

Contributi/7

From Lenin to Badiou

The Philippine Revolution against Neoliberal Capitalism

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This paper will examine the concrete appropriation of Leninism in the Philippine communist movement. It will further trace the triadic convergence between Leninism, the Philippine Revolution, and Badiouian emancipatory politics. It will argue that three essential Leninist concepts are appropriated by the current Philippine Revolution: the vanguard party, the basic alliance of the peasants and the workers, and the united front work. It will also discuss Badiouian emancipatory politics, and particularly highlight Badiou's treatment on the question of organization or the party of the new type vis-à-vis the need to wage emancipatory struggles against neoliberal capitalism. The paper will conclude by positing three crucial points as necessary for an emancipatory politics: eventual rupture with the state, reconstitution of the organization or party of a new type as a political necessity, and the recognition and forging of a broader revolutionary unity with other sites of oppression.

Introduction

The communist revolution in the Philippines is the longest running anti-imperialist and democratic revolution in Asia. Since the re-establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) last 1968, the subsequent establishment of the New People's Army (NPA) last 1969, and the formation of the alliance of revolutionary organizations under the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) last 1973, the communist movement has advanced wave by wave, gained overwhelming support and influence, and successfully established sites of political power that cut across the archipelago. These successes came unprecedented despite the challenges posed primarily by the dominant reactionary forces led by US Imperialism and its local allied classes, and secondarily by the country's challenging archipelagic geography.

Much of the successes of this Revolution is due largely to the correct application of universal theories to concrete Philippine conditions. For almost half a decade, the CPP has unwaveringly pursued the basic tenets of Marxism-

Leninism-Maoism, most notably in preserving its role as the vanguard political party of the proletariat and all the oppressed classes in Philippine society¹. This does not however deny the fact that the communist movement in the Philippines has committed grave deviations and errors in the past which even prompted two Great Rectification Movements, one in 1968 and another in 1992. After all, as Žižek elucidates, «theory is a theory of a failed practice»². Of great importance in these movements are their rejection of all forms of opportunism and revisionism, an achievement inspired by no less than Lenin's hard stand against both opportunists and classical and modern revisionists in Russia and in Europe in general.

This paper will examine the concrete appropriation of Leninism in the Philippine communist movement. It will further trace the triadic convergence between Leninism, the Philippine Revolution, and Badiouian emancipatory politics. In particular, it will answer the following questions: 1) *what specific principles of the October Revolution influenced and advanced the current Philippine Revolution?*; 2) *how is a Badiouian Emancipatory Politics relevant to a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist-influenced Revolution?*; 3) *what lessons does the October Revolution teach us in the contemporary fight against neoliberal capitalism?*

The paper will be divided into four parts. The first part will be an introduction of the whole paper. This will be followed with a discussion of the CPP's appropriation of Leninism within concrete Philippine conditions especially in waging a National Democratic Revolution (NDR) with a socialist perspective. The third part will be an elaboration and assessment of Badiou's concept of emancipatory politics *vis-à-vis* the fidelity to re-commit today to emancipatory collective actions similar to both the October Revolution and the current Philippine Revolution. The last and concluding part will present the triadic convergence by showing three crucial principles in pursuing the communist hypothesis. As will be seen in the presentation, what ties the triad of the October Revolution, the current Philippine Revolution, and Badiouian Emancipatory Politics are twofold. First is their unwavering critique of capitalism, developed by Lenin as imperialism, and the necessity of organized revolutionary action to dismantle such a system. Second is the steadfast position in favor of the communist hypothesis as the only alternative against capitalism. In fidelity to the basic tenets of Marxism, which was enriched by the October Revolution, and further advanced by Maoism, I shall argue that much like in the past, global capitalism must be confronted through revolutionary sequences guided by the communist hypothesis.

¹ See A. Liwanag, *Brief Review of the History of the Communist Party of the Philippines*, 1988, <http://www.bannedthought.net/Philippines/CPP/1988/BriefHistoryOfCPP-AL-881226.pdf> (accessed 28 March 2017), p. 13.

² S. Žižek, *In Defense of Lost Causes*, New York 2008, p. 3.

