



Sartre's Hegelianism: A Culturally Appropriate Form of Radical Rebellion

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I. Two Traditional Forms of Rebellion

The aims of the present paper are to show how traditional models of liberal protest are culturally inappropriate and to then offer a counter-enlightenment model of resistance. In sections I and II, I shall demonstrate the cultural impropriety of traditional models of rebellion to contemporary social and material conditions of existence and propose that the main problem lies in the forgetting, repression or outright rejection of the consideration of a counter-enlightenment social agent in favour of the prevalent and widely accepted putative isolated, liberal individual. Section III will then offer a brief characterization of a situated form of reasoning derived largely from Hegel's conceptual term “objective freedom,” before responding, in section IV, to the inherent conservatism of such an account by showing how Sartre's work on social group formation can be understood as an alternative form of rebellion consistent with Hegel's conservatism.

Let us begin with a very brief characterization of two traditional models of justified resistance: one, the liberal paradigm which, for the most part and for very good reasons, derives from Locke; and, two, the revolutionary model of Marx.¹ Resistance or protest is an intentional, public action which is pursued with the agent's full knowledge that it may incur legal penalty and because the agent objects to state policies, laws or institutions on moral or rational grounds. For Locke, a political act of disobedience is justified when the government uses its monopoly of violence to violate one of the three natural rights of the individual (life,

¹ John Locke, *Second Treatise*, in *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960) especially 168, 230, 240, 241. Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, trans. M. Milligan, Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1988; Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*. Trans. S. Ryazanskaya (New York: Prometheus Books, 1988); Karl Marx, *Capital: Volume 1: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. B. Fowkes (London: Penguin, 1992); Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto* (London: Penguin, 2004).

liberty or property). As soon as the government violates the rights of individuals, then it is assumed that individuals withdraw their consent to its authority. Of course, the full picture is more complicated than this as it involves the formation of a community by individuals who alienate their right of justice and the community, as a whole, loaning this executive right to the government.²

The tripartite form of the contract makes perfect sense as it curbs the excesses of single, isolated individuals who may wrongly perceive a violation of rights or exaggerate an actual violation since all possible grounds for disobedience must seek intelligibility from the community (and not the state) as a whole.³ The role of the community is significant since an individual or group can reject or opt out of the political agreement between the community and the rulers if one can convince enough of one's peers to join in an intelligible protest, rebellion or act of resistance, but not uniquely and individually. The individual makes an appeal to the values of public reason, shared values of the community, which mediate his or her relationships with others. Institutions, products and culture mediate between individuals: I can convince you of my wants by expressing and pursuing what I hold dear and I can justify this to you through those shared tropes of reasoning which enable my agency. The individual can still be committed to the integrity of the values of one's community (the true will of the people) without having blind trust in the government's policies to execute these values.⁴ The Lockean model, whether conceived of as an individual or the ideal individual structured as an element of a rational community, rests upon the idea of a subject transcendental to social existence motivated by public reason, whether this be the moral subject of Locke, the noumenal subject of Kant or the heuristic original position of Rawls. What is assumed is that judgements about justice and the rightness and wrongness of state policy can be made independently of one's own existence in society, as though there is a rational "me" (independent, free and public) separate from and, in some sense, prior to the full "me" (burdened, entangled and private).

On the other hand, the Marxist model does not rely on a transcendental subject making judgements of justice, but rather the class-subject who is aware or unaware of his or her collective interests. Ideology (or culture broadly conceived) is the self-understanding of an individual as a member of a class and, as such, it can either be regressive or progressive.⁵ It is regressive when the self-understanding that a class possesses commits it to social production that is in the interests of either another class or society as a whole at the expense of its own interests. Ideology is progressive when the class forms an understanding of itself as having interests separate from and in conflict with those of society as a whole or another class and committing the class to actions that constitute a change in the economic structure so that these interests can be realized. A class in possession of a progressive ideology is the revolutionary class:

...the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or - this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms - with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces

² John Locke, *Second Treatise*, 95, 97, 99, 106.

³ These are the sort of capricious individuals who Hegel sees as products of and a danger to the Enlightenment project. See Georg Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 590; *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. H. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), §§5R, 272.

⁴ John Locke, *Second Treatise*, 95-96, 99, 119ff.

⁵ Karl Marx, *Capital*, chs. 1-2; *German Ideology*, I, b-c, especially 33-34.

these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution.⁶

The mode or form of production divides the forces of production into human labour and the physical, non-human elements (technology, knowledge, raw materials) and establishes the relations of production between people (property laws, classes). The compliance between relations and mode equates to normal social development and stability whereas when the relations come into conflict with the modes, then this conflict is felt as a need for change. Relations of production, the classes and the established laws of a state, are for the most part static because they promote the specified interests of particular social groups but at specific moments, these relations may well stall or come into conflict what is needed or desired by other groups. The breakdown of the social model is manifested in the attitudes of social classes which either desire or fear transformation of these relations.⁷ A political revolution is the collective intention to change the legal actuality and material reality of the relations of production; the intention necessitates an action which violates the constitution of a political power since it desires to change the institutional structure of government. Revolution is brought about by the revolutionary class taking control of the means of production because if they can determine what is made and how it is made, then they have control of culture and value systems. It seems implicit in Marx that the existing social and political system is illegitimate and that it is just to overthrow it, and that this action can justify violence.⁸ A revolution or protest occurs when a class recognise that they have needs that are not represented, recognised or satisfied by the state and are, in fact, inhibited in favour of the ends of another alien class or society as a whole.

II. Cultural Impropriety

Neither form of disobedience is “culturally appropriate.” Much first depends on what is meant by culturally appropriate and culturally inappropriate (or propriety and impropriety) and that, in turn, is dependent on our understanding of contemporary culture. In the two traditional models of political resistance there is an implicit avowal, which is lost or forgotten in the Lockean liberal tradition and repressed, seen as dangerous or irrational in the Marxist tradition, of a *collective subject* and it is this collective subject which counter-enlightenment accounts of resistance may be able to better articulate given their sensibility to the historicism of the subject. Culture, in general, is taken to be the “ideality” of a society, that is its axiological understanding of itself, related to its material reality.⁹ There is nothing overtly controversial about such a claim and it is consistent with both the negative and positive aspects Arnold indicates in the following words:

... culture being a pursuit of our total perfection made by means of getting to know, on all the matters which concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world, and, through this knowledge, turning a stream of fresh

⁶ Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy 1859*, trans. S.W. Ryazanskaya (online: marxists.org, 1999), https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/Marx_Contribution_to_the_Critique_of_Political_Economy.pdf (accessed 1st March, 2019), Preface, 2.

