

The Fragile Absolute Or Why Is The Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For The Essential Zizek

[#Slavoj Zizek](#) [#The Fragile Absolute](#) [#Christian legacy](#) [#Zizek philosophy](#) [#Christianity critique](#)

Explore Slavoj Zizek's provocative insights from "The Fragile Absolute," where he challenges conventional understanding and argues compellingly for the enduring significance of the Christian legacy in contemporary thought. This essential examination delves into why its core principles remain a vital battleground worth intellectual engagement and defense in the modern world.

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The Fragile Absolute, Or, Why is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For?

No Marketing Blurb

The Fragile Absolute

One of the signal features of our era is the re-emergence of the 'sacred' in all its different guises, from New Age paganism to the emerging religious sensitivity within cultural and political theory. The wager of Žižek's *The Fragile Absolute* – published here with a new preface by the author – is that Christianity and Marxism can fight together against the contemporary onslaught of vapid spiritualism. The revolutionary core of the Christian legacy is too precious to be left to the fundamentalists.

The Essential Zizek

The essential texts for understanding Zizek's thought.

First As Tragedy, Then As Farce

Examines the failure of liberalism during the threatened collapse of financial systems in the 2009 worldwide recession, during which large amounts of cash were distributed to save financial institutions without regard for other liberal objectives.

In Defense of Lost Causes

No Marketing Blurb

God in Pain

A brilliant dissection and reconstruction of the three major faith-based systems of belief in the world today, from one of the world's most articulate intellectuals, Slavoj Zizek, in conversation with Croatian

philosopher Boris Gunjevic. In six chapters that describe Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in fresh ways using the tools of Hegelian and Lacanian analysis, *God in Pain: Inversions of Apocalypse* shows how each faith understands humanity and divinity--and how the differences between the faiths may be far stranger than they may at first seem. Chapters include (by Žižek) (1) "Christianity Against Sacred," (2) "Glance into the Archives of Islam," (3) "Only Suffering God Can Save Us," (4) "Animal Gaze," (5) "For the Theologico-Political Suspension of the Ethical," (by Gunjevic) (1) "Mistagogy of Revolution," (2) "Virtues of Empire," (3) "Every Book Is Like Fortress," (4) "Radical Orthodoxy," (5) "Prayer and Wake."

On Belief

What is the basis of belief in an era when globalization, multiculturalism and big business are the new religion? Slavoj Žižek, renowned philosopher and irrepressible cultural critic takes on all comers in this compelling and breathless new book. From 'cyberspace reason' to the paradox that is 'Western Buddhism', *On Belief* gets behind the contours of the way we normally think about belief, in particular Judaism and Christianity. Holding up the so-called authenticity of religious belief to critical light, Žižek draws on psychoanalysis, film and philosophy to reveal in startling fashion that nothing could be worse for believers than their beliefs turning out to be true.