2. A Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Party. In a Semi-colonial Semi-feudal Society

The soul of Marxism is the concrete analysis of concrete social conditions³. It is a fundamental tenet among Marxist revolutionaries in waging an emancipatory movement to not merely apply theories without a thorough analysis of the unique economic, political and geographic conditions of a particular society. Failing to do so would inevitably lead to a serious subjectivist or dogmatist error. This would expectedly lead to a mechanical application of revolutionary principles which may even be harmful to the goal of winning a revolution, and building socialism. This error the CPP consciously avoids from committing.

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has been the solid and enduring theoretical guide of the party which the CPP claims has led to a massive national revolutionary movement. After all, Lenin himself correctly pointed out that «[w]ithout revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement...» and that «the role of the vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory»⁴.

The CPP was re-established last December 26, 1968, upon the ruins of the old erring merger party, under the theoretical guidance of Marxism, Leninism, and Maoism⁵. Upon its re-establishment, it immediately resolved to resume the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) in order to end US Imperialism, Feudalism, and Bureaucrat Capitalism, and immediately proceed to the Socialist Revolution⁶. Claiming to be the vanguard party of the entire oppressed classes, it built, in 1969, the New People's Army (NPA) as the military force of the party and the entire revolutionary movement which will seize political power wave by wave in a protracted scale. And upon gaining significant political influence that cuts across classes and sectors, the CPP organized in 1973 the National Democratic Front (NDF) of all revolutionary groups that adhere to the cause

³ M. Zedong, *On Contradiction*, in *On Practice and Contradiction*, ed. by S. Žižek, New York 2007, p. 73.

⁴ V. I. Lenin, *What is to be Done: Burning Questions of our Movement*, New York 1972, pp. 25-26.

⁵ For a comprehensive presentation of the CPP's history, see A. Liwanag, *Brief Review of the History of the Communist Party of the Philippines*, cit., p. 2; See also J. M. Sison, *Impact of the Communist International on the Founding and Development of the Communist Party of the Philippines*, 5 May 2006: <https://josemariasison.org/impact-of-the-communist-international-on-the-founding-and-development-of-the-communist-party-of-the-philippines/> (accessed 28 March 2017).

⁶ The resumption here refers to the obstructed Philippine Revolution of 1896 where, nearing its victory, American Colonialists intervened and eventually waged an aggressive war against the Revolutionaries and the Filipinos, thus thwarting what supposedly was a victorious anti-colonial and democratic revolution. See R. Constantino, *The Philippines: A Past Revisited*, Quezon City 1975, pp. 207-228. Liwanag explains that «the Party envisions two stages in the Philippine revolution: the national democratic and the socialist. The national democratic revolution is being carried out. Upon basic completion of this through the seizure of political power, the socialist revolution can commence». See A. Liwanag, *Brief Review of the History of the Communist Party of the Philippines*, cit., p. 9.

of the NDR. Undeniably today, the revolutionary movement remains as the strongest opposition force, and the number one threat to national security in the Philippines⁷. This situation pushed the current *Duterte* administration to enter into a peaceful dialogue with the communists.

With its re-establishment, the CPP immediately presented a comprehensive analysis of the Philippine society. The CPP believed that the Philippines is suffering from a semi-colonial and semi-feudal system. Guerrero explains that its «semicolonial [sic] character... is principally determined by US imperialism»⁸. While it proclaimed “independence” to the Philippines last July 4, 1946, prior to it however, the US colonial government had already laid the foundations for neocolonial rule. Until today, the Philippines is still suffering from neocolonial bondage, so that even the current *Duterte* administration, whether he meant it sincerely or rhetorically, is fighting for an «independent foreign policy»⁹. On the other hand, its semi-feudal character «is principally determined by the impingement of US monopoly capitalism on the old feudal mode of production and the subordination of the latter to the former»¹⁰. The US neither obliterated nor developed the old feudal mode of production and transformed it to a capitalist one. On the contrary, it maintained it as its strong social base where it could secure the three important conditions for a monopoly capitalistic system of production: cheap raw materials, cheap labor, and liberalized markets. It can be said that the current underdevelopment of the Philippines is due largely to its semi-feudal character perpetuated by no less than US Imperialism¹¹. With these problems faced by the majority of the Filipino people, the CPP, together with the NPA and the NDF, wages a National Democratic Revolution (NDR) with a socialist perspective.