⁷ Adam Schaff, “Marxist Theory on Revolution and Violence”, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 1973, 34.2: 265.

⁸ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*; Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*.

⁹ It is what Berlin characterizes as those “attitudes, more exactly conceptual systems, frameworks that consist of interrelated categories through which and by means of which we judge periods.” Isaiah Berlin, “The Birth of Individualism: a Turning-point in the History of Political Thought,” in *Liberty*, ed. H. Hardy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 288.

and free thought upon our stock notions and habits, which we now follow staunchly but mechanically, vainly imagining that there is a virtue in following them staunchly which makes up for the mischief of following them mechanically.¹⁰

Positively, culture is the shared beliefs, values and modes of reasoning that agents access to understand themselves and those around them and such thinking can be an exercise in emancipation. It is the established public reason of agents who appeal to values that mediate their relationships and empower the formation of a collective, revolutionary subject. Negatively, it can be an exercise in oppression: the following of what is expected and valued is mechanical and praiseworthy by culture at large. In late modernity, given certain contingent facts, culture has become predominantly oppressive and the traditional models of resistance have become inefficacious.

Late modernity will be defined as societies exhibiting three characteristics.¹¹ First, late modern societies are at an advanced state of capitalism in that economic viability is ensured by fetishism such that the goods required to satisfy most material needs are no longer scarce, but economic production is powered by a series of ideal needs. Material needs, those whose satisfaction are necessary for life are no longer urgent and constitute only a peripheral concern for most agents. However, surplus production — or the mediation established by exchange value — is for the most part a matter of fetishist preference. Capitalism in contemporary society is characterised by a type of spectacle, divorcing what we produce from reality. Marx had already noticed this feature of capitalism: iron is materially more valuable than gold if the value is determined by human interests, but gold in most societies is worth more because in a social reality agents are inculcated to want the object.¹² It becomes an object worn and displayed and it symbolizes our social standing to others. In late capitalism, the majority of goods produced, exchanged and consumed are socially valuable but not materially so. To be banal, one does not buy a mobile phone because it serves the interests of communication, but more so one can make a statement about one's lifestyle or affluence. Society is organized around consumption and display of commodities through which individuals express prestige, identity and standing. Symbolic value and not exchange value mediates the relations between groups and individuals; there is no longer any way to distinguish true needs from social needs.¹³ The symbolic value of a product replaces its exchange value as the mediation between individuals and groups.

Second, the dominant commodity that is produced, exchanged and consumed in such societies is information or knowledge.¹⁴ Given the fetishist nature of later capitalist societies, the knowledge that is produced, exchanged and consumed is not linked to reality (useful or geared towards the satisfaction of interests, emancipation of humans, *et cetera*) but determined by the system of social values. Experts and consumers are produced by the system and these have become, in late modernity, wholly divorced from material reality (material reality is in fact repressed and forgotten) but are valuable insofar as they perpetuate the flow of capital. The distinction between an object's use value and exchange value is repressed and exploitation and oppression occur when the symbolic value is derived from the principle of accumulation of wealth rather than the satisfaction of needs: the production and exchange of knowledge is

¹⁰ Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 5.

¹¹ It will be clear from the following description that late modernity is a local geographical, period limited to the Western Atlantic and European states, and not a universal condition of mankind.

¹² Karl Marx, *Capital*, 1.i.4.

¹³ Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*. trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone books, 1994).

¹⁴ Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. G. Bennington and B. Massumi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).

fulfilled when the product is transformed once more into capital at the end of the production process.¹⁵

Third, legitimation of moral values, political institutions and laws is by a form of rational consensus between consenting parties rather than the legitimation by truth, the word of God or any other metaphysically controversial doctrine.¹⁶ Legitimation practices depend on consensus grounded in pluralism and a multiplication of discourses of knowledge each with their own experts and internal reason. Knowledge is cultural discourse and this brings together the mediation of symbolic values and the society of the spectacle because it divorces the production of knowledge from the satisfaction of human interests and instead aligns it with symbolic needs. The production of knowledge is dominated by celebrity tittle-tattle, the hierarchy of academic disciplines and lifestyle technologies and only in a culture where these types of knowing are to be privileged amongst others, do we forget what it is important to know. The goal of knowledge production is above all its transformation back into capital mediated by its symbolic value.

Traditional justifications of protest concern the inhibition of needs due to the material reality (society), but are articulated and expressed in terms of the ideality (culture). So, in early modernity it was possible for an exploited individual, class or group to express a desire for equality, which was nominally shared by all members of that culture and recognized as both good and rational, and to show that the institutional structures (Locke) or mode of production (Marx) inhibited such equality. The individual's shared goals, aspirations and projects are intelligible to others through the mediation of public reason. In late modernity, such straightforward grounding of rational culture in material needs and shared values has become problematic. Traditional forms of resistance are undermined for reasons grounded in Foucault's analysis of power consistent with Luke's analysis of its third dimension.¹⁷ The first dimension of power is simply the empirical observation of one will making another will do its bidding against the second will's wishes, and the second dimension of power is the determination of which interests are to enter into political consideration even if some agents are aware of their exclusion. Both forms of oppression are known to the agent because he or she has knowledge of his or her real interests or access to a public form of reasoning and can state that the policy or institution is not in his or her interests. The third dimension of power, however, takes the form of a subject who wills their own domination in that his or her reason has been constructed in such a manner that he or she wants what is rational, yet what is rational is actually not in his or her own interest. The liberal model of resistance is founded on the idea of a moral or self-interested individual who is able to transcend the requirements of their social identity and withdraw his or her consent in line with reason. The third dimension of power is suspicious of such supposed public uses of reason: Foucault asserts that not only does power determine the concepts, mode and form of reasoning, and as such excludes those who would not consent a priori, he also holds that power is not a relationship between atomistic units but the production of subjects with desires, needs and preferences. Thus, the rational subject cannot but willingly agree to his or her own domination because the subject's existence is the proof of such domination.

