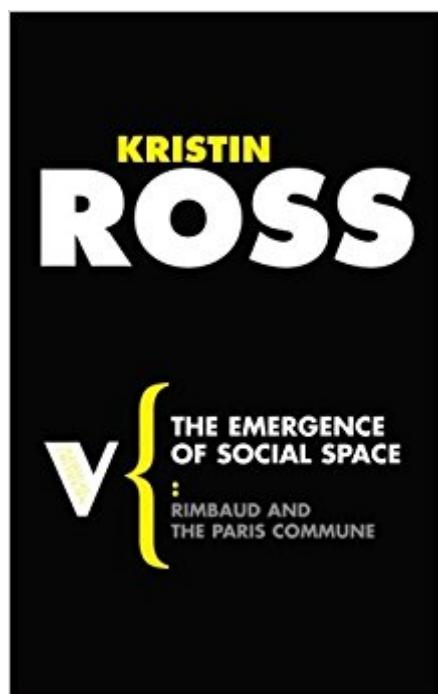


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The Emergence Of Social Space: Rimbaud And The Paris Commune (Radical Thinkers)



Synopsis

The 1870s in France – Rimbaudâ™s moment, and the subject of this book – is a decade virtually ignored in most standard histories in France. Yet it was the moment of two significant spatial events: Franceâ™s expansion on a global scale, and, in the spring of 1871, the brief existence on the Paris Commune – the construction of the revolutionary urban space. Arguing that space, as a social fact, is always political and strategic, Kristin Ross has written a book that is at once a history and geography of the Communeâ™s anarchist culture – its political language and social relations, its values, strategies, and stances. Central to her analysis of the Commune as a social space and oppositional culture is a close textual reading of Arthur Rimbaudâ™s poetry. His poems – a common thread running through the book – are one set of documents among many in Rossâ™s recreation of the Communard experience. Rimbaud, Paul Lafargue, and the social geographer Émile Reclus serve as emblematic figures moving within and on the periphery of the Commune; in their resistance to the logic and economy of the capitalist conception of work, in their challenge to work itself as a term of identity, all three posed a threat to the existing order. Ross looks at these and other emancipatory notions as aspects of Communard life, each with an analogous strategy in Rimbaudâ™s poetry. Applying contemporary theory, to a wealth of little-known archival material, she has written a fresh, persuasive, and original book.

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âœA fascinating cultural history of the Commune.â•â "Tariq Ali âœA rare example of cultural studies done with zest as well as depth.â•â "New Statesman & Society

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