The Monstrosity of Christ

A militant Marxist atheist and a "Radical Orthodox" Christian theologian square off on everything from the meaning of theology and Christ to the war machine of corporate mafia. "What matters is not so much that Žižek is endorsing a demythologized, disenchanted Christianity without transcendence, as that he is offering in the end (despite what he sometimes claims) a heterodox version of Christian belief."—John Milbank "To put it even more bluntly, my claim is that it is Milbank who is effectively guilty of heterodoxy, ultimately of a regression to paganism: in my atheism, I am more Christian than Milbank."—Slavoj Žižek In this corner, philosopher Slavoj Žižek, a militant atheist who represents the critical-materialist stance against religion's illusions; in the other corner, "Radical Orthodox" theologian John Milbank, an influential and provocative thinker who argues that theology is the only foundation upon which knowledge, politics, and ethics can stand. In *The Monstrosity of Christ*, Žižek and Milbank go head to head for three rounds, employing an impressive arsenal of moves to advance their positions and press their respective advantages. By the closing bell, they have not only proven themselves worthy adversaries, they have shown that faith and reason are not simply and intractably opposed. Žižek has long been interested in the emancipatory potential offered by Christian theology. And Milbank, seeing global capitalism as the new century's greatest ethical challenge, has pushed his own ontology in more political and materialist directions. Their debate in *The Monstrosity of Christ* concerns the future of religion, secularity, and political hope in light of a monstrous event—God becoming human. For the first time since Žižek's turn toward theology, we have a true debate between an atheist and a theologian about the very meaning of theology, Christ, the Church, the Holy Ghost, Universality, and the foundations of logic. The result goes far beyond the popularized atheist/theist point/counterpoint of recent books by Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins, and others. Žižek begins, and Milbank answers, countering dialectics with "paradox." The debate centers on the nature of and relation between paradox and parallax, between analogy and dialectics, between transcendent glory and liberation. Slavoj Žižek is a philosopher and cultural critic. He has published over thirty books, including *Looking Awry*, *The Puppet and the Dwarf*, and *The Parallax View* (these three published by the MIT Press). John Milbank is an influential Christian theologian and the author of *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* and other books. Creston Davis, who conceived of this encounter, studied under both Žižek and Milbank.

Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?

Totalitarianism, as an ideological notion, has always had a precise strategic function: to guarantee the liberal-democratic hegemony by dismissing the Leftist critique of liberal democracy as the obverse, the twin, of the Rightist Fascist dictatorships. Instead of providing yet another systematic exposition of the history of this notion, Žižek's book addresses totalitarianism in a Wittgensteinian way, as a cobweb of family resemblances. He concludes that the devil lies not so much in the detail of what constitutes totalitarianism as in what enables the very designation totalitarian: the liberal-democratic consensus itself.

Žižek

Afterword by Slavoj Žižek It has been the brilliance of Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek (b. 1949) to uniquely weave theology, psychoanalysis, and politics together into stunning commentary on contemporary culture. Assuming little prior knowledge of this controversial (atheist, communist) philosopher, Marcus Pound provides the first comprehensive, systematic account of Žižek's work as it relates specifically to theology and religious studies.

Violence

Žižek argues that the physical violence we see is often generated by the systemic violence that sustains our political and economic systems. With the help of eminent philosophers like Marx, Engel and Lacan, as well as frequent references to popular culture, he examines the real causes of violent outbreaks like those seen in Israel and Palestine and in terrorist acts around the world. Ultimately, he warns, doing nothing is often the most violent course of action we can take.

The Sublime Object of Ideology

In this provocative and original work, Slavoj Žižek takes a look at the question of human agency in a postmodern world. From the sinking of the Titanic to Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, from the operas of Wagner to science fiction, from *Alien* to the Jewish Joke, the author's acute analyses explore the ideological fantasies of wholeness and exclusion which make up human society. Žižek takes issue with analysts of the postmodern condition from Habermas to Sloterdijk, showing that the idea of a 'post-ideological' world ignores the fact that 'even if we do not take things seriously, we are still doing them'. Rejecting postmodernism's unified world of surfaces, he traces a line of thought from Hegel to Althusser and Lacan, in which the human subject is split, divided by a deep antagonism which determines social reality and through which ideology operates. Linking key psychoanalytical and philosophical concepts to social phenomena such as totalitarianism and racism, the book explores the political significance of these fantasies of control. In so doing, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* represents a powerful contribution to a psychoanalytical theory of ideology, as well as offering persuasive interpretations of a number of contemporary cultural formations.

The Ticklish Subject

The Ticklish Subject confronts Deconstructionists and Habermasians, cognitive scientists and Heideggerians, feminists and New Age obscurantists by unearthing a subversive core to this elusive spectre, and finding in this core the indispensable philosophical point of reference of any genuinely emancipatory politics.