⁷The CPP is proud to claim that «[t]he NPA stands as the most glorious, durable and advanced revolutionary armed force in the entire history of the Filipino people. It grew in strength and prevailed in fierce opposition to a 14-year fascist dictatorship. And it has overcome all the military campaign plans unleashed against it by the pseudo democratic successors of the Marcos regime». See *Aim to Win Greater Victories in People's War: Message of the Central Committee in Celebration of the 47th Founding Anniversary of the NPA*, 29 March 2016: <https://www.ndfp.org/aim-win-greater-victories-peoples-war-message-central-committee-celebration-47th-founding-anniversary-npa/> (accessed 28 March 2017). With regard to the communist movement as a top security threat, see E. Regalado, *Communists still top Security Threat*, «The Philippine Star», 6 March 2017: <http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2017/03/06/1678359/communists-still-top-security-threat-esperon> (accessed 28 March 2017).

⁸A. Guerrero, *Philippine Society and Revolution*, Manila 2006, p. 63.

⁹See for example R. Cabato, *Duterte is Consistent on Independent Foreign Policy – Palace Spokesman*, in *CNN Philippines*, 27 October 2016: <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2016/10/25/Duterte-is-consistent-on-independent-foreign-policy-Palace-spokesman.html> (accessed 29 March 2017). Worthy of note here is how foreign aids influence national economic policies. See for example *US Aid and Imperialism*, 21 October 2016: <http://ibon.org/2016/10/us-aid-and-imperialism/> (accessed 29 March 2017).

¹⁰A. Guerrero, *Philippine Society and Revolution*, cit., p. 64.

¹¹See for example J. M. Sison, *US Imperialism and People's Resistance in the Philippines*, 08 June 2014: <http://www.ilps.info/en/2014/06/08/us-imperialism-and-peoples-resistance-in-the-philippines/> accessed 29 March 2017.

Having made an extensive and thorough class analysis, the NDR demarcates the allies and enemies of the revolution. Three essential Leninist principles are observable in the current NDR: party leadership, basic alliance of workers and peasants, and united front work. After Lenin expounded the meaning and nature of imperialism, it was found out that capitalism and its system of exploitation and oppression no longer worked in the traditional way. Economic exploitation has extended and has included not only the proletariat but also the peasantry and even some segments of the bourgeoisie¹². Eventually, even the bourgeoisie and the peasantry would launch social movements, from mere reforms to outright bourgeois revolutions or peasant uprisings. The change in the actual economic and political conditions pushed Lenin to apply Marxism to a new circumstance, way beyond what Marx and Engels had originally envisioned.

The CPP acknowledged the basic Leninist doctrine of a vanguard political party. Lenin insisted that the «primary and imperative practical task» is «to establish *an organization of revolutionaries* capable of lending energy, stability, and continuity to the political struggle»¹³. At a time when the notion of party leadership was eroding, and movementist and identity politics fueled by postmodernism seem to dominate world politics, Filipino revolutionaries, in fighting foreign and local exploitation, faithfully upheld this important Leninist notion. Its non-dogmatist position enabled the CPP to enrich the classic notion of the Leninist party by taking an anti-revisionist stand, and by further upholding Maoism, especially the latter's concepts of the mass line and contradiction¹⁴.

The revolutionaries within this political party had to actively engage with the entirety of the people, and not, as the Mensheviks before were erroneously doing and which Lenin blatantly criticized as economism and primitivism, limit themselves to organizing solely the working class. Lenin had set clear the task of this revolutionary group: «to bring political knowledge to the *workers* the social democrats must *go among all classes of the population*; they must dispatch units of their army *in all directions*»¹⁵. Conscious of this proletarian imperative, the CPP dispatched itself across all classes, sectors, and to all the archipelagic regions of the Philippines. It was and is ever conscious that many of the oppressed classes in the Philippines also have a burning revolutionary resolve to implement bourgeois democratic reforms (e.g. land reform to the peasantry). Further, it was and is conscious that one of the tasks of the communists is «to support

¹² It is in this context in which we must understand Lenin's position that in Asia, «[t]he bourgeoisie there is *as yet* siding with the people against reaction». V. I. Lenin, *Backward Europe and Advanced Asia*, in *Lenin Collected Works*, vol. 19, trans. by G. Hannah, ed. by R. Daglish, Moscow 1977, p. 99.

