalis*) is the only antidote to this peril. *Homo politicus* understood as self-sovereign through collective sovereignty must literally subdue the creature of self-interest and self-absorption."

emancipation and transformation achieved? Sympathizers of Marx(ism) would like to disassociate it with the idea of utopia altogether. Many wishes to disentangle utopian meaning from the meaning of a revolutionary project.

The project of individual and collective autonomy is not utopian, but a socio-historical project bound by peoples' understanding, imagination and determination (Castoriadis & Arnold, 2010: p. 3). The important issue is not the success or failure of communism - but the ways in which capital operates in many newer forms than before (Derrida, 2011). This enables us to grasp, what Andrew Tosel calls, the hegemonic intellectual system of neo-liberalism. This is reflected in the targeted attack pin-pointing out the horrific violence that happened in the name of communism. Upon genuine moral reflection, it is no prejudice to assert that the portrayal of the twentieth century as the tragic century is a super exaggeration and a one-dimensional story [Marxism supposedly belongs to a past of errors and horrors] (Tosel, 2007: p. 39). It also reflects the reduction of the history of an epoch to mere few instances. There is no denial of the degeneracy and perversion of the crimes committed in the name of Communism.<sup>11</sup>

Tosel speaks of the ramification of rather confusing "thousand Marxism's" and starting anew overcoming the tragic phase of the by-gone century. The issue is whether we could erase that memory? What, asks Andre Tosel, is the minimal consensus as to what may legitimately be called a Marxist interpretation? (Bensaïd, 2009)<sup>12</sup> The most important issue is not whether an ideology or philosophy sank itself or met its own end. On the contrary, the issue is amid the violent ruptures in erasing the present and a creating an altogether different new society, the torsion that people must have undergone that magnificently affected their lives, especially, the every day. When a revolutionary project attempts to topple down the hierarchical, oppressive and complex human orders, it is important to see

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<sup>11</sup> The focus of the paper is on communism. However, the study makes a remark though it falls outside its scope: What about crimes committed in the name of opposing the spread of communism and in the name of democratization of the world? This is just referring to post world wars and post-colonial scenario.

<sup>12</sup> He further explains the complexity. If one either emotionally or practically inclined to the Philosophy of Marx - the biggest challenge is to [re]discovering Marx for every other generation [43].

which aspects of social life is ruptured as part of the radical change. That violence has been the means always makes us unwillingly apologetic. The oppressive forces are always rigid and are armored with powerful forces repelling change; hence, the resort to radical change. Did Marxism fail at the level of praxis? It is not as simple as the question. It cannot be answered when we are brainwashed [consciously and unconsciously] that it is fundamentally violent and terroristic.

Can revolutionary projects like the scale of the socialist experiment avoid any kind of Excess? Revolution aims at far-reaching social change - not any kind of minor changes here and there, like error solving in epistemic theories. Bentley Le Baron nicely argues this point. Long before the collapse itself, he refers to the impoverished nature of attempts for 'replacement for revolution' that calls for re-reading of Marx as a "restoration of richness, complexity and human substance." (Baron, 1971, 559) This kind of an argument very much suits those societies where hierarchy is deep-rooted in their cultural formations diffident enough to level the dehumanized status of certain communities, identities and individuals. The inevitability of excess itself shows the magnitude of revolution and hardships of its implementation. In the case of Marx, revolution means a thoroughgoing change in modes of production that result in a thoroughgoing change in relations-of-production. The latter implies a change in the conscience of beings, their ideas, relationships, their habits and pleasures, and more importantly their institutions they are part of (Baron, 1971, 559). Not sure about the Rawlsian framework, the formula of Marx if successful in its deterministic scheme would certainly result in social justice. To repeat the point this schema suits those conditions where the social backwardness is merely due to economic backwardness. How did Marx(ism) fare with the cultural turn or the cultural politics? Cultural Marxism employs Marxian theory to analyze cultural forms in relation to production, their imbrications with society and history, and their impact and influences on audiences and social life. This is a serious issue. Marxism is classified as vulgar for having a great omission of issues of art, culture, ideology and everyday life. The same thing happened in the former Soviet Union, China, East Europe and other communities. Cultural concerns were subdued to the scientific laws of dialectical materialism (Best, 1995). In other words, ideological internal criticism is disvalued resulting in no guarantee of the emergence of a revolutionary proletariat against