The Idea of Communism 3

An all-star cast of radical intellectuals discuss the continued importance of communist principles. In 2009 Slavoj Žižek brought together an acclaimed group of intellectuals to discuss the continued relevance of communism. Unexpectedly the conference attracted an audience of over 1,000 people. The discussion has continued across the world and this book gathers responses from the conference in Seoul. It includes the interventions of regular contributors Alain Badiou and Slavoj Žižek, as well as work from across Asia, notably from Chinese scholar Wang Hui, offering regional perspectives on communism in an era of global economic crisis and political upheaval.

The Fragile Absolute

One of the signal features of our era is the re-emergence of the 'sacred' in all its different guises, from New Age paganism to the emerging religious sensitivity within cultural and political theory. The wager of Žižek's *The Fragile Absolute* - published here with a new preface by the author - is that Christianity and Marxism can fight together against the contemporary onslaught of vapid spiritualism. The revolutionary core of the Christian legacy is too precious to be left to the fundamentalists.

Žižek Now

Arguably the most prolific and most widely read philosopher of our time, Slavoj Žižek has made indelible interventions into many disciplines of the so-called human sciences that have transformed the terms of discussion in these fields. Although his work has been the subject of many volumes of searching criticism and commentary, there is no assessment to date of the value of his work for the development of these disciplines. *Žižek Now* brings together distinguished critics to explore the utility

and far-ranging implications of Žižek's thought and provide an evaluation of the difference his work makes or promises to make in their chosen fields. As such, the volume offers chapters on quantum physics and Žižek's transcendentalist materialist theory of the subject, Hegel's absolute, materialist Christianity, postcolonial violence, eco-politics, ceremonial acts, and the postcolonial revolutionary subject. Contributors to the volume include Adrian Johnston, Ian Parker, Todd McGowan, Bruno Bosteels, Erik Vogt, Verena Conley, Joshua Ramey, Jamil Khader, and Žižek himself.

Welcome to the Desert of the Real

Liberals and conservatives proclaim the end of the American holiday from history. Now the easy games are over; one should take sides. Žižek argues this is precisely the temptation to be resisted. In such moments of apparently clear choices, the real alternatives are most hidden. Welcome to the Desert of the Real steps back, complicating the choices imposed on us. It proposes that global capitalism is fundamentalist and that America was complicit in the rise of Muslim fundamentalism. It points to our dreaming about the catastrophe in numerous disaster movies before it happened, and explores the irony that the tragedy has been used to legitimize torture. Last but not least it analyzes the fiasco of the predominant leftist response to the events.

Alan Phelan

Foreword by Enrique Juncosa. Text by Sean Kissane, Dusan I. Bjelic, Medb Ruane, Tony White.

The Plague of Fantasies

Modern audiovisual media have spawned a 'plague of fantasies', electronically inspired phantasms that cloud the ability to reason and prevent a true understanding of a world increasingly dominated by abstractions—whether those of digital technology or the speculative market. Into this arena, enters Žižek: equipped with an agile wit and the skills of a prodigious scholar, he confidently ranges among a dazzling array of cultural references—explicating Robert Schumann as deftly as he does John Carpenter—to demonstrate how the modern condition blinds us to the ideological basis of our lives.

The Task of Theology

In these troubled times, even the most pessimistic diagnosis of our future ends with an uplifting hint that things might not be as bad as all that, that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Yet, argues Slavoj Žižek, it is only when we have admitted to ourselves that our situation is completely hopeless - that the light at the end of the tunnel is in fact the headlight of a train approaching us from the opposite direction - that fundamental change can be brought about. Surveying the various challenges in the world today, from mass migration and geopolitical tensions to terrorism, the explosion of rightist populism and the emergence of new radical politics - all of which, in their own way, express the impasses of global capitalism - Žižek explores whether there still remains the possibility for genuine change. Today, he proposes, the only true question is, or should be, this: do we endorse the predominant acceptance of capitalism as a fact of human nature, or does today's capitalism contain strong enough antagonisms to prevent its infinite reproduction? Can we, he asks, move beyond the failure of socialism, and beyond the current wave of populist rage, and initiate radical change before the train hits?

