



The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity (Short Circuits)

Slavoj Žižek

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Slavoj Žižek has been called "an academic rock star" and "the wild man of theory"; his writing mixes astonishing erudition and references to pop culture in order to dissect current intellectual pieties. In *The Puppet and the Dwarf* he offers a close reading of today's religious constellation from the viewpoint of Lacanian psychoanalysis. He critically confronts both predominant versions of today's spirituality -- New Age gnosticism and deconstructionist-Levinasian Judaism -- and then tries to redeem the "materialist" kernel of Christianity. His reading of Christianity is explicitly political, discerning in the Pauline community of believers the first version of a revolutionary collective. Since today even advocates of Enlightenment like Jürgen Habermas acknowledge that a religious vision is needed to ground our ethical and political stance in a "postsecular" age, this book -- with a stance that is clearly materialist and at the same time indebted to the core of the Christian legacy -- is certain to stir controversy.

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