

The Third Move: Julia Kristeva on Chinese Women

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ABSTRACT

The concept of the subject-in-process Kristeva develops in *La révolution du langage poétique* belongs to those theories of the subject that try to understand the subject as a revolutionary subject. Theories of that type usually are formed by three moves. In the first move, the subject is positioned as the victim of some oppressive structure that keeps the subject from being or becoming what it really is or what it deserves to be. In the second move, the subject's potential for becoming aware of that oppressive situation and finding ways to overturn it is developed. The third move is a supplement. Such a supplement is necessary, because the conceptual resources of such theories seem to be exhausted at the very point where the overturning of the oppressive structure has been achieved. There does not seem to be a bridge from a theory of the subject as a revolutionary subject to a strong theory of the subject as a social agent. The classical version of a supplementing third move is a philosophy of history. The theory of the subject is positioned within a philosophy of history as a frame. Reinterpreted within such a frame, the revolutionary subject becomes a historical agent, bringing about the form of society that comes next—according to the respective philosophy of history. Kristeva's theory of the subject-in-process excludes a solution of that kind. Her third move attempts to solve the problem by description. A segment of the present is singled out as a world of subjects-in-process already existing or at least in the making. Although for a brief period only, Kristeva saw in the Chinese Cultural Revolution the po-

tential of such a new world and the women of China as its first messengers.

KEY WORDS

avant-garde

China

Chinese Cultural Revolution

Hegel

Kristeva

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renaissance

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1. The New Subject

Kristeva's theoretical entry point is Hegel's concept of *Negativity*. Her argument then uses the by now familiar genre of thinking through Hegel against Hegel.

Kristeva takes up Hegel's turn against Spinoza. Nothingness, Nothing, the Negative, must not be seen as separated from Being. Nothingness rather is a dimension within Being, and Being, the Positive, affirmation, is a dimension within Nothingness. One of the texts she refers to for documenting that point is the following quote from the *Encyclopedia*:

The highest form of nothingness (taken) for itself is *freedom*, but it is negativity to the extent that it goes as deep into itself as possible, and is itself affirmation. (Hegel par. 87, quoted *Revolution* 102f, Olivier 72).¹

In Kristeva's view, Hegel stops halfway, however. The affirmation at the deepest level of the Negative finally collapses into another affirmation which is soaking up, extraditing or, as Kristeva puts it, erasing any form of heterogeneity. Kristeva develops that point in a discussion of the section on Being, Nothingness and Becoming in the *Science of Logic*. I quote Kristeva quoting Hegel, which she does in quite an elaborate way:

If "the truth is, not either Being or Nothing, but that Being—not passes—but *has passed over* into Nothing, and

Nothing into Being” (emphasis added), and if “their truth is therefore this *movement*, this immediate disappearance of the one into the other, in a word: *Becoming*; a movement wherein both are distinct, but in virtue of a distinction which has equally immediately dissolved itself,” then we see that this supersession amounts to the erasing of heterogeneity within the Hegelian dialectic. (*Revolution* 104, Olivier 73)

Kristeva’s concern here is, if I understand her correctly, the dissolution of the distinction between Being and Nothing within Becoming. If that distinction is there and dissolving at the same time, if Becoming is exactly that unity of the distinction between Being and Nothingness and its dissolution, the affirmative depth of the Negative has been reduced to a moment within a process which is always already one step ahead of the heterogeneous—at least potentially. The heterogeneous is right from the beginning understood as that which will not be heterogeneous any more but integrated into that process. In Kristeva’s view, the misconception that triggers that erasure of the heterogeneous lies in the fact that Hegel treats Negativity at all as a moment within logic. The quoted text continues:

When negativity is considered a logical operation, it becomes reified as a void, as an absolute zero—the zero used in logic and serving at its base—or else as a connective in the logical Becoming. Yet what the dialectic represents as negativity, indeed Nothing, is precisely that which remains outside logic (as the signifier of a subject), what remains heterogeneous to logic even while producing it through a movement of separation or rejection, something that has the necessary objectivity of a law and can be seen as the logic of matter. (*Revolution* 104, Olivier 73)