According to Foucault, discipline experts have the authority to manipulate the reason of non-experts and to exclude non-conformists from discourse. Locke defines legitimate power as trust in an authority grounded in claims of either expertise of the authority or of the

¹⁵ Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*, (London: Sage, 2016), 77-8.

¹⁶ John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (Columbia University Press, 2005). Gianni Vattimo, *Nililism and Emancipation: Ethics, Politics, and Law*, trans. W. McCuaig (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

¹⁷ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon, 1980); Steven Lukes, *Power: A radical view* (London: Macmillan International Higher Education, 2004).

institutions that determine our behaviour. However, if discourses dictate who are and who are not experts and who has and who does not have the right to speak, then power not only represses but also produces. Power produces knowledge, discourse and above all subjects who desire and want what is dictated in order to be considered normal and rational. The Lockean rights-bearer is a social construct that is produced by a relationship of power; the mediation by public reason is a form of oppression. Moreover, the characteristic model of political legitimation in democratic societies is reasonable consensus and not putative, metaphysical authority or claims to absolute truth. Yet, to be the sort of person who can consent, one is expected to reason “reasonably” and such consent to rational structures is also an exercise of power: do as we do or you are not normal, rational or reasonable and you will not be allowed to participate in discussions. When the agent engages in public reason, she is only exchanging one exercise of power for another since there is no “me” to endorse and no “good reasons” to be endorsed:

The individual is not to be conceived as a sort of elementary nucleus, a primitive atom, a multiple and inert material on which power comes to fasten or against which it happens to strike, and in so doing subdues or crushes individuals. In fact, it is already one of the prime effects of power that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires, come to be identified and constituted as individuals. The individual, that is, is not the *vis-a-vis* of power; it is, I believe, one of its prime effects. The individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, it is the element of its articulation. The individual which power has constituted is at the same time its vehicle.¹⁸

The collective subject, the community, is already a form of oppression and is not constituted by multiple, prior subjectivities freely alienating their own executive right of justice.

Foucault seemingly asserts that his conceptualization is a universal description of power whereas the present argument only asserts that it is in fact a conditional description of power appropriate to the culture of fetishist production and rational consensus. If Foucault’s claim is a general, universal characterization of power, then the standard rejection of his position seems to have some bite: power must at the very least mean “power over,” but for Foucault there is no original subject who is dominated, and the concept of “power” becomes so broad as to be empty and vacuous. The reason that a concept of power is normally articulated is to know who has it in order to achieve our goals, to apportion merit and blame and to evaluate society’s aims and aspirations. If there is no subject free from the discourses that mould him or her, then, in fact, there is no power since power must be power over and there is nothing to have power over before power is exercised. There is just force and so the way in which Foucault uses the word actually does no conceptual work whatsoever (in the sense that one could just use the concept force which is less rhetorical). If all human relationships of power, then the lover, parent, tyrant and oppressor cannot really be distinguished. Even if one’s cultural values are an exercise of power, they can still be a liberating mediation. The ability to participate in culture affords the subject the capacity to define and justify his or her goals to others and seek recognition through them. The word power loses all meaning and becomes empty. Foucault does not just redefine the concept of power, he negates it. And it cannot allow us to distinguish between beneficial forms of power and domination.¹⁹ Such

¹⁸ Ibid, 546. See also Michel Foucault, “Power, Right, Truth,” in *Contemporary Political Philosophy: an anthology*, eds. R. Goodin & P. Pettit (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 543.

¹⁹ Charles Taylor, “Foucault on Freedom and Truth,” *Political Theory* 12.2 (1985): 175.

reservations would need to be answered if Foucault's concept of power is to be taken universally, but there is perhaps a more pertinent consideration to be discussed. If Foucault's thesis is offered not as a general, universal one, but as an historically contingent one that describes power in later modernity, then his analysis is pragmatically useful. When knowledge is a commodity, and that commodity is produced by a fetishist capitalistic machine and ruled by consensus and when the spectacle divorces the production, exchange and consumption of knowledge from human interests, then public reason seems to be mere play ruled by consensus. Foucault claims that the totalization of the state is so complete that all attempts to articulate what you want or need are already part of the state reason and hence oppression. Pluralism and difference are merely moves in the game and not real disagreement. Hence, the liberal subject that grounds claims of morality against the state in some supposed universal interest is revealed itself to be a form of domination and not the means to emancipation.

If the Lockean model of resistance is a move in the game, then the idea of knowledge as a commodity becomes ever more pertinent. The Foucauldian thesis asserts that, since the state dictates that we produce knowledge and consume this in learning, the subjects are wholly consumed by the system and cannot identify interests separate from the system because any attempt to articulate interests is to engage in reason and reason is oppression. To want interests separate from the system is irrational, unreasonable and fetishism has ensured that the knowledge produced is isolated from any material interests. If the revolutionary subject could take possession of the means of production, the production of knowledge, then cultural discourse could be emancipatory. Revolution is brought about by the revolutionary class taking control of the means of production because if they can determine what is made and how it is made, then they have control of culture. The resistance to the spectacle of reason can only occur when the means of production are taken possession of by those that they alienate; thus the mediation afforded by public reason becomes the property of the revolutionary class. But, a counter-cultural public reason. A revolution occurs when a class recognize that they have needs that are not represented, recognized or satisfied by the state and are, in fact, inhibited in favour of the ends of another alien class or society as a whole. If knowledge is the product, then the means of production and consumption are education (teaching and learning); research, technology (computers, mass media) and telecommunications (postal exchange, telephones, internet, publishing). A revolution should be constituted at the collectivization and restructuring of these institutions.

