stable, balanced and peaceful European state system, were compatible with those of other powers, in stark contrast to Napoleon's dreams of world conquest. Maritime strategy and offshore balancing have returned to the center of world affairs, making this a timely text as well as an impressive contribution to scholarship.

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Roberto del Valle Alcalá. *British Working-Class Fiction: Narratives of Refusal and the Struggle against Work*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016. Pp. 192. $195.26 (cloth).
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Many factors have contributed to the diminution of class critique. Some commentators have tried to give the decline's beginning an exact date, around Margaret Thatcher's quip in 1987 that "there is no such thing as society," but while it is true that Thatcherism (and Reaganism) heralded a neoliberalism of the individual and the weakening of state palliatives that addressed class divisions and hierarchies, it was an effect rather than a cause, and a symptom rather than a decisive moment. It coincided closely with another marker, the collapse of the Socialist Bloc, which suggested a broad contraction in the influence of Marxist thought with its theorization of class formation and antagonism. Such factors and others, emerging from long-term socioeconomic trends, are bound to have an impact on the importance of class discourse in understanding the current conjuncture. It is no small antinomy of history that when capitalism appears so global and triumphant, the class divisions on which it pivots appear so abstract and abstruse. Even the invocation of the infamous "one percent" underlines the confusion around how class determines and overdetermines social differentiation and how indeed one percenters can criticize their own and so claim to represent the rest against themselves. How might literary and cultural study speak to the banalization and obfuscation of class in the present?

British Working-Class Fiction comes as a welcome contribution to contemporary debates concerning fictions on class and fictions of class. Rather than simply trying to revivify or restate the class components of literary production, Roberto del Valle Alcalá attempts something more ambitious. In the face of class misrecognition or displacement, he pays attention to the problem of work itself in the production and reproduction of social relations within twentieth-century fiction. Following provocations in Autonomist thinking, the idea is to consider the contradictions of class in work as an ontological category. In this approach, being is not composed of a self-recognition around identity, but is conceived instead in specific relations to work and its processes. The reason behind this shift is not to dismiss either selfhood or self-recognition but to draw attention to class expressiveness that is not based on theories of transcendence. True, this means that del Valle Alcalá must distance his approach from the imprimatur of Hegelian dialectics (which for some is the true distinction between Marxism and post-Marxism—such a break is for Gilles Deleuze the only categorical imperative), but the challenge is to think the immanence of the work/worker relation without negating the very reason for its proposition or tension. Without recounting the complex dimensions of this political and philosophical debate (say, between Antonio Negri's penchant for Marx's fragment on machines and Deleuze's gambit on the desiring fragment itself), it should be clear that when del Valle Alcalá discusses British working-class fiction, his analysis will necessarily not comport with any reading based on a kind of New Left polemic (emanating from Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams, Eric Hobsbawm or, for instance, E. P. Thompson, who warrants nary a mention in the text). The result can be both refreshing and frustrating.

On one hand, del Valle Alcalá's approach brings new insight to British texts and writers that have often been the focus of working-class cultural critique (Alan Sillitoe and Pat Barker, for instance, have been prominent inspirations in my work and others'); on the other hand, it is not always clear the refusal of work, an Autonomist axiom, necessarily constellates what makes the fiction under discussion "working-class" as such. In other words, part of the challenge in writing about working-class fiction is not only the extent to which the texts explain the concept brought to them but how they might write the concept itself. We might say that characters discussed in the book—such as Arthur Seaton (Sillitoe's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*), Alice Bell (Barker's *Union Street*), and Oona (Monica Ali's *In the Kitchen*)—embody working-class outlooks and perhaps offer resistance to the regimes of work that are the substance of their everyday lives. But does the writing have to be conscious of this standpoint in order to provide an understanding or intervention? We do not expect Welsh's Renton in *Trainspotting* to bear the burden of philosophical nuance, yet between Welsh's imagination and Renton's, the edge of class itself is pressed in its imaginary. A little refusal of theory here, even that of Giorgio Agamben and Deleuze, might provincialize it (in Dipesh Chakrabarty's sense) in favor of the provinces or provenance of "working-class" as description. (To recall my opening on the place of class critique, it is interesting that Welsh and James Kelman are read to critique Thatcherism in a chapter titled "Beyond Civil Society"). So what are the benefits of bringing a theoretically distinct appreciation of work to the idea of British working-class writing today?

Del Valle Alcalá's approach usefully problematizes working-class fiction as a site of cultural resistance by attending to the ways in which fiction reveals work dissembling, multiplying, and fracturing capital's desire to mediate every level of the worker as subject. Indeed, according to del Valle Alcalá, the norms of subjectivity are displaced so that we might witness, even in what can be read as social or socialist realism, a form of non-subject. While this canceling of subjectivity is not necessarily a comforting prospect, especially with regard to questions of agency and the agential, it nevertheless draws attention to the relevance of alternative criteria in thinking class when workers no longer have parties or states that even pay lip service to the role of class in the everyday. Worklessness, or the refusal of work, is a scary outlook for those who must still seek sustenance through the wage and the wage relation. Yet this is also the challenge of working-class fiction, because it not only comes to terms with the meanings of class in socialization but also intimates what might be risked in its transformation. The cynic will say this is easy in fiction and even easier in theory. I would say work like del Valle Alcalá's keeps alive all kinds of class possibility in a world (or a Britain) too long inclined to extinguish it.

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MARK DOYLE. *Communal Violence in the British Empire: Disturbing the Pax*. London: Bloomsbury, 2016. Pp. 283. $122.00 (cloth).
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One of the most valuable areas of new research on empire in the last decade has been the close investigation of imperial violence. Recent scholarship ranging from John and Jean Comaroff's examination of the violence of "lawfare" to Elizabeth Kolsky's analysis of the quotidian violence of the British in India, Priya Satia's study of institutional violence in the Middle East, and other scholars' work on the suppression of Mau Mau resistance has opened up compelling areas of historical research. Mark Doyle's *Communal Violence in the British Empire: Disturbing the Pax* joins this body of scholarship by exploring what he terms internal or communal