

WHICH REVOLUTIONARY SUBJECT?
CLAUDIO NAPOLEONI'S REFLECTIONS
ON THE PROBLEM OF SUBJECTIVITY IN THE 1980S

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ABSTRACT

How to define the revolutionary subject is one of the central theoretical issues of modernity, as the response to this question shapes the development of political theory, strategy, and praxis. Claudio Napoleoni dedicated a significant portion of his work to addressing this issue. This article retraces his thinking during the 1980s on two key aspects of the problem. First, it examines his considerations on subjectivity, highlighting the fruitful interplay between Marxian economic theory, Heideggerian philosophy, and Catholic theology. Second, it assesses the political implications of these considerations. From reflections on the residues of the totalitarian tendency of capital, Napoleoni arrived at a more complex position, where a certain interpretation of Catholic anthropology allowed a further step beyond the Heideggerian critique of modern subjectivity. This provided the basis for the definition of a new revolutionary agent.

Keywords: Claudio Napoleoni, Subjectivity, Revolutionary Subject, Martin Heidegger, Karl Marx, Christian Anthropology.
JEL Codes: B24, B40, Z12.

INTRODUCTION

This article investigates two central issues in Claudio Napoleoni's thinking during the 1980s. The first concerns the question of the *subject*, and whether it still serves as a point of reference for a project of liberation. The second is the issue of the *revolutionary subject*. Assuming that the subject is not entirely confined to a fate of domination, the question shifts

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to identifying which subject is historically called upon to lead the process of liberation.

This calls for a new analysis of the final phase of Napoleoni's thought, specifically that following the publication of *Discorso sull'Economia Politica* (2019 [1985]). A significant portion of the literature has regarded this phase as an irrationalist retreat devoid of scientific interest. It is described as a "desperate attempt"¹ (Gattei 1990: 201), a refuge in the "consolation of the sacred"² (Virno 1990), something veiled in a mystical aura (Mazzetti 1994). Messori (1993) and Rodano (1999) do not see a break during the 1980s, which they argue were, as a whole, characterized by a growing interest in metaphysical issues and a shift away from economic questions.

This article aims to provide a different interpretation. First, it will show how Napoleoni's theses offer a *possible* response to the same theoretical issues that had engaged his thought from the outset. Second, we will show how the 1980s are marked by a significant internal rupture. This can be temporally situated precisely with the publication of the *Discorso*. Up to that point, the primary influence is Marcusean-Heideggerian; subsequently, the influence of Catholic theology gains ground (La Valle 1990; Bellofiore 2024 [1991]).³ By contrast with the existing literature, however, we argue that this shift specifically concerns the problem of the subject.

At the end of the 1970s, as is well known, Napoleoni faced another theoretical turning point. The "scientific return" to Marx during the period 1971-1976 had already entered into crisis in *Valore* (1976).⁴ The Modena Conference of 1978 marked the end of this period of research. For Napoleoni, the contradiction between the philosophical-dialectical moment of capitalist production, represented by value, and the scientific-empirical one, represented by price, had become irreconcilable. But why was the labor theory of value so significant for the question of the subject? It offered Marx two fundamental points of support for his interpretation of history and his own revolutionary perspective. On a subjective level, this theory highlighted how capitalism was part of the history of exploitation, even though the relationship between the exploited and the exploiting classes no longer occurred directly – through a personal relationship of

¹ [*disperante tentativo*].

² [*consolazione del sacro*].

³ BELLOFIORE 2024 [1991] argues that Napoleoni's final position in 1988 is the fulfilment of Felice Balbo's attempt to return to Thomas Aquinas through Marx, while fully accepting Augusto Del Noce's critiques on the self-dissolution of Marxism in capitalist society. In this article, we will focus more on the role that Heidegger played in Napoleoni's return to Christian theology.

⁴ See BELLOFIORE 2024 [1991]; GUZZONE and MARCHIONATTI 2022.

subordination – but rather through the mediation of the market. Moreover, exploitation was no longer directed at the unproductive consumption of the exploiting class but towards enhancing productive forces. This scientific foundation of capitalist exploitation thus dispelled any need to introduce moral elements: exploitation was a *fact* that the labor theory of value could reveal on a *scientific level*. On an objective level, the labor theory of value demonstrated that the socialist appropriation of the means of production was not so much a voluntaristic act by a group of individuals driven by personal interest but rather a necessity intrinsic to the very dynamism of the structural forces of history.⁵

Napoleoni's abandonment of the attempt to scientifically re-establish the labor theory of value thus entails a radical questioning of the entire revolutionary framework. Capital, as both Ricardo and Marx themselves had maintained, subsumes all social classes in the same impersonal dynamic of self-valorization. The subject is entirely lost, or rather, we observe a *full subjectification of capital*.⁶ Capitalists and workers are merely personifications of roles that capital requires. Exploitation, therefore, is no longer what it has been throughout human history. It is not so much a matter of one class exploiting another; instead, all social classes are drawn into the same dynamic of alienation. But then, who is the subject capable of making the revolution?

In Marxian theory, the answer is rather straightforward. Following an eschatological imagery, the proletariat is the most exploited and most radically alienated class, and it is for this reason that it is tasked with liberating all other social classes. "Marx sees in the proletariat the world-historical instrument for achieving the eschatological aim of all history by a world revolution. The proletariat is the chosen people of historical materialism" (Löwith 1949: 37). The most humble and persecuted people/class has the historical duty to heal the separation [*Trennung*] and establish a civilization, a Kingdom of Freedom, for all other peoples/classes.⁷ Marx,

⁵ Among the many instances where Napoleoni alludes to this subjective and objective foundation of Marxian philosophy of history through the categories of political economy, one can refer to his letter to Augusto Del Noce dated April 22, 1988, where he concludes that "[Marx] asks political economy to show him how the proletariat (the presumed subject) can ground its action on an objective process of crisis, yet political economy cannot provide him with this support" [*Marx chiede all'economia politica di mostrargli come il proletariato (presunto soggetto) possa fondare la sua azione su un processo oggettivo di crisi ma l'economia politica non gli può dare quest'aiuto*] (FN I.4/2/b.4; fasc. 27.2).

⁶ For a different interpretation of this same point, see ARTHUR 1999.

