



Tarrying with the Negative: Kant, Hegel, and the Critique of Ideology (Post-Contemporary Interventions)

By Slavoj Zizek

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In the space of barely more than five years, with the publication of four pathbreaking books, Slavoj Žižek has earned the reputation of being one of the most arresting, insightful, and scandalous thinkers in recent memory. Perhaps more than any other single author, his writings have constituted the most compelling evidence available for recognizing Jacques Lacan as the preeminent philosopher of our time.

In *Tarrying with the Negative*, Žižek challenges the contemporary critique of ideology, and in doing so opens the way for a new understanding of social conflict, particularly the recent outbursts of nationalism and ethnic struggle. Are we, Žižek asks, confined to a postmodern universe in which truth is reduced to the contingent effect of various discursive practices and where our subjectivity is dispersed through a multitude of ideological positions? *No* is his answer, and the way out is a return to philosophy. This revisit to German Idealism allows Žižek to recast the critique of ideology as a tool for disclosing the dynamic of our society, a crucial aspect of which is the debate over nationalism, particularly as it has developed in the Balkans—Žižek's home. He brings the debate over nationalism into the sphere of contemporary cultural politics, breaking the impasse centered on nationalisms simultaneously fascistic and anticolonial aspirations. Provocatively, Žižek argues that what drives nationalistic and ethnic antagonism is a collectively driven refusal of our own enjoyment.

Using examples from popular culture and high theory to illuminate each other—opera, film noir, capitalist universalism, religious and ethnic fundamentalism—this work testifies to the fact that, far more radically than the postmodern sophists, Kant and Hegel are our contemporaries.



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Review

"This new Zizek is as stunning as its predecessors, and breaks new philosophical ground. Not only to Kant and Hegel illuminate Lacan (and vice versa), mass culture and politics illuminate all of them, along with a bonus in an astonishing excursus on opera."—Fredric Jameson

“Slavoj Žižek, the Giant of Ljubljana, . . . provides the best intellectual high since *Anti-Oedipus*.”

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From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Slavoj Žižek is a Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He is the author of numerous books, including *The Sublime Object of Ideology* and *Enjoy Your Symptom!*.

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