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Some Thoughts on the '(Extra)Ordinary': On Philosophy, Coloniality and Being Other-wise.

The Philosopher and the Street.

“[R]evolutions start only after people have taken to the street, stay there and challenge the established order. Whether radical change follows and what type it takes depends in most cases on the *emergence of a political subject...*”¹

Indeed, it is a peculiar enterprise that we ‘critical intellectuals’, engage in.² We assume an audacious capacity to contemplate the ‘world’ and read its signs, to interpret our present and imagine better futures. We think, perhaps, this a worthwhile social endeavour; the ‘thinker’, we might hope, serves as a catalyst to identify, to instigate, to provoke otherwise merely latent potentialities of suppressed insurgencies against the ossification of the future in unsatisfactory and captured presents.³

With this self-assumed sense of purpose perhaps it is understandable that many of us seek out the ‘street’ for our thinking;⁴ it is here that we search for the extra-ordinary ‘event’ that marks, as we see it, a rupture, the moment of catharsis, a transformation, the ‘new’ born into the world. We see this tendency to philosophise the street clearly in recent intellectual work of the critical ‘post-Enlightenment’ philosophers.⁵ Reading ‘uprisings’, ‘resistance’ and ‘revolutions’, interpreting the happenings of irruptions in the squares and bazaars of anger, ascribing meaning to voice as voiced in a multitude of vernaculars in multiple locales as these ‘events’ are gazed-

upon and made audible to consuming eyes and ears, investing hope and dispensing disappointment, indeed, we observe that much political-legal thought is so moved by the (variously conceived of) 'political' projects to open up possible pathways of 'rupturing' the present. In this fashion, the 'street' has indeed come to be the primary locale from which philosophical contemplations are undertaken in this "age of resistance" as Costas Douzinas has named our present time:

“A sequence of uprisings will dominate the world political landscape in the next period. Ours is an age of resistance. The possibility of radical change has been firmly placed on the historical agenda.”⁶

What inspires such fervour, such ecstatic celebration of the street, is a perceived, hoped for, *emergence*,⁷ here the extra-ordinary 'event' is the harbinger of hope, marking the (possible, nascent) becoming of a 'political subject' as the one who emerges into the street, and out from the street, breaking free from the shackles of extant sovereign-biopolitical diagrams, heralding (with 'fidelity'), as Alain Badiou would have it come to be, the 'rebirth' of History.⁸ The 'street', thus, portends History. This, we see, is thinking fixed on the spectacular, the heroic, the extra-ordinary, of 'radical change'. It is this philosophical tendency – to appropriate the 'street' as the ecstatic site of extra-ordinary becoming – that is my concern in this essay. It is this heroic orientation of thought that is the subject of my critique.

In what follows, I consider the philosophical-political heritage from which the preoccupation with thinking the extra-ordinary of the 'street' originates, and question the implications of such thinking. I argue that such thinking betrays the continued coloniality of critical post-Enlightenment philosophy.⁹ My intention is to provide a different reading of the 'extra-ordinary' that emerges in the street - as a physical place of embodied presence rather than a reified space

of philosophical aspiration) - informed by what I argue to be a decolonial understanding of the presents (and presence) of already-being in the world. The essay is organised as follows.

First, I trace the foundations of what I name the ‘ontology of abandonment and resurrection’ which, I argue, founds critical Eurocentric political-legal philosophy. Central here is the invention of the mythologies of the ‘Event’ and of ‘Becoming’. I argue that for the philosopher of the European (post-)Enlightenment, betrayed by the Idea and abandoned by the ‘revolutionary-Subject’, the quest for a new Evental becoming is all consuming. I demonstrate that the ‘street’ presents precisely such an opportunity for rescue, the irruptions there witnessed serving to revive the heroic moment of ‘becoming-subject’ through the ‘Event’. But this, I argue, is a philosophy that perpetuates, still, colonial categories of Being. Against this philosophy of the ‘extra-ordinary’, I suggest a twofold correction: firstly, an emphasis on the persistent ordinariness of the perceived ‘extra-ordinary’ of the ‘street’ in order that the many worlds of resistance against the normalities of coloniality are de-invisibilised to philosophy; secondly, and consequently, a cognition of the resilient extraordinariness of the ‘ordinary’ everyday so that the worlds of being-otherwise to ‘Europe’ are returned to the philosophical register as present and real possibilities of being. What is intended by this ‘decolonial’ correction, as I elaborate below, is to return philosophy from the ‘street’ to the everyday locations, material conditions and experiences of embodied beings-in-the-world.¹⁰ In this task of rupturing the coloniality of philosophy, I suggest, we philosophers of rupture are ourselves implicated.

On the Ontology of Abandonment and Resurrection (and Disappointment).

We begin by directing our attention to the constitutive categories of the ‘European (post-)Enlightenment. By this I mean the fundamental concepts that found the ground from which (Eurocentric) political-legal philosophy is thought and the premises from which ‘critical’

discoveries are imagined to be made;¹¹ examples relevant to the present discussion include (Human)Being, sovereignty, the political, constituent and constituted power, subjectivity. Various, the attempt to reclaim some emancipatory meaning and content for these foundational categories of (presumed) human-being-ness in the world characterises much of the preoccupation of critical philosophy. What we are concerned to do here is to reveal the coloniality of the ontological foundations of this cosmology of the ‘Modern’, whereby the radical, ‘enlightened’ potentiality of human-being-ness was projected as the Idea of ‘Europe’ onto the world. I suggest that we can best understand this past, and present, of post-Enlightenment political-legal philosophy as being founded upon an ontology of *abandonment* and *resurrection*. The so-called ‘French Revolution’, as a philosophical invention, is a good place to start in this connection.

It would appear that no critical, transformative, engagement with the worlds of politics, of law, of democracy, of hope for better human futures in short, is possible, without some return and due reference to the ‘French Revolution’ as the ruptural moment of European human imagination and enactment, presented, as it often is, as an original, and originary, event in History. This is the moment of the great birth of ‘Man’-post-God, ‘degodded’ as Sylvia Wynter put it,¹² as ‘subject’ and ‘citizen’, a being-sovereign, author in and of the world. In this construction of the ‘Idea’ of being in History is the French Revolution, for the ‘post-Enlightenment’ philosopher of the European tradition, a constitutive ‘Event’, for with it, through it, is consolidated the advent of ‘Man’ as a necessary rupture from emptiness and darkness into fullness and belonging, the emergence from the abandonment and Void of Godless-ness into the secular ‘Word’ and ‘World’ of Reason-ed Enlightenment. This is a momentous becoming indeed. With the *invention* of the ‘French Revolution’, as ‘Event’ (quite aside and distinct from the temporal happenings and outcomes in France from 1789 and onwards),¹³ the ‘citizen’ thus replaces the ‘believer’, the ‘children of revolutionary sovereignty’

thus replaces the ‘children of God’, the violent ‘evental’ revolutionary-becoming thus the portend of the (im)possible secular resurrection of the human-as-citizen into the world of words and meaning absent mediation by the divine ascription of place-ments.¹⁴ Indeed, a ‘becoming’ into the world through an extra-ordinary Event – a secular resurrection as it were – is necessary to birth the ‘rupture’ and bring into ‘being’ the Modern promise of deliverance-salvation, necessary to relegate the claim of God (and His priests) on humanity to the fringes of ‘pre-modern’ superstition.¹⁵ Simply put, the ‘French Revolution’ – as invented by the repetitions of political-legal philosophers – marks the recurrent moment, and provides the repeated enunciation, for a spectacular send-off for (the Western version of the Judeo-Christian) God by the philosophy of a new (En)Light(enment) and the ‘liberation’ and ‘freedom’ of sovereign ‘Man’ thereby re-birthing.¹⁶ Thus was invented the ontology of (Colonial-)Modern Being-ness that so many take as given:

- That human-being-ness is the possibility of Becoming-Being out of Non-Being. We see this defined by the duality of the believer and the heathen under Occidental Christianity, traced to an earlier distinction between the (political-)sociality/civilisation of *bios* and the ‘naturalness’ of *zoe* in more ‘classical’ Grecian rationalisations.¹⁷
- That being-ness – as being-self as self-with-others – is, as such, haunted by the inherent and perpetual threat of abandonment to non-being, from *bios-community* to *zoe-bare life*. It is the (constantly strived for) universal potentiality and responsibility of Man therefore to Become into the ‘public’ as (ethical-)political-subject.¹⁸
- That this Becoming, out of Non-Being (*zoe-bare life*) into the World of political-Being-subject, is a process filled with ontological labour-pains; theories of ‘social contract’ enacted out of the extra-ordinary Event thus serves as the ‘Modern’ philosophical vehicle for this transformation from the extra-ordinary moment to the normalised future.

This is all well and good, no doubt significant for an understanding of the evolving cosmologies and philosophoscapes of the emerging ‘European-Man’ out of his ages-dark; the actual in the ‘ideal’ of this emancipation of the modern ‘subject’ was however something quite different.¹⁹ And the consequences for the post-Enlightenment philosopher following the many subsequent disappointments of History, grave.

A different, decolonial, telling of the philosophical biography of the ‘political subject’ begins with remembering that we are not merely recounting a ‘European-modern’ philosophical tale here. The birthing of the ‘modern’ universal ‘subject’ of the ‘political’ was coeval with its co-constitutive colonial underside; it was an ontological birth whose origins lay in the violent gestations, both material and cosmological, of the colonial ordering of the world. I don’t intend to repeat the readings of the history of History through a colonial-modern lens; this has amply been done effectively elsewhere.²⁰ My aim is more to draw-out the constituting premises that connect the current preoccupation of extra-ordinary becoming of (Western-ised) Man with prior colonial philosophies of ‘Being’ that sought to deny and thereby annihilate the manifold actuals of *already-(other-)being-ness* that constitutes the worlds of being-(variously)human.