⁷ These considerations undergo a radical shift between Marx's analyses of the early 1840s, prior to his engagement with political economy and the theory of value, and those presented in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital*. In this later phase, the emphasis is on the contradictory development

of course, does not believe he is applying an eschatological framework to his theory of revolution.⁸ He considers his approach to be a strictly scientific method. To support this, the labor theory of value becomes *the bridge between utopia and science, between eschatology and political economy*. The problem, for Napoleoni, is that this bridge no longer functions, and thus the passage between the transcendent and the immanent dimensions of the revolutionary process can no longer be circumvented scientifically.

The question Napoleoni faces in the 1980s is thus twofold. If the labor theory of value is no longer sustainable, and indeed if one must fully accept the theoretical-political implications of Sraffa,⁹ what theory of liberation remains possible? And is liberation still possible at all? Or is the very concept of the subject dominated by a tendency towards domination that is intrinsic to the entire history of the West? Furthermore, does the distinction between alienation and exploitation remain as significant as before?¹⁰

This article describes the Napoleoni's two main responses to these questions. The first, which extends up to around 1985, is strongly influenced by Marcuse initially and Heidegger later. The totalitarianism of value subsumes everything, revealing it as a commodity. The human being loses all autonomy. The response, then, might be to identify some sociological "residue", that is, that part of society which has not yet been fully absorbed

of capital and the emergence of the possibility of collective control over production through the process of real subsumption. In other words, Marx no longer focuses solely on deprivation, but on the entire dynamism of the productive forces. Nonetheless, even in this second phase, the liberation of the proletariat is conceived as a liberation for all social classes.

⁸ "One may wonder if Marx ever realized the human, moral, and religious implications of his postulate: to create a new world by creating new men, a new kind of men. It seems that he was completely blind to the prerequisite of a possible regeneration and was dogmatically satisfied with the abstract formula that the new man is the Communist, producing commonwealth, the *zoon politicon*, or 'collective being' of the modern cosmopolis" (LÖWITH 1949: 36-37).

⁹ Even beyond Sraffa's own self-interpretation.

¹⁰ It appears that Napoleoni ultimately answered this last question in the negative. In the new form that exploitation takes under capitalism, its conceptual difference is no longer as significant. He writes to Duccio Cavalieri on December 11, 1986: "My impression is that, if you do not accept my definition, if you believe that the one based on labor-value does not hold, and if you reject Garegnani's view that Sraffa offers a new demonstration of exploitation, then you are left with no choice but to say that exploitation does not exist in capitalism. This conclusion is one I could even accept, because, as I mentioned in the book, I do not wish to make this a matter of semantics, and if one wishes to speak solely of alienation, I would have no decisive objections" [*La mia impressione è che, se tu non accetti la mia definizione, se ritieni che quella basata sul valore-lavoro non tiene, e se respingi il punto di vista di Garegnani che Sraffa sia la nuova dimostrazione dello sfruttamento, allora non ti resta che dire che lo sfruttamento, nel capitalismo, non c'è. Conclusione, questa, che io potrei anche accogliere, perché, come ho detto nel libro, non voglio fare una questione di parole, e se si vuole parlare di alienazione soltanto, non avrei obiezioni decisive*] (FN I.4/2/b. 4; fasc. 19.5).

by the logic of value. Napoleoni initially considers women and young people as new revolutionary subjects, as they are excluded from the dynamics of capital. This seems to be the aspect of his response most influenced by Marcuse (Rodano 1985). Conversely, the Heideggerian influence is evident in the critique of the very history of subjectivity, which is seen not as a solution to any form of alienation but rather as its very source (Amato and Lucarelli 2019). The subject is embedded in that detachment from Being, which leads it to relate to reality as an object: a conceptual representation of a metaphysical rationalization or a productive reserve for a process of self-valorization.

The second response characterizes Napoleoni's thinking from the publication of *Discorso* onwards. In this later phase, Napoleoni proposes a theory of subjectivity that differs even from Heidegger's. This elaboration is mainly developed through interviews, articles, conferences, and private letters. Technical-metaphysical subjectivity is no longer considered the necessary fate of the subject. There would be *another* "Subject" beyond the alienated subject. Thus, the history of subjectivity would be animated by an *essential ambiguity*, and therefore by a possibility of freedom, which extends to the very identification of the subject, that is, the *who?* of the subject. This does not mean that the "Heideggerian lesson" is entirely abandoned. Heidegger continues to serve as a means of radicalizing Marx beyond the materialist-dialectical framework. However, Christian anthropology allows Napoleoni to radicalize Heidegger *beyond a certain unilateral interpretation of the history of subjectivity*. The unilateral view pertains to the fact that, for Heidegger, the subject belongs to the history of metaphysics, and thus to the oblivion of Being. Napoleoni maintains that this aspect does not account for the *full* historical truth about subjectivity. This reveals that a Subject that is not enslaved by the link between domination and alienation is possible. It is this residue, no longer sociological but anthropological, that constitutes the new revolutionary subject. This insight, however, is possible only within the framework of Christian revelation.

A final clarification concerns the use of the terms subject, Subject, and subjectivity. *Subjectivity* is employed to express the general concept and the philosophical problem. Following Napoleoni's choice in his 1985 letter to Mario Reale, the term *Subject*, with a capital "S", refers to the liberated subject and the subject of liberation. Conversely, *subject*, with a lowercase "s", refers both to the general concept, as a synonym of subjectivity, and to the human being in a state of alienation.

In Section 2, we will address the issue of subjectivity. In Section 3, we will examine that of the revolutionary subject.

1. IS THERE A FUTURE FOR THE SUBJECT?

1.1. *Marx after Heidegger*

The philosophical analysis of the relationship between Heidegger and Marx was particularly intense in the 20th century, especially from the 1960s onwards (Axelos 2015 [1966]; Eldred 2000; Hemming 2013; Kittsteiner 2004; Vioulac 2009). The main issues in the literature have concerned the problem of technology, what could be salvaged of Marxism after the Heideggerian lesson, and the relationship between the overcoming of metaphysics and the critique of political economy. What is extremely interesting about Napoleoni's analysis, however, is that he arrives at Heidegger through the coherent and rigorous development of *a purely economic problem* (Ranchetti 1993; Amato 1994). This unfolds in two steps. The first consists in the ontological radicalization of the problem of value; the second in the need to rethink the concept of alienation following the abandonment of the labor theory of value.