¹³ V. I. Lenin, *What is to be Done: Burning Questions of our Movement*, p. 103.

¹⁴ See the CPP's tribute to Mao, A. Guerrero, *Tribute to the Great Communist Mao Zedong*: <http://www.padepaonline.com/pag-aaral-sa-marxismo-leninismo-maoismo/parangal-sa-dakilang-komunistang-si-mao-zedong> (accessed 13 May 2014).

¹⁵ V. I. Lenin, *What is to be Done: Burning Questions of our Movement*, cit., p. 79.

every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order»¹⁶. And lastly, it was and is conscious that it is the vanguard political party of the oppressed Filipinos, and it acted «in such a way that *all* the other contingents recognize and are obliged to admit that [they] are marching in the vanguard»¹⁷.

Having with it this clear revolutionary line, the CPP forged its class basis of strategy and tactics. This class basis of course starts with the class leadership: the proletariat through its political party, the CPP¹⁸. Guerrero further discusses that the CPP

is the most advanced embodiment and the principal instrument of the revolutionary leadership of the Filipino proletariat in fulfilling its historic mission. It is composed of the most advanced elements of the proletariat and, therefore, it is the concentrated expression of the ideological, political and organizational strength of the proletariat as a leading class¹⁹.

Since the CPP wages a revolution in a semi-feudal society where the peasantry predominates the entire population, the working class, which only composes 15% of the population, has to forge an alliance with the largest mass force in the Philippines: the peasants, which comprise 75% of the population. Being the main force of the revolution, the CPP believes that «[w]ithout [the peasants'] powerful support, the people's democratic revolution can never succeed»²⁰. Because of rampant feudal and semi-feudal forms of exploitation, seven out of ten farmers are left landless²¹. The clamor for genuine land reform has been burning ever since the Spanish colonial period, yet the same demand is still reverberating in the countryside until today. And since big landlords also control significant positions in the bureaucracy having with them the needed funds to win electoral posts, the clamor for land reform would either fall on deaf ears or be responded by sham land reform programs. In the case of the Philippines, numerous land reforms have been implemented, including the current Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, yet not one has solved the endemic problem of landlessness. Worse, peaceful demonstrations of peasants demanding such calls are oftentimes reciprocated with violent and even fatal dispersals resulting to massacres.

Having all these things considered, the CPP believes that there is no other solution to the peasant problem «but to wage armed struggle, conduct agrarian

¹⁶ V. I. Lenin, *The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*, in *Lenin Collected Works*, vol. 41, trans. by Y. Sdobnikov, Moscow 1969, p. 156.

¹⁷ V. I. Lenin, *What is to be Done: Burning Questions of our Movement*, cit., p. 83.

¹⁸ A. Guerrero, *Philippine Society and Revolution*, cit., pp. 156-157.

¹⁹ Ivi, p. 157.

²⁰ Ivi, p. 158.

²¹ See a government publication, *DAR Holds GAR in ARMM*, 08 October 2016: <http://www.dar.gov.ph/national-news/2460-dar-holds-gar-discussion-in-armm> (accessed 29 March 2017). Abbreviations: DAR (Department of Agrarian Reform), GAR (Genuine Agrarian Reform), ARMM (Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao).

revolution and build revolutionary base areas»²². Lenin before raised a very practical question: «*can the feudal-minded landowners and plunderers capitalists be expected to give land to the peasants and give up the supreme power to the people*»²³? Lenin categorically answered, NO. He continued that the communists «must naturally do everything they can to continue the people's great cause – the revolution, the struggle for liberty and land»²⁴. It is only through an armed struggle that despotic landlords will be dispossessed of their lands and feudal monopoly be dismantled. And it is only through a peasant uprising that big landlords are dethroned from their political power. Reiterating Lenin, the CPP is firm that the revolutionary movement alone «is capable of wiping the feudal landowners and their unlimited power in the [...] state»²⁵.