We recall that the foundational assumptions and constitutive philosophical categories of Being, sovereignty, subject, political – were invented alongside the material enforcement of colonial-modern politics and law.²¹ From the very beginning, the universal Man of the Enlightenment was constructed on a whole array of geo- and body-political ‘disqualifications’;²² for all the assertions of the sovereignty of Man, it was the bordering of ‘population’ that marked the advent of the ‘sovereignty’ of (biopolitical) ‘government’.²³ This, to stress the point, was no ‘exception’ but the very actuality of colonial-modernity.²⁴ Indeed, a matter of anguish for the Eurocentric philosopher of the Enlightened subject is the continuing realisation that the inflicted and perpetuated suffering upon the majority of the human population is a matter of everyday and

ordinary reality, that the ‘exclusions’ and deprivations that are daily witnessed as defining the ‘actual’ of human-beingness under national and global orders of (b)ordered populations are a constitutive feature of the condition of (colonial-)modernity.

Aside from the dire actualities of the biopolitics of ‘populationisation’, the effects of ‘individualisation’ that has ensnared the ‘subject’ perhaps poses a greater disappointment to the philosopher. The problem, simply put, is a crisis of the ‘present’: the apparent complacent condition of Being that has come to define the settled-present of a domesticated subject. As Zygmunt Bauman observed, the ‘imagination’ that underpins the ‘post-political’, ‘post-modern’ consensus of neo-liberal ‘liquid modernity’, the result of the global consolidation of capitalism, is one whereby the much-vaunted ‘subject’ is concerned more with the ‘mining’ of ‘disengaged’ happiness and less with any historic mission for an Enlightened Humanity.²⁵ It would appear, the enticements of consumerism and entrepreneurism, more than some resurrection of a political subject into History defines the (post)modern condition of Being. And the consequence of this emptying out of ‘the political’ from the ‘subject’ is that of precarious being-ness and being ‘precariat’ as the ‘normal’ conditions of modern subjectivity.²⁶

Through all this, the philosopher, it would appear, stands abandoned by her ‘subject’. The abdication by the subject of her ‘historic’ responsibility of Becoming-Being-in-the-political is an ongoing disappointment for any critical political-legal philosopher who takes the universal promise of the ‘Enlightenment’ seriously; it is after all the repudiation, by embodied actual beings, of the philosophically-ascribed role of the political-subject to be the maker of History. Rescue is necessary therefore; recovery of the foundational promise of the Enlightenment is, for the philosopher of rupture, imperative. And so we understand the reasons for the following refinements to the original birth-story of the ‘political subject’ that we find in much current critical thinking:

- That to be denied being-(in the)‘political’, is to be either in abjection or in stupor, in ontological Nothingness as inexistent, or meaninglessness as a commodity, a thing not worthy of the legacy of the Idea of Europe. The former is the state of ‘rightless’ exclusion that concerned Arendt and her philosophical progeny, it is the condition of abandonment that preoccupies post-Agambenian philosophers of biopolitical sovereignty. The latter is the perceived condition of the contemporary biopolitical subject-object of governmentality - the ‘counted’ and the ‘accounted-for’, self-disciplining, held docile and domesticated to be nothing useful other than as ‘entrepreneurial citizen-consumers’ - that is the object of disappointment if not contempt. And so, the crisis of the present necessitates efforts to revive, if not rescue, even resurrect, the ‘political subject’ from either abandoned deprivations, or hedonistic automatony and consumptive banality.
- That Becoming-Subject, therefore, is the continuing ontological potentiality of ruptural emancipation. ‘Becoming’-subject, thus, is an ever incomplete project of Becoming-Being, in History.

With this critical reformulation of the Idea, we arrive at the present problem to ‘invent’, as Badiou put it, the ‘problem of the present’;²⁷ it becomes the task of the philosopher to identify the critical moments whereupon might History be glimpsed in ‘events’ of rupture, of becomings. We see variously therefore that the intention to reclaim some presumed emancipatory content to these related foundational assumptions of human-beingness permeate through the vast majority of critical thinking on the subject of the ‘subject’ in the political. The question that is addressed in such contemplations of the present is: how to rescue the emancipatory potentiality of the subject from the normalisations, and banalisations, of the present?²⁸ As Badiou poses it:

“How are we to be faithful to changing the world *within the world itself*? This becomes: How are we to weave in the world the political truth whose historic *condition of possibility* was the event, without it being able to be the realization of this possibility? How are we to inscribe politically, as active materiality under the sign of the Idea, a reawakening of History?”²⁹

And so we understand the particular preoccupation of the contemporary critical philosopher with the ‘Street’.

We witness the incessant search by philosophers of radical hope for such evental and heroic happenings; so is the world scoured for ruptural articulations, so are peoples’ struggles ascribed meaning *vis a vis* the constitutive categories of ‘modern’ political-legal philosophy. From the past are the French and American Revolutions (and their enunciations of universal subject-beingness) tracked through to the Russian and Chinese Revolutions (less so the Haitian and Mexican), then the revolts of 1968, to now (jumping a few decades) and the anti-globalisation movements post Seattle, the Occupy Movements, the ‘Arab Spring’, all grist to the mill of the philosopher in search of signs that faith in the ‘subject’ of the ‘political’ may be redeemed, that History itself may be reawakened. For the purpose of the Idea, therefore, are the instances of irruptions sought to be revisited, read repeatedly, and referred to in their many and varied interpretations as (potential) instances of Becoming - as Badiouian ‘Event’, as Rancierian ‘dissensus’, as Zizekian ‘Truth-Event/Act’, as Douzinasian ‘resistance/insurrection’.³⁰ The extra-ordinary is a constant preoccupation, we see.

Yet, notwithstanding the philosophical investment in the Event, life, when viewed through the lens of the heroic, inevitably disappoints. The event, in its materiality, is never quite as pure as its

philosophical version, never quite enough to transform ‘History’ sufficient for the philosopher’s satisfaction;³¹ moments of exalted extra-ordinary emancipation seemingly tire into languid returns to imperfection and corruption, domesticity, even ‘failure’. Žizek, for example, is quite clear:

“[W]e should avoid the temptation simply to admire the sublime beauty of uprisings that are *doomed to fail*. ... What new positive order should replace the old one, once the sublime enthusiasm of the uprising has waned? It is here that we encounter the fatal weakness of the current protests. They express an authentic rage that remains unable to transform itself into even a minimal positive programme for socio-political change. They express a spirit of revolt without revolution.”³²

If only people who struggle, who erupt, who promise such excitement to the philosopher, could be truer to their calling, possess greater ‘fidelity’ to their eventual cause, be firmer in their resolve to fulfil the ‘revolution’. Still, despite the many inadequacies and failures of these uprisings, as Žizek judges them, the ‘radical emancipatory core’ of such expressions of irruption, is affirmed.³³ Indeed for the Eurocentric ‘secular’ philosopher this ‘fidelity’ to the Idea is a matter of philosophical salvation/damnation. Without the extra-ordinary resurrection of some mythologised ‘subject’ birthed through the extra-ordinary ‘Event’, the post-Enlightenment philosopher of (Becoming-)Being is left devoid,³⁴ absent a cosmology of human-beingness that is able to withstand the abandonment of God, that makes such ‘degodding’ meaningful. And so we witness: a foundational ontology of abandonment and resurrection informs the philosophical ‘discoveries’ of critical post-Enlightenment philosophers of the ‘street’.

To us who are non-believers of this parochial faith-system however - for those of us non-Europeans less entranced by the advent of the secular subject of Becoming born out of the

‘Enlightenment’ of ‘Europe’ - a different reading of the philosophical ‘situation’ of the ‘present’ presents itself. With this un-enchanted understanding of History, we turn now to see and read differently the ‘street’ in the (extra)ordinariness of struggle.

On the Ordinariness of the ‘Extra-ordinary’.

Unintended it might be, but radical readings of spectacular extra-ordinary 'becoming' are premised still on prior constructions of human-beingness based on a colonial-modern ontologic-epistemology of Being/Non-Being. For the post-Enlightenment philosopher – Badiou – is exemplary - what is assumed is that to ‘be’ outside the ‘political’ is to be abandoned to inexistence whereby the ‘political’ has come to be the ontological standard of a post-divine, secular norm-ality of human-beingness proper, a life desired, a life full; as such ‘inexistence’ (Non-Being) in political-subjectivity is the underlying abandonment that defines the condition of the captured present that requires recovery and rescue.³⁵ The recovery and rescue of Eurocentric philosophy, that is; the ascription of extra-ordinary Becoming to events of irruption serves precisely, it appears to me, to enable such a rescue whereby the philosopher assumes that what is witnessed in these instances is the extra-ordinary ruptural assertion of the Idea, of the ‘subject’, claiming a belonging in the political, out of absence, out of ‘inexistence’, out of Nothing-ness, into (extra-ordinary-)Being, a ‘liberated’ entity – the ‘subject’ – as the ‘new’ in History. Badiou, again, is illustrative: “We shall then say that a *change of world* is real when an in-existent of the world starts to exist in this same world with maximum intensity.”³⁶ The emergence of a ‘new’ out of inexistence is the heroic core of post-Enlightenment political-legal philosophy.

A simple counter-affirmation serves as our point of departure for a decolonial correction to ‘white ignorance’.³⁷ We can state it simply thus: prior to the apparent extra-ordinary moment

which draws the (critical) philosopher's gaze to rest upon the manifestations and expressions of rebellious life, persists the daily manoeuvrings of communities in struggle in their encounters with the totalising desires of appropriative power. In this view, what is witnessed as the extraordinary Becoming of the 'new' into the world is but the material and exigent appearance of persistent, if largely 'invisible' being(-otherwise) whose everyday is the ordinary struggle against extant orders of asserted normalities. It is this that I here term *already-(other-)being* that underpins a decolonial philosophy. And it is this presence, and persistence that is lost to critical Eurocentric philosophers of rupture; we see this, for example, in the philosopher's apparent discovery of 'dissensus'.