Both issues can be better understood if analyzed from the perspective of the real problem Napoleoni addresses: that of the subject. According to Napoleoni, Marx always presupposes that in the nullification of the subject within the object, in the inversion between ends and means, in the fetishism of commodities, subjectivity can still be recovered. Paradoxically, this recovery is achieved by reinforcing the position of the subject in relation to the object. By "reversing the reversal", that is, by overcoming the capitalist mode of production as a social organization, the subject receives a renewed, "enhanced" confirmation of its position in relation to beings. The human subject is able to recreate that correct condition of relationship with the object, which capital had overturned to enable the enhancement of the productive forces. The outcome is a repositioning of the subject at the center of productive reality, with the additional technical power ensured by the historical function of capital.

The problem is that in the subordination of both workers and capitalists to the dynamic of value, the subject is entirely lost. This is the metaphysical shift that, according to Napoleoni, Sraffa contributes to the history of the theory of value. In the lecture of December 16, 1987, part of the last course he chose to give, Napoleoni states that "Ricardo is the first who, with great coherence and clarity, conceives capital as a totality"¹¹ (Fondo Napoleoni I.4/2/b.4; fasc. 39.1). However, it is only with Sraffa that this insight attains *full formal coherence*. The metaphysical idea of a complete subjectification of

¹¹ [Ricardo è il primo che con grande coerenza e lucidità concepisce il capitale come totalità].

capital, which Marx had already intuited, finds its scientific correspondence in Sraffa's derivation of prices. This implies that "a subject such as this, by its very nature, is entirely absorbed into its own object without residue; here, the product, that is, value, absorbs the entire process within itself"¹² (Napoleoni 1992: 147).

If this is true, Napoleoni considers the Marxian idea of recovering the subject as a way out of alienation to be *untenable*. First, there is no subjective relationship of exploitation, as capital inaugurates a new phase in the history of exploitation. What remains is not so much a dialectic between two classes, as a subordination of both to the dominance of the "Thing". Second, it is the subject itself that Napoleoni begins to see as the origin of the problem. It is no longer a matter of recovering a subject that has become alienated within objective dynamics, but rather of questioning the very position of subjectivity. The Marxian separation [*Trennung*] is conceivable only within a detachment [*Abschied*] from Being that leads the human being to relate to entities solely in the sense of increasing a manipulative power.¹³ This relationship manifests both in the conceptual representation of traditional metaphysics, which seeks to control the totality of beings,¹⁴ and in the technical objectification that reveals entities as a standing-reserve [*Bestand*] for a logic of accumulation.¹⁵ In both cases, the subject is *merely* this claim to dominate entities from a position of otherness, that is, from a radical separation.¹⁶

In other words, the form of mediation may cease to be that of self-originating and self-purposing production, that is, the inclusion of the producing subject in the produced object (and, naturally, without this cessation entailing a return

¹² [un soggetto come questo per sua natura si risolve interamente, senza residui, nel proprio oggetto; qui il prodotto, cioè il valore, risolve in sé l'intero processo].

¹³ See NAPOLEONI 2019 [1985]: 164-165.

¹⁴ Heidegger, in his 1935 lecture course at the University of Freiburg, stated: "Thinking brings something before us, *represents it*. This representing [*Vorstellen*] always starts of our own accord, is freely at our disposal. This freedom is not arbitrary but is bound by the fact that in representing, we think upon and think through what is represented by analyzing it, by laying it out and reassembling it" (HEIDEGGER 2000 [1966]: 125).

¹⁵ "Thus *techne* characterizes the *deinon*, the violence-doing, in its decisive basic trait; for to do violence is to need to use violence against the over-whelming; the knowing struggle to set Being, which was formerly closed off, into what appears as beings [...] *Techne* is the violence-doing [*Gewalt-tätigkeit*] of knowing" (*ibid.*: 170, 171, 176).

¹⁶ "Only where, in essence, man has become subject does there exist the possibility of sliding into the unbeing of subjectivism in the sense of individualism. [...] To the essence of the subjectivity of the *subiectum*, and of man as subject, belongs the unconditional delimiting forth [*Entschränkung*] of the sphere of possible objectification and the right to determine this objectification" (HEIDEGGER 2002 [1950]: 70, 83).

to historically experienced forms) [...]. This is to say that it is not inevitable for human activity to unfold in a *hubris* which, beginning with an intention of the subject to dominate the world by reducing it to a product, ultimately resolves in the reduction of the producer itself to a product – that is, in the contradictory mutual identification of subject and object¹⁷ (Napoleoni 1989: 44).

In a kind of *dialectic of subjectivity*, then, precisely because of the claim of separation from the rest of beings and domination over them, the human being ends up being the most exploited of all beings. In the very historical role it assumes – and here the Marxian echo is strong¹⁸ – of revealing all beings in terms of producibility, the subject finds itself as the employee [*Angestellte*] of this process: not the one who uses technology but the one who is used by it. It is evident, then, that for Napoleoni, the “*Heideggerian-Sraffian lesson*” – namely, the interpretation of the metaphysical implications of Sraffa’s work – entails a profound questioning of the entire trajectory of the subject. In the illusory technical empowerment, one must see the subordination of human beings to an apparatus [*Gestell*] that, among various things, exploits the subject the most, as it makes it the “leader” [*Führer*] of the entire process. But the subjects are “leaders” only insofar as “they are the first employees in the process of the unconditional utilisation of beings, in the service of securing the emptiness of the abandonment of Being”¹⁹ (Heidegger 1954: 94).

This does not negate the fact that, for Heidegger, the human being never becomes a pure standing-reserve,²⁰ and technology retains a potentially emancipatory ambiguity.²¹ However, this entails a radicalization

¹⁷ [In altri termini, la forma della mediazione può cessare di essere quella della produzione auto-originante e auto-finalizzata, ossia dell’inclusione del soggetto produttore nell’oggetto prodotto (e senza naturalmente che questa cessazione comporti il ritorno a forme già storicamente esperite) [...]. Si vuol dire che non è inevitabile che il fare dell’uomo si svolga all’interno di una *hubris*, che, partendo da un’intenzione di dominio del soggetto sul mondo attraverso la riduzione di quest’ultimo a prodotto, si risolve alla fine in una riduzione a prodotto dello stesso produttore, cioè nell’identificazione reciproca e contraddittoria di soggetto e oggetto].

¹⁸ Marx writes in the third volume of *Capital*: “Capital comes more and more to the fore as a social power, whose agent is the capitalist. This social power no longer stands in any possible relation to that which the labour of a single individual can create” (MARX 1998 [1894]: 263).

¹⁹ [Sie sind die ersten Angestellten innerhalb des Geschäftsganges der bedingungslosen Vernutzung des Seienden im Dienste der Sicherung der Leere der Seinsverlassenheit].