With the basic alliance forged between the proletariat and the peasantry, the basis for establishing a patriotic alliance has already been prepared²⁶. The CPP acknowledges the important role and influence of the petty-bourgeoisies – which comprise 7% of the population – in waging and winning a revolution. Especially among the intelligentsia, the petty-bourgeoisies could amplify revolutionary propaganda and make the revolutionary cause more palatable among the basic masses of workers and peasants, and also among the middle or national bourgeoisies – which compose 2% of the population – interested in ending foreign monopoly of industry, trade and commerce, and whom a positive alliance for the NDR can possibly be built. Lenin correctly clarified that «only when [the petty-bourgeoisie class] joins the proletariat is the victory of the revolution... assured easily, peacefully, quickly and smoothly»²⁷. In fact, Lenin himself argued that revolutionary proletarian consciousness could only come outside of the working class itself, since the latter, too caught up with economism, is incapable of articulating the universalist position of the proletarian party²⁸. This process, coupled with the Maoist notion of the mass line, enables a dialectical remolding of both the intellectual and the proletariat to become the revolutionary intellectual²⁹.

²² A. Guerrero, *Philippine Society and Revolution*, cit., p. 158.

²³ V. I. Lenin, *The Third Duma and Social-Democracy*, in *Lenin Collected Works*, vol. 41, cit., p. 213.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ V. I. Lenin, “*The Peasant Reform*” and *the Proletarian-Peasant Revolution*, in *Lenin Collected Works*, vol. 17, trans. by D. Cox, Moscow 1977, p. 120.

²⁶ Lenin himself was already aware of the importance of the peasants in the revolution. He explained that «the attitude of the proletariat to the peasants in such a situation confirms the old Bolshevik concepts... that the peasants must be wrested from the influence of the bourgeoisie. That is the sole guarantee of salvation for the revolution». See V. I. Lenin, *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat it*, in *Revolution at the Gates*, ed. by S. Žižek, New York 2004, p. 104.

²⁷ V. I. Lenin, *The Tasks of the Revolution*, in *Revolution at the Gates*, cit., p. 124.

²⁸ V. I. Lenin, *What is to be Done? Burning Questions of our Movement*, cit., pp. 78-79.

²⁹ Or as Lenin correctly pointed out, «*all distinctions as between workers and intellectuals*, not to speak of distinctions of trade and profession, in both categories, *must be effaced*». Ivi, p. 109.

Various revolutionary organizations among the petty-bourgeoisies under the NDF have already allied with the NDR. These would include organizations from the youth and students, church people, teachers/professors, women, scientists and engineers, artists, medical practitioners, and migrant workers. Working in clandestine method especially in the urban areas, they have succeeded in drawing the widest possible moral, political, financial, logistical, and personal support for the revolution waged in the countryside.

The initial momentum of revolutionary upsurge in the 70's and the 80's, fueled by political repressions during the dictatorial Martial Law, however, was foiled by deviant and opportunist elements within the CPP. Due to major deviations, the party and the entire revolutionary movement suffered grave ideological, political, and organizational decline, and even fatal consequences. A Second Great Rectification Movement (SGRM) has to be launched in order to «reaffirm basic principles and rectify errors»³⁰. In affirming its basic principles, the CPP urged its members and all revolutionaries to «stand firm as proletarian revolutionaries like the Bolsheviks did...»³¹. One theoretical achievement of this document, among many, was its critical assessment of the USSR as a revisionist center, which was further clarified in a separate and later document which called on the party and the revolutionary forces to «stand for socialism against modern revisionism»³².