That text again shows Kristeva’s strategy. The Negative as we find it in Hegel’s text reduces the heterogeneous by translating it into

logic. Thinking through Hegel against Hegel means following his reorganization of the opposition of Being and Nothing into that process of productive dissolution he seems to be pointing at by characterizing affirmation as the deepest level of Negativity. At the point where Hegel is translating that affirmation into logic, Kristeva begins her move away from Hegel. She tries approaching that which the dialectic thinks—after that translation—as Negativity in a way that avoids that translation. A common way of characterizing the line Hegel supposedly did not cross is to speak of the pervading theology in his thought:

The theology inherent in this reorganization will, however, leave its mark in an implicit teleology: namely, the *Becoming* that subordinates indeed erases the moment of rupture. (*Revolution* 105, Olivier 74)

Kristeva's theory of the text tries to think that rearrangement otherwise, without erasing the moment of rupture or subordinating that moment to some overarching frame. That theory is a construct that unfolds as two models: On the one hand as a theory of the avant-garde texts, on the other hand as a theory of the subject. I am speaking of two models of the same theoretical construct here, because the essential terms of that construct function as terms within those two theories. Precisely that, constructing terms functioning that way, again characterizes the architecture of that construct.

The subtitle of Kristeva's work is *The Avant-Garde at the End of the 19th Century: Lautréament and Mallarmé*. Avant-garde texts indicate the appearance of a new subject. That is the historical entry point of her argument. Speaking of a new subject here may not be the right word and indeed, it is not Kristeva's term. What she has in mind is not replacing one subject by another, but an opening up and dissolution of a certain unity of the subject, a unity or form of unity she calls *paranoid*. As she sees it, Hegel had been on the way towards such dissolution in his discussion of *desire* in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. At the beginning of the chapter on Self-Consciousness the subject becomes aware of the other—of what it is not—in all its weight and

inescapable relevance. When the subject is establishing itself as Self-Consciousness, that relevance is being brushed aside—at least considerably downgraded. There are those two moments in Hegel's theory of the subject, a moment of exposure to the other, and a moment of closure. With Feuerbach's anthropological reworking of Hegel, the first moment is becoming lost, and in Marx, in spite of his turn against Feuerbach, it remains lost. Inheriting that reductive understanding of the subject, the social and political movements since the late 19th century focus on changes in the relation between subjects and on those of the structure of the state. The reduced condition of the subject remained untouched. That other moment in Hegel was developed or re-discovered only in aesthetics, in art, in the texts of the avant-garde. With that, we are back at Kristeva's historical entry point (see *Revolution* 122-128).

A rephrasing of that concept of paranoid unity in a terminology different from Kristeva's may be useful. For that purpose I take as my basic term the idea of a self, a subject, structuring a situation, or of a situation structured by a subject. Neither the unstructured situation nor the self independent of that process of structuring are terms more basic. There is no self outside of that process, and there is no situation without structure. There is only one term more basic than the idea of a subject structuring a situation, and that is the idea of change. I will leave that term undiscussed, however. Starting from the basic idea of a holistic process of structuring kept in motion by change, the crucial concept that has to be further developed is the concept of those structures used or in play in that process of structuring the changing. Because of the holistic nature of that process, those structures and their formation must not be conceived in isolation. They are and they are being formed and transformed by being in play. Another way of putting that is to say that the self is structuring itself by structuring the situation. The process of structuring is not one-directional. The agent is structured and restructured by and through the activity of structuring. From here, the paranoid closure Kristeva has in mind can be rephrased as a blockage of one of the two directions of the impact of structuring. The structures in play in the process of structuring the changing are

cutting themselves off from change. They are structuring the changing, but they are not transformed any more by the process. The subject, the self, the structuring agent defines his or her unity and identity as a set of structuring structures with a history that has come to an end.

Kristeva describes that blockage in psychoanalytic terminology as the subject being cut off from its pre-oedipal dimension (see *Revolution* 22ff). By that dimension, she means that flow of impulses and desires that form the immediate response of the subject to the situation. Due to the immediacy of those responses, the distinctions between the subject, the subject's responses, and the situation, do not exist here. At the level under discussion, the subject just is that flow of impulses and desires, and the situation is that flow too. Only later a first distinction may be made between the situation and that flow, which then will be considered as the most immediate level of those particular subjects being in that situation. That implies already a second distinction, which considers that flow as somehow "belonging" to a subject. From here, the process of structuring the changing becomes visible as double-edged. What has to be structured is on the one hand the situation out there and on the other hand that flow of desires and impulses which are the deepest level of the structuring agent's being in that situation. At that deepest level, the changing is not only out there but within the structuring agent as well. Structuring the changing within—that flow of impulses and desires—means translating it into structures for the purpose of structuring the changing out there. The formation of those structures is a process of translating the changing within, which is already an immediate response to the changing out there. It is a translation of that immediate response the self at its deepest level is, into tools for an articulate or mediated response. That is why and how those tools or structures keep changing. When the subject is cut off from the pre-oedipal, that changing ends.