²⁰ “But precisely because man is challenged more originally than are the energies of nature, i.e., into the process of ‘ordering,’ he never is transformed into mere standing-reserve” [Doch gerade weil der Mensch ursprünglicher als die Naturenergien herausgefordert ist, nämlich in das Bestellen, wird er niemals zu einem bloßen Bestand] (HEIDEGGER 1954: 19).

²¹ “There is no demonry of technology, but rather there is the mystery of its essence [...] The essence of technology is, in a lofty sense, ambiguous” [Es gibt keine Dämonie der Technik, wohl dagegen das Geheimnis ihres Wesens [...] Das Wesen der Technik ist in einem hohen Sinne zweideutig] (*ibid.*: 29, 34).

of the Marxian conception of alienation, placing it in a historical dimension deeper than the merely materialist-dialectical.²² As Napoleoni wrote in a letter to Giorgio Lunghini on March 24, 1988, it is no longer a matter of interpreting alienation in terms of a loss of the “naturalistic dimension”²³ (FN I.4/2/b.4; fasc. 30.2). Rather, it involves a radicalization of Marx’s thought in recognizing that alienation must be understood “in a strong sense, not as descriptive of a human condition but as a representation of the essence of a given history”²⁴ (FN I.4/2/b.4; fasc. 30.2). Napoleoni now considers it necessary to conceive a new liberation that lies “outside the temptation of subjectivism”²⁵ (Napoleoni 2019 [1985]: 181). In his view, however, this can only be achieved by going beyond Marx’s conceptual horizon. *Going beyond Marx now essentially means going beyond the subject.*

After Marx, and after the failure of his hope for liberation through unraveling and resolving contradictions, Heidegger provides the first analysis of modern production outside the illusion of a lost subjectivity to be recovered²⁶ (Napoleoni 2019 [1985]: 163).

In an interview published in *L'Espresso* on June 23, 1985 regarding the *Discorso*, Napoleoni reiterates this aspect but does so by initiating the *rehabilitation of the subjectivity* that would characterize his thought after 1985.

Alienation is indeed a loss of subjectivity, but the way this occurs in this society make such a loss irrevocable. Liberation can no longer be imagined, as Marx once did, as the recovery of lost subjectivity – *at least not if we understand subjectivity as the West has traditionally conceived it*, that is, as the human being’s domination over the world. For it is precisely this domination that ultimately renders everything a producible object, even the human being. One might put it this way: at the root of the alienation as seen by Marx lies a far deeper separation,

²² “What I propose for discussion, then, is not so much the idea that Heidegger surpasses Marx but rather that Heidegger allows us to revisit the Marxian theme of alienation without implying a dialectical view that has, in some way, been falsified by history” [*Allora ciò che io propongo alla discussione non è tanto il fatto che Heidegger superi Marx quanto il fatto che Heidegger consente di riprendere la tematica marxiana dell’alienazione senza implicare una visione dialettica che è stata in qualche modo falsificata dalla storia*] (NAPOLEONI 1988: 139).

²³ [*dimensione naturalistica*].

²⁴ [*in senso forte, non come descrittiva di una condizione umana ma come rappresentazione dell’essenza di una storia data*].

²⁵ [*al di fuori della tentazione del soggettivismo*].

²⁶ [*Dopo Marx, e dopo il fallimento della sua speranza di liberazione attraverso il dispiegarsi delle contraddizioni e del loro superamento, Heidegger dà la prima analisi della produzione moderna al di fuori dell’illusione di una soggettività perduta da recuperare*].

one that Heidegger describes as a detachment from Being – a failure to recognize the essential otherness of the world²⁷ (Napoleoni 1985: 93, emphasis added).

1.2. *A new liberation of the subject: Beyond Marx and Heidegger?*

On December 2, 1985, Claudio Napoleoni wrote a letter to Mario Reale to comment on the latter's review of the *Discorso*, which appeared in *La Rivista Trimestrale* (Reale 1985). This letter can be considered an important testimony to the new approach Napoleoni would take towards the subject: from the necessity of overcoming to its rehabilitation as the cornerstone of a project of liberation. The essence of this shift can be summarized as follows. Napoleoni holds that technical-metaphysical destiny is no longer the sole intrinsic possibility within the history of subjectivity. A distinction should be made between subjectivity understood metaphysically, as the foundation of capitalist relations, and the Subject as a project of liberation. This is a significant departure from the theses of the *Discorso*.

I criticize those who – like Ruggenini and Goldoni – after seeing in Marx the end of subjectivity, regard this precisely as Marx's relevance, asserting that, beyond all his erroneous economic predictions, there is in Marx an essential insight: one that speaks of production closing in on itself and of the end, in this closed process, of the very subject. My observation here is that the producing subject is not *the* Subject; or rather, it is not necessarily so²⁸ (FN I.4/2/b. 4; fasc. 19.1).

Napoleoni now distances himself from those Italian Heideggerian authors who had previously served as a point of reference for the *Discorso*. According to him, they misunderstand the lesson to be drawn from the *Marx-Heidegger dialog*. They believe that Marx had asserted the end of subjectivity in the self-valorizing dynamism of the "Thing". And, as Napoleoni well knows, Sraffa was also to provide scientific confirmation of this.²⁹ However,

²⁷ [L'alienazione è, sì, perdita della soggettività ma il modo in cui ciò avviene in questa società rende tale perdita irrimediabile. La liberazione non può più essere immaginata, come Marx faceva, come recupero della soggettività perduta. Almeno intendendo per soggettività ciò che l'Occidente ha sempre inteso, cioè il dominio dell'uomo sul mondo: proprio questo dominio finisce infatti per rendere tutto oggetto producibile, anche l'uomo stesso. Si potrebbe dire così: alla base dell'alienazione vista da Marx, c'è una separazione ben più profonda, quella che Heidegger chiama distacco dall'Essere, mancato riconoscimento di una alterità essenziale del mondo].

²⁸ [Io critico coloro che – come Ruggenini e Goldoni –, dopo aver visto in Marx la fine della soggettività, vedono appunto in ciò l'attualità di Marx, affermando che, al di là delle previsioni economiche tutte sbagliate, c'è in Marx una previsione essenziale, che dice della chiusura della produzione su se stessa e della fine, in essa così chiusa, dello stesso soggetto. La mia osservazione, qui, è che il soggetto produttore non è il Soggetto; o meglio, non lo è necessariamente].