In any case, the CPP upheld the anti-revisionist stand of Lenin, renewed its commitment to advance the national democratic revolution, and resolved to carry forward the NDR towards the socialist revolution. From Moufawad-Paul's analysis, the revolutionary movement in the Philippines is a continuity-rupture relationship in relation to the revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism³³. While it upheld Leninism, the CPP creatively applied the latter to the unique conditions in the Philippines enriching the said theory in foreign soil and thereby avoiding the pitfalls of dogmatism. The current revolutionary situation in the Philippines enfleshes what Lenin long ago had accurately assessed in relation to the advance revolutionary state of Asia. He emphatically narrated that:

[e]verywhere in Asia a mighty democratic movement is growing, spreading and gaining in strength... Hundreds of millions of people are awakening to life, light,

³⁰ This is the title of the second rectification document of the CPP. See A. Liwanag, *Reaffirm our Basic Principles and Rectify Errors*, «Kasarinlan: Philippine Journal of Third World Studies», 9 (1), pp. 96-157.

³¹ Ivi, p. 97.

³² See A. Liwanag, *Stand for Socialism against Modern Revisionism*: <https://theworkersdreadnought.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/armando-liwanag-stand-for-socialism-against-modern-revision.pdf> (accessed 13 June 2017).

³³ He argues that «all ruptures must also place themselves in continuity with a science; they mobilize the general concepts of the previous theoretical stage and, in doing so, seek to develop a living theory out of the germinal insights of those thinkers who were incapable of thinking beyond the contradictions of their own times». J. Moufawad-Paul, *Continuity and Rupture: Philosophy in the Maoist Terrain*, Winchester 2016, p. 106.

and freedom. What delight this world movement is arousing in the hearts of all class-conscious workers, who know that the path to collectivism lies through democracy!³⁴

3. Badiou and the Communist Hypothesis

Among the leftist thinkers that proclaimed fidelity to the communist hypothesis, or at least to egalitarian politics, Badiou displayed a critical fidelity to Marxism, Leninism, and even Maoism. Initially influenced by the currents of Maoist thought during the 70's and the 80's, and guided by his own dictum that «[t]he inevitable result of the lack of ambitious thought is a mediocre politics and a devalued ethics», Badiou formulated a notion of an emancipatory politics which ambitiously revived the seemingly failing communist hypothesis³⁵.

Badiou's Marxist orientation is evident in his notion of an evental rupture against the State. He claims that only upon the opening of an event, and the consequent fidelity of an interventionist subject, can the organization of the New proceed. The event is an inaugural which «happen in certain times and places which, unlike the minor contingencies of everyday life, rupture with the established order of things». ³⁶ Crucial to the notion of the event is its happening in the world as a sort of discontinuity, a radical break from the normal or established routines, structure, and language of a particular situation. The general theme is that evental ruptures, rather than conserving the old and the decaying, construct a new order through a kind of supplementation of the old. In this regard, the old is not totally extinguished in the sense of total destruction – at least in the *Being and Event* – but preserved in a higher and newer unity. Badiou clarifies that «[i]t is solely in the point of history, the representative precariousness of evental sites, that it will be revealed, via the chance of a *supplement*, that being-multiple in-consists»³⁷.

This discontinuity in the field of politics is a rupture from capitalism which is only possible under a communist hypothesis. A radical break demands more than statist reformisms. It even goes beyond movementist or identity politics which, for decades now, have merely criticized but have not really pushed history beyond the limits of capitalism³⁸. As Marx earlier has formulated, rupture against capitalism assumes the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and not a mere reconfiguring and giving it a human face³⁹.

³⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Backward Europe and Advanced Asia*, in *Lenin Collected Works*, cit., pp. 99-100.

³⁵ A. Badiou, *Theory of the Subject*, trans. by B. Bosteels, New York 1982, p. xxxviii.

³⁶ A. Badiou, *Being and Event*, trans. by O. Feltham, New York 2005, p. xxvi.

³⁷ Badiou explains that «[t]he subject's measure demands that the strict logic of the outplace... exceeds itself in the *destruction of the place*». See A. Badiou, *Being and Event*, cit., p. 177. Emphasis added.

³⁸ Bosteels explains that «[t]he task of criticism then ultimately no longer consists only in drawing up limits but also and above all in enabling one to pass beyond them». B. Bosteels, *The Actuality of Communism*, New York 2014, p. 60.