Kristeva tries to develop that first moment in Hegel's theory of the subject, which became lost with Feuerbach and Marx to be rediscovered only by the aesthetics of the avant-garde. The emphasis on the pre-oedipal dimension as sketched above is the centerpiece of that project. In that dimension, Kristeva sees the very exposure of the

subject to the other Hegel touched upon only to erase it again by establishing the subject as Self-Consciousness. Opening up the paranoid unity of the subject, consequently, can only mean affirming that dimension, the presence of the other—the becoming other, the changing—within the subject. The new subject, to use again that term Kristeva does not use, is a *subject-in-process* in the above sense of a structuring agent who is constantly structuring and restructuring himself or herself. It is the ongoing formation and pulverization of constancy as a translation of the changing within into structures, perspectives, and formulas for structuring the changing out there.

2. The China-Theme

Depending upon the level of comprehensiveness intended, a theory of the subject may focus on one or both of two major perspectives. The first perspective concentrates on the formation, integration, development and inner harmony of the self. The social dimension, the relation of the self to others, plays an important part here, but that dimension is discussed only as far as it is relevant to the mentioned focus. We may call that first perspective of a theory of the subject the *therapeutic* perspective. In the second perspective, the social dimension is the main focus. Questions discussed here concern the ways subjects interact, coordinate their actions and form as well as transform institutions that stabilize that coordination. The concern of a theory of the subject concentrating on that *social* perspective is that segment in social theory where a theory of the subject forms part of a theory of society. As for Kristeva's project at the stage under discussion here, it is obvious that she starts from the first perspective with the intention of going beyond it. Dissolving the paranoid unity of the subject is understood as a perspective of social theory, not as a therapeutic program. The problem is, however, that the theory of the subject-in-process as developed in *Revolution* does not provide conceptual resources for developing a theory of action or of the formation of social institutions. It is hard to see how subjects-in-process would coordinate their actions and how they would form a society. The theo-

ry of the subject-in-process may be a strong theory of self-formation and self-integration; it does not provide a potential for a theory of social integration.

That problem is not unknown in the history of social theory. Kristeva's theory of the subject belongs to those versions that take the subject as a revolutionary subject. A theory that tries to think the subject that way usually is formed by three moves. In the first move, the subject is positioned as the victim of some oppressive structure, keeping it from being or becoming what it really is or deserves to be. In the second move, the subject is conceived as becoming aware of that oppressive situation and finding ways of overturning it. Those are the two core moves of any theory of the revolutionary subject. The third move is a supplement. Such a supplement is necessary, because the conceptual resources of a theory of the revolutionary subject seem to be exhausted at the very point where the overturning of the oppressive structure has been achieved. Revolutionaries usually are bad administrators, and in most cases, they are bad politicians as well. That has to do with the inner limitations of the concept of the revolutionary subject. There does not seem to be a bridge that leads from a theory of the subject as a revolutionary subject to a strong theory of the subject as a social agent—a theory of social integration, of society, of the formation and transformation of institutions. The revolutionary subject reaches the limits of what it is when the given oppressive structure has been overturned. That cannot be much of a surprise, because the presence of such a structure forms the constructive center of that concept. The third move supplements the theory of the revolutionary subject in preparation for the moment when that center disappears.

The classical version of that supplement does so by positioning the subject in history. The supplement of most theories of the revolutionary subject is a theory or philosophy of history that allows us to interpret the overturning of a given oppressive structure as a step into a direction defined or at least outlined by that theory of history. That direction and the conceptual resources brought into place for defining it then provide the conceptual tools to think social integration, social

institutions, society after the overturning of the given oppressive structure. The revolutionary turned politician and administrator will establish those institutions that are *timely* or come next according to the supplement he is working with. The consequences are familiar. They have been, in most cases, disastrous.