However, as before, the nature of late modern society undermines such revolutionary action for three main reasons. One, the Marxist critique of capitalism only attacks exchange value but keeps use value in place, thus keeping production at the heart of its conception of society.²⁰ Class division is overcome (negated, annihilated, superseded) by transforming production and recoding surplus value into common, social projects. The formation of the revolutionary consciousness is impossible due to the absence of a "common" need. Mediation through symbolic value, rather than exchange value, is far more fluid and disorientating; it is always fulfilled in the transformation back into social capital. Escape may be permitted from these organizations, but only in excess and absolute exoticism which are not, by their very nature, productive. But these are not productive and non-productive elements have no intelligibility in Marxist discourse. Two, knowledge, in the developed nations at least, is fetishist in nature. To seize control of the means of its production and thus determine what is made (knowledge) and how it is made (discourse) is impossible because such an act of violence would be massively expensive and, unlike early modern revolutions, the means of production are not "there" to be seized in the same manner. There is a difference between seizing the munitions factory and the coal mines which would bring an industrial modern

²⁰ Jean Baudrillard, *Seduction*, trans B. Singer (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 1983), 79-80.

economy to its knees and seizing control of the production of images and the dissemination of truth (Facebook, Google, Amazon) which are usually stateless and non-geographical. Three, Marx's theory of history still rests on a discredited account of progress and Marxism's goals, which are a narrative form of knowledge, are shut out of rational discourse as a possible legitimation of critique.²¹ The reason why legitimate action is no longer possible is because the grounding discourse of such action (justice, progress, fairness) is no longer seen as anything but fiction and stories for the realm of reason and understood in terms of symbolic value. The revolution would have to be justified in terms of reasons to those who we would "liberate" and to dictate to another will, another individual liberal self, what they should truly value, like and prefer, has been made impossible by the loss of objectivity in the religious, aesthetic and moral spheres of discourse and also by the sanctity and celebration of the paradigmatic liberal self with its entitlement to its own tastes and choices supported by a robust system of rights. Radical articulations are already commodified. Social control and markets determine the values of things divorced from real properties or material reality. So, any form of resistance becomes a fashion: eco-warriors, punk, and so on. Such movements are made into a spectacle because they are divorced from the real needs that brought them into being and made into something they are not by social control. They become a fashion justified by their symbolic value.

Foucault's analysis shows that the individual cannot rationally rebel on his or her own (because the individual does not exist outside the productive power system) and neither can traditional, established identity groups. For resistance to be possible, a group must produce a new form of consensual identity that identifies needs separate from society as whole and obstructed by the current state of affairs. Foucault's thesis is a call to arms because when reason has become empty and a mere game, one is left with the need to transcend the current state of affairs in order to assert oneself in an act of resistance. Foucault thinks this impossible because resistance must be articulated in terms of reasons and reasons are pre-legitimated by power. Late modern resistance must consist of a community that separates itself from the rest of society in order to assert control over its own projects and simultaneously resists the totalizing effects of the state.

Communitarian models of selfhood and counter-enlightenment thought, most explicitly the conservatism of Hegel, allow the possibility of a situated rationality.²² For resistance to be effective in late modern societies, the formation of a group with a progressive ideology that freely constructs its own authorities and topics of discourse is required: a new and separate spontaneous mediation. Foucault thought this impossible and it was the characterization of it as impossible that first chimed with Sartre's later thinking. For Sartre, repression is a choice of a way to be, a choice of the individual to become part of the inert structures of reason; bad faith is a choice not to choose. But such an individual repression dialectically motivates its own negation because it contradicts one's very own needs and basic desires. The impossibility of change is impossible to suffer and the very impossibility to reason in another way may well present itself as an impossibility to live:

Indeed, what is called the *meaning of realities* is precisely the meaning of that which, in principle, is forbidden. The transformation therefore occurs when impossibility itself becomes impossible, or when the synthetic event reveals that the impossibility of change is an impossibility of life. The direct result of

²¹ Gianni Vattimo, *The Transparent Society*, trans. D. Webb (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), ch. 1; Jean-Francois Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*.

²² David Rose, "The relevance of Hegel's social thought to contemporary conservatism," in *Reflections on Conservatism*, ed. D. Oszel (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2011).

this is to make the impossibility of change the very object which has to be transcended if life is to continue.²³

When life becomes impossible, it is the actual impossibility of change which becomes impossible to bear and necessitates new community formations and new mediations in the social relations between individuals.

III. Hegel and the Historicism of Public Reason

What the failure of the liberal and Marxist models of resistance share is an inherent aspiration to universality and rely too heavily on the individual rather than the group. Locke's account of political resistance is appropriate for early modern contract states, Marx's model of resistance is appropriate for industrialised, centralized states and Foucault's critique is appropriate for late, fetishist capital states. None, though, is universal. What is often overlooked, though, is the collective group identity both in Locke (the community) and in Marx (the class) because it sits so uncomfortably with our liberal pretensions. The elements and values of public reason are primarily constituted as a cultural a priori and not a universal one. The motivational elements of the agent's practical reasoning are relative to both history and culture. These values are imposed by a subject on his or her experience in order to make the experience intelligible. Foucault calls this discourse and it is grounded in the community or collective mediations of social relations.²⁴ Liberalism with its universal individual rights-bearer and Marxism with its establish revolutionary future identity are divorced from these understandings and corrupt what is an appropriate understanding of community. Agents are *shot through* with historicity. Hegel thinks that the conflict and violence inherent in transformation allows us to perfect public reason through establishing new mediations. New mediations which are controlled and spontaneously formed by the individuals who participate in them and are therefore a liberation. It seems that the Hegelian model offers the possibility for a conservative form of resistance because the individual is always and already in the discourse.

Hegel prescribes objective determinations of the will from one's social and cultural identity. He realizes that the nature of the good cannot be created from the abstract thinking of the mind consistent with universal norms. Instead the subject must begin from existing values and institutions because his constraint of objectivity involves the idea that the good must be intelligible to the judgements of my cultural peers. Recognition of the rightness of my action is necessary for me to be treated as a free agent and thus requires mediation through shared identities. Those values the agent finds himself thrown into are those that make rational thinking possible and are, then, the ground of his own evaluation and the starting point of his own revisionary project. Axiology is a socially immanent enterprise. The substantial understanding of others as derived from their social identity and also of oneself is the objective freedom of the agent. The objective freedom of an agent is the institutions, moral values, social fabric, roles, civil, economic and political structures and so on that guarantee his or her recognition as an agent. So, for example, capitalism, the family and the Christian tradition are all forms of objective freedom: they assign roles and duties that determine how we behave in certain situations and in behaving in accordance with their dictates (or, at times, violating them) we are able to be, and also understood as, a free agent.

²³ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Vol. 1, trans. A. Sheridan-Smith, (London: Verso, 2006), 349-350.

²⁴ What follows is a very succinct summary of Hegel's ethical thought as it appears in the *Philosophy of Right*. For a fuller discussion and argument, please refer to David Rose, *The Ethics and Politics of Pornography* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), ch. 6.