We observe the following: the critical philosopher's discoveries of ruptural Becomings is informed repeatedly, to use Santiago-Gomez's phrase, of a 'point-zero' perspective on human life-worlds.³⁸ By this is meant a perspective whereby it is the 'discovery' of the 'other' (as imagined) by the philosopher that begets the worlds of meaning from whence History, as a projection of the Idea, marches on. This we observe is commonplace in much recent thinking and writing on 'resistance' and 'dissensus'. For example, in concluding his analysis of the Tunisian uprisings which marked the start of the so-called 'Arab Spring', Illan Wall reflects thus:

"In terms of strategies of resistance then, I want to underline the importance of learning to live together without loyalty, without the everyday presupposition that the state is naturally and inexorably there. It is the interruption of everyday authority that is crucial. ...this inoperativity is already there. ... Let me suggest then, that the point of articulation between the critical legal theory of dissensus and the Tunisian events is the question: how to unwork sovereign power on an everyday basis, without reinstituting the same logics once more?"³⁹

Wall's is a thoughtful, and respectful reading of 'resistance', rooted and influenced by Jean-Luc Nancy's notion of 'inoperativity'; indeed he is mindful not to "appropriate the politics of the 'post-colony' and put it to work for some 'European' project."⁴⁰ However, as with all Eurocentric view-ings of the worlds of 'rupture/resistance', the 'point-zero' perspective is marked here. What I mean by this is that the analysis assumes a (dissensual) moment, an event, from which the extra-ordinary emergence/becoming of a new is discovered; a perspective that identifies 'dissensus' in moments of 'emergence' out of perceived absence or inexistence after all is one which assumes a prior 'consensus', a norm-ality from which then the 'interruption' is thought to be witnessed. From this point-zero then are 'strategies of resistance' postulated, futures anticipated, as a 'new' in the world.

But let us pause. For whom this normality of consensus from which dissensus is celebrated? From whose location of thought this reading of the new of 'interruption'? For whom, and from which moment on, the novelty of this discovery? Even as Wall's account of the Ben Ali regime is nuanced, an assumption of a prior normality of the 'political' as a 'consensus' still persists here. A decolonial view instead, I suggest, begins precisely from a demystification of that assumption of *consensus* and a re-cognition of the many undersides of persistent refusal against such presumptions of normality. I explain below.

Wall's view and imagination suffers from a common inability of the well-intentioned Eurocentric philosopher to see a different normality when gazing upon the world, to comprehend that the "interruptions of everyday authority", and the non-reification of the state, are perhaps, for social majorities the world over, the persistent everyday unsentimental normalities of their ordinary being even as they appear subservient; for them, the "importance of learning to live together without loyalty, without the everyday presupposition that the state is naturally and inexorably there" may rather be better understood and realised than assumed by the critical philosopher

who earnestly exhorts such ‘rupture’ based on some discovery of the extra-ordinary ‘event’. Indeed, such exuberance at fixing a meaning of extra-ordinariness to the eruptional manifestation of persistent refusals, however ‘incompletely’ as Wall claims to do, might well be to impoverish rather than enrich understandings of the extraordinariness of the normalities of resistance, it might continue invisibilising the the rich tapestry of actually present consciousness and experiences of (already-)being that refuse the ‘consensus’ of the present as assumed by the critical post-Enlightenment philosopher. Let us be frank. Nothing is added to the actualities or the materialities of life and struggle by the philosophical naming of an eruption of anger or refusal as ‘Event’ or ‘dissensus’, neither are extant orderings of the ‘political’ as bordered normalities of governmentality challenged by the invented duality of consensus/dissensus; all such ascriptions do is to attach to a given time and place particular abstracted categories based on presumed universal truths of Being-ness. In doing so, the pasts, presents and infinite futures that define the materialities of life and struggle are conveniently subsumed under the celebratory reification of an instant that is read as ‘evental’, marking a progressive node in History as promised by the heroic mythology of the European-Enlightenment; in this, Wall does not escape from the ‘appropriation’ of the post-colony for the ‘European’ project.

A decolonial philosophical perspective might understand ‘resistance’ and struggle differently, grounded as it is in the experiences of past and present struggles of ordinary human-beingness outside of the privileging gaze of the post-Enlightenment philosopher: notwithstanding both the material infliction of violence and the ideological-biopolitical constructions of subject-ontologies, subjected human populations remain in their majority stubborn in their multiplicities of already-being as other to the totalising ascription of being-subject that is the biopolitical project of the sovereign assertion.⁴¹ What is significant in this ‘other’ ontology of being – not fixated with tropes of abandonment and resurrection - is its rootedness in the histories and materialities of everyday resistance to the coloniality of power.⁴²

As an example of a reading of the (extra)ordinary, in contrast to philosophers eager to discover extra-ordinary rupture in the ‘events’ of the street, James C. Scott provides a profoundly insightful corrective.⁴³ Scott’s insight was to recognise, as the ‘infra-politics’ of ‘hidden transcripts’, the everyday ordinariness of resistance in their many forms amongst subjected populations; for Scott, such hidden transcripts compose variedly disguised and persistent articulations and manifestations of opposition to the assumptions, desires, and reach, of power. Rejecting the commonly held-view that the everyday ‘petty’ actions by subordinate groups to defy, thwart the smooth operation of, mock, negotiate through, and stretch the limits of permissibility and ‘(il)legality’ of power are little more than insignificant acts of relieving the pressures of subjugation, Scott presents these as vital forms of resistance, of conscious and dignified praxes of living through and denouncing the claims of power. In this way, Scott also returns the extra-ordinary irruptions of manifested and articulated anger/refusal/reversals that periodically occur to their rightful place within the spectrum of the (extra)ordinariness of life in worlds of domination and resistance. Importantly, Scott’s reaffirmation of the ordinary in this respect points also to the presence of *(already-)being* as it pertains to my argument:

“The limits of the possible are encountered only in an empirical process of search and probing.

The dynamic of this process, it should be clear, holds only in those situations in which it is assumed that most subordinates conform and obey *not* because they have internalized the norms of the dominant, but because a structure of surveillance, reward and punishment makes it prudent for them to comply. It assumes, in other words, a basic antagonism of goals between dominant and subordinates that is held in check by relations of discipline and punishment.”⁴⁴

The connection Scott makes between the operations of the ‘hidden transcript’ and the moments of public eruption of rebellion is significant for our purposes for two reasons: firstly, it brings to prominence the non-totalisation of subordinated populations within the diagrams of ‘subjectivities’, be they of ‘inclusion’ or ‘exclusion’, even as they might appear to operate as docile subjects manipulated by the ideologies of naturalisation and normalisation that permeate through the biopolitical attempts at reconstituting purported ‘political belonging’ in the everyday; and secondly, in that it highlights the significance of the extraordinariness of ordinary being that is more creative and calculating in negotiating the risk/benefits of biopolitical rewards and punishments.⁴⁵

We see, therefore, with Scott, that it is not Nothingness, nor Non-Being, nor ‘inexistence’ in abject abandonment, that defines the ‘excluded’ when viewed through a decolonial lens. Rather, prior to, and concurrent with, the colonising and totalising advent of the ‘subject’ are already vibrant presences in the world that are cosmologically rich and vital, various and diverse. ‘Being’-ness in this sense remains present, even in the face of colonising violence, both corporeal and philosophical, invisibilised and silenced perhaps, silent often, made subaltern no-doubt, even self-doubting as it may be, yet tenacious in its perseverance and creativity. Understood in this light, it is less the heroic, extra-ordinary advent of the resurrected subject than the ordinary resilience and creativity of (already-)being that defines decoloniality.⁴⁶

But there is nothing exceptional, nothing out of the ordinary, that is being described in these observations. In contrast to thinking that originates from (Eurocentric) exceptionalism, this is a thinking which seeks no ‘historical moment’ to beckon the extraordinariness of human fortitude and creativity against the desires of colonising appropriation, either of bodies or of minds. Life, we learn, is simply not that spectacular in its infinite unfolding. ‘History’ as a philosophical idea

and ideal of the ‘European Enlightenment’ is not the concern here; the decolonial philosopher is not so obsessed with recovering such a faith. Rather, what is of concern is the everyday resilience of struggle against coloniality, both material and philosophical. As Gustavo Esteva and Madhu Suri Prakash remind us:

“For the most part, ... the main actors of the unfolding epic remain unknown to the world created by modern media; thereby still protected or sheltered from the forces that co-opt, tempt, or seduce those suddenly blinded by overnight fame and “front-page” limelight. In many cases, people’s reactions to the “Global Project” have not yet taken the shape of “a movement”: they have not a specific name or label with which they identify themselves or are identified by others. Their informal condition as the unnamed and the unidentified is an important aspect of their politics, often offering them the camouflage essential to their survival; as is their “failure” to adopt any “institutional structure”.”⁴⁷

Obviously, ‘they’ do surface from time to time, unleashing their anger, their refusal, their expression of being (already and other) against continued attempts to make them compliantly ‘subject’; the ‘subaltern’ indeed does speak, even if otherwise than the comprehensible frames of speech that make them audible to colonial listeners!⁴⁸ This is to say that it really does not matter to the actual worlds of everyday ‘resistance’ and ‘inoperativity’ whether or not philosophers of rupture ascribe meaning and significance to the infinite ways of (already-)being that constitute human-beingness. Such is the persistent truth of the ordinary: the ‘slave’ – the ontological non-subject that has fixated many a critical thinker – for all the philosophical negation that purportedly constructs the non-beingness of ‘slave’, still, as already-being other-than-slave, unceasingly rises up against the ‘master’; repeatedly and everywhere, thus are lived out the

extraordinariness of the ordinary truth wherein the negated continue to negate the negater! The following two declarations are illustrative:

“Our autonomy doesn’t need permission from the government: it already exists.”⁴⁹

“What do we have to ask forgiveness for? What are they to “pardon” us?... Who should ask for forgiveness and who can grant it?”⁵⁰

Examples abound where the subjugated refuses to be subsumed within the ‘consensus’, remembering and dreaming a life otherwise; the ‘negro’ articulates the radical power of ‘black skins’; the women who were ‘invisible’ stand at the forefront of a march; the indigenous refuses to be decimated by ‘civilisation’ through the simple refusal ‘Ya Basta’; the ‘alien’ affirms that ‘no one is illegal’; the economically superfluous and disposable self-names ‘indignados’. All of these are significant not for any eventual Becoming into the World – such would be the heroic reading that fixes, and thereby perverts, the moments of the (extra)ordinary in reified moments of purported before and after – rather, in that they voice the extraordinariness of ordinary refusal and affirmation of an ever-present being-otherwise. Ordinary being in ways otherwise than prescribed and assigned by ‘sovereign’ assertions of authority and prescriptions of names and place-ments already contain within them not the nothingness of inexistence or non-being but the rich tapestry of existing social and philosophical resources of being, of refusal, of desubjectification, even as these might largely be invisible, silent, compliant.