Kristeva's overall theory is to some extent inspired by the awareness of those disasters. The theory of the revolutionary subject she offers rejects the classical version of the third move. In her terminology, any philosophy of history that could supplement the theory of the subject would be the very erasure of the rupture she tries to avoid. Even so, the paralysis of the revolutionary subject after its potential success remains. Only two options were left. Kristeva could have dropped the whole project of a theory of the subject as a social agent and focussed instead on a theory of the subject in a therapeutic perspective. That she did later. In the meantime, she looked for a supplement compatible with her refusal to erase the rupture. With that, I come to the China-theme in *Revolution*, a theme that does not appear very often, but always at crucial junctures of the argument.

Phrasing the theory of the subject-in-process in terms of a theory of the text, Kristeva distinguishes between the *phéno-texte* and the *géno-texte* (*Revolution* 83ff). Those two dimensions of the text correspond to the two dimensions of the subject-in-process. The *phéno-texte* corresponds to the structures structuring the changing out there. That dimension of the text represents and signifies according to established rules and conventions of discourse. The *géno-texte* corresponds to the pre-oedipal dimension that provokes a constant restructuring and transformation of those structuring structures. Any text has a dimension that does not represent anything but still seems to be charged with meaning. The most obvious example is rhythm. In that dimension, the semiotic potential of the text is wider than the *phéno-texte* is able to display, although less specific. The rules and conventions forming the *phéno-texte* are specifications always already transgressed by that wider potential. Developing her theory of those two dimensions of the text, Kristeva illustrates that distinction first by a brief excursion into mathematics, comparing the *géno-texte* with topology and the *phéno-*

texte with algebra (84). Immediately afterwards, she uses as another illustration the distinction between written Chinese and spoken Chinese. Written Chinese, and especially so, as she emphasizes, the classical language, has the overflowing semiotic richness of the *géno-texte*. The pronunciation specifies that potential for the purpose of actual communication in specific situations, without ever exhausting it.

Only a few pages later, Kristeva describes four different signifying practices: narrative, metalanguage, contemplation and textual practice (86ff). For each one of those signifying practices, she tries to identify a corresponding social formation. As for textual practice, she points out, the corresponding social formation would have to be a formation with “fluctuating hierarchies.” As the only example of a society that would have fulfilled that requirement she mentions classical China—as characterized by Needham (94f).

A few chapters later, Kristeva discusses the limitations of the theory of practice in Hegel’s *Science of Logic* and in the Marxist tradition (176ff) The core of her argument is a variation of the argument on Negativity as summarized above. Neither Hegel nor Marx is able—that is not Kristeva’s terminology, but I think it is her opinion—to think practice without erasing the rupture. At that point, the China-theme appears again, although in a transformed way. Not classical China any more, but the China contemporary at the time. Kristeva refers to Mao Tse-tung and his essay *On Practice* (177-179).

At first, we may be inclined to take those references on China just as an echo of the setting within which *Revolution* was written. According to a note at the end of the book, Kristeva wrote it from January 1972 through January 1973. The time of preparation and of thinking through the elements of theory fused together in that book certainly goes back a few years before 1972. The setting where the book was developed and written was the Paris of the early seventies. Part of that setting was a strong Maoist movement in intellectual circles (see Bourselier). Since 1971, the journal *Tel Quel* celebrated the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Kristeva belonged to the inner circle of that journal (see Forest 380ff).

Those references on China certainly are echoes of that setting. If we look at them against the background of the problem of Kristeva's third move in her theory of the subject, it becomes obvious, that they are far more than that. What is Kristeva doing here? She interprets the Chinese system of writing, the social formation of ancient China and some ideas of Mao Tse-tung in the light of her theory of the subject-in-process. The validity of those interpretations in historical or philological terms is not my topic here. What I am interested in is the function of that interpretation in Kristeva's quest for a supplement to that theory in the above-described sense.

The classical form of the supplement positioned the theory of the revolutionary subject within a philosophy of history as a wider frame of reasoning. The conceptual resources for thinking the social dimension of the subject were then taken from that wider frame. Kristeva's theory of the subject-in-process cannot be positioned within any other theory as a wider frame, because that would erase the rupture, and that is what she tries to avoid at any cost. Taking the conceptual resources for thinking the social dimension of the subject-in-process from another theory would mean such a positioning. If that must be excluded, the whole strategy of trying to find such resources in some theoretical frame apart from the theory of the subject-in-process itself had to be given up. Within that theory, those resources cannot be found either, however. If there was any option left to think the subject-in-process as a social agent, that option could not consist in finding and then applying conceptual resources. The only option left was looking not for theories but for the subject-in-process as already embodied, already existing. If a certain existing segment of society, or a whole society somewhere in the world, could be identified as a society on the way towards a society of subjects-in-process, the social dimension of that new subject could be characterized by observation and description, and that would in no way interfere with the persistence of the rupture. The China-theme in *Revolution* must be seen in that context. Kristeva desperately needed a world that could be described as a society of subjects-in-process in the making, because that would allow her just to point at that society as a

