

Immanent Creativity and Constitutive Power

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Abstract:

I argue that the resources for political change do not exist as already constituted entities, whether in the form of transcendent values or an already-given consensus. Instead, they must be created; constitutive political action is rooted in creativity, and requires the creation of new movements, new powers, and new values. This creativity, though, does not come from a transcendent outside, as though a bolt from the blue. Instead, political creativity, and the creativity which humans may use to transform politics are themselves rooted in the immanent creativity of the natural and material world. I bring the sciences of Complexity into relation with the philosophies of Spinoza and DeLanda in order to argue that the world is made up of only the one reality of matter-energy, but that this matter-energy is capable of creatively generating novel phenomena. This understanding of the creativity of matter-energy is then used in order to reconceptualise political creativity in materialist terms. Political orders are constituted by a set of capacities or powers in relation, but the field of powers and their possible relations vastly exceeds any one configuration that it enters, and this field of possible relations, and the possible powers that might be formed through these relations, provide boundless resources for constitutive political change.

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