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[Mutemag-edit] threads? (somewhat frayed)

Hi,

attached is the Negri interview on the Paris riots I mentioned at the last meeting. He's evidently as insane as ever; but here for once the elements of misreason converge quite interestingly. He's being interviewed by 'La Stampa', a fairly lightweight reactionary paper owned by Fiat, so he has some of the dumbest commonplaces flung at him and deals with them neatly by invoking the basic sense of historical proportion that's been missing from most of the 'debate'. But then some of his solutions sound strikingly like a Blairite agenda of 'social inclusion': not just hand-outs, but REAL participation, schools that work etc. Never mind a late lurch into the most egregious sexism. Two other odd details: Negri is apparently privy to the otherwise classified information that the 7/7 bombers went to the pub and got 'drunk on beer' before blowing themselves up, and this lifelong admirer of Machiavelli and author of some very fine scholarly writing on him feels obliged to declare: 'I am not Machiavellian'!

Anyway, following on from the Yves Coleman piece, which is pretty much the best thing I've seen on this stuff, maybe this could form part of a mini-thread together with Yann Mouillier-Boutang's piece on Interactivist which comes

from the same sort of political background as Negri but is a bit more elegant, and, crucially, insists on the rationality of the non-self-representing rioters, and Diana Johnstone's early first-hand empirical account on Counterpunch

, which is

social-democratically minded but sets out the issues and dispels some of the fantasies quite effectively, and some of the other French-language texts, including a lot of participant/eyewitness stuff, collected on the Mondialisme site, where an early version of Coleman's text showed up:

Something else very loosely related that I came across recently: David Harvey has written a new book about the last 30 or so years of capital flows and value-transfer called something like 'a brief history of neoliberalism'. It's apparently thick with empirical detail, and is reviewed quite interestingly by Brian Holmes here:

It sounds

vaguely pertinent to the French stuff and the other contemporary discourse around race/religion/terror/'integration' etc inasmuch as a central theme, already insisted on by the author elsewhere, is the disastrous effect (and hence ideological centrality) of treating political/economic problems as cultural ones. But another theme of the book that might be more interesting to pursue, perhaps by asking Harvey to write something himself, or just through an apposite review, is the centrality of crisis to accumulation: i.e. 'crisis' is a motive force, not a disaster, for capital; it's the mother of all structural adjustment. Negri actually wrote quite well on this in terms of the nation state and the death of Keynesianism in the 70s, but a global 'crisis-state' is surely something else again. Might be worth addressing in terms of economic-crisis portents (eg the Greenspan bubbles, those 900 million 'marginal' Chinese peasants, etc) that sound quite

plausible but by no means imply the happy 'revolutionary' ending that their adherents tend to see in them. And I suppose, more superficially, also in terms of purely ideological Mike Davis-children's-book-apocalypses like bird flu, sars or, some would say, peak oil...

I'll stop now before I end up proposing three-sided ideological boxing over hypothetical US/Chinese meltdown between Augheben, Harvey and Goldner, with a containerload of the HSBC's sars-contaminated banknotes as the prize...

See you tomorrow if the Airborne Toxic Event doesn't get us first.

Krankensliebe,

Matthew