proof that the new subject was capable of forming a society at all. The fantasies on the promises of the Chinese Cultural Revolution circulating in Paris and elsewhere at the time provided the material. So she constructed her China as a utopian society unthinkable and unthought of but really out there and ready as a point of reference to avoid the lingering aporia.

3. Chinese Women

A crucial aspect of Kristeva's third move I have not mentioned yet. It has to do with the simple fact that the world of subjects-in-process she needs and is pointing at as an existing world is a constructed world—constructed as really existing. Her third move could only work if that moment of construction could finally be crossed out. Kristeva's participation in that famous expedition of a group of French intellectuals right into the middle of the Chinese Cultural Revolution may have something to do with that.² There hardly is a better way of crossing out the moment of construction in the picture created of a world somewhere else than going there and acquiring the authority of speaking the language of return, of the one who has seen with one's own eyes and listened with one's own ears. After her return, Kristeva wrote *About Chinese Women*.

In the first part of that book, she describes the position of women in the West past and present as a function of the monotheistic nature of Western culture. She traces the beginnings of monotheism as an established religion and social bond back to the foundation of Judaism at the time around 2000 B.C., when "Egyptian refugees, nomads, highwaymen, and insurgent peasants banded together . . . without any common ethnic origin, without land, without a state, seeking at first to survive as an errant community" (18). The roots of Jewish monotheism, on that view, have to be seen in a "will toward community despite and because of all the unfavorable concrete circumstances: an abstract, nominal, symbolic community beyond individuals and their beliefs, but beyond their political organization as well" (18). As described here, monotheism came to be established as the bond of a community

that could not count on anything else to keep members together than the will to establish a community that allowed survival. The One—God, his Law, and his Word—is binding together a diversity of identities, wills, memories and expectations by transcending and then reshaping or reinterpreting those identities as a diversity or internal difference within the One. That bond is in constant danger, however, and exactly so because it is based upon a re-interpretation. It starts from the diverse, the not-One, and could not be without it. The diverse and polymorph does not completely disappear within the One in that process of re-interpretation. If it did, the One as re-interpretation would end as well. There is, we may say, no need for the One, the Word and the Law any more, when the last refugee, nomad, highwayman or insurgent has been transformed into an altruistic member of the community. But that never happens. Some insurgencies always remain and new ones appear. Within the One, the Word, the Law, there remains that endangering presence of the diverse. *Establishing* monotheism, or better: establishing a community, society or culture through monotheism requires an institution that can contain and neutralize that threatening presence within the One.

In logical terms, the institutionalization of Western monotheistic culture operates—Kristeva does not put it that way, but the point she is trying to make becomes more accessible if we do so—in two steps.

The first step interprets or re-interprets that endangering presence within the One on a meta-level. The fact that there always remains and has to remain something that cannot be reinterpreted and represented as an internal differentiation of the One is translated into a separate reality that essentially is unsayable, ungraspable, non-representable. With that step, the danger is contained. The more we affirm that other reality, the reality of the unsayable, ungraspable, unfathomable, the more we paralyze its power to affect the Word, the Law, the One. In order to affect or to endanger the Word, the unsayable would have to come close to it. The closer it comes, the less it remains what it is: the unsayable. Once it has reached the Word, it has ceased to be what it is. The powers are gone. With that meta-

interpretation of the dangerous presence within the One, the awareness that there is something that cannot be reinterpreted as internal difference gets a completely different meaning. Before, that awareness had meant that language was exposed to some endangering pressure. Based on that meta-interpretation, the awareness of the internal limit of language just means that we have reached the point where the unsayable begins.

