

Alexandra Kokoli: PERFORMANCE WORKS

SOCIALISM OR BARBARISM

Durational performance through daily posts on

<https://www.facebook.com/amkokoli>

25 October 2020-24 October 2021



The phrase 'Socialism or Barbarism' posted daily as a Facebook status update, with the audience set to 'public'.

First post, 25 October 2020:

<https://www.facebook.com/amkokoli/posts/pfbid02HgXLb5enYjWRaUMj7YGiirr3AWnpqyepFpZ9LYGHUeNJB7rYe6H4gNXrTdP3QCMTI>

COMMENT

SOCIALISM OR BARBARISM is a durational performance on Facebook in protest against Tory necropolitics. Every day between 25 October 2020 and 24 October 2021, I will be posting the phrase 'Socialism or Barbarism' as a Facebook status update, with no further comment other than this explanation.

Rosa Luxembourg famously first used the phrase in an anti-war pamphlet that she wrote in prison in 1915 and should be credited with its on-going currency and vitality. Luxemboug attributed the idea to Friedrich Engels, although it has subsequently been traced back to Karl Kautsky, whom Lenin denounced as a renegade because of his criticism of the Bolshevik Revolution.

At the time of writing, over 40% of children in my London suburb are reported to live in poverty and will be receiving no assistance towards food costs over the school holidays.

Comment text to subsequent posts:

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Last post, 24 October 2021:

<https://www.facebook.com/amkokoli/posts/pfbid02WrSzjyQLHFBBTqnr2QiPK58tseCAsguesKBrQKkYwoLaHXYsgk5UxiJNffJFkLtl>

Comments to last post:



Alexandra M Kokoli's post



16 7



All comments ▾



Alexandra M Kokoli

SOCIALISM OR BARBARISM is a durational performance on Facebook in protest against Tory necropolitics. Every day between 25 October 2020 and 24 October 2021, I will be posting the phrase 'Socialism or Barbarism' as a Facebook status update, with no further comment other than this explanation.

4y Like Reply



Alexandra M Kokoli

This is the last instalment.

4y Like Reply



Keith Piper

What a fantastic durational artwork colleague!! Well done!!!

4y Like Reply



Alexandra M Kokoli

Keith Piper this means a lot coming from you, colleague!

4y Like Reply



Corinne Charton



4y Haha Reply



Alexandra M Kokoli

Corinne Charton-Grahn Omg, the office guys celebrating the end of 'socialism or barbarism'!!!!