³⁹ See a brief elaboration of Žižek's critique of capitalism with a human face, P. Suechting, *Global Capitalism with a Human Face*, in *AC Voice*, 2 December 2012: <https://acvoice.com/2012/12/02/global-capitalism-with-a-human-face/> (accessed 5 December 2015).

In *The Communist Hypothesis*, Badiou takes on the challenge posed by critiques that the communist project is a big failure. He stresses the need «to reformulate the communist hypothesis in contemporary terms» taking into account «new local events and political battles» which may enlighten how revolutionaries ought to create «new forms of organization»⁴⁰. Recognizable in this need for reformulation is the backdrop of the failed political projects which supposedly promised alternatives to a decaying capitalism. In this reformulation, Badiou stresses the need to reconsider within a so called emancipatory politics a political organization subject to the force of the masses⁴¹.

In a much later work *The Rebirth of History*, Badiou addresses further this problematic of the organization. In this work, one can draw out theoretical support for a renewed political organization. Analyzing contemporary riots many of which took place in the Middle East, Badiou assesses their significance. Since local riots may end up in a nihilistic if not terroristic violence, these must be raised in a level which Badiou would describe as historical i.e. «the violent restitution of an inexistent», the content for a rebirth of history⁴². But this would only be possible if historical riots are raised in the level of the political i.e. that it must confront the state since it is the «machine for manufacturing the inexistent»⁴³. The political sequence of these riots can only be guaranteed under the composition of the organization⁴⁴. Here, Badiou distinguishes between the historical and political, a distinction he previously emphasized in the *Theory of the Subject* when he noted that «history is the fortune of the event, never to be confused with politics which is its *forced* subjective rationality». He further clarified that «[i]t is fully in keeping with Marxism to say that history is the chance of political necessity»⁴⁵.

Although the *Theory of the Subject* is already veering towards a rejection of the classical Leninist conception of the party, – which is later evident in *Being and Event* – spread throughout the book is Badiou's assertion for a «party of a new type». Interestingly, Badiou quotes, at the pages devoted to ethics, a Chinese Communist Party decision emphasizing the Maoist mass line to clarify his position on the party of the new type. Badiou argues that the communist subject inevitably must rebel, even against the party itself especially if the latter divorces itself away from the masses. He contends that:

⁴⁰ A. Badiou, *The Communist Hypothesis*, trans. by D. Macey and S. Corcoran, New York 2010, p. 65.

⁴¹ Badiou describes that class «is an analytical and descriptive concept, a 'cold' concept, and 'masses' that is the concept with which the active principle of... real change, is designated... it is the masses, much more indistinct, who are feared». A. Badiou, *The Rebirth of History: Times of Riots and Uprisings*, trans. by Gregory Elliot, New York 2012, p. 91. Or as Moufawad-Paul argues, «[i]t is not that we are replacing *proletariat* with *the masses* but that we are using the latter concept as a substitute for the simplistic *working-class*». J. Moufawad-Paul, *Continuity and Rupture: Philosophy in the Maoist Terrain*, cit., p. 147.

⁴² A. Badiou, *The Rebirth of History: Times of Riots and Uprisings*, cit., p. 62.

⁴³ Ivi, p. 71.

⁴⁴ Ivi, p. 63.

⁴⁵ A. Badiou, *Theory of the Subject*, cit., p. 60.

[i]n such circumstances, no corporeal hierarchy can exempt you from the test of courage. If the party pretends to protect you from it, you should become the party all by yourself. You must in turn know how to consider the party as null, solely *so that it continues to exist* as the body of a subject⁴⁶.

While it may seem that Badiou has totally repudiated the notion of the Leninist party, what is evident however is first, his insistence of the necessity of a militant organization – provisionally named as dialectically communist – in the procedure of an emancipatory politics, and second, his unflinching affirmation towards a politics of whose maxim is no less than equality⁴⁷. In this regard, we can absolutely position Badiouian emancipatory politics within the revolutionary tradition of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. In short, Badiouian politics is an effective theoretical force against capitalist hegemony.