The second step consolidates the first one by using its as a basis for defining sexual difference:

There is one unity: an increasingly purified community discipline, isolated as a transcendent principle and thus insuring the survival of the group. This *unity* that the God of monotheism represents is sustained by a desire that pervades the community, making it run but also threatening it. Remove this threatening desire—this perilous support of the community—from man; place it beside him: you have woman, who is speechless, but also appears as the pure desire of speech, or who insures, on the human side, the permanence of the divine paternal function: that is, the desire to propagate the race. (19)

In Kristeva's terminology, that ambiguous reality within the One, threatening and necessary at the same time, is *bodily desire*. The difference between the sexes, according to that text, is defined by repositioning desire as present only in woman. More precisely: Desire is positioned *outside* man, *beside* him, and desire thus repositioned defines woman. The spatial metaphors "*outside, beside*" indicate what I tried to understand in logical terms as the first step of that institution. *Outside* means somewhere else, at another place. *Beside* means the same, indicating in addition that the other place is not too far away. Repositioning desire *beside* is paralyzing the dangerous presence it was or is when inside by keeping it available at the same time. As is the case with the unsayable and ungraspable. It guarantees that there always is a rest that keeps the process of reinterpretation going, but without danger, for the mentioned reasons.

In the second part of the book, Kristeva compares the cultural history of the West under the aspect discussed with the cultural history of China. The decisive difference is that in China the monotheistic closure and the corresponding positioning of women was never completed:

One thing is certain: a revolution in the rules of kinship took place in China, and can be traced to sometime around 1000 B.C. A similar occurrence may be detected at about that time in the neighboring regions of the Mediterranean; but in China, it is particularly marked by the fact that the new patriarchal model preserved a greater number of elements from the earlier model. (*Women* 46)

In terms of Kristeva's theory of the subject, the monotheistic closure corresponds to the exclusion of the pre-oedipal dimension. In a society where that closure has never come to an end, the pre-oedipal dimension must still be present in its social institutions. The institution Kristeva discusses is the position of women in Chinese society throughout history. In the Confucian view on the position of women, she sees a development that corresponds to the positioning of women in the monotheistic tradition. In China, however, there was always another mode of thought present as well, a mode of thought strictly opposed to any form of closure: the Taoist side of Chinese thought. For that reason, the Confucian positioning of women was never as rigid and unchallenged as the corresponding monotheistic positioning of women in the West. In Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, she sees a revival and at least a tendency towards a possible victory of that other mode of thought. Years later, in her "Mémoires," first published in 1983, she writes:

What we were looking for in the spasms of Chinese antibureaucratism at a moment when the party machinery had exploded and women, after the young, were suddenly pushed to the front line was Taoist culture, Chinese writing,

and poetry, like jade, bland but subtle. Joseph Needham, whom I had met in the chapel of Caius College, in Cambridge, . . . had no trouble convincing me that Mao, poet and writer, was the most faithful modern version of ancestral Taoism.” (Olivier 18)

Those are already words of another era.

The last section of *Women* is titled “To Risk a Renaissance.” The revival of the pre-oedipal dimension in the Chinese Cultural Revolution, in Kristeva’s view, and the discovery of those developments by the West, may be of importance *here* as well. To get an idea of the social forms that might imply, she refers to the women of China, the women she describes in a series of interviews before that last section. What Kristeva thinks to discover there, if only as a tendency, is a form of social integration without representation and power.³

Those who had to suffer through the Chinese Cultural Revolution soon would tell the world otherwise. Kristeva’s comments on Chinese women belong to those errors of epic dimensions that are quite common in the history of ideas of this century. That error, however, was the only option left to a third move within Kristeva’s theory of the subject. Not long after the publication of *Women*, she gave up the project of such a third move. Most books she wrote since focus on the therapeutic dimension.

NOTES

¹ Enz. § 87, Zusatz. “Die höchste Form des Nichts für sich wäre die *Freiheit*, aber sie ist die Negativität, insofern sie sich zur höchsten Intensität in sich vertieft und selbst, und zwar absolute, Affirmation ist.”

² Other participants of that expedition were Philippe Sollers, Marcelin Pleynet, Roland Barthes and François Wahl. See Forest 475ff.

³ “A power, thus, represented by none, not even women, but recognized by all, and assumed and exercised by each: man and woman,

men and women, exercising it only to criticize it, badger it, force it to move. This would explain why the 'tribunal' has been replaced in China by 'Peoples Assemblies': there would be no more *instance* of the law itself, if each individual, man and woman, took it upon himself to remake it by permanently confronting it with his/her practice, in his/her discussions with others, in each individual act, in each concrete moment" (*Women* 200f).

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