None of this is new to philosophers less fixated with the extra-ordinary promises of the ‘European Enlightenment’ for the extra-ordinary subject of History. Many have variously described the persistence of decolonial refusal: Mignolo, as the material and psycho-social formations of ‘border thinking’;⁵¹ Chatterjee, as the manoeuvrings and calculated negotiations of

life that define the ‘politics of the governed’;⁵² Satrin, as the revolutions of creativity and resilience in reclaiming *horizontalidad* and autonomy by community and worker organisations;⁵³ de Sousa Santos, as the living pluriverse of the ecologies of knowledges and the epistemologies of the south.⁵⁴ Tempting as it is to focus our critical philosophical attention on spectacular events (of perceived ‘rupture’), the everydayness that originates such visible and public enactments and enunciations, and the untamed consciousness of insubordination, disobedience and rebellion that nourishes and informs these journeys of hope, remind us that the sovereign assertion of totality and normality are less successful in constructing identities of subject-beingness than either the masters of the universe or critical philosophers of rupture might assume.

Let me be clear. This distinction I am drawing between the notions of ‘extra-ordinary’ evental rupture on the one hand and the ordinariness of the ‘extra-ordinary’ on the other would matter little if all that is at stake here is a matter of philosophical word-play. I am suggesting however that the distinction is critical to a decolonial correction of the way we read ‘resistance’ and envisage other possibilities to the problem of the present. The recognition and reintroduction of ordinary already-being to philosophy returns the ‘extra-ordinary’ back to the materiality of the everyday. Importantly, such a de-privileging of the constitutive categories of Eurocentrism returns attention to the invisibilised and silenced truths (of consciousness and imagination) that define the persistence of struggles (and of hope) in the everyday. It is here, in this everyday of the ‘ordinary’ materialities of living-life, wherein the extraordinariness of decoloniality resides.

On the Extraordinariness of the ‘Ordinary’.

“[T]he most revolutionary thing we can do is strive to create new social relationships within our territories – relationships that are born of the struggle, and are maintained and expanded by it.”⁵⁵

Eruptions of anger and refusal, of bodies emergent onto the street, of voice and song and chants, of dreams articulated against the decadent normalities of the present, these indeed are important occasions of celebration which remind History of the utter unpredictability of futures regardless of presents however seemingly entrenched they might be. These are thrilling events no doubt; they portend passage often, and importantly so at that. But this said, the significant pathways of decoloniality are not charted by these moments of the ‘street’, they are laid before and travelled hence, after the thrill has gone, so to speak,⁵⁶ in the everyday ‘revolutions’, as Raul Zibech reminds us, ‘to create new social relationships’. I argue that it is precisely this necessary actuality of being-otherwise that is missed by Eurocentric philosophers in their quests for the extra-ordinary resurrection of the reified ‘subject’ of History. To put it bluntly, such inability, or refusal, to ‘see’ beyond the European frame of the world of Being is to perpetuate a colonial philosophy of Eurocentric arrogance. Before I explain my meaning of the extraordinariness of the ordinary, it is worth demonstrating the continuing coloniality of such purportedly radical post-Enlightenment thought; Zizek serves as an example.

Zizek’s anguish, frustration, impatience, with the state of the world and its thinking in the present is constantly repeated. In this he is utterly dismissive of the “left liberal morons” in Europe and contemptuous of their self-flagellation in “confessing Europe’s own sins” and in “humbly accepting the limitations of the European legacy”; for Zizek it is precisely a fervent fidelity to the ideas and ideals of ‘Europe’ that is necessary to overcome the problems of the present.⁵⁷ Whilst disdainful of ‘reformists’, Zizek is also dismissive of the many expressions of peoples’ anger that have so excited other philosophers of ruptural hope; Zizek explains:

“It is not enough, then, to reject the depoliticized rule of the experts; one must also begin to think seriously about what to propose in place of the predominant economic

organization, to imagine and experiment with alternative forms of organization, to search for the germs of the new in the present. Communism is not just or predominantly a carnival of mass protest ... it is also and above all a new form of organization, discipline and hard work.”⁵⁸

This perceived carnivalistic tendency, this lack of substantive organisation towards ‘communism’, is for Zizek unsatisfactory. This said, Zizek then cautions against any such attempt to actualise such alternatives:

“However, following a properly dialectical necessity, this urge to *invent* new forms of organization should simultaneously be kept at a distance. What should be resisted at this stage is any hasty translation of the energy of the protest into a set of concrete demands. The protests have created a vacuum – a vacuum in the field of hegemonic ideology, and time is needed to fill this space in a positive fashion.”⁵⁹

These two apparently contradictory wisdoms can only be reconciled perhaps if we understand that herein is the space reserved for the ilk of Zizek, to do the work of searching for the “germs of the new in the present”, to criticise, to think, to dismiss, to fill that space, that ‘vacuum’, with “positive content”; the radical philosopher emerges as the contemporary priest, if not oracle, to serve as the heroic arbiter of the true path:

“The only way out of this dilemma is to abandon the entire paradigm of “resistance to a *dispositive*” ... The task of emancipatory politics lies elsewhere: not in elaborating a proliferation of strategies of “resisting” the dominant *dispositif* from marginal subjective

positions, but in thinking about the modalities of a possible radical rupture in the dominant *dispositif* itself.”⁶⁰

Thus the Zizekian assumption of judgement - of the good, the bad and the pointless of ‘revolt’ *qua* revolution.⁶¹

But a series of issues arise from Zizek’s impatience and irritation with non-revolutionary ‘revolt’. It is unclear who it is to be charged with the responsibility to “[think] about the modalities of a possible radical rupture in the dominant *dispositif* itself”; no explanation of what it means to think and act a radical rupture of the ‘dominant *dispositif*’, or when such truths may be known as truth, are provided. All that is known is that thus spoke Zizek. There is no equivocation here, no doubt of judgement and proclamation. For Zizek, nothing but an absolute fidelity to the Idea that is Europe, rebirthed by revolutionary terror ala the French Revolution, would satisfy. Therefore, it is not just the ‘moronic’ dispositions of the European reformists that find no accommodation in Zizekian visions of the communist ‘revolution’, but no dilution of the essential ‘core’ of the European legacy as might be suggested by ‘other’ wisdoms of being can be tolerated.⁶² Zizek’s reading of the ‘ambiguous’ nature of the rebellion of the Zapatista communities in Chiapas, Mexico, illustrates this well:

“we encounter here the same ambiguity: are these autonomous spaces [reclaimed by the Zapatista communities] germs of the organization-to-come of the entire society, or *just* phenomena emerging in the crevices and gaps in the social order? Marcos’s formulation that the Zapatistas are not interested in the Revolution but, rather, in a revolution that makes revolution possible is deeply true, but nonetheless profoundly ambiguous. Does this mean that the Zapatistas are a “Cultural Revolution” laying the foundation for the *actual* political revolution ... or does it mean that they should remain *merely* a site of

resistance, a corrective to the existing power (not only without the aim to replace it but without the aim to organize conditions in which this power will disappear)?”⁶³

What is here revealed is the inherent colonial tendencies that persist. Whilst Zizek calls for a ‘radical rupture’ of the ‘dominant *dispositif*’, he cannot accept that it might be precisely the assumptions of the idea of ‘Europe’ that requires rupturing; In this connection, Zizek’s Eurocentrism disables him from envisaging what Ghassan Hage terms an ‘alter-politics’, that is ‘a politics aimed at providing an alternative to the political order’, as opposed to ‘anti-politics’ that is an ‘oppositional politics aimed at resisting and defeating the existing order’.⁶⁴ That perhaps it is precisely an alternative to the Eurocentric imagination of the political order (as rupture of the ‘*dispositif*’) that is at the heart of the Zapatista’s ‘theoretical revolution’,⁶⁵ appears to be lost on Zizek as he sits in judgement on the future of ‘revolution’. And as Zizek waits, so must we wait, and trust, or so appears to be the prescription for the ‘future’.⁶⁶ Seen from a decolonial perspective which does not still cling on fervently to a faith in the ‘lost causes’ of a mythical “European legacy” however Zizek’s Eurocentrism results in a negation of imagination itself; being fixed on some fantastical Truth-Event, such Eurocentric readings of the world are incapable precisely to see beyond the coloniality of ‘post-Enlightenment’ categories. Hamid Dabashi provides a scathing response:

“Zizek and his fellow philosophers are oblivious to those [other decolonial] geographies because they cannot read any other script, any other map, than the colonial script and the colonial map with which Europeans have read and navigated the world; conversely they cannot read any other script or map because they are blinded to alternative geographies that resistance to that colonialism had written and navigated. ..There is a new condition beyond postcoloniality that these Europeans cannot read, hard as they try to assimilate it

back into the condition of coloniality. ... European philosophers chase after their own tails”.⁶⁷

In contrast to Zizek’s preoccupation with the ‘actual political revolution’, we consider rather the path of ‘living’ (rather than death) that was chosen by the communities of the ‘Zapatistas’ (and the very many actual communities around the world that live their struggles for life). Here we see the essence of the ‘alternative geographies’ of resistance that Dabashi speaks of, of the ordinary that is the radical decolonial rupture rooted in the materialities of life (and death) of embodied beings as opposed to those of reified (universal) ‘subjects’:

“rather than dedicating ourselves to training guerrillas, soldiers, and squadrons, we developed education and health promoters, who went about building the foundations of autonomy that today amaze the world.