The Courage of Hopelessness

One of our most daring intellectuals offers a Lacanian interpretation of religion, finding that early Christianity was the first revolutionary collective. 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.

The Puppet and the Dwarf

Edited, with a Foreword and Afterword, by Slavoj Žižek.

Revolution at the Gates

In this provocative book, one of Europe's foremost philosophers contemplates the future of religion in the postmodern world.

After Christianity

Probably the most famous living philosopher, Slavoj Žižek explores the meaning of events in this short and digestible book. An event can be an occurrence that shatters ordinary life, a radical political rupture, a transformation of reality, a religious belief, the rise of a new art form, or an intense experience such as falling in love. Taking us on a trip that stops at different definitions of event, Žižek addresses fundamental questions such as: are all things connected? How much are we agents of our own fates? Which conditions must be met for us to perceive something as really existing? In a world that's constantly changing, is anything new really happening? Drawing on references from Plato to arthouse cinema, the Big Bang to Buddhism, *Event* is a journey into philosophy at its most exciting and elementary.

Event

What is the contemporary legacy of Gramsci's notion of Hegemony? How can universality be reformulated now that its spurious versions have been so thoroughly criticized? In this ground-breaking project, Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek engage in a dialogue on central questions of contemporary philosophy and politics. Their essays, organized as separate contributions that respond to one another, range over the Hegelian legacy in contemporary critical theory, the theoretical dilemmas of multiculturalism, the universalism-versus-particularism debate, the strategies of the Left in a globalized economy, and the relative merits of post-structuralism and Lacanian psychoanalysis for a critical social theory. While the rigor and intelligence with which these writers approach their work is formidable, *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality* benefits additionally from their clear sense of energy and enjoyment in a revealing and often unpredictable exchange.

Contingency, Hegemony, Universality

Slavoj Žižek's critical engagement with Christian theology goes much further than his seminal *The Fragile Absolute* (2000), or his *The Puppet and the Dwarf* (2003), or even his discussion with noted theologian John Milbank in *The Monstrosity of Christ* (2009). His reading of Christianity, utilising his signature elements of Lacanian psychoanalysis and Hegelian philosophy with modern philosophical currents, can be seen as a genuinely original contribution to the philosophy of religion. This book focuses on these aspects of Žižek's thought with either philosophy and cultural theory, or Christian theology, serving as starting points of enquiry. Written by a panel of international contributors, each chapter teases out various strands of Žižek's thought concerning Christianity and religion and brings them into a wider conversation about the nature of faith. These essays show that far from being an outright rejection of Christian thought and intellectual heritage, Žižek's work could be seen as a perverse affirmation thereof. Thus, what he has to say should be of direct interest to Christian theology itself. Touching on thinkers such as Badiou, Lacan, Chesterton and Schelling, this collection is a dynamic reading and re-reading of Žižek's relationship to Christianity. As such, scholars of theology, the philosophy of religion and Žižek more generally will all find this book to be of great interest.

Slavoj Žižek and Christianity

Series numbering from publisher's Web site.

Dada 1916 in Theory

Turbo-folk music is the most controversial form of popular culture in the new states of former Yugoslavia. Theoretically ambitious and innovative, this book is a new account of popular music that has been at the centre of national, political and cultural debates for over two decades. Beginning with 1970s Socialist Yugoslavia, Uroš Vorobiloć explores the cultural and political paradoxes of turbo-folk: described as 'backward' music, whose misogynist and Serb nationalist iconography represents a threat to cosmopolitanism, turbo-folk's iconography is also perceived as a 'genuinely Balkan' form of resistance

to the threat of neo-liberalism. Taking as its starting point turbo-folk's popularity across national borders, *Voro* analyses key songs and performers in Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia. The book also examines the effects of turbo on the broader cultural sphere - including art, film, sculpture and architecture - twenty years after its inception and popularization. What is proposed is a new way of reading the relationship of contemporary popular music to processes of cultural, political and social change - and a new understanding of how fundamental turbo-folk is to the recent history of former Yugoslavia and its successor states.