Such objective determinations will differ from age to age, area to area and, as it is constituted by various concatenations of class, geography, age and so on, from person to person. One simplified way to understand Hegelian ethics is as a one-dimensional relativism: a moral assertion is true or false relative to a system and code of values, goods and rules institutionalized in a community. And this justifies his conservatism: the isolated, idiosyncratic individual has no grounds to oppose or disobey shared conventions except through arbitrary wilfulness. Even given the erroneous nature of such an interpretation of Hegel (he is not a relativist), such a position has immediate problematic consequences. Relativism is quietist in ilk: when a conflict between a group or individual and the state occurs, legal and moral evaluation will always side with the traditional and conventional. Rebellion, which goes against the established order, will always be wrong.

Relativism is hugely unappealing, but, to repeat, Hegel is not a relativist. Moral judgements are not transcendental, or products of a priori thinking. They are contingent, products of an historical tradition and cut across the politics, social values and economics of a particular community. However, there is a further story to be told. Hegel has two axes of evaluation to apply. To the question, "Is X legitimate?" the first dimension (the cultural constraint) is to see whether the statement coheres with the centrally agreed and rational values of the culture to which the statement is presented, the social and moral fabric of the agent's culture. The second axis (the autonomy constraint) asks whether the existence of the institution, practice or creed maintains, supports or reproduces a state of affairs that inhibits or supports the procedural requirements of modern moral discussion, that is autonomy, independence and equality. A society with an institution of slavery is worse than one which does not have such an institution on this model. Of course, it rests with the superior culture to explain why, to bring the other culture into line with its thinking and such a task is historical and not merely rational: the words require the economic reforms, the aid, the educational system that would support them. And such an acknowledgement needs to be self-realized and not through an operation of putative moral force but through the creation and sharing of new objective mediations of identity.²⁵

The agent's *objective freedom* consists in his or her institutional identities, social roles, traditional values and economic, material existence. The question is then why Hegel understands these objective determinations of one's identity as a liberation or a freedom. These roles and values make possible the agent's moral, rational action: they define what is intelligible and what is to be admired and admonished. *Subjective freedom* is the freedom to act in accordance with or to break the principles and requirements of one's objective freedom and to satisfy one's own personal projects, desires, interests and so on. The agent's subjective freedom is the capacity of the agent to achieve what he or she sees as a worthwhile project or a valuable life within the limits of the values and requirements of objective freedom. So, not only does the agent ask whether or not his or her action is appropriate to the expectations of his or her peers, but also whether the expectations of his or her peers are appropriate to him or her. The agent asks himself or herself if he or she feels *at home* in such a culture, whether his or her individuality can be adequately respected in such a culture with all its traditions and values. Moral language, its concepts and topics, is a form of objective freedom and a mediation between individuals. The language of Locke and Marx were appropriate to the communities of their times, but their time is no longer our time and their reasoning is now out of joint.

Public reason is those values justified by the interpersonal relations of a culture and those in which the subject can find their own autonomy and equality respected through the expression of their own freely chosen projects and aspirations. Yet, this still may not be

²⁵ Georg Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §57A.

enough because human beings immersed in culture can be coerced into believing that they are at home in roles which do not violate the procedural limits of moral discourse, but may still be morally problematic. There are values which are operative in our practical reason that appeal to one's identity not only as a member of a specific class, nor only as a member of a specific society nor people, but also and above these as a member of the human race. Public reason is an aspect of objective freedom: my personal, subjective freedom can be increased or decreased by the institutions of education in my culture but also so by the language available to me and the reasons such language embodies. A culture with a substantial and robust understanding of autonomy is better for the individual than one with an opaque and ambiguous understanding of it. The objective freedom of public reason is required for the freedom and rationality of the individual, and for the agent to feel at home in his or her culture when three constraints are met:

1. **the cultural constraint:** its concepts and practices can be justified to others in terms of publicly shared values;
2. **the naturalist constraint:** the personal roles and practices it prescribes do not violate the basic needs which ground the development of all human societies and generate human association;
3. **the autonomy constraint:** the subject is able to express his or her personal individuality as an ongoing project which has been freely endorsed and chosen and is respected by others. The subject is able to feel at home in a culture where personal integrity as an individual, expressed as his or her autonomy and recognized via respect from others, is possible.

Rebellion is required when the state's policies, laws or institutions conflict with or violate these constraints. However, since state actions produces ideology and culture, the rationality of rebellion becomes seemingly impossible. The impossibility is not just incoherence but a simultaneous urgency for change. However, instead of the community or its values being rejected, one finds that the individuals and groups can make an appeal to or begin to form new norms. (1) has to cohere with the demands of (2) and (3) to be a form of objective freedom: it must mediate the individual's relationship to others in a way consistent with the aims, projects and desires of the individual or the group. One can now begin to understand this in terms of Marx's concept of ideology. An ideology is the self-understanding of a group or class and is justified as a form of objective freedom when we recognize ourselves as agents with interests that are separate from those interests which are permissible and coherent with the public reason of our age and yet these interests are coherent with emergent or shared values. Two cultures, the dominant and emergent ones, exist side by side. This cannot be subjective or idiosyncratic because interests must be expressed in terms which can be grounded in some part of the meditations of society. The language of the demand cannot be wholly other, otherwise it is capricious or arbitrary action. What Foucault sees as the imposition of power is in fact the possibility of its very overcoming. However, Hegel's own conservatism remains too conservative. The "the right of the rational – as the objective – over the subject" that is, the social mediations (the objective freedom, the institutions, the moral values and reasons) "remains firmly established" because, for him, the most rational groups and classes have already been established under a bourgeois, capitalist state.²⁶

²⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §132R.

IV. Sartre and Group Formation

In Sartre's early thought, the original choice of the subject was structured as the desire to be for-itself-in-itself. However, since the for-itself is freedom, it can only be what it is through the negation of what it is, so the ultimate project of human existence is futile. The project to be for-itself-in-itself is the desire to be recognised as a subject who exists in a determinate way, yet that determinate way is freedom. The for-itself wants its freedom to be its essence, so it pretends that "freedom" is a determinate characteristic of its being and then attempts to ratchet a subjectivity on top. In *Being and Nothingness*, the inevitability of the original choice necessitates bad faith in one of its three forms. First, the subject pretends that essential, fixed properties limit his possibilities and explain his actions (the cultural and/or naturalist constraints violate the autonomy constraint). Second, the belief that I exist most authentically as transcendence, that no matter what you describe as "me," I can negate it. I can negate all my facticity, because I am free. This form of bad faith implicitly denies my being-for-others which is an essential structure of freedom; that is, existing in the world (the autonomy constraint violates the naturalist and cultural constraints). Finally, the "spirit of seriousness" or binding oneself to a purpose whereby one's role dictates certain obligations which derive from collectively established goals. One attempts to fulfil the project without the anguish of choosing for oneself because, as a part of a general movement, one's choices are limited by the dictates of that collective action. The third form of bad faith is the homeliness of the Hegelian subject in the chosen society based on consensual choice, yet for Sartre this always implies a violation of the autonomy constraint.