Instead of constructing barracks, improving our weapons, building walls and trenches, we built schools, hospitals and health centers; improving our living conditions.

Instead of fighting for a place in the Pantheon of individualized deaths of those from below, we chose to construct life.”⁶⁸

This is a concise articulation of the everyday, of convivial and socially-rooted ‘beings’ being in the world. In these everyday actions of ‘choosing life’ (not in some beautiful future to-come but in the very uncertainties and struggles in the present) at the same time is expressed the most profound substance of decoloniality; Subcomandante Marcos continued, in his ‘final communique’ to stress this, the ordinary, its radicality rooted in the lives of the ordinary:

“And the most important [change]: the change in thinking: from revolutionary vanguardism to ‘rule by obeying’; from taking Power Above to the creation of power

below; from professional politics to everyday politics; from the leaders to the people; from the marginalisation of gender to the direct participation of women; from the mocking of other to the celebration of difference. ... Personally, I don't understand why thinking people who affirm history is made by the people get so frightened in the face of an existing government of the people where 'specialists' are nowhere to be seen."⁶⁹

Thus is the extraordinary work of decoloniality in all its messy, mundane materiality: to choose life over death, to regenerate socialities and cultures of being, to remember what human-beingness means and involves. And here lies the radicality of decolonial thinking and being. In these already present struggles of the social majorities are ways of being-otherwise the living experiments of actual rupture, not of reified philosophical categories but of material life-worlds. As 'other' to Zizek's 'actual political revolution', as an alter-politics that ruptures the *dispositive* of colonial-modernity, the Zapatista's experiments with choosing life correspond to what Eduardo Viveiros de Castro described as the life-worlds of 'primitive societies' existing as exterior to the state,

“as the force of anti-production permanently haunting the productive forces, and as the conceptual embodiments of the thesis that another world is possible: that there is life beyond capitalism, as there is society outside of the State.”⁷⁰

In such 'primitive societies', are the actual 'hard work' of creating new forms of organisations (Zizek), and the daily manoeuvres of unworking sovereign power (Wall), the normal and (extra)ordinary matters of survival, solidarity and regeneration. What this struggle involves in the everyday is the very material and existential matters of eating, learning, healing, playing, dreaming, dancing, even shitting, in other words, of 'living', in living communities of solidarity and hope.⁷¹ Understood in this light, the work of a decolonial correction pertains to the refusal

precisely to be subject to what Wynter terms the Eurocentric ‘descriptive statement’ of the human – the very ontological assumptions of human-being-ness – that informs post-Enlightenment, colonial-modern subject-beingness.⁷² To speak ‘rupture’ in philosophy as particular ‘Events’ are named and heralded is no difficult task; it is quite something else to insert the struggles to transform the material conditions of coloniality, as they persist in the everyday, into philosophical registers of ‘meanings’. In this connection, the philosophical work of the ‘decolonial’ pertains to the tasks of de-naming the normalities of being-ness in the world as inscribed by colonial philosophies of Being-Becoming.

There is little here that might appear as satisfactory to the gaze of the post-Enlightenment philosopher concerned with the heroic politics of rupture; the material organisation, for example, of shitting -the ‘economies’ of shit as it were - after all is not quite as spectacular as the ‘politics’ of riots and street occupations.⁷³ And yet, this is precisely the necessary correction in my view that might be rightfully regarded as ‘decoloniality’; in the materiality of the ordinary lies the extraordinary decolonial imagination and practical resilience of communities who, regardless of the presumed totality of colonial philosophical-political construction of (b)ordered subjectification past and present, built, and continue to build “schools, hospitals and health centers” to improve their living conditions, “chose to construct life”, outside of the embrace of ‘biopolitical care’, refused to ‘be’ what they were assigned to be in spaces, both geographical and cosmo-philosophical, remaining other-wise than ascribed and enforced. Simply put, this is how, largely invisible, and in the margins, are actual revolutions’ lived, how ‘horizontal’ and autonomous lives are regenerated in ways that are resistant and creative.⁷⁴ Once we understand this ordinary wisdom, and extraordinary struggles of being-otherwise, then we might begin seeing, and learning, ourselves, from the extraordinariness of ordinary being that define the decolonial actualities of the world’s social majorities. The question then is what do *we* make of such a realisation as we philosophise rupture.

To Conclude.

An underlying ontology of abandonment-resurrection founds Eurocentric readings of extraordinary becoming, and it continues to inform radical post-Enlightenment efforts to rescue the 'Idea' of the historical 'subject'. This reified abstraction, born out of a figure of desolation, continues to agonise the 'European' mind, unhealed still from the wound of godlessness, betrayed by the many cruelties of History. Appear Kafka's 'man from the country', awaiting by the gate of Law in perplexity and longing. Many interpretations are available for this little parable, most focus on the law as discourse and practice. I think it apt differently. Kafka's 'man from the country' condemned to meaningless and perpetual abandonment perfectly personifies the horrifying spectre for the critical philosopher; indeed we might suggest that it is precisely the abandoned philosopher, waiting by the gates of the promise of History that the 'man from the country' actually represents! From such despair is hope sought to be resurrected. Despite the repeated efforts to reinvent the glorious 'revolution' that birthed the 'Enlightened' subject, this is a bereft origins for thinking; the abandoned subject, the poor soul from the country, in all the various accounts and interpretations of Kafka's protagonist, has no life, no laughter, no love, no embodiment, no memory, no materiality, rather it is the very desolation of the subject that serves as the origins of thinking-Being amongst philosophers.

No wonder then that critical philosophers of the 'street' find themselves constantly oscillating between hope and disappointment with every perceived evental occurring, 'chasing after their own tails' as it were. But more than this, I suggest, is that such a philosophy does precisely the opposite of rupturing the present; in all its bravado in proclaiming the next resurrection of History's mandate, it is irrelevant to the actual workings of coloniality which continues untouched by the radical posturings of heroic philosophers, as it is to the politics of dismay and

disavowal as witnessed by recent resurgences of nationalistic populisms, as well as to the manifold experiments with decolonial being that enrich the geographies of being-otherwise to 'Europe'. We remember Franz Fanon's advice from long ago, that humanity is better served by leaving behind the Idea of 'Europe', to abandon its precepts and promises: "where they were never done talking of Man ...today we know with what sufferings humanity has paid for every one of their triumphs of mind."⁷⁵ 'Leaving behind the idea of Europe': for this, we must begin to learn from outside and beyond the assumptions of the categories of normality and exceptionality of human-beingness that underpin European 'civilisation'. Instead, we might begin by thinking 'critically' in the sense suggested by Hage (as he considers the lessons of 'critical anthropology') to "reflexively move outside of ourselves such that we can start seeing ourselves in ways we could not have possibly seen ourselves, our culture or our society before."⁷⁶ Then might we understand that,

"we can be radically other than what we are. Our otherness is always dwelling within us: there is always more to us than we think, so to speak. ... Critical anthropology, appropriately enough, is more akin to the shamanic act of inducing a haunting: indeed it encourages us to feel haunted at every moment of our lives by what we are/could be that we are not." (289-90)⁷⁷

The dual responsibility to be haunted by the radical 'other' as possibility, and to serve as the shaman to induce such a haunting, usefully describes the decolonial philosophical labour. Rather than seeking out life (in its extraordinariness) to conform to some pre-figured philosophical category of extra-ordinary subject-becoming/Being, a decolonial perspective would learn from the (extra)ordinary experiences of struggle of peoples from which to demythologise the ontologic-epistemologies of 'Europe' as a colonial invention. Two simultaneous tasks are urgent, both pertaining to a *rupture of philosophy*. Firstly, a dismantling of the philosophical (European)

Self that has hitherto cast its defining gaze upon the world so that we might better see and sense the haunting of the radical other upon our-selves, and following from this, secondly, a dismantling of the substantive foundational categories of post-Enlightenment philosophical structures, and thus of the technologies of naming and emplacing bordered subject-beingness that normalise the coloniality of power.

