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Abstract

It is generally agreed that the work of Antonio Gramsci reveals an imaginative and intellectual power seldom attained in Western Marxism. For those interested in the role of education in building an alternative, anti-capitalist cultural formation, Gramsci's ideas are of considerable value. Of particular interest is that Gramsci, as part of his revolutionary strategy, argued that the education of children of subordinate classes must be considered an essential element in any strategy aimed at building an oppositional culture. This paper explicates Gramsci's essential educational ideas.

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Gramsci's Contribution To The Analysis of Public Education Knowledge

British historian E.J. Hobsbawm has called Antonio Gramsci "an extraordinary philosopher, perhaps a genius, probably the most original communist thinker of the 20th century in Western Europe." Born in 1891 into a poverty-stricken Sardinian family, Gramsci, after distinguishing himself as a brilliant student in extremely arduous circumstances, moved into the ferment of Turin (the centre of the liberal bourgeoisie and modern factory) in 1911 to study philosophy and literature. Destined for a distinguished career as a professor, Gramsci abandoned his formal studies for the life of the professional revolutionary. He joined the Turin section of the Socialist Party (PSI) in 1914 where he worked as a philosopher, journalist, critic and educator.

Gramsci was a leader of the workers' struggles in Turin between 1918 and the beginnings of fascism in 1922, and one of the founders of the Italian Communist Party (PCI). During his imprisonment by Mussolini from 1926 until his death in 1937 he wrote, under tremendous pain,¹ an enormous number of notes and reflections on literary, philosophical, historical, political and pedagogical subjects. He wrote letters too and those penned to his two children, one of whom he never saw, were often gay, skipping lightly over such topics as how to nurse a sick parrot back to health or what to feed monkeys, but more often serious, offering advice on the importance of reading critically and spelling accurately.

It is generally agreed that Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* (*Quaderni del Carcere*) reveal an imaginative and intellectual power seldom attained in Western Marxism.² One Italian political philosopher, Norberto Bobbio, notes that his analysis of Italian and European society (which evolved in dialogue with the Italian idealist philosopher Benedetto Croce), as well as his philosophical reflection on crucial themes of our time (the problem of the intellectuals, the theory of the party and the state, the nature of the revolutionary process and the concept of hegemony) are original, if controversial, contributions to a Marxist humanist analysis of history and society. For those committed to fundamental social change, Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* (and other writings) offer important reflections on the failure of the revolutionary movement in 1919-1920 and equally important observations on the prerequisites for revolution in advanced capitalist societies. For those

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interested in the role of education in building an alternative, anti-capitalist cultural formation, Gramsci's ideas are of considerable value. This paper will attempt to explicate Gramsci's essential educational ideas.

Gramsci's model of political education

Students of Gramsci agree that his notion of hegemony is the "essential ingredient" of his thought.³ Traditionally defined as political rule or domination between states, the meaning of hegemony was extended by Marxist theorists between classes, especially to the notion of a ruling class. With Gramsci, the concept of hegemony acquired a further meaning. Though acutely aware, from bitter personal experience, that any ruling class can, in crisis situations, call on its coercive apparatus to quell opposition, Gramsci was primarily concerned to understand how a ruling class maintains its hegemony during normal times. He concluded that a ruling class dominated subordinate classes through its ability to gain acceptance of its "conception of the world." The ruling class philosophy passed "through a whole tissue of complex vulgarizations to emerge as 'common sense': that is, the philosophy of the masses, who accept the morality, the customs, the institutionalized rules of behavior of the society they live in."⁴

Gramsci came to see hegemony as the "normal" form of domination in advanced capitalist societies. His conception of hegemony shifts the locus of bourgeois power to the institutional and ideological structures of civil society (media, family, church, trade unions, school, etc.) and thus makes the question of the cultural and political education of the working class central to his strategy of revolution (i.e. the establishment of counterhegemony). If the proletariat is to overcome its cultural and ideological subordination, it must "also pose for itself the problem of the conquest of intellectual power."⁵ The proletariat must be prepared to fight a "war of attrition," gradually undermining the cultural viability of existing civil society. This task, clearly, is more complex than the Leninist strategy of a violent conquest of political power by the workers.

