



In Defense of Lost Causes

By Slavoj Žižek

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In Defense of Lost Causes By Slavoj Žižek

Acclaimed, adrenalin-fuelled manifesto for universal values by 'the most dangerous philosopher in the West.'

In this combative major new work, philosophical sharpshooter Slavoj Žižek looks for the kernel of truth in the totalitarian politics of the past.

Examining Heidegger's seduction by fascism and Foucault's flirtation with the Iranian Revolution, he suggests that these were the 'right steps in the wrong direction.' On the revolutionary terror of Robespierre, Mao and the Bolsheviks, Žižek argues that while these struggles ended in historic failure and horror, there was a valuable core of idealism lost beneath the bloodshed.

A redemptive vision has been obscured by the soft, decentralized politics of the liberal-democratic consensus. Faced with the coming ecological crisis, Žižek argues the case for revolutionary terror and the dictatorship of the proletariat. A return to past ideals is needed despite the risks. In the words of Samuel Beckett: 'Try again. Fail again. Fail better.'

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In Defense of Lost Causes By Slavoj Zizek Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #418060 in Books
- Brand: Zizek, Slavoj
- Published on: 2009-10-19
- Released on: 2009-10-19
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.30" h x 1.10" w x 5.50" l, 1.32 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 530 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

“The most dangerous philosopher in the West.”—Adam Kirsch, *The New Republic*

“Addictively eclectic ... He contrives to leave the reader, as usual, both exhilarated and disoriented, standing in the middle of a scorched plain strewn with the rubble of smashed idols.”—Steven Poole, *The Guardian*

“A wealth of political and philosophical insight.”—Terry Eagleton, *The Times Literary Supplement*

“A monument to imaginative, risk-taking and rigorous scholarship.”—*Times Higher Education Supplement*

“Exhilarating, inspiring, thought-provoking.”—David Schneider, *Prospect*

“Outrageous, provocative and entertaining.”—Terry Eagleton

About the Author

Slavoj Žižek is a Slovenian philosopher and cultural critic. He is a professor at the European Graduate School, International Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities, Birkbeck College, University of London, and a senior researcher at the Institute of Sociology, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. His books include *Living in the End Times*, *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce*, *In Defense of Lost Causes*, four volumes of the Essential Žižek, and many more.

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