With respect the former, we begin by critical self-cognition. We, philosophers of 'rupture', are so easy in our conjuring up of philosophical engagements with the extra-ordinary. And in doing so, we project our visions and contemplations as if the peoples of the worlds, caught up in the diagrams we expose, need our wisdoms for their salvation. This, we think the role of the insurrectionary intellectual. But this is a deflection of the 'critical question' of what it means to be human-being. The thinker thinks the 'world' out there, projecting thoughts and imaginations for liberated futures to an external realm of the 'problem', a 'liberation' of the 'other'. Thus is the 'event' spoken of and the extra-ordinary read in certain moments, thus are 'epistemic insurrections' and 'strategies of resistance' envisioned, all to transform the 'world', whilst the ordinary moments and the locations of the thinker-in-the-world, of the existential implicatedness of the professional(ised) philosopher of liberation, is excused the urgency of liberation, absented the ontology of colonisation and subjugation, denied the embodiment of subjugation itself. Jose Medina exemplifies such a position of deflection:

"The critical task of the scholar and the activist is to resurrect subjugated knowledges – that is, to revive hidden or forgotten bodies of experiences and memories – and to help produce insurrections of 'subjugated knowledges. ... Such insurrections involve the difficult labor of mobilizing scattered, marginalized publics and of tapping into the critical potential of their dejected experiences and memories. ... those subjects by

themselves may not be able to destabilize the epistemic *status quo* until they are given a voice at the epistemic table...’’⁷⁸

These are noble intentions but how different this from the ‘critical thinking’ of Hage? The clear demarcation of an ‘us’ and ‘them’ in Medina’s ‘difficult labours’ of insurrectionary thinking involves no process of being ‘haunted’ by they who are the other who require rediscovery and salvation. The ‘scholar and the activist’ appears not subject to the critical insurrections envisaged; in this, neither the ‘self’ nor the ‘office’ of the ‘critical thinker’ factor as being constituent of the ‘world’ as ‘worlds’ of resistance and liberation are thought and proffered, the thinker-thinking-liberation is the one ‘subject’ in and of the world that figures little in critical theories of subjugation/liberation, whose everyday ordinary world does not confront the demands of ‘rupture’. Thinking the ‘extra-ordinary’ enables precisely such deflection.

Instead, we might think critically differently: to see coloniality as it is imprinted upon our worlds, to see our-selves differently. Perhaps we might then see that it is us who are the ones utterly colonised even as we pride ourselves with our endeavours of ‘thinking’ critically; our radical outpourings being just another commodity in a system of exchange where anything can be so. Through this other-view we might begin to learn that, the world over, communities in struggle within the social majorities, in their being already and other, do indeed live out ‘actual revolutions’, before, through and after the ‘revolutions’ of philosophers, theirs being lives non-transfixed to the colonial-modern mythologies of the ‘Enlightenment’, their time not defined by the before and afters of abandonments by History and resurrections of ‘Events’, even as the events of refusals, celebrations, resistance and reaffirmations, when these so unpredictably occur, are significant expressions of their beingness. The stuff of decolonial struggle, in this understanding, is precisely the work to be-otherwise in the face of the norm-alities of coloniality, and this indeed is extraordinary. The question is whether ‘we’ have the capacity so to be

decolonial non-subjects, to ourselves rupture from the normalities that secures us our 'places' in this world of rewards (and punishments) and care? Can we, in other words, contemplate that (extra)ordinary possibility of being our-selves other-wise? For then might we share in the struggle to imagine the substantive rupture of coloniality.

The philosophical task for the 'European-ised'⁷⁹ philosopher becoming-otherwise then would be to dereify the invention of the foundational categories of post-Enlightenment ontologic-epistemology; this includes such sacraments as 'sovereignty', the 'subject', the 'political', and with it, the underlying conception of a (propertied-)self that serves as the ontological foundation of colonial-modern political-legal philosophy. The result of such a correction might be that we neither seek to reclaim some lost humanity from discredited (Enlightenment) institutions of the state (as liberal 'reformers' are inclined to do), nor to reclaim some Evental-Truth of mythologised Becomings that would transform/return 'political-sovereignty' and subjectivity (as are the inclinations of so-called radicals), but rather to de-name the very assumed ontological categories themselves. This is a lot more than a philosophical exercise. The rupture of categories in this way entails the material encounter with the structures of power, of the state, of the market, of the purported 'subject', in order that what is understood as the givenness of human-beingness is interrupted. The point is this: a decolonial correction would begin the critical task of thinking against 'norm-ality' by taking, as the philosophical point of departure, the (extra)ordinary refusals of the 'social majorities' to be-subject. Thus the task of the 'critical' philosopher is less one to educate 'them', out there, with our insurrectionary wisdom, but more, first and foremost, to enable an unlearning, ours included.⁸⁰ This is perhaps a somewhat more discomforting a burden for the heroic philosopher than it is to pontificate upon the 'ruptures' of the 'street', but what better reason than this to think the (extra)ordinary?

¹ Costas Douzinas, *Philosophy and Resistance in the Crisis: Greece and the Future of Europe* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), p.9.

² I direct my thoughts in this essay to those who would identify with my use of ‘we’ and ‘us’ in this context – professional(ised) thinkers, ‘radical/critical’ philosophers, scholarly ‘intellectual insurrectionaries’ and the like. It is my intention to be self-critical, to interrogate the presumptions and assumptions of intellectual labour, particularly as these are informed by philosophical Eurocentrism. I don’t claim any competence to speak to any wider ‘activist’ audience, who may or may not share similar afflictions of intellectual presumptuousness.

³ For such articulations of critical function and responsibility, see for example Costas Douzinas, “A Short History of the British Critical Legal Conference or, the Responsibility of the Critic,” *Law & Critique* 25, no. 2 (2014); José Medina, “Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology of Resistance: Counter-Memory, Epistemic Friction, and Guerrilla Pluralism,” *Foucault Studies*, no. 12 (October 2011); and Andreja Zevnik, “Sovereign-less Subject and the Possibility of Resistance,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 38, no. 1 (2009).

⁴ The ‘street’ (including the ‘square’), as I use the term in this essay, is a reified ‘public’ space of abstract, depersonalised appearances. It is, as we will see, the location of thought for much ‘critical’ affirmations of the political as ruptural praxes. A different ‘street’ is that on which the existential relationalities of street dwellers and other philosophically invisible figures are played out. Such streets figure less in critical philosophical contemplations.

⁵ See, Douzinas, *Philosophy and Resistance*; Slavoj Žižek, *The Year of Dreaming Dangerously* (London: Verso, 2012); Alain Badiou, *Rebirth of History: Times of Riots and Uprisings*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2012). See also, Illan Wall, “Tunisia and the Critical Legal Theory of Dissensus,” *Law & Critique* 23, no. 3 (2012); Oscar Guardiola-Rivera, “A Jurisprudence of Indignation,” *Law & Critique* 23, no. 3 (2012).

⁶ Douzinas, *Philosophy and Resistance*, 9 (emphasis mine). Douzinas, is a prominent witness and fervent advocate of the revolutionary significance of the street; the claims he makes are bold. They are also, quite simply, rather trite. Some cursory questions are sufficient to demonstrate the point: *ours* is an age of resistance, so it is claimed, but as opposed to which other age that was not?; according to whom, and seen from whose vantage point?; *ours*, meaning whose?; the European?; based on some assumed normality which was an *age* based on what, whose, consensus?; on what concrete ‘historical’ evidence is the present moment, and the ‘next period’, ascribed such momentous historic import? None of these concrete questions appear addressed by Douzinas. Neither, I suspect, did Douzinas envisage the ‘radical change’ and ‘uprisings’ of ‘Brexit’ and ‘Trumpism’ in this celebration of the ‘age of resistance’. And yet they have been claimed to be precisely of such significance; see for example, Brendan O’Neill, “Five reasons why 2016 was the best year in ages”, December 23, 2016, at <http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/five-reasons-2016-was-the-best-year-in-ages/19135#.WG4cRFOLR0w>

⁷ Of course, which ‘uprisings’ catch the attention, which become seen as ‘evental’, which attracts the attention of the ‘global’ media gaze which then become the object of philosophical ruminations, are all themselves pertinent questions. How might an Adivasi uprising in rural India fit within the nomenclatures of ‘resistance and philosophy’, for example?; see Malini Subramaniam, “An adivasi protest in Chhattisgarh is gaining strength – but not getting much attention,” *Scroll*, February 23, 2015 at <http://scroll.in/article/708704/An-adivasi-protest-in-Chhattisgarh-is-gaining-strength-%E2%80%93-but-not-getting-much-attention>. How many such everyday public appearances of resistance and refusal go by the wayside of philosophical attendance? See below for a discussion of the ordinariness of such extraordinary struggles.

⁸ Badiou, *Rebirth of History*, 68. Badiou defines the ‘event’ thus: “An event is signalled by the fact that an in-existent is going to attain genuine existence, an intense existence relative to a world”; Unlike Douzinas, Badiou is rather more hesitant in observing a fundamental changing of worlds; Badiou sees the present more as an ‘intervallic period’, insisting caution as he presents the typologies of ‘riots’ as ranging from the immediate, to the latent, and finally, the historic. It is this birthing of the historic that interests Badiou. Contra, Raul Zibechi, “The rising power of slum democracy,” *New Internationalist*, October 2010: “[t]wentieth century history is full of births of worlds that embody ‘old’ social relations. This tumultuous reality has brought disastrous consequences ... they have not been able to create new worlds.”

⁹ There is considerable literature on the notion and significance of ‘coloniality’ as a critical corrective to Eurocentric presumptions of both material and philosophical understandings of the world; see for example, Anibal Quijano, “Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America,” *International Sociology* 15, no. 2 (2000); Walter D. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton Uni. Press, 2000); Ramon Grosfoguel, “Transmodernity, border thinking, and global coloniality: Decolonizing political economy and postcolonial studies,” *Eurozine*, July 14, 2008, <http://www.eurozine.com/pdf/2008-07-04-grosfoguel-en.pdf>; Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation – An Argument,” *The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003); and Nelson Maldonado-

Torres, “The topology of being and the geopolitics of knowledge,” *City* 8, no. 1 (2004). The specific implications of coloniality that I am concerned with in this essay pertains to how philosophy continues to normalise a particular categorical assumption of human-beingness which renders invisible the materiality of the ‘ordinary’ as I argue below.