4y Like Reply



Corinne Charton

hahahahahahahaha

4y Like Reply

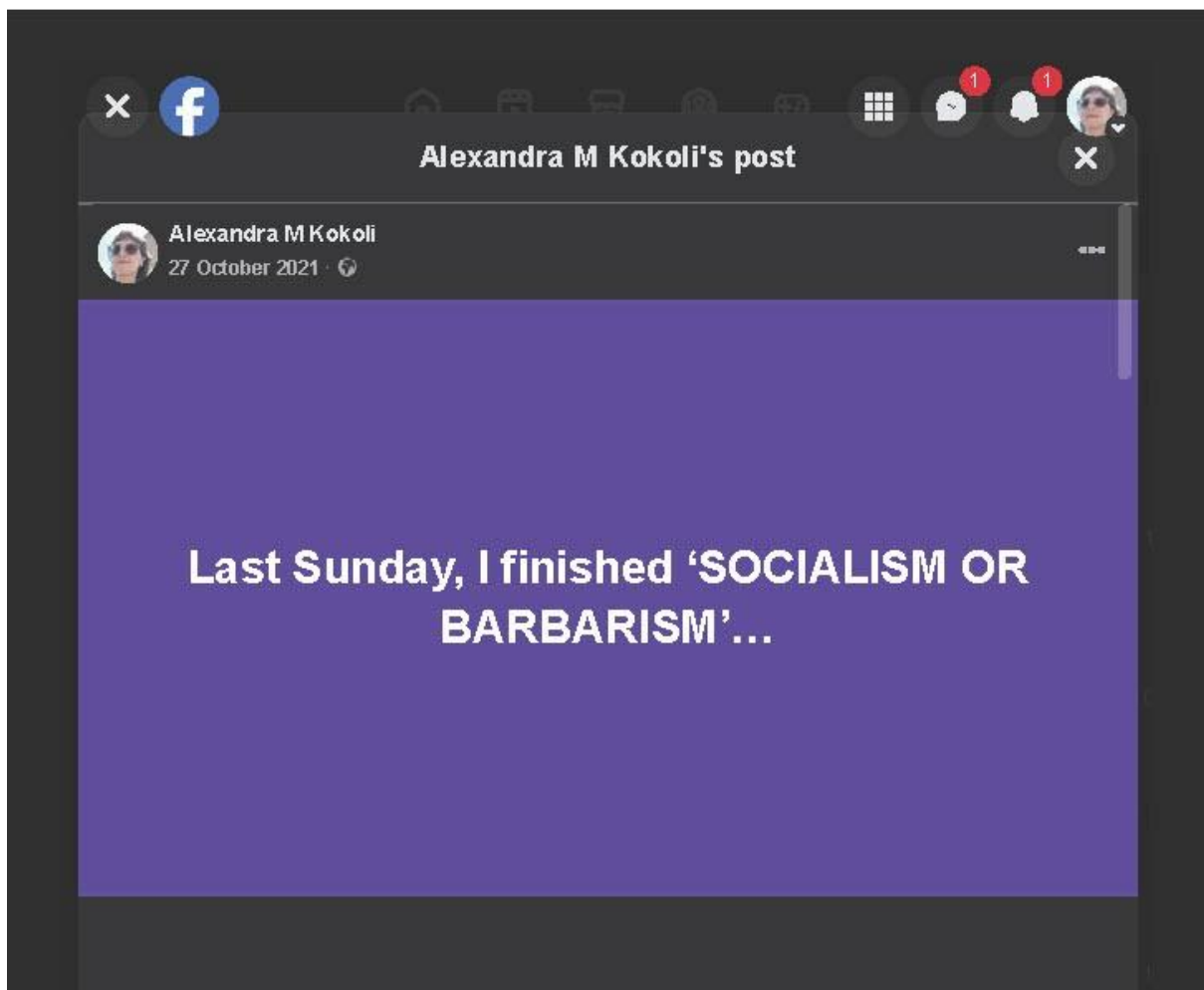


Comment as Alexandra M Kokoli



Reflection post and comments, 27 October 2021:

<https://www.facebook.com/amkokoli/posts/pfbid0EjB5sZ1fD18WxhqXJgg1H7GW7k4EJKipV39Bhh8XzZZZnZ8Juu16EVB24hD1M5QPI>



POST: Last Sunday, I finished 'SOCIALISM OR BARBARISM'...

COMMENT: ... it was a durational performance lasting only a year, as a small protest against the tory necropolitical regime that still holds strong. Every day between 25 October 2020 and 24 October 2021, I posted the phrase 'Socialism or Barbarism' as a Facebook status update, with no further comment other than a very short explanation, just like this one.

COMMENT: Rosa Luxemburg famously used the phrase in an anti-war pamphlet that she wrote in prison in 1915, and she deserves to be credited with its on-going currency and vitality. Luxemburg attributed the idea to Friedrich Engels, although it has subsequently been traced back to Karl Kautsky, whom Lenin denounced as a renegade because of his criticism of the Bolshevik Revolution.

COMMENT: The (mis)attribution is thought-provoking: did Luxembourg misremember or did she assume that the words of Engels would have greater traction than those of Kautsky? I am in no position to speculate even if it were advisable to do so.

COMMENT: Doing this project prompted me to read the whole of Luxembourg's pamphlet for the first time. It has remained in print since its first edition in 1915 and you can also find it online: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1915/junius/>

COMMENT: Some thoughts on using Facebook as a medium: Responding with 'Socialism or Barbarism' to Facebook's perpetual question 'What's on your mind, Alexandra M?' was intense, meaningful, and didn't feel like the empty gesture I feared it would become. I imagine this is a bit like what real believers experience when they start their day with a prayer, that this is what they get out of praying and why they stick with it. Also, training Facebook to predict 'Socialism' after four, then three, two, and eventually just a single keystroke was thrilling.

COMMENT: In spring 2021 and while this project was ongoing, I attended a short training course organised by the Rosa Luxembourg Stiftung, with support from the University and College Union (UCU). 'Workers Rising Everywhere' was taught by Jane McAlevey in collaboration with union organisers from across the world. One of the six sessions was conducted in Spanish: <https://www.rosalux.de/o4p>

COMMENT: The performance is continued by Hilary Robinson [tag], and I hope someone else takes over from her in a year's time.