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the capitalist domination. Internal critics may say that Marxism could not go onto show the world the success it preempted through the revolution due to this avoiding of culture. The point is what is the fate of cultural Marxism after the rhetoric of the great fall? David Harvey remarks, "To pretend there was anything interesting about Marx after 1989 was to sound more and more like an all-but extinct dinosaur whimpering its own last rites (Harvey, 2000, 5)." Marcuse had and still has a great influence on later generations. Three of his ideas are profoundly relevant today: the great refusal of capitalism, valuing the subjective conditions of life, as good as the objective conditions. Simultaneously the suspicion of metanarratives [history as the realization of freedom or progress (linked to the postmodern turn)] (Lyotard, Bennington, & Massumi, 1984) (Baudrillard, 1983) was also in the air. Though there are criticisms of overdoing of the culture industry, the nexus between hegemony and culture is well theorized.

How useful is this terrain? Combining Jameson, Deleuze and Guattari, Steve Best states: "Postmodern culture ruptures narrative and decenters subjectivity in a schizophrenic dispersal of fragments [emphasis added] Individuals are overloaded with information and the complexities of hyperspace that disable their ability to situate themselves within larger systems of meaning... (Best, n.d., para. 18)" This is not an easy task here. The suspicion of cultural Marxism brings us back to the same position and the same question; the lost cause of emancipatory appeal. Jameson classifies it as the cultural logic of late capitalism. We should not get caught in an oppositional dialectic here: socialism is not capitalism's radical-*other* and *vice versa*. Ideology has turned hybrid over a period of time. It was convincing for many that freedom is a superior goal seriously threatened by totalitarian/authoritarian regimes. Negri and Thomas (2006: p. 9) make an interesting remark: "To my mind, 1989 corresponds to 1968. While 1968 had broken down the walls that closed our society, 1989 broke down the wall that defended real socialism, keeping it outside the world market." However great the ideal it may be people do not want to forget the violence wherever it perpetrated. The actuality of communism through the historical fact is ever tied to violence. This actuality caused communism to distance itself from the actual actuality. The fall also indicated the moral bankruptcy. Do we have a right to remain nostalgic to the idea of communism? For many that the era of Communism came to an end

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in the demise of Soviet Union had become a tautology. Indeed, it has become vulgar Marxism. Yet, the anti-communist slogans weren't less vulgar (Zizek, 2009, 1).<sup>13</sup> In opposition to this, it is believed that "While there is no doubt that the Soviet Union collapsed as a result of its own contradictions, the nature of these contradictions needs to be explored (Sakwa, 2013, 66)." The abolition of the free market and the creation of an alternative modern society and realization of popular sovereignty itself is questioned greatly. It is needless to go into the discussion of the reasons for the great failure.

The collapse sounded as if the actuality of communism ran counter to its orientation. The experiment somewhere lost the political strategy. This remark comes from the allegation that Marxism rests on a flawed understanding of politics – de-heroization of politics and "not existentializing politics properly (Diefenbach & Battista, 2011).<sup>14</sup> Further Deifenbach states that this shows that Marx(ism) oscillated between an economic and political perspective. Zizek poses a paradoxical situation here: The East-European experience is rather a nightmare of the twentieth-century European history. There is no denial of the fact that the idea went pervert in the process of the execution of the idea. Yet, in many of his writings, Zizek exposes the irony and back-stabbing of the global democratic capitalism that misdirected much of the world. He makes an interesting remark here: "... the time for liberal-democratic moralistic blackmail is over. Our side no longer has to go on apologizing; while the other side had better start soon (Zizek, 2009, 8)."