¹⁰ I distinguish the location of the radical ordinariness of decoloniality from the ‘ordinary’ that are constituted by the ascriptions of ‘subject-beingness’. For example, whilst the ‘ordinary’ violence of ‘far-right’ subjectivities may well be the violence of ordinary people, they are indeed the norm-alised actions of constructed subjects within the diagrams that constitute the subjectivities respectively of licence, containment and bans; for an elaboration of this point, see Jayan Nayar, “On the Elusive Subject of Sovereignty,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 39, no. 2 (2014).

¹¹ We are here usefully reminded of Ashis Nandy’s argument on the ‘imperialism of categories’; Ashis Nandy, “History’s Forgotten Doubles,” *History and Theory* 34, no. 2 (1995).

¹² Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality”

¹³ I stress the point about invention here. The persistent recourse to the ‘French Revolution’ as the eventual foundations of ‘enlightened’ philosophy serves as an example of how philosophy has built for itself a floor from which to make its leaps into the future – it is astounding that these references to the ‘French Revolution’ in literature purportedly critical and universal in its emancipatory aspirations simply assume the universal relevance, presumably as some form of civilisational and evolutionary maturation, this particular, even if significant, local happening to the peoples of the non-‘European’ traditions of philosophical myth-making! For all the consequential grandeur of thought, this is merely philosophy inventing History in order to invent Philosophy through the ascriptions of meanings upon meanings on a human experience in time.

¹⁴ Ranciere’s ‘theses of politics’ and specifically his definition of ‘democracy’ – understood as the rule by those with no claim of qualification to rule – explicitly points to the significance of this ‘rupture’ in post-Enlightenment philosophy; Jacques Ranciere, “Ten Theses on Politics,” *Theory & Event* 5, no. 3 (2001): 21. It is interesting to note that this rationale is now precisely the political assertion of recent ‘post-truth’ and ‘anti-expert’ populist movements. As we have long understood, the politics and philosophies of rupture need have no intrinsic ‘progressive’ content. We simply assume that this notwithstanding, the Idea of ‘Europe’, as a philosophical ground-zero, does.

¹⁵ It would of course be sensible to pause and note that such grand readings of philosophical ruptures served the new priests of sovereignty rather more than they did the masses of the intended ‘subjects’ of liberations for whom the matter of life and death in violence and impoverishment (as ever always in the histories of ‘events’) returned to their normal course of philosophical insignificance. For a contemporary account of grand birthings and consequent disenchantment, in this instance in the case of post-Apartheid South Africa, see, Grant Farrow, “The Not-Yet Counterpartisan: A New Politics of Oppositionality,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 103, no. 4 (2004). The struggle, quite simply, continues, in the everyday.

¹⁶ That Agamben throws a spanner in the philosophical works by his assertion that rather than salvation, abandonment is retained at the core of sovereign-becoming serves of course as an unfortunate twist in the Enlightenment tale; Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford Uni. Press, 1998). For a different reading of the (colonial) ‘modern’ invention of sovereignty, see Jayan Nayar, “On the Elusive Subject of Sovereignty,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 39, no. 2 (2014).

¹⁷ Indeed, this space between *zoe* and *bios* is the philosophical distinction that Eurocentric thought has struggled to reconcile, and for Agamben, it is precisely here in this space of ‘indistinction’ we find *homo sacer*; see Agamben *Homo Sacer*.

¹⁸ The anxiety of Being – between abandonment and being ‘together’ – underpins much anguished philosophical work following the disenchantment with ‘Modernity’ and it’s genocidal logics. This we see is the underlying anxiety that informs much of Arendt’s work. On a different understanding of the anxiety of being – seeking rescue from the loneliness of abandonment into a being as being-with-other – we find Levinas’ ‘face’ seeking commune with the other.

¹⁹ For a discussion of the ‘actual’ in the ‘ideal’ of Eurocentric Reason, see Jayan Nayar, “The Philosopher’s Elusive Subject: On the Problem of the ‘Present’ in the ‘Political’,” *Journal of Critical Southern Studies* 1 (2013).

²⁰ See n.9, above.

²¹ For important exposes of the colonial underpinnings of the (b)ordering of the world through the categories of international law, see for example, Antony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (New York: Cambridge Uni. Press, 2005); China Mieville, *Between Equal Rights: A Marxist Theory of International Law* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2006).

²² See, for example Walter D. Mignolo, "Citizenship, Knowledge, and the Limits of Humanity," *American Literary History* 18, no. 2 (2006): 312; Walter D. Mignolo, "The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Colonial Difference," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 101, no. 1 (2002); Maria Lugones, "The Coloniality of Gender," in *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, eds. Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar, 2010, Reprint (London: Routledge, 2013): 369-90.

²³ See Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Enquiry* 8, no. 4 (1982). Whilst Foucault's insights into 'biopolitical governmentality' may have been a revelation to the Eurocentric philosopher, peoples the world over subjected to European colonialism had little cause to doubt that they existed as nothing but categorised 'populations' to be collectively made-subject and subjected. Before Foucault, after all, we learnt from Mohandas Gandhi, Babasahib Ambedkar, Franz Fanon, and Steve Biko, for example.

²⁴ Contra, Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: Uni. Of Chicago Press, 2005).

²⁵ Zygmunt Bauman, "Utopia with no Topos," *History of the Human Sciences* 16, no. 1 (2003).

²⁶ For discussions on the precarious present, see, Judith Butler, *Prekarious Lives: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004); and Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011).

²⁷ Alain Badiou, "Thinking the Event," in Alain Badiou and Slavoj Zizek, *Philosophy in the Present*, ed. Peter Engelmann, trans. Peter Thomas and Alberto Toscano (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), 2

²⁸ A somewhat different type of ruptural thought, equally extra-ordinary in its expectation of Becoming, is Sergei Prozorov's restatement of a Foucauldian 'ontology of freedom', an interesting attempt to think out of the box of 'subjectivity' through a radical reclaiming of 'bare-life'; see Sergei Prozorov, *Foucault, Freedom and Sovereignty* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007). For other, more earnest, articulations of the emancipatory path of 'bare-life' following from Agamben's notion of 'whatever being', see Jenny Edkins and Veronique Pin-Fat, "Through the Wire: Relations of Power and Relations of Violence," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 34, no. 1 (2005); and Zevnik, "Sovereign-less Subject."

²⁹ Badiou, *Rebirth of History*, 67 (emphases in original).

³⁰ In this context, we might understand Badiou's insistence differently; it is less fidelity to the event as a material happening in the world that is relevant to the philosopher, and more fidelity to the ontological imagination – the Idea – that is assigned to it as philosophical 'Event'; see Alain Badiou, *Theory of the Subject*, trans. Bruno Bosteels (London: Continuum, 2009); and Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, trans. Peter Hallward (London: Verso, 2002).

³¹ Ashis Nandy's insight is pertinent here; what we observe in much of the critical philosophy of contemporary priests of rupture pertain to the needs of the philosopher – to find in life a reflection of the philosopher's articles of faith – rather than that of the would be 'subject' that is the subject of contemplation; see Ashis Nandy, "Shamans, Savages and the Wilderness: On the Audibility of Dissent and the Future of Civilizations," in *Asking, We Walk: South as New Political Imaginary*, ed. Corinne Kumar (Bangalore: Streelekha Pub, 2012), 225-30.

³² Zizek, *The Year of Dreaming Dangerously*, 78 (emphasis mine). An obvious question, even as we might agree with Zizek's insistence on more than the 'spirit of revolt', is how Zizek has come to acquire the crystal ball that enables him to see what is or is not doomed to fail? See below for a further discussion.

³³ *Ibid.*, 75. We will return to the matter of consequences in the next section.

³⁴ Slavoj Zizek is a useful example of this preoccupation of the radical Eurocentric philosopher to cling on to the promise of the Enlightenment; his indeed is a plea for an uncompromising 'leftist' Eurocentrism; see Slavoj Zizek, 'A Leftist Plea for "Eurocentrism"', *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 24 (4). 1998, 988-1009. We will return to Zizek shortly in the discussion.

³⁵ For a fuller elaboration of the point, see Nayar, "The Philosopher's Elusive Subject".

³⁶ Badiou, *Rebirth of History*, 56 (emphasis in original).

³⁷ I am here extending Charles Mills' notion of 'white ignorance' to the ontological foundations of '(colonial-)modern epistemologies; See, Charles Mills, "White Ignorance," in *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, eds. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana (New York: State Uni. of New York Press, 2007).

³⁸ Grosfoguel, "Transmodernity, border thinking."

³⁹ Wall, "Theory of Dissensus.", 233-34.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, 232.

⁴¹ I suspect that such a position of thought that begins with ‘ordinariness’ as its point of departure may well appear wholly unsatisfactory for the chest-beating, heroic visionaries of post-sovereignty and post-capitalism. An example of a projection of a post-capitalist future that deems it ‘progressive’ to denounce as irrelevant and ineffective a source of possibility anything but the legacy of the modern-Enlightenment project, see Alex Williams and Nick Srnicek, “#ACCELERATE MANIFESTO for an Accelerationist Politics,” *Critical Legal Thinking: Law & the Political*, May 14, 2013, <http://criticallegalthinking.com/2013/05/14/accelerate-manifesto-for-an-accelerationist-politics/>.

⁴² The everyday, as I invoke it, needs to be distinguished from that which concerned Henri Lefebvre. Indeed, Lefebvre serves as a corrective to much of the gung-ho enthusiasts of radical rupture with his understanding that it is through the everyday that subjectification – commodification/consumerism – defines the human state. Thus Lefebvre asks: “Why wouldn’t the concept of everydayness reveal the extraordinary in the ordinary?”; Henri Lefebvre and Christine Levich, “The Everyday and Everydayness,” *Yale French Studies*, no. 73: *Everyday Life* (1987). Lefebvre was right, therefore to insist on a critical analysis of such everyday, ‘banal’, conditions of ordinary (modern) human existence. This however, is an everyday, an ordinary, as already constituted by the diagram; thus Lefebvre’s concern was to examine, in and through the everyday, the condition of human being-ness, of subjectification. My interest in the everyday, however, is one of the ‘other’ actuality – an everyday, an (extra)ordinary, that remains rebellious to the colonising totalisations of ascribed subject-ed positions.