Turbo-folk Music and Cultural Representations of National Identity in Former Yugoslavia

The concept of the avant garde is highly contested, whether one consigns it to history or claims it for present-day or future uses. The first volume of *The Idea of the Avant Garde – And What It Means Today* provided a lively forum on the kinds of radical art theory and partisan practices that are possible in today's world of global art markets and creative industry entrepreneurialism. This second volume presents the work of another 50 artists and writers, exploring the diverse ways that avant-gardism develops reflexive and experimental combinations of aesthetic and political praxis. The manifest strategies, temporalities, and genealogies of avant-garde art and politics are expressed through an international, intergenerational, and interdisciplinary convocation of ideas that covers the fields of film, video, architecture, visual art, art activism, literature, poetry, theatre, performance, intermedia and music.

The Idea of the Avant Garde

The first university-level textbook on the power, condition, and expanse of contemporary fine art drawing *A Companion to Contemporary Drawing* explores how 20th and 21st century artists have used drawing to understand and comment on the world. Presenting contributions by both theorists and practitioners, this unique textbook considers the place, space, and history of drawing and explores shifts in attitudes towards its practice over the years. Twenty-seven essays discuss how drawing emerges from the mind of the artist to question and reflect upon what they see, feel, and experience. This book discusses key themes in contemporary drawing practice, addresses the working conditions and context of artists, and considers a wide range of personal, social, and political considerations that influence artistic choices. Topics include the politics of eroticism in South American drawing, anti-capitalist drawing from Eastern Europe, drawing and conceptual art, feminist drawing, and exhibitions that have put drawing practices at the centre of contemporary art. This textbook: Demonstrates ways contemporary issues and concerns are addressed through drawing Reveals how drawing is used to make powerful social and political statements Situates works by contemporary practitioners within the context of their historical moment Explores how contemporary art practices utilize drawing as both process and finished artifact Shows how concepts of observation, representation, and audience have changed dramatically in the digital era Establishes drawing as a mode of thought Part of the acclaimed Wiley Blackwell Companions to Art History series, *A Companion to Contemporary Drawing* is a valuable text for students of fine art, art history, and curating, and for practitioners working within contemporary fine art practice.

A Companion to Contemporary Drawing

In his epistles, St. Paul sounded a universalism that has recently been taken up by secular philosophers who do not share his belief in Christ, but who regard his project as centrally important for contemporary political life. The Pauline project -- as they see it -- is the universality of truth, the conviction that what is true is true for everyone, and that the truth should be known by everyone. In this volume, eminent New Testament scholars, historians, and philosophers debate whether Paul's promise can be fulfilled. Is the proper work of reading Paul to reconstruct what he said to his audiences? Is it crucial to retrieve the sense of history from the text? What are the philosophical undercurrents of Paul's message? This scholarly dialogue ushers in a new generation of Pauline studies.

St. Paul among the Philosophers

The *Palgrave Handbook of Radical Theology* is the definitive guide to radical theology and the commencement for new directions in that field. For the first time, radical theology is addressed and assessed in a single, comprehensive volume, including introductory and historical essays for the beginner, essays on major figures and their thought, and shorter articles on various themes, concepts, and related topics. This book is a seminal work for the radical theology movement. It clarifies origins and demonstrates the exigency and utility of current figures and issues. A useful and essential guide for

newcomers and veterans in the field, this volume serves as both a reference work and an introduction to omitted or forgotten topics within contemporary discussions.

The Palgrave Handbook of Radical Theology

There should no longer be any doubt: global capitalism is fast approaching its terminal crisis. But if the end of capitalism seems to many like the end of the world, how is it possible for Western society to face up to the end times? In a major new analysis of our global situation, Žižek argues that our collective responses to economic Armageddon correspond to the stages of grief: ideological denial, explosions of anger and attempts at bargaining, followed by depression and withdrawal. For this edition, Žižek has written a long afterword that leaves almost no subject untouched, from WikiLeaks to the nature of the Chinese Communist Party.