²⁹ "The model presented in *Production of Commodities by Means of Commodities* gives form

this no longer involves a questioning of the entire history of subjectivity. From the interview in *L'Espresso*, where the dividing line was “at least not if we understand subjectivity as the West has traditionally conceived it” (Napoleoni 1985: 93), we observe a further shift. The total inclusion of the subject within the “Thing”, which Marx had intuited, Heidegger explained, and Sraffa demonstrated, is not the final word on subjectivity. Napoleoni now considers that the metaphysical-alienated subject is a *historical specification* in the trajectory of the Subject. This implies a further theoretical shift beyond the one-sided interpretations of subjectivity. In a dialog with Carla Ravaioli, following 1986, he states:

I believe one can still legitimately speak of the liberation of the subject, provided that this is not a subject placing the world at its service, but a subject that continuously relates to a substantial otherness – that is, a world of which the subject is a part, which, as such, cannot be dominated by the subject, and which instead must be respected and even enjoyed, enjoyed precisely because it is respected. In short, the world is a radical otherness with respect to the subject; it cannot be produced or dominated by the subject, it can only be respected by it, in its essence, in its mechanisms, in the way it offers itself to humanity as the stage of its action – an action that, however, should neither disturb nor alter it. [...] And by world, I do not mean only the physical nature, but also the inner world of human beings, which is what it is, and as such should be accepted and respected, not used as an instrument of domination over any existing reality³⁰ (FN I.4/2/b.4; fasc. 23.1: 69-70, emphasis added).

But what, then, is the theoretical shift that Napoleoni makes during these months to once again position the Subject as the agent of a project of liberation? In our view, it is precisely the personal and theoretical rediscovery of the Christian faith. This serves two functions. First, the

to the idea, specific to Marx (though anticipated by Ricardo), that capital is *totality*, in the sense that it is not merely *an* aspect of the economic process (as in neoclassical theory) but the horizon within which every particular aspect unfolds” [Il modello contenuto in *Produzione di merci a mezzo di merci dà realizzazione all’idea, propria e specifica di Marx (anche se anticipata da Ricardo), secondo cui il capitale è la totalità, nel senso che non è un aspetto del processo economico (come nei neoclassici) ma l’orizzonte entro il quale ogni aspetto determinato si svolge*] (NAPOLEONI 1992: 191).

³⁰ [Io credo si possa ancora legittimamente parlare di liberazione del soggetto, a condizione che non si tratti di un soggetto che mette il mondo al suo servizio, ma di un soggetto che si rapporta continuamente a una sostanziale alterità, cioè di un mondo di cui il soggetto è parte, che come tale non può essere dominato dal soggetto, e che invece dal soggetto va rispettato e anche goduto, ma goduto appunto perché rispettato. Insomma il mondo è un’alterità radicale rispetto al soggetto, non può essere da lui prodotto e dominato, può essere solo dal lui rispettato, nella sua essenza, nei suoi meccanismi, nel modo in cui si offre all’umanità come teatro della sua azione; un’azione dalla quale però non può essere disturbato e modificato. [...] E per mondo non intendo soltanto la natura fisica, ma anche il mondo interiore degli uomini, che è quello che è, e come tale va accettato e rispettato e non usato come strumento di dominio verso qualsiasi realtà esistente].

Christian Revelation offers an image of subjectivity that is not necessarily ensnared by the logics of alienation. The dogma of the Incarnation, and thus of a God who deeply intersects with human history to liberate it, reveals a human Subject already external to the determinations of social, political, and religious domination. "I believe that the central point of Christianity is the Incarnation"³¹ (Napoleoni 1990: 117). Even before the metaphysical deviation, it is the original sin that Napoleoni identifies as the beginning of that *Trennung/Abschied*, which Marx later analyzes on an economic level and Heidegger in the history of Being. However, this is not a destiny. "Nothing is inevitable in all this; the course of history can be changed"³² (*ibid.*: 134). The Incarnation heals the separation, and it does so within history (Agamben 2005 [2000]).

This historical process of estrangement from God [...] unfolds under a particular sign, one I regard as original, marked by an *ab initio* renunciation by the human being of himself, which in turn conditions everything that follows³³ (Napoleoni 1990: 133).

Second, Napoleoni takes a new approach to political initiative. The Subject enters history and dismantles from within all institutions founded on separation. Modernity, therefore, can be rehabilitated, albeit with a different interpretation. Subjectivity must not accept its condition of estrangement, but neither should it consider itself capable of fully overcoming it on its own, as modernity still believed to some extent. Instead, it must open itself to the mystery whereby it does not possess "in itself, apart from reference to that which surpasses it, the sufficient grounds for its own full unfolding, that is, for overcoming the limits, disorders, and contradictions that systematically emerge from within its very core"³⁴ (Napoleoni 1990: 30). Napoleoni thus realizes that the theses presented in the *Discorso* were incomplete.

At this point, then, I believe the issue of subjectivity must be revisited in new terms. What, indeed, occurs here? Something very delicate, I think, which

³¹ [Io credo che il punto centrale del Cristianesimo sia l'incarnazione].

³² [Niente di ineluttabile in tutto ciò; il segno della storia può essere cambiato].

³³ [Questa vicenda storica di allontanamento da Dio [...] è una vicenda che si svolge sotto un particolare segno, appunto che io considero originario, in cui c'è stata una rinuncia dell'uomo a sé stesso, ab initio, e questo condiziona tutto il resto].

³⁴ [in sé, al di fuori del riferimento a ciò che la supera, le ragioni sufficienti per il pieno svolgimento di sé stessa, cioè per il superamento dei limiti, dei disordini, delle contraddizioni che dal suo stesso seno sistematicamente emergono].

is not even well articulated in the book... or, in any case, not fully explicated. What actually happens is that what we are trying to think, the 'general domination of capital,' let's call it that, hence this radical loss of subjectivity is entirely within one dimension of reality... it is not coextensive with reality as a whole³⁵ (Napoleoni 1990: 63, emphasis added).

Domination and the annihilation of the subject in the object are one dimension of reality, but they do not encompass reality in its entirety.³⁶ The aspect Napoleoni highlights is that of the original separation, which subsequently unfolds across economic, social, and historical-ontological dimensions. However, this dimension does not represent the full scope of historical reality but rather an alienated manifestation of it. Christianity is not merely a personal matter of the final part of Napoleoni's life; it plays a *central theoretical role*. It allows Napoleoni to rehabilitate a political transformation based on the Subject, one that does not fall back into "a dialectical and materialist framework like that of Marx"³⁷ (Napoleoni 1990: 63). The "temptation of subjectivism" is only one of the forms in which subjectivity has manifested, but it is neither its destiny nor its truest meaning.