⁴³ See James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (Yale: Yale Uni. Press, 1992).

⁴⁴ Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 193 (emphasis in original, footnote omitted). Similarly, see also, Robin D.G. Kelley, “‘We Are Not What We Seem’: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South,” *The Journal of American History* 80, no. 1 (1993). The important point here is not to oppose the apparent public and private modes of resistance, but to understand that the eruption of public anger is informed by a prior ontologies of resistance and refusal in this connection.

⁴⁵ For an excellent discussion of the creative rationalities and actions of struggle in the face of structures of governmentality, see Partha Chatterjee, *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World* (New York: Columbia Uni. Press, 2004), especially ch. 3. Similarly, Steven Robins, Andrea Cornwall and Bettina Von Lieres, “Rethinking ‘Citizenship’ in the Postcolony,” *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 6 (2006).

⁴⁶ The point is well made by Carolyn Fick in asserting the primacy of the slave ‘masses’ in the Haitian Revolution against the commonly emphasised heroism of the revolutionary vanguard:

“The masses had resisted the French from the very beginning, in spite of, and not because of, their leadership. They had shouldered the whole burden and paid the price of resistance all along, and it was they who had now made possible the political and military reintegration of the leaders in the collective struggle.”;

Carolyn E. Fick, *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below* (Knoxville: Uni. of Tennessee Press, 1990), 228. For powerful account in fiction similarly narrating the extraordinariness of everyday resilience, refusal and resistance, see, Évelyne Trouillot, *The Infamous Rosalie*, trans. M.A. Salvodon (Lincoln: Uni. of Nebraska Press, 2013).

⁴⁷ Gustavo Esteva and Madhu Suri Prakash, *Grassroots Post-Modernism: Remaking the Soil of Cultures* (London: Zed, 1998), 13. Esteva’s and Prakash’s, in my view, remains an inspiring account of the many stories of creativity and struggle that define the ordinary lives of the social majorities. That such accounts of the (extra)ordinary’ is largely ignored by ‘critical’ thinkers of ‘rupture/resistance’ is an indictment against the continuing coloniality of political-legal philosophy.

⁴⁸ Contra, Gayatri Cakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak,” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, eds. C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988), 271-313, http://www.mcgill.ca/files/crcclaw-discourse/Can_the_subaltern_speak.pdf.

⁴⁹ The words of a young Tzeltal woman from Morelia region in Mexico, as quoted in Shannon Speed, “Dangerous Discourses: Human Rights and Multiculturalism in Neoliberal Mexico,” *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 28, no. 1(2005): 29.

⁵⁰ The ‘Zapatista’ rejection of the offer of ‘pardon’ by the Mexican government soon after the insurrection in 1994, quoted in Esteva and Prakash, *Grassroots*, 182-83.

⁵¹ Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs*.

⁵² Chatterjee, *The Politics of the Governed*.

⁵³ Marina A. Sitrin, *Everyday Revolutions: Horizontalism and Autonomy in Argentina* (London: Zed Books, 2012).

⁵⁴ Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Another Knowledge is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies*, vol. 3 (London: Verso, 2007); also, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014).

⁵⁵ Raul Zibechi, *Dispersing Power: Social Movements as Anti-State Forces*, trans. Ramor Ryan (Oakland: AK Press, 2010), 4.

⁵⁶ See Grant Farred and Rita Barnard, eds., *After the Thrill is Gone: A Decade of Post-Apartheid South Africa*, Special Issue 4, *South Atlantic Quarterly* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004). It will always remain a treasured memory for me the moment when I was rightly reprimanded by my late friend Dwijen Rangnekar that the expression must first be attributed to the late, great, B.B.King.

⁵⁷ Zizek, *Dreaming Dangerously*, 44. Slavoj Zizek, 'A Leftist Plea for "Eurocentrism"', *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 24 (4). 1998, 988-1009

⁵⁸ Zizek, *Dreaming Dangerously*, 82.

⁵⁹ *Ibid* (emphasis mine).

⁶⁰ *Ibid* 106-07.

⁶¹ For an interesting, and 'leftist' critique of Zizek's purported radicality and relevance to 'progressive' political action; see Andrew Robinson and Simon Tormey, "The Ticklish Subject? Zizek and the Future of Left Radicalism," *Thesis Eleven* 80, no. 1 (2005): 94-107.

⁶² Of a very different ilk to Zizek, but equally, steadfast in Eurocentric confidence is Seyla Benhabib; for example in criticising Hardt's and Negri's enthusiasm for the 'multitude' (which in itself is a worthy engagement), Benhabib finds no discomfort in making the following sweeping assertions:

"[T]he multitude, Hardt's and Negri's revolutionary subject, is not the citizen. The multitude is not even the carrier of popular sovereignty since it lacks the drive towards the constitutionalization of power, which has been the desiderata of all popular movements since the American and French revolutions. ... Theorists of the multitude seem to confuse politics with carnival. Only transnational institutions can built permanent structure to counteract the forces of empire."

Seyla Benhabib, "Twilight of Sovereignty or the Emergence of Cosmopolitan Norms? Rethinking Citizenship in Volatile Times," *Citizenship Studies* 11, no. 1 (2007): 29; this advocacy for 'cosmopolitan norms' reads as little more than an exercise in idealisations, a wish-list for a nicer, kinder world, if only the leaders would heed the wise advice of Benhabib.

⁶³ Slavoj Zizek, *In Defence of Lost Causes* (London: Verso, 2008), 310 (emphasis mine).

⁶⁴ Ghassan Hage, "Critical anthropological thought and the radical political imaginary today" *Critique of Anthropology* 32 no. 2 (2012), 285-308, 292.

⁶⁵ See Walter Mignolo, "The Zapatista's Theoretical Revolution: Its Historical, Ethical, and Political Consequences," *Review* 25, no. 3 (Utopian Thinking, 2002).

⁶⁶ What we do apparently is to continue reading the 'signs' of the 'future'; see Zizek, *Dreaming Dangerously*, 127-35.

⁶⁷ See Hamid Dabashi, *Can Non-Europeans Think* (Zed Books: London 2015), 10-11. A similar point is made by Harcourt by way of response to Zizek's criticisms of the Occupy Movement; see Bernard E. Harcourt, "Political Disobedience," in *Occupy: Three Inquiries in Disobedience*, eds. W.J.T. Mitchell, Bernard E. Harcourt and Michael Taussig (Chicago: Uni, of Chicago Press, 2013), 45-91.

⁶⁸ Marcos, "Between Light and Shadow", final communique, May 24 2014, *Enlace Zapatista*, <http://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/2014/05/27/between-light-and-shadow/>.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*.

⁷⁰ Eduardo Viveiros de Castro E, "Introduction" in Clastres P (ed.) *Archeology of Violence*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010) 15, quoted in Hage, "Critical anthropological thought", 298

⁷¹ See Esteva and Prakash, *Grassroots*, for accounts of struggles of regenerate the 'commons' of convivial being-together. Also, for a discussion of the 'logic of the commons' against that of 'development'; see Gustavo Esteva,

Salvatore Babones and Philipp Babczyk, *The Future of Development: A Radical Manifesto* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2013). On the fringes of mainstream ‘philosophy’ and ‘critical theory’ we find a rich and diverse literature that narrates such presents and presence of already-being which remain open to the world notwithstanding Eurocentric post-Enlightenment philosophical blindness to such ontological presents and presence. In light of the devastation wrought by the economic normalities of (colonial-)modernity, a particularly interesting, and significant, ontology of being and social being-ness is presented in Genevieve Vaughan, *Women and the Gift Economy: a radically different worldview is possible* (Toronto: Inanna Publications, 2007). For long available critiques of the sacred cows of (colonial-)modern constructions of being-ness, see the various works of Ivan Illich; see for example, Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society* (Marion Boyars, 1995); Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (Marion Boyars, 2001); and Ivan Illich, *Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health* (Random House, 1988). It is telling that these many examples of Other-Being are often dismissed as ‘romantic’ and ‘impractical’ in the real world of states, globalised economic relations, transnational corporate power. – this in itself is revealing of the extent to which the reification of the ‘modern’ categories of the possible have colonised the imaginations of the critical mind.

⁷² Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality.”

⁷³ For a full account of the significance of the politics of shit, of the socialities and solidarities that underpin such reclaimings of the bowels, see Esteva and Prakash, *Grassroots*, Chap. 3

⁷⁴ For an excellent account of ‘horizontalidad’ as a living and ever-changing, ever-vibrant praxis of the ordinary rather than the spectacular content of ‘revolution’; see Sitrin, *Everyday Revolutions*.

⁷⁵ Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Penguin Books: London, 2001 ed), 251

⁷⁶ Hage, “Critical anthropological thought” 287

⁷⁷ Ibid, 289-90

⁷⁸ Medina, “Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology,” 11. Such assumptions of critical work, we see, is based on a clear demarcation of an ‘us’ and ‘them’, whereby the us appears not subject to the critical insurrections envisaged. For similar assumptions of critical responsibility to think ‘possibilities’ of resistance, see Zevnik, “Sovereign-less Subject.”

⁷⁹ As stated in note 2, I intend here a self-critical position; these questions pertain to both the writer and the reader, the matter of the extent to which ‘we’ regard ourselves colonised or ‘decolonised’, ‘European-ised’ or ‘decolonial’, a matter of personal reflection.

⁸⁰ An excellent guide is Madhu Suri Prakash and Gustavo Esteva, *Escaping Education: Living as Learning within Grassroots Cultures*, 2nd ed. (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2008).