Living in the End Times

The National Body in Mexican Literature presents a revisionist reading of the Mexican canon that challenges assumptions of State hegemony and national identity. It analyzes the representation of sick, disabled, and miraculously healed bodies in Mexican literature from 1940 to 1980 in narrative fiction by Vicente Leñero, Juan Rulfo, among others.

The National Body in Mexican Literature

Drawing on recent philosophical developments in hermeneutics and poststructuralism, *The Fragility of Language and the Encounter with God* offers a theological account of the contingency of language and perception and of how acknowledging that contingency transforms the perennial theological question of the development of doctrine. Klug applies this account to humanity's encounter with God and its translation into language. Because there exists no neutral epistemological standpoint, Klug integrates contemporary insights on the theory of the subject (especially those of Žižek and Badiou) and presents humanity as a subject that transforms its experience of and with God into language and places it in a shared space for reception. But can the speaking subject have authority and legitimacy in making statements about the Absolute? What role do the Christian faithful play in evaluating that authority? These questions are addressed both to biblical texts and doctrinal statements. Crucial is the Catholic perspective that legitimate statements of faith and insights are only possible through the Holy Spirit. However, humanity cannot command or control the Holy Spirit but can only show its influence indirectly through the receptive tradition of the universal church. *The Fragility of Language and the Encounter with God* argues that statements of faith cannot overcome contingency. Instead, the Catholic notion of receptive tradition attempts to cope rationally with the fragility of perception and language in humanity's orientation toward God.

The Fragility of Language and the Encounter with God

This is the first book devoted entirely to exploring Žižek's peculiar kind of Paulinism. It seeks to provide a full map of the Marxist philosopher's interpretations of Paul and critically engage with it. As one of several radical leftists of European critical thought, Žižek embraces the legacy of an ancient apostle in fascinating ways. This work considers Žižek's philosophical and political readings of Paul through the lens of reception history, and argues that through this recent philosophical turn to Paul, notions of the historical and philosophical are reproduced and negotiated anew.

The Reception of Paul the Apostle in the Works of Slavoj Žižek

Jimmy Buffett and his music have touched the lives of millions of people around the world, spanning generations and genres. But is Buffett's music just a good time, or is there a deeper level to it? *Jimmy Buffett and Philosophy* shows the philosophical side of this self-proclaimed non-philosopher's work. The articles in this book provide an accessible approach to thinking about Buffett's music philosophically and to thinking about philosophy from the perspective of Jimmy Buffett's music. Along the way, questions are raised about figures in the philosophical tradition from ancient to contemporary — Epicurus, Diogenes, Heidegger, Josiah Royce, William James, John Dewey, and Judith Butler. In addition, questions about a wide range of traditional philosophical issues, including aesthetic theory, identity, knowledge, culture, and being, are explored.

Jimmy Buffett and Philosophy

For a long time, the term 'ideology' was in disrepute, having become associated with such unfashionable notions as fundamental truth and the eternal verities. The tide has turned, and recent years have seen a revival of interest in the questions that ideology poses to social and cultural theory, and to political practice. Mapping Ideology is a comprehensive reader covering the most important contemporary writing on the subject. Including Slavoj Žižek's study of the development of the concept from Marx to the present, assessments of the contributions of Lukács and the Frankfurt School by Terry Eagleton, Peter Dews and Seyla Benhabib, and essays by Adorno, Lacan and Althusser, Mapping Ideology is an invaluable guide to the most dynamic field in cultural theory.

Mapping Ideology

Slovenian philosopher and psychoanalyst Slavoj Žižek has been called an 'academic rock star'. This text assists students in getting to grips with Žižek's earlier and more recent works, with an eye toward what brings him to an explicit engagement with Christianity.

Zizek and Theology