There is no stability in these forms of bad faith because the world is not solely mine, but simultaneously structured by the free choices of others. I know that others are different from objects because they pull my world away from me and make my objectification a farce. It is the shame that I feel before the Look of others, either because they see me as what I am not and judge me as that or they see me as what I am not yet and judge me on my failure. For them, I exist as an object, as a thing which frustrates or aids the achievement of their own future projects. For myself, I am the construction of meanings, but I exist as a meaning for them at the same time. I am both subject and object. The failure maps on to the forms of bad faith. In the first, self-objectification is impossible because there is always the excess, the presence to oneself that knows I am not what others see. In the second form, others will continually judge one's indifference and see it as a game, as false and insincere. In the third form, the subject will once again exist as excess above the collective and try to escape it through the mastering of others and their understandings. The relationship between the self and the other is, then, inherently unstable. There exists no Hegelian possibility of mutual reciprocity in a shared community because one cannot exist as a subject for the other unless that other makes themselves an object (which they are not), and one cannot exist as an object for the other unless one denies one's subjectivity, but this very denial is that subjectivity. The presence of the other is not under my control, nor am I under his or her control, like the matrix of objects which constitutes our being-in-the-world, so the relationship is inherently unstable.²⁷ Reciprocity is impossible for Sartre and the only possible attitudes towards the other are sadism (objectifying) or masochism (self-objectifying). Mediation is established through given understandings or their negation and this is always already unfreedom.

What is interesting about Sartre's early account, though, is that one possibility for stabilizing the relationship between the self and the other is brought about by the existence of a Third consciousness which looks at "us" in our conflicting, indifferent or cooperating struggle. The Third sees "us" as an object for him or her (or it) and we become aware of

²⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. H. Barnes (London: Routledge: 1991), 408.

being looked at not as two individuals but as a constituted “us.”²⁸ The Third Look, as such, makes possible the third form of bad faith: I can reinforce my subjectification or objectivity only through established social projects, a commitment to ways of understanding, and that requires the pre-existence of these modes of understanding. The gaze of this Third consciousness fixes not “me” and an “other,” but an immediate “me and the other” as a group or a singular entity and hence further limits our possibilities. Sartre’s consistent claim throughout his work is that a plurality of subjects can exist as the objectified “us,” through the mediation of a Third consciousness, but never truly as a “we” or the reciprocal Hegelian cooperating rational beings.²⁹ An “us” can be looked at, but it cannot – for early Sartre – look. The “us,” then, can be objectified but only an I can look, the “we” cannot look. Equality is impossible because community (the subjectivity of a “we”) and individuality (a plurality of “I”s) are, for him, mutually exclusive. However, the Third is a mediation between independent consciousness, a way for them to form a community even if that community is in the joint resistance to the Third’s Look. And it is for this reason that the spirit of seriousness remains a form of bad faith and is never liberating.

The reason why a “we” subject is impossible harks back to Sartre’s existentialism: the self or the “I” is immediate and the “we” is derivative, that is it can only be understood if we first understand what it is to be an “I.” I understand a “we” as an amalgamation of “I”s like myself hence not a real subjectivity at all. It could equally well be argued that we only know what it is to be a person, though, when we have an understanding of what it is to be an “us.” So, the human being growing up will understand itself as a son, a male, white, English and so on. Of course, for Sartre, the subject only exists as these in the sense of negation: I am a son, male, English and so on, but these do not exhaust what I am, I am in the sense of not being them. Sartre, tellingly, identifies the looking as the oppressive class and the looked at as the oppressed class.³⁰ As soon as I identify myself with the “us” of conventional understandings, I undermine my own particularity and my own subjectivity. I perform an act of bad faith in that I objectify myself for the other according to meanings I have not chosen. The mediations into which I am thrown are, as Foucault has said, productive of the subject and the limits to one’s own free self-representation; there is nothing outside these understandings (which, of course, Sartre agrees with). Yet this existentialist negation is also necessary for Hegel’s homeliness.³¹

Sartre fails because his view of objectification is always an unfreedom, a concession to the will of others whereas, for Hegel, the concession to others is what separates freedom for-itself from freedom in and for itself: the mediation is a possibility of liberation. Sartre’s posthumously published notebooks show how he tried in vain to use Hegel’s theory of recognition to overcome the impasse in his own theory of social interaction.³² It was futile because the other, for him, was always either an objectifying or an objectified entity, never as a subject for a subject. His failure initiated his movement in the direction of Marx. The “we” needs to be mediated by social facts, institutions and meanings and this is the Third self-consciousness. It is not a subject, but the will of subjects codified into structures of meaning of society. Such a Third can make subjects into:

1. an “us” (both objectified);
2. an “I” and a “him/her”;

²⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, 415-423.

²⁹ Thomas Flynn, *Sartre and Marxist Existentialism* (London: University of Chicago Press: 1984), 19.

³⁰ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, 420-1.

³¹ Georg Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §5.

³² Jean-Paul Sartre, *Notebooks for an Ethics*, trans. D. Pellauer (London: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

3. a “me” and an “he/she”;
4. a “we” (both subjectified).