For Gramsci, then, a successful revolution can only occur if the subordinate classes acquire a conscious historical awareness of their time and its background. Men, according to Gramsci, must educate themselves about the real meaning of wanting a new society, must understand (and be ready for) all the implications of creating a new order, must find in the interpretation of past history the strength, underpinned by a new culture, to radically modify the relationship between themselves, to upset the concept of individuality as isolation and affirm the concept of individuality as 'original contribution to a collective life' ".⁶

In order to challenge the hegemony of the capitalist class who succeed, though never completely, in presenting their own interests as the interests of the whole society, the working class must launch an assault on bourgeois hegemony in the realms of culture, ethics, ideology and politics. This is necessary if the working class is to "put itself forward as a more reliable guardian of the public interest than its class enemy, the bourgeoisie."⁷ To accomplish this task, nothing less than the critical assimilation of traditional humanistic and contemporary technical resources will suffice. Gramsci comments:

To create a new culture does not mean to make original discoveries on an individual basis. It also and especially means to critically popularize already discovered truths, make them, so to speak, social, therefore give them the consistency of basis for vital action, make them coordinating elements of intellectual and social relevance. That masses of men be led to evaluate in a coordinated way the present reality is, philosophically speaking, a much more important and original fact than the isolated philosophical genius's discovery of a certain truth, which is then left in heritage to small intellectual groups.⁸

And:

Culture means to have ideas about nature and its laws in order to understand the laws governing the spirit. It amounts to learning without losing sight of the final goal which is to best know oneself by way of others and others by way of oneself.

If it is true that universal history is a chain of efforts by man to free himself from privileges, prejudices, and idolatries, then it is not clear why the proletariat, which wants to add another link to this chain, should not know how, why, and by whom it has been preceded, and what benefit it may derive from this knowledge.⁹

In the teaching of philosophy which is aimed not at giving the student historical information about the development of past philosophy, but at giving him a cultural formation and helping him to elaborate his own thought critically so as to be able to participate in an ideological and cultural community, it is necessary to take as one's starting point what the student already knows and his philosophical experience . . .¹⁰

But how can the subordinate classes build an alternative cultural formation? Does not an alternative cultural formation need to be anchored in autonomous educational, social, economic and political institutions such as clubs, cooperatives, workers' councils and communist party sections? And, perhaps crucially, what form of pedagogy serves best to develop critical consciousness, given the penetration of a bourgeois conception of the world into the ordinary, everyday sensibility of the subordinate classes?

Gramsci's own practice as a socialist educator and militant provides some answers to the above questions. In the aftermath the Russian revolution in opposition to those who wanted to move Italy down the Russian path, Gramsci, believing that the PSI lacked the cultural resources to act, proposed the establishment of proletarian cultural organizations to create the necessary climate for the revolutionary intervention of the working class. He formed "clubs of moral life" in the major cities of Turin, Milan and Genoa. These clubs brought together workers, students, intellectuals and professionals to discuss the relationship between the cultural climate and the revolutionary process. Authors such as Zola, Balzac, Rolland, Barbusse, Lunacharsky and Max Eastman were read and discussed as the "living experience of revolutionary consciousness."

In 1919 the Turin working class, in response to unbearable working conditions and a politically impotent trade union leadership, spontaneously occupied some factories. Sensitive to the dangers of a premature revolution, Gramsci appealed to the workers to form themselves into workers' councils. One-hundred and fifty thousand Turinese responded, supported by families helping them from the outside. The revolutionary movement was, however, weak. The army did not support the workers, the PSI was ambivalent and corrupt union men undermined the initiative of the workers' councils.

Nevertheless Gramsci and his followers did everything they could to defend and expand the councils as the model of the proletarian state.¹¹ Gramsci, whose information about workers' councils in 1922 was sparse, believed that the "soviet" vindicated his concern with political education, subjectivity and organization. He also thought that he had concretized something new: knowledge of how a non-totalitarian form of political tutelage could be grounded in the "school of labour." The soviets could prefigure future social and political relations. For Gramsci political education had to be closely linked with the "school of labour" for only here was the proletariat truly self-active and thereby capable of interacting on a more equal basis with an intellectual leadership. This leadership, in turn, was itself organically in tune with production. Thus it would not be inclined to superimpose a viewpoint but only to enable the worker to transform his or her "common sense" through self-activity into a fully self-aware (rational) class consciousness. And the educational process was to be Socratic, focusing not merely on the acquisition of data and skills but on the formation of self-knowledge upon which could be built the entire range of worker power, including cultural power, previously denied by capitalist production and education.¹²

Thus, workers were to become aware of their own potentialities and abilities through the collective organization of the productive and administrative apparatus; mental and manual work were to be united in the councils. Within the factories, Labour Schools were to help workers acquire new technical skills. In addition, Gramