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BOOK REVIEW**MICHAEL HARDT AND ANTONIO NEGRI. „ASSEMBLY”,
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The capitalist system has faced various social movements that want to remove it to make way for social changes for the better, and yet this has failed to happen. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (H&N) agree that social movements aim to change governments and they believe that social movements cannot achieve their real goal without destroying the capitalist system. In this direction, H&N's recent book, *Assembly*, focuses on a roadmap on how horizontal social movements, which have recently emerged and are partially successful, will succeed in the future. According to the authors, social movements need to mobilize a lasting social transformation, and that we have to prepare ourselves to see how these movements show the potential to redefine basic social relations.

The authors link the social movements that emerged from 1848 to the present day. In this context, H&N conduct 21st-century political criticism with a wide literature review from social thinkers to philosophers. *Assembly* is a complement to the authors' previous books: *Empire* (2000), *Multitude* (2004) and *Commonwealth* (2009). The two writers have been criticizing injustice, inequality and political and cultural pressures in their previous books and *Assembly* can be considered a new step for their new political theories.

The book consists of four parts (sixteen chapters) and five calls and responses. H&N begin to put forward a sequence of proposals, couched as calls, for critical groups and individuals, who are against the capitalist system and changing it toward the better. Readers can indeed take what needs to be done in the struggle against the capitalist system without getting lost in the political theory. The response to each call was analyzed under separate headings. The first call is 'strategy to the movements' (18) and focuses on the effective role of horizontal movements in the decision-making process. H&N's second call, 'invent non-sovereign institutions' (37), seeks to overthrow institutional sovereignty and ensure the formation of horizontal structures under the rule of the majority. 'Take power, but differently' (69), the third call, tries to find the true definition of power. It aims to destroy and reorganize the relationship between power and hegemonic structures. 'Take back fixed capital (the fixed capital being man himself)' is H&N's fourth call (115) that references Karl Marx in this matter: "when Marx proclaims that fixed capital, which we normally conceive in terms of machines, has become 'man himself,' he manages to anticipate the developments of capital in our time" (115). The re-appropriation of fixed capital is

a critical struggle against the capitalist system. The fifth and final call is 'Entrepreneurship of the multitude' (143) that says socially cooperating segments should organize themselves and build an autonomous structure. Through these five calls, H&N traced a series of historical arguments supporting social change in order to arrive to their own conclusion.

Fundamentally, *Assembly* offers a road map to reach a truly democratic society and provides philosophical, historical, sociological, psychological and cultural examples of this by looking at past and present events of social movements. Although the movements of the Arab Spring, the Spanish Indignados, Gezi Park, Occupy Wall Street and others did not achieve their main goals, they left important experiences for us. The road map presented by H&N is critical for the solution of social movements that arise for the realization or implementation of political, cultural and economic demands with these experiences. H&N see neoliberalism as the enemy to the process of social cohesions and decision-making. Therefore neoliberalism needs to be defeated because it is a disruptive force to social cohesion and decision-making.

Early in *Assembly*, H&N examine the necessity of the schematic structure of social movements by revealing their historical backgrounds. In particular, the definition of what kind of leadership profile these movements should have is of great importance for the future of social movements. Leadership is crucial for social movements. While the incompetence of leaders created by the social movements abolishes all the aims of the revolution, the absence of an expected leader also prevents the movement's desired achievement. H&N do not advocate leadership fetishism or the destruction of leadership. They argue that leadership should be given a new, democratic, strategic and appropriate role – that is, the transformation of this institution and its leading role in ensuring participation. As a result, two main tasks are crucial about the problem of leadership in the book: "how to construct organization without hierarchy" and "how to create institutions without centralization" (14). According to H&N's definitions, leadership must take on a completely different meaning. In this context, the first chapter of the book outlines and analyzes the new leadership model. In chapters two and five, the authors go beyond the problem of leadership and social movements. They question the economic and social relations formed by the capitalist system. In these chapters, H&N's questioning of capitalism has too much intellectual depth for most readers to understand. Considering that H&N have made efforts to form a comprehensive political theory, readers can entitle to them for this intellectual depth.

Throughout the third chapter, the authors examine all the fine details of the domination of neoliberalism in society. While H&N criticize it, they do so by emphasizing its political characteristics rather than economic: "Neoliberalism usually shows its economic face, but has a political heart" (157). In particular, neoliberalism destroyed Keynesian economics by defining it as a social issue. It has devastated democracy and made it unrecognizable today to suppress and immobilize social struggles. Apart from democracy, the economic system implemented by neoliberalism is designed to render society immobile and unresponsive. Subverting the public sphere is an integral part of the agenda laid out in neoliberalism. In this context, *Assembly* analyzes the financial relations of neoliberalism, the use of money and the imposition of private property in much critical detail. The solutions proposed after these analyses allow the book to put forward a new political theory. For example, instead of opposing money, H&N go outside the communist framework to propose an alternative theory; the authors invent an alternative to capitalist money. "That

is an alternative social technology for institutionalizing new social relations – a money of the common” (224). When the authors advocate for money of the common, they want to use it as a tool like “subversive money” in tangent with a universal basic income (225). In this way, the domination of the capitalist system in society by using money can be destroyed and new social relations will be institutionalized. Along with these effects, the money of the common must also associate access in democratic decision-making and the creation of an open society.