In his early work, Sartre seemed to imply only (1) is possible; and the authentic attitudes of sadism (2) or masochism (3) were temporary and unstable.³³ Hegel’s objective freedom shows us how (4) is possible, but he too seems to slip into (1) if the community’s rationality is established above the subject’s own entitlements (conservatism). However, Sartre’s intention in the *Notebooks for an Ethics* to marry existentialism and Marxism makes perfect sense when read through the Hegelian lens. In *Being and Nothingness*, as the only limitation on freedom was the presence of an “other,” Sartre found his own philosophy faced with the problem of interpersonal relationships. His original analysis is very Hobbesian: one can exist for the other authentically only in two modes, either masochistically (as an object) or sadistically (as objectifying); there could be no reciprocal, non-antagonistic recognition. Either, one is faced with the cultural (or, at times, the naturalist constraint when the demands of existence make freedom impossible) violating the autonomy constraint, which is masochism; or the autonomy constraint violating the cultural constraint (and at times the naturalist constraint as in Hegel’s ascete), which is sadism. Both are forms of bad faith. Hence, interpersonal relationships were always a struggle for power over the other. In the *Notebooks*, Sartre returns to the Hegelian dialectic of lordship and bondage to see whether Hegel’s mutual recognition could be stable or the basis for ethical (that is, collective) action. The Hegelian lens offers us a way out of the “I/me” impasse: the subject is first a universal, in that he or she is constituted by the objectification of the “us” and cultural meanings: I am a type and if I was not I could not be an agent at all (I would be nothing but a bundle of incoherent deeds and not in any sense a unity). However, the particular “I” is the negation of these determinations and their eventual confirmation with the attitude of “homeliness.” The abstract “I” can rise above these determinations to assert itself as an individual in the group (hence the “I” is derivative from the “us”). Finally, though, the “I” can exist as a “we” when the self gives itself positive and not just negative content and chooses to be or not to be what society understands it as; when it *looks* at the Third.³⁴ The particular and substantial individual uses the conventions of the “us” to objectify a chosen and not just given identity. The formation of communities is possible in shared, dialectical opposition grounded in the refusal to allow the state to define us as individuals. The interrogation of Hegelian recognition leads Sartre to the proper consideration of class conflict: “If the master were the only one, he would indeed be obliged to consider his slave as a man since he would have his truth only through the slave. But since there are many masters, they find their truth in one another. There remains, however, the uneasy feeling that alien eyes may alter this truth.”³⁵ The quotation already reveals the possibility of an “alien” Third who alters the stasis, that is the emergence

³³ “But the other is an unpredictable freedom. He *creates* everything he touches. So if I solicit his recognition, I incline him toward creation. If I fully *succeed*, that is, if I do incline the other freedoms to take up my project and make it objective, I have totally failed because I no longer recognise my project. It is entirely alienated from me and comes back to me as the figure the others have conferred upon it. And since my work is me, it is just me that I alienate in succeeding. In one sense, there is a success in failure for the me refuses, it remains open, it has not been ‘caught’, it does not allow itself to become frozen. In another sense, there is failure in success for the image I wanted to make of myself I have incited others to make and I do not recognise myself in it. However it is me. I am responsible for what I have not made and not responsible for what I have made. My act is stolen from me and I must claim it such as it is. And since my character is nothing other than the actual relation of my choice to my work, the other’s theft is the theft of my character.” In Jean-Paul Sartre, *Notebooks*, 121.

³⁴ Georg Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§5–7.

³⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Notebooks*, 454.

of a third, authentic group, arising from the impossibility that the denial of the outside of the oppressor-oppressed dichotomy is impossible for the individual.

The problem both Hegel and Sartre's philosophies of social action propose is that of the possibility of an authentic or "homely" group, or community, or the spontaneous creation of mediations which emerge from the oppressive nature of a negation of a social reality without it becoming the self-perpetuating spiral of individual revolutionary violence or the second nihilistic form of bad faith. Locke, if you will excuse the pun, began his political philosophy from an ideal, blank slate: the community is formed prior to the existence of a state and established mediations, it is formed by the original encounter of individuals in a state of nature. Sartre offers a dialectical opposition between the serial, fused group or community versus the reciprocal group in fusion. Authentic resistance resides with the latter.

The community of Locke is a form of the fused group and the individual's existence in the state is to exist in serial relationships with others. The first type of group is when social praxis, or collective group action, is solidified into a serial reality or the practico-inert whereby the collective aim of the group becomes fixed and institutions, policies and values as means to the end of realizing this goal become determining of the individual. So, once where it was material reality that determined the praxis of the individual (through scarcity as in Locke after the invention of money), now it is the practico-inert that determines the individual because one is thrown into structures and values that determine one's place.³⁶ One belongs incidentally to a series and this determines one's ends; one's aims and intentions are an inert effect of separate activities. A mass is a coincidental collection of people determined by a material or inverted praxis base, such as a bus stop. The Third sees them as a unification only because the institutions of public transport and requirements of travel in an urban space determine them thus. Members of the mass find in one another a common unity, but such unity is merely accidental. Such unities constitute a material reality which confers "pretended necessity" on the behaviour of individuals: the institution of queuing, of small talk about the lateness of buses and so on. A bus queue designates a present community, but each member is abstract because they are interchangeable. Their identity is determined by being a member of a queue which is coincidental to their actual aims (going to work, meeting a friend and so on); homeliness is lost and the right of the rational is firmly established. The members of the group all have the same interest (to catch a bus) but it can tell us nothing about their particularity, what differentiates them from others, viz. their individuality.

The series is established by the organization of the mediations of the Lockean community into a fused group via a contract. Social action becomes frozen into the world as meaning and inverted praxis: "The future comes to man through things in so far as it previously came to things through man..."³⁷ The institution of queuing makes it "impossible" for me to satisfy my individual praxis because it would be wrong. So, interpersonal relations in the group are set as alterity, the negation of authentic reciprocity derived from conventions which are objectified will frozen into a material structure. The human being is bound by her or his own freedom and choices; the social praxis to negate scarcity in the past return as objectified structures which make certain projects impossible. Scarcity ruptures this, when there are more passengers than the number of spare seats or space on the bus, the queue begins to break apart. When the individual perceives state action violates liberty and equality (Locke) or when the mode of production no longer satisfies a specific class (Marx), the violation is felt as a lack. Scarcity determines the behaviour of individuals as individuals: I must have that space, you are an object/obstruction to me and Hegel's Terror breaks out. The reality is that it is impossible not to negate the impossibility, so one must form revolutionary groups. The unity

³⁶ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique*, 262.

³⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique*, 178.

is experienced as an irrational necessity, but because it is a necessity, changing it is seen as the “impossible.”³⁸

Foucault’s analysis of power rests upon individuals viewing themselves as isolated atoms in a series which characterizes the system of domination. Locke’s community is a fused group which produces individuals with rational wants but the rebellion to the state requires a formation of a new community which Locke never countenances. The negation of established mediations can be wilful and destructive when carried out by the individual or it can be affected by the formation of new groups whereby the “I” is part of a “We” which looks at the oppressor-oppressed dichotomy. In late modernity, the state of social being is to exist in serial relationships, a “plurality of isolations” based on competition, with others, that is capitalistic atomism. Such competition undermines the formation of class consciousness as no common project can be formed between atomistic individuals who seek to subordinate one another, except as the already given oppressed class:

Indeed, the more we are in contact with generalities and repetitions (the world of alienated, impersonal labour, the world of the ‘they’, of habits, of customs), the more our own operation will harden into generalities and repetitions, and these calluses will affect our ends which will have an aspect of generality. At the limit, we shall have impermeable languages and experiences (bourgeois, workers – workers, peasants), even when it is a question of freedoms that can in each case *recognise* one another, at least theoretically.³⁹

Hegel’s conservative social theory guarantees recognition and identity through everyday established mediations, yet the impossibility to be otherwise asserts itself as the impossibility of this limit in that it cannot be accepted by pure subjectivity. The world of discourse makes freedom impossible, even if this impossibility is a motivation to reject the status quo.⁴⁰ Social action becomes group praxis, the group in fusion, when the impossibility of life (the impossibility of not wanting the impossible) asserts itself in the negation of the serial praxis and the identification of me as a member of a group with collective wants separate from what is expected of us as constructed individuals; a group that negates the material and structural reality. In a group in fusion, the individual makes praxis into social praxis in that it is an action that cannot be executed without the cooperation of individuals with different particularities and an action that benefits more than one individual and establishes a common interest and rely on each other to achieve it (freed cooperative, dependence). Such common aims guarantee reciprocity, the members of a group have a common interest and collective purpose, but individually or spontaneously so such as the formation of a corporation for a group to escape a fire or a flood. The end (to survive) is necessary to them all but for different reasons and, unlike the bus queue, it is this end that constitutes them as a group and as individuals. They must be aware of being a member of the group is necessary: the impossibility to continue to live according to established mediations requires social action. As such, it is progressive ideology or the formation of an identity of a group as having a common, collective aim separate from the interests of society as whole:

... an exploiting class, by tightening the bonds against an enemy and by becoming aware of itself as a unity of individuals *in solidarity*, shows the exploited classes their material being as a collective and as a point of departure for a constant effort to establish lived bonds of solidarity between members.⁴¹

³⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Search for a Method*, trans. H. Barnes (New York: Vintage, 1968), 91-98.

³⁹ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Notebooks*, 313.

⁴⁰ See the example of the “pilot” in Jean-Paul Sartre, *Search for a Method*, 94-96.

⁴¹ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique*, 346.

However, Sartre believes that every disintegration of the group has an a priori intelligibility; which is to say, it is a necessary and not a contingent fact that groups will disintegrate into an inert mass. A group quickly becomes serial praxis or a fused group, or as Locke would put it: an association quickly transforms into a community that establishes the state.⁴² What one lacks is determined by the social whole or the practico-inert (that is the praxis of past humans frozen into institutions or material being). The aim of praxis is to form an internal, material reciprocity whereas the aim of society is to negate this into separated instances (alterity). The human being's fundamental choice resides in seeing oneself as either a "We" (reciprocity) or as anti-human, the material other (alterity or "Us"): "As the freedom of revolt reconstitutes itself as common violence against practico-inert necessity, its future objectification becomes, for it, the free violence of men against misery and impossibility of living."⁴³ The important point to remember is that any group in fusion is only ever temporary such groupings must fall back into serial relationships. The members of a group will attempt permanence through the act of pledging or contracting to each other and forming an established community, but then the autonomy constraint is violated. Or, permanence will be forced on them by establishing their identity (the counter-revolutionary move to identify a group as terrorists). For Sartre, the Terror is a refusal of internal determinations and violence of external determinations that threaten to convert a group into a series. And here we finally see the true difference between Sartre and Hegel, it is to be found in the consideration of violence as a fulfilment of the autonomy constraint and not just meaningless Terror.⁴⁴

Conclusion

Violence is intuitively bad, and Hegel's own rejection of the Terror of the French Revolution was grounded in this intuition, yet here it is the way to maintain an authentic group, both internally and externally. Hegel's conservative objective freedom is motivated by the refusal of violence and the right of the rational, the cultural constraint, takes precedence. Yet, for Sartre, the right of the rational established over and above the right of the subject is masochism and masochism is also violence. The Terror of the state is violence and its negation is violence. The progressive ideology of the group is always a negative of a negative (I am not what I am and I am what I am not) in terms of a project, but that project is authentic because it is shared and common for individual rather than cultural reasons: it is the formation of a new community and new mediations. Violence is important in order to resist the group becoming an objectification, a new form of repression. The formation of authentic groups with free, participatory mediations is a culturally appropriate form of resistance, it is a situated form of reasoning (in the negation of an already established order of meaning) that overcomes the charge of inherent conservatism through its existentialist roots. And this form of radical rebellion exhibits cultural propriety because the features of late modern society (fetishism, knowledge economy and consensus) are no longer problematic. First, the model does not rely on a fixed individual or collective subject produced by the serial relationships of Locke's community or the agent's objective freedom, but a collective subject which is the negation of the impossibility of an outside of the oppressed-oppressor dichotomy. Second, the act of rebellion is no longer grounded in the paradigm of production and the recovery of lost use values and real needs, but the group is formed as a negation with a common aim for different individual reasons and is in perpetual reformation so the ends of collective action cannot be reduced to already established symbolic value and, for this reason, there is no universal myth

⁴² John Locke, *Second Treatise*, ch. 8.

⁴³ Jean- Paul Sartre, *Critique*, 405.

⁴⁴ Georg Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 590; *Philosophy of Right*, §§5R, 272.

of progress since the end of the group is established spontaneously and not a priori. It is about the creation of a new cultural identity as an impossible for the current social conditions. Furthermore, since it is the creation of a new cultural identity, it can use the means of production (Google, Facebook, education) as enablers rather than inhibitors.⁴⁵

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⁴⁵ Three examples, of this type of rebellion, which I do not have time to develop, are Tax Uncut (a UK protest group) that occupy banks and perform pop up libraries, the Italian aesthetic protest group Luther Blissett, and Hakim Bey's, *Taḡ* (New York: Autonomedia, 2003).

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