4. Fidelity to the Communist Hypothesis Against Neoliberal Capitalism

While capitalism continues to assume various appearances throughout its stages, and while past attempts to overcome it have seemingly failed, the specter that continues to haunt modern capitalism has not finally been exorcised, especially at a time when global capitalism rocked by a financial crisis much worse than the Great Depression of 1930 is challenged by both spontaneous and organized movements. We can very well agree with Badiou in this regard that «[t]he decisive issue is the need to cling to the historical hypothesis of a world that has been freed from the law of profit and private interest»⁴⁸. In confronting neoliberal capitalism, revolutionaries must be united under three principles which were manifested by the victorious October Revolution, advanced by the current Philippine Revolution and expounded in Badiouian emancipatory politics.

First, the communist hypothesis demands a rupture with the state, not a mutual coexistence with it. This means a communist movement which works independently outside of the state. This does not mean however that openings for agitational and propaganda work within the state should dogmatically be ignored. The revolutionary movement must be absolutely independent *and yet* can still work within and maximize state structures. The State Duma as a venue for agitation is a classic example for this position. Sison accurately labels this as the combination of legal and illegal forms of struggle which also is effectively practiced in the current NDR⁴⁹.

⁴⁶ Ivi, p. 315. Emphasis added.

⁴⁷ See for example A. Badiou, *Metapolitics*, trans. by J. Barker, New York 2005, pp. 99, 149.

⁴⁸ A. Badiou, *The Communist Hypothesis*, cit., p. 63.

⁴⁹ J. M. Sison, *On the Combination of Legal and Illegal Forms of Struggle*, in *For Democracy and Socialism Against Imperialist Globalization*, Manila 2009, pp. 34-38. Also see CPP, *Recti-*

Second, the communist hypothesis actualizes in history only through the discipline of an organization. The old party-state has been exhaustively criticized by Mao, Badiou, Zizek, and other thinkers. Yet, recent events have shown the need to reconstitute such a notion on the basis of both past failures and successful experiences, especially of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, in order to cross the limits of capitalism. If for Badiou, the decisive issue for an emancipatory politics is the need to cling to the communist hypothesis, the decisive issue on the other hand for the pursuit of a communist hypothesis is the creative reinvention of the party: the party of a new type. The CPP, quoting Mao, describes this organization to be a «well-disciplined Party armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, using the method of self-criticism and linked with the masses of the people...»⁵⁰.

Third, the communist hypothesis acknowledges other sites of oppression and struggle. Various movements in the past which have assumed the appearance of identity politics can actually be drawn within the revolutionary movement guided by the communist line. These multiple sites share a common theme: the recognition «that things as they are must be regarded as unacceptable».⁵¹ Women's movements denounce patriarchy and all forms of male chauvinism; LGBT movements condemn discriminations grounded on homophobia; and national minorities decry the plunder of their ancestral domains. While all of these display peculiar tones of mass discontent, a mass-oriented revolutionary party will somehow unite these fragmented voices into one powerful force that sweeps the foundations of the principal enemy: capitalism. In other words, a revolutionary party demands an ever inclusive united front against capitalism. This party, as Lenin has reminded, must «'go among all classes of the population' as theoreticians, as propagandists, as agitators, and as organisers [sic]...»⁵². While being thoroughly conscious with the unique complexities of different sectoral issues, a revolutionary movement guided by the communist hypothesis ought to retain as politically principal the issue of class. Only in this way can the old primitivism and mass spontaneity be avoided, and subsumed under sway of the proletarian political struggle.

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fy Errors, Rebuild the Party!, 26 December 1968: <http://bannedthought.net/Philippines/CP-1960s/RectifyErrors-RebuildParty-681226.pdf> (accessed 17 June 2017), p. 31.

⁵⁰ CPP, *Rectify Errors, Rebuild the Party!*, 26 December 1968: <http://bannedthought.net/Philippines/CP-1960s/RectifyErrors-RebuildParty-681226.pdf> (accessed 17 June 2017), p. 30.

⁵¹ A. Badiou, *The Rebirth of History: Times of Riots and Uprisings*, trans. by G. Elliot, New York 2012, p. 21.

⁵² V. I. Lenin, *What is to be Done? Burning Questions of our Movement*, cit., p. 81.