The point is to perceive communism not as an utopian not-yet for which reality will always fail to be often an adequate match, but as something already there in every moment of refusal to private appropriation and collective appropriation. Badiou presents an argument that was used by the capitalist west for a long time:

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<sup>13</sup> Zizek begins his book with an interesting observation in opposition: ...generates the vulgar anti-communist cliché - "You are right-today, after the tragedy of twentieth century totalitarianism, all the talk about a return to communism can only be farcical!"

<sup>14</sup> Marx's diagnosis is the process of revolution will evade a complete fall, from tragedy to farce. By being self-critical "until the historical moment of transformation is produced" and most importantly "conditions themselves cry out".

At the level of the state, this socialist 'totalitarianism' must be contrasted with representative democracy which ... is ... imperfect, is ... least bad form of government. At the moral level, ..., we must preach the values of the 'free world' centered on and protected by the United States ... it has ended in failure all over the world, the communist hypothesis is a criminal utopia that must give way to a culture of 'human rights', which combines the cult of freedom ... (Badiou, 2010, 4)

This also sounds like another deterministic account as that of Marxism. Stating this Badiou does not deny the failure paradigm. Maybe this is the kind of treatment communism got in France after post-communism. Badiou greatly addresses the meaning of failure with respect to the understanding of history - takes cognizance of Mao's reference to failures as stages in history [historical growth]. For him, it is a matter of the relationship between politics and its historicity. Addressing the failure Badiou rightly points out that success must be feared more than the failure. Badiou's treatment of failure is really an eye-opener. To come back to the same question - How do we treat the thesis/ideology of failure? To put failure in a perspective is a monumental task. The failure hypothesis subverts the reality into a fake truth. Attempts were made to forever denounce Marxism/Communism their ontological status. As mentioned earlier, either the basic philosophy of economic revolutionary transformation is grounded on mistaken assumptions or it is badly strategized politically. What did the fall narrative put at stake? To mention Badiou again, "the difficulties of a politics are never universal, as enemy propaganda — along the lines of 'your communist hypothesis is nothing more than a chimera that cannot be put into practice, a utopia that has nothing to do with the real world (Badiou, 2010, 39)" Unlike many, Badiou focuses on the Chinese Cultural Revolution too that impacted France for some time. For him, it is a great lesson in history and politics, "in history as thought and from within politics. How different is the failure of the Cultural Revolution from that of the failures of the Bolshevik revolution? All this discussion is at the level of ideologies, their manifestation contra-power and state. The focus must be the excruciating effect on people's lives all over under the cloud of either transit or transformation. Change by consent or revolution brings turbulence to the lives of the people holistically and in terms of everyday life.

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## Conclusion

A question can be posed to both the sympathizers-defenders and the denouncers of the idea of Communism. What is attractive in this philosophy? Equality? Struggle? Emancipation? Or the very discourse is appealing like that of an ornament? Definitely, the idea appealed to many as the oppressed state naturally aspires for an alternate world - impersonating all phantasmic perfections of an all-right-world. These suppositions take into account the liberated conditions of everyday life. For instance, a leftist ontology is about everyday political practice defined by daily struggles about the very nature of the world. In the process, the image gets fixated as if the knowledge of the perfect world [here a world of no exploitation and oppression] has an ontologically a priori presence. On what basis we say this is not the world that we are supposed to inhabit? The recognizable conditions of inequality or injustice are always tricky, and at times may not escape the myopic condition of one-dimensionality. We the oppressed, with a certain collective consciousness, come together; to overthrow the dreary condition attain equality, and thus, bring justice. Nancy and Cornor boldly state that communism is no longer the unsurpassable horizon of our time. To him, this is not because humanity has traversed all horizons - owing to our resignation of things - horizons themselves must be challenged (Nancy & Cornor, 1991: p. 8). True, humanity has witnessed no alterations at all. Later, Benedict Anderson explains that alliances based on identity proved a lot more fruitful than alliances on ideological grounds (Faramelli, 2013). Communism may or may not be relevant; the ideas of liberation, emancipation and revolution are never settled. Communism may remain both a possible thought experiment and practical revolution. Finally, we can make a bold cry that the world had failed Communism.

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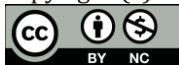
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