Chapter six, “How the Open Property to the Common”, proves that property, which is the mainstay of neoliberalism, must be destroyed, theoretically and practically. H&N state that “to investigate contemporary property relations we need first to look to today’s forms of social production and reproduction” (93). Hence, Marx and John Locke’s analysis of property do not reflect the truth today. Production becomes more collaborative and social in a contemporary capitalist society. Therefore, the link between individual labor and private property of capitalist ideology has weakened more than ever. These analyses by H&N highlight that horizontal social movements have an important place in social production as well as in decision-making and creating new, alternative structures to power. The authors conclude that, when regards to social production today, “property should become “non-property” and wealthy must become common” (94). It is still a utopian idea that the disappearance of property applies to everyone at the same time. On the other hand, the disappearance of property seems inevitable to show that a new world is possible.

In chapter seven, “We, Machinic Subjects”, H&N look at the relationship between humans and machines. The authors know that this relationship is important in capital analysis: “The re-appropriation of fixed capital, taking back control of the physical machines, intelligent machines, social machines...” (120). This chapter brings together ideas about technology and capital presented by philosophers Gilles Deleuze, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Martin Heidegger and Félix Guattari. The main problem with “machinic assemblages”, according to H&N, lies in its capital: “...when it is transformed from private property to the common, then the power of machinic subjective and their cooperative networks can be fully actualized” (123). As it is understood by reading the Assembly, the solutions offered by the authors always go to the same door: the capitalist system must be collapsed, and this should be the target of social movements.

In the following chapters, H&N argue that all aspects of financial command and neoliberal governance coincide with social phenomena. Today, when the struggle between the tools of the current system (governments, law enforcement agencies, venture capitalists, fund managers and speculators) and those who are oppressed by the system, H&N remind us of the importance of coming together socially and making common decisions. They call it “entrepreneurship of the multitude that is the autonomous organization of social cooperation” (143). H&N say that political cohesion, the essence of entrepreneurship of the multitude (social production, social union, social strike) in which trade unions and social movements work in concert to undermine capital (150), will bring new hope, understanding and governance. At this point in their argument, H&N draw attention to the importance of how the multiplicity of social enterprises holds great potential of self-organization and self-governance. “The networks of productive cooperation, the social nature of production and reproduction, and, moreover, the capacities of entrepreneurship of the multitude are the solid foundations of strategic powers” (146). They state that the elimination of private property is a “sine qua non” for a healthy realization of social rela-

tions and fair production for all. Furthermore, we have to break with the standard usage of the key terms in our political vocabulary, according to H&N. The harmonization of the political terms in the manifesto of the British Labour Party with the neoliberal system in 1997 is seen as a breaking point by H&N. For example, “the term of social was posed in a completely neutral way, socialism was confused with ‘social services,’ the concept of ‘freedom’ was given as ‘liberty’ without any link to social struggle” (151). In short, these and similar terms should be prosecuted for their true meaning and the success of social movements against the system should result in the abolition of private property and the emergence of a new system based on social production and relations.

We see that H&N are inspired by Machiavelli, especially in the analysis of leaderless social movements. With this context, the authors adapt Machiavelli’s *The Prince* to the present century to bring functionality to social movements. H&N call the social movement model as a *new Prince* that will be born of the passions of the society. “A *new Prince*, though, will not be an individual or a central committee or a party” (228). All elements of the power of society must be included in the *new Prince*. Thus, a new autonomous field will be provided for social movements. “A Prince of the multitude is something like a chemical precipitate that already exists in suspension, dispersed throughout society, and under the right conditions, it will coalesce in solid form” (228). The aim of the authors with the new Prince is to free us from the immobility of life in our age and to eliminate voluntary slavery. H&N, who impersonate the new Prince throughout the book, are seeking to prove that this is not impossible, even if it is a difficult path. On the other hand, the authors, who have demonstrated the innovative structures of social movements based on justice and democracy as a guide throughout their research since 2011, have proved that it is not impossible to create the new Prince.

The fundamental motivation behind the independent social movements is the demands of the oppressed people for their rights and wealth. Such social movements often result in the change of political power without the questioning of the political regime and system or the introduction of reform packages without allowing them to leave the capitalist system. H&N put forward a new political theory in their new book. According to this theory, which includes the creation and institutionalization of alternative social structures to the capitalist system for the success of social movements, a new leader is defined and these movements are aimed to be more challenging. There is no reason why this theory, which also reveals the formulas that will destroy private property, does not turn into practice. *Assembly* cannot answer all the questions about why social movements have often failed to unseat capitalism but it makes us believe that a new system is possible against the capitalist system. The social movements in Iraq, Lebanon, Hong Kong, France, Chile, Iran and Spain, which emerged immediately after the book was written, exemplify the political theory of the book. Especially, when capitalism proves us once again through COVID-19 that it is not a viable system without economic growth and surplus value, H&N’s new system proposal deserves consideration.