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LEIA O TEXTO ABAIXO E RESPONDA, EM PORTUGUÊS, ÀS
QUESTÕES QUE O SEGUEM.

**Terry Eagleton reviews *Trouble in Paradise* and *Absolute Recoil* by
Slavoj Žižek**

**Like Socrates on steroids: Žižek is both breathtakingly perceptive and
outrageously irresponsible. Is he just out to scandalise?**

Terry Eagleton

In these two new books, Slavoj Žižek philosophises in much the same spirit about sex, swearing, decaffeinated coffee, vampires, Henry Kissinger, *The Sound of Music*, the Muslim Brotherhood, the South Korean suicide rate and a good deal more. If there seems no end to his intellectual promiscuity, it is because he suffers from a rare affliction known as being interested in everything. He is equally at home with Hegel and Hitchcock, the Fall from Eden and the fall of Mubarak. If he knows about Wagner and Schoenberg, he is also an avid consumer of vampire movies and detective fiction. A lot of his readers have learned to understand Freud or Nietzsche by viewing them through the lens of *Jaws* or *Mary Poppins*.

If some of Žižek's ideas can be hard to digest, his style is a model of lucidity. *Absolute Recoil* is full of intractable stuff, but *Trouble in Paradise* reports on the political situation in Egypt, China, Korea, Ukraine and the world in general in a crisp, well-crafted prose that any newspaper should be proud to publish. Not that, given Žižek's provocatively political opinions, many of them would.

Stentorian, faintly manic and almost impossible to shut up, Žižek is a man who gets out of bed talking about psychoanalysis and steps back into it holding forth on Zionism. As a frenetic intellectual activist, he always seems to be in six places on the planet at once, like Socrates on steroids. His day may begin with a visit to Julian Assange in the Ecuadorian embassy and end with writing supportive letters to one of the imprisoned Pussy Riot performers. In between, he passes his time antagonising a sizeable chunk of the world's population.

All this may be because he comes from Slovenia. Small nations tend to have a perverse relation to more powerful ones, as anyone acquainted with the Irish can attest. There is a dash of the Dubliner Oscar Wilde in Žižek, a man who couldn't hear a pious English sentiment without feeling an irresistible itch to reverse its terms, rip it inside out or stand it on its head. Žižek, who has the grim appearance of a hired assassin in a Jacobean tragedy, lacks Wilde's stylishness and elegance. He also lacks his distinctive brand of humour. Žižek is funny but not witty. He tells some excellent jokes and has a well-honed sense of the absurd, but one couldn't extract a book of epigrams from his writing, as one can from Wilde's. Both men, however, are natural-born debunkers and deconstructors, allergic to high moral tones and good clean fun.

Like the rest of his work, these two latest volumes are postmodern in form but anti-postmodern in content. Žižek has the eclecticism of the postmodern, along with its mixing of high and low genres. His books are broken-backed affairs which leap erratically from topic to topic. *Absolute Recoil*, which lurches from ideas of hysteria, art and absolute knowledge to God, death and the Fall, is grandly subtitled "Towards a New Foundation of Dialectical Materialism", but this is a barefaced deception. There are only a handful of references to dialectical

materialism in its 400 pages. Žižek’s books and chapters are rarely about what they say they are about, since he can’t help saying 50 things at once. He is postmodern, too, in his suspicion of originality. A good deal of what he says has been said before, not by others but by himself. He is one of the great self-plagiarisers of our time. Whole chunks of *Absolute Recoil* reappear in *Trouble in Paradise*, and whole chunks of *Trouble in Paradise* appear twice over. He has now told the same jokes, recycled the same insights and recounted the same anecdotes dozens of times over.

When it comes to content, however, nothing could be further from postmodern pluralism than Žižek’s uncompromising revolutionary politics. It is a strange sign of the times that perhaps the most popular intellectual in the world is a dedicated communist. The lesson of *Trouble in Paradise*, subtitled *From the End of History to the End of Capitalism*, is plain: “a new Dark Age is looming, with ethnic and religious passions exploding, and Enlightenment values receding”.

Trouble in Paradise, with its unerring ear for political cant, is a book that everyone, not least the Masters of the Universe, would profit from reading. *Absolute Recoil*, with its intricate reflections on materialism and dialectics, is likely to have fewer takers. There is less on cant and more on Kant. Even so, it contains some fascinating stuff on Kabbala, slave narratives, espionage, atonal music and God as the supreme criminal. No doubt we shall have a chance to read some of this again in his next few books.

Disponível em: <<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/nov/12/terry-eagleton-trouble-in-paradise-absolute-recoil-zizek-review>>. Acesso em: 09 de agosto de 2016.

- 1) De acordo com Terry Eagleton, qual seria o motivo por trás da “promiscuidade intelectual” de Slavoj Žižek? (1 ponto)

- 2) Destaque do texto um exemplo que comprove o ecletismo intelectual de Žižek. (1 ponto)

- 3) De acordo com o segundo parágrafo do texto, qual seria a diferença entre os livros *Absolute Recoil* e *Trouble in Paradise*? (1 ponto)

- 4) Por que Terry Eagleton compara Slavoj Žižek a um Sócrates tomando esteroides? (1 ponto)

5) Eagleton também compara Žižek a Oscar Wilde. Indique uma característica que Žižek teria em comum com Wilde e uma diferença entre os dois. (2 pontos)

6) Eagleton caracteriza Zizek como um dos maiores auto-plagiadores dos nossos tempos. Que evidências são apontadas em relação a este fato? (1 ponto)

7) Para Eagleton, os livros de Žižek são pós-modernos em sua forma, mas se opõem ao pós-modernismo em seu conteúdo. Indique duas características pós-modernas dos livros de Žižek e uma característica que os afastaria do pós-modernismo, de acordo com Eagleton. (3 pontos)