2. WHO IS THE REVOLUTIONARY SUBJECT?

If, therefore, the subject does not necessarily equate to technical-metaphysical subjectivism, the question arises as to *who* this Subject is and *what* it can accomplish in history. The issue, then, ultimately becomes a political one. It is necessary to identify the "anthropological class" that must carry out the revolution. Here as well, a shift can be observed between the late 1970s and 1988: the first part is influenced by a certain German philosophy – with Marcuse playing a more prominent role than Heidegger in this connection – while the second part draws on a re-actualization of Christian anthropology. But let us proceed in order.

³⁵ [A questo punto, allora, secondo me va ripreso in termini nuovi il problema della soggettività. Che cosa accade infatti? Una cosa molto delicata, penso, che nel libro non viene neanche detta... troppo bene, o comunque non è esplicitata fino in fondo. Accade che, in realtà, quel che tentiamo di pensare, la 'dominazione generale del capitale', chiamiamola così, quindi questa perdita radicale di soggettività, è tutta interna ad una dimensione della realtà... non è coestensiva della realtà].

³⁶ In this context, the distinction between the economic and non-economic spheres, already present in earlier texts, becomes significant. What changes, as we will see in the following section, is that the notion of the *residue* – that is, what remains outside domination and alienation – no longer pertains to specific social categories (women and youth) but rather to everything that is not subsumed under the domination of capital. The extent to which this overlaps with the economic sphere is an open question.

³⁷ [schema dialettico e materialista come quello di Marx].

Marx identifies the proletariat as the class entrusted with the historical function of making social relations consistent with productive development and, therefore, of overcoming wage labor, alienation, and fetishism. For Napoleoni, however, this thesis can only be upheld if one maintains – *under the same conditions as Marx* – the labor theory of value. Once the latter is abandoned, the Marxian revolutionary subject collapses (Rodano 1985). This is further confirmed by the catastrophic outcomes of real socialism: instead of representing liberation, it has brought an intensification of separation and domination.³⁸ He writes to Mario Reale:

The end of this theory of value also means, for me, the end of the idea that capitalist exploitation is essentially identical to pre-capitalist exploitation, that is, unpaid labor, the appropriation by one class of the fruits of others' labor. This essential departure from Marx carries two significant consequences that clarify its meaning: (1) the working class is no longer the universal class, and (2) a revolution carried out by the working class inevitably reproduces the capitalist relation³⁹ (FN I.4/2/b. 4; fasc. 19.1).

Accordingly, if the proletariat is no longer the universal class, exploited and persecuted and thus called on to liberate all other classes, and at the same time one does not want to concede that alienation and exploitation simply no longer exist, it is necessary to identify a new revolutionary Subject. The first answer Napoleoni envisions is that of the *residues*. If capital has a totalitarian tendency that seeks to subsume all agents of the economic process, the revolutionary Subject will be represented by those groups that remain entirely or partially *outside* this process. “The reduction, that is, of the subject itself to a producible reality” does not occur “without residue”, Napoleoni (1992: 168) states, and this points to a margin for action. “Each residue, in fact, opens up space for politics”⁴⁰ (*ibid.*: 168). As is well known, he initially identifies these residues in women and young people. The former have often been excluded from the productive process, while the latter have not yet been incorporated into it. It would thus be

³⁸ In fact, he had already reached these conclusions decisively in previous decades. See, for example, NAPOLEONI 1973: 146. The conclusion remains the same, but in the 1980s, the political implications and theoretical foundation change.

³⁹ [La fine di questa teoria del valore significa, per me, che finisce anche l'idea che lo sfruttamento capitalistico sia sostanzialmente identico allo sfruttamento pre-capitalistico, ossia lavoro non-pagato, appropriazione da parte d'una classe dei frutti del lavoro altrui. Questo distacco essenziale da Marx si porta con sé due conseguenze di grande momento che ne precisano il senso: 1) la classe operaia non è più la classe generale, 2) una rivoluzione fatta dalla classe operaia riproduce inevitabilmente il rapporto capitalistico].

⁴⁰ [La riduzione cioè dello stesso soggetto a realtà producibile]; [senza residui]; [Ogni residuo infatti apre lo spazio alla politica].

a matter of bringing together those residues that, on a sociological level, remain outside the logic of estrangement.

It is not difficult to discern a certain *naïveté* in this argument. First, if the tendency to include the subject in the object is totalitarian, it is unclear why so many categories would *automatically* remain outside of it (Gattei 1990). According to this idea, revolutionary Subjects are already “ready” in society: they are categories differentiated by age and gender, with a disposition contrary to that of capital. Napoleoni would soon realize the inadequacy of this response. In the 1987 interview with *Palomar*, where he once again presented this idea, he states that “a revolution cannot be made only with women and young people” (Napoleoni 1990: 67) and that, more generally, one must see that “the human being is never reducible to the producer”⁴¹ (*ibid.*). The human being – regardless of sex or age – cannot be reduced to the subject of domination. This means that, from an anthropological (and no longer sociological) perspective, the totalitarian drive of capital does not affect an aspect of subjectivity that remains *irreducible*. The totalitarianism of value is not truly “totalitarian.”

According to Napoleoni, as well as to the entirety of Christian theology, there is an irreducible aspect that cannot be affected by separation – not even the original one – and therefore not by the desubjectification brought about by capital. It is the “inner world of the human being” to which Napoleoni refers, the *inner man* mentioned by Saint Paul, that human dimension which serves as a bridge between incarnation and history, preserving an openness to transcendence. A theoretical revival of the revolutionary Subject is thus possible, provided it is conceived in *universalistic* terms.

Towards liberation, then, there is *no sociological electiveness* but rather *an anthropological vocation*. This is also the essence of the debate with Giorgio Lunghini during the 1986-1987 series “Le Grandi Correnti della Cultura Mondiale degli Ultimi Venti Anni”. Napoleoni’s new conception of alienation does not mean that there is no longer conflict in society, nor does it imply an individualistic exit from exploitation. On the first point, Napoleoni maintains a traditional political stance. “An expropriation of everyone’s respective subjectivity does not mean that all are equal, nor that there is an identical relationship to the social situation in which one lives”, and this reveals a vision of society that is not irenic but rather “a politics of conflict and struggle”⁴² (Napoleoni 1988: 136-137). Although the

⁴¹ [non si può fare la rivoluzione solo con le donne e i giovani]; [l'uomo non sia mai riducibile al produttore].

⁴² [Un'espropriazione in tutti della rispettiva soggettività non implica che tutti siano uguali né che vi sia un identico rapportarsi alla situazione sociale nella quale si vive]; [una politica di confitto e di lotta].

capitalist is a functionary of capital and thus *ontologically* exploited as much as the worker, he derives a *social* benefit from it, which is why he resists its abolition. As Marx had already made clear in the *Unpublished Sixth Chapter*, the capitalist “is rooted in that alienation process and finds in it his absolute satisfaction, whereas the worker, as its victim, stands from the outset in a relation of rebellion towards it and perceives it as a process of enslavement” (Marx 1994 [1933]: 399). *The different ways in which the capitalist and the worker relate to ontological alienation generate social conflict.*

On the second point, he vehemently rejects the criticisms from some Marxian circles that his thought had taken a “spiritualistic-reactionary” turn. “I have not spoken of a subjective and private aspect of the operation of exiting the given situation, but always [...] of a political exit from the situation”⁴³ (Napoleoni 1988: 137). But, then, who is this revolutionary Subject? It seems that for Napoleoni the answer is ultimately twofold: one more political, the other more anthropological. Regarding the former, in the face of the emergence of “neo-conservative policies”, there is a need to “somehow reintroduce a class dialectic in a society that is losing it” (Napoleoni 1987: 124), and therefore to reconstruct a “lost internal constraint” (*ibid.*), which can only begin with an attempt to “radically alter the perspectives, objectives, and thus the instruments”⁴⁴ (*ibid.*: 125) of the economic model. These struggles, however, must be grounded in *a new anthropological awareness.*

If the human Subject is not automatically the subject that is lost in the object but retains its *irreducibility*, then the entire human aggregate is *potentially* the revolutionary Subject. It is not a matter of identifying social categories that are already prepared but of understanding that at the core of the human being there remains *a lever for liberation* that *can* be translated into political action. Exiting from domination, therefore, first and foremost equates to a *metánoia*, a profound transformation of the human condition, which also entails the free and entirely new rediscovery of the great spiritual traditions (Balducci 1989). Peace becomes the new political dimension, as Napoleoni states in the *Letter to the Communists: Exiting the System of Domination and War*, co-written with Raniero La Valle on the occasion of the 17th Congress of the Italian Communist Party in April 1986.

Peace is not to be understood merely as the cessation of conflicts but as a regulative ideal for all collective issues. It becomes *the new revolutionary*

⁴³ [Io non ho parlato di un aspetto soggettivo e privato dell'operazione di uscita dalla situazione data, ma sempre [...] di fuoriuscita politica dalla situazione].

⁴⁴ [riproporre in qualche modo una dialettica di classe in una società che la sta perdendo]; [vincolo interno perduto]; [mutare in maniera radicale le prospettive, gli obiettivi e perciò gli strumenti].

praxis. Conflict remains and, in fact, is further radicalized. There will be those who oppose peace, those who seek to perpetuate the system of domination, and those who aim to preserve separation because it yields social benefits.⁴⁵ Nor does the goal of peace imply an irenic collaboration between capitalists and workers. Instead, it involves shaping the entire political strategy towards healing the division that, within the system of domination and war, underpins every aspect of collective life.

In this sense, Napoleoni now sees the theoretical synthesis attempted in the 1960s between Catholicism and communism, and thus also Franco Rodano's thought, as not only politically insufficient but also theologically flawed. In rehabilitating a full positivity of the finite, against Augustine but also against Thomas Aquinas, Rodano, according to Napoleoni, falls into a form of Pelagianism: the claim that human beings can heal the separation on a purely voluntaristic plane. In Napoleoni's view, however, the separation can only be healed through faith in something that *transcends* the historical and empirical dimension, even if this faith subsequently has direct transformative consequences on *that very historical dimension*. This theological "error" would also lead Rodano to overlook the fact that his demands for justice, freedom, and equality are not at all the product of a "strictly natural morality, which highlights the values of equality and freedom"⁴⁶ (Napoleoni 1990: 6). Instead, they originate from a specific tradition, which is historical and belongs to the nexus of revelation and liberation intrinsic to Christianity and, in its secularized form, to the trajectory of modernity itself.

In other words, the individualism intrinsic to the capitalist dynamics of production and consumption is possible only within an original individualism – an anthropological separation – that characterizes capitalism but is not exclusively caused by it. In this way, without denying the need to transform social relations, Napoleoni recognizes the religious radicality of the problem of separation, in a form distinct from the Catholic-communist compromise. The latter remained limited to a rational and moral synthesis between Christianity and socialism, without investigating the anthropological root of alienation.

⁴⁵ Even those who pursue "a policy of peace inevitably have an enemy before them; their enemy is anyone who wants war. The world is full of warmongers, and it is clear that, along the path taken to overcome the system of war, they are enemies to be fought" [*una politica di pace inevitabilmente ha dinanzi a sé un nemico, ha davanti a sé come nemico chi vuole la guerra; di guerrafondai è pieno il mondo ed è chiaro che, durante il percorso che si segue per arrivare ad un superamento del sistema di guerra, essi sono dei nemici da combattere*] (NAPOLEONI 1986: 49).

⁴⁶ [*una morale strettamente naturale, che mette in evidenza i valori dell'uguaglianza e della libertà*].

Individualism in consumption is merely the reflection of this original individualism; to imagine changing the former while leaving the latter untouched is an illusion. Moreover, even within the narrow limits in which such a transformation might be possible, it would introduce an element of imbalance and tension that could not be sustained for long⁴⁷ (Napoleoni 1990: 15-16).

This perspective, however, does not lead Napoleoni to a technical fatalism or a neo-conservatism in the style of Del Noce (who nonetheless influenced this phase of Napoleoni's thought). Indeed, alongside this spiritual rediscovery of Christianity, Napoleoni continues to acknowledge that "capitalism and democracy are not compatible with one another and, at best, can coexist only through compromises"⁴⁸ (Napoleoni 1992: 192). There is a new unity between the anthropological and the political problem, and this is not an escape into the irrational but a historical response to a practical issue. "The generality of social subjects (inasmuch as all are subjected to alienation, to the loss of subjectivity that Marx predicted solely for the working class) can be conceived as a revolutionary agent"⁴⁹ (Napoleoni 1985: 97). It is evident, then, that the invocation of Heidegger's statement "only a God can save us" is not a vague spiritual reference but an attempt at a renewed return to the Christian God (Fortini 1990).

If the objective is not one of reversed domination – that is, domination directed in the opposite way from the current direction of domination – but rather an objective of pacification, then the quantity of residues that can be found in the given society is probably so substantial as to create the possibility for such an operation. Through the goal of peace, of pacifying the world and thereby achieving peace with oneself – a peace, therefore, not only among states but within the social structures of individual states – and if, therefore, it is not so much a matter of restoring to itself a subject that would, as such, dominate the world, but rather of *restoring the human being to himself*, then one might come to discover that, in reality, the social reduction of the subject to an object is indeed the foundation of the given society, but that *it has not, for this reason, been totally destructive and without residue of humanity*⁵⁰ (Napoleoni 1986: 50).

⁴⁷ [L'individualismo nel consumo non è che lo specchio di questo individualismo originario; pensare di cambiare il primo lasciando inalterato il secondo è un'illusione, e, comunque, negli stretti limiti in cui ciò sia possibile, si introdurrebbe un elemento di squilibrio e di tensione non a lungo sopportabile].

⁴⁸ [capitalismo e democrazia non sono tra loro compatibili, e se mai possono coesistere solo mediante compromessi].

⁴⁹ [La generalità dei soggetti sociali (in quanto tutti sottoposti all'alienazione, alla perdita della soggettività che Marx preconizzava per la sola classe operaia) può essere pensata come agente rivoluzionario].

⁵⁰ [Se l'obiettivo non è un obiettivo di dominio rovesciato, cioè di un dominio che si svolge nella direzione opposta a quella in cui si svolge attualmente il dominio, ed è invece un obiettivo di pacificazione,

Responding to David Turolto at the same conference, Napoleoni clarified:

Lastly, this is the final issue raised by Father David: the working class; the worker has disappeared, and with him, as Father David says, the flagbearer of freedom has vanished. [...] It must also be said, however, that the flag the working class has always held is a problematic one, a flag upheld in a perspective of freedom and liberation which, as we know – as I tried to explain this morning – contained serious problematic elements. Today, we must redefine that flag, for we must redefine the process of liberation, and we must also redefine those who bear it⁵¹ (Napoleoni 1986: 55).

CONCLUSIONS

Claudio Napoleoni remains highly relevant today in gaining an understanding of many contemporary issues in economic science, politics, and the relationship between anthropological questions and new perspectives on liberation. This article has sought to show how the analysis of subjectivity can serve as an effective lens for interpreting some significant developments in the final theoretical evolution of Napoleoni's thought. In particular, we have introduced two possible new interpretations.

First, it has been shown that the publication of the *Discorso* marked a turning point in Napoleoni's reflections on both the question of subjectivity and the revolutionary Subject. The Marcusean and Heideggerian influences were enriched by the contributions of Christian theology. Christianity, thus, should not be reduced to a private dimension in Napoleoni's intellectual trajectory. To adopt this perspective would be to greatly underestimate the published and unpublished texts that Napoleoni himself left us, thereby making an arbitrary interpretative choice. It is not

allora probabilmente la quantità di residui che si possono trovare nella società determinata è così grande da determinare la possibilità di una operazione di questo tipo. Cioè attraverso l'obiettivo della pace, della pacificazione del mondo e perciò con se stessi, una pace dunque non soltanto tra gli Stati ma all'interno delle strutture sociali dei singoli Stati, e se perciò si tratta non tanto di restituire a se stesso un soggetto che come tale sarebbe dominatore del mondo, ma si tratta piuttosto di restituire l'uomo a se stesso, ecco allora si potrebbe venire a scoprire che in realtà la riduzione sociale del soggetto ad oggetto è sì il fondamento della società data, ma non per questo è stata distruttiva in maniera totale e senza residui dell'umanità].

⁵¹ [Infine, questa è l'ultima questione posta da padre David: classe operaia; è scomparso l'operaio e con esso, dice padre David, è scomparso il portatore della bandiera della libertà. [...] Va però anche detto che quella bandiera che la classe operaia ha sempre impugnato è una bandiera problematica, è una bandiera tenuta all'interno di una prospettiva di libertà e di liberazione che come sappiamo, come io ho provato a dire questa mattina, aveva al proprio interno degli elementi gravi di problematicità. Noi oggi dobbiamo ridefinire quella bandiera, perché dobbiamo ridefinire il processo di liberazione, e dobbiamo anche ridefinire coloro che la impugnano].

a question of renouncing the theses of the *Discorso*, but of bringing them to a new level of analysis.

Second, the question of the revolutionary Subject returns to the forefront. It is about identifying that Subject which, not being imprisoned in the nexus of alienation/domination, can be “the flagbearer of liberty” (Napoleoni 1986: 55). Until the *Discorso*, the thesis on sociological residues predominates. Women and young people are seen as those categories external to production that can carry forward a praxis of liberation. After the *Discorso*, this thesis fades and is enriched by the new considerations that Napoleoni had meanwhile developed. If, indeed, “the producing subject is not *the* Subject; or rather, it is not necessarily so” (FN I.4/2/b. 4; fasc. 19.1), then the Subject of liberation is *universalistic*. Everyone can be redeemed from the totalitarianism of alienation and domination that, in capitalism, extends to all. Thus, the new revolutionary praxis is one of peace, which signifies not merely the cessation of armed conflicts but serves as a regulative ideal for addressing all social issues. The Subject can become the fulcrum of this revolutionary process, provided it first consents to undergo this transformative praxis within itself.

In conclusion, it can be argued that Napoleoni’s reflections, initiated at the Modena Conference, came to a resolution in his later years. The Heideggerian phase allowed Napoleoni to critique the concept of the subject, moving beyond the materialist-dialectical perspective. Similarly, the Christian reflection enabled him to go beyond Heidegger’s dissolution of the subject as a *fundamentum inconcussum*, as an agent of a process of domination, and to see that precisely in the crisis of *this* subject another Subject emerges, which can also serve as the cornerstone of the liberation project.

Throughout the forty years that separate us from these reflections, Napoleoni’s insights have remained strikingly relevant. The decline of the communist revolutionary perspective in the West, the triumph of neoliberal policies, the resurgence of armed conflicts across the globe, and a new logic of bloc confrontation render the question of peace – and the Subject capable of constructing it – exceptionally pertinent and decisive for the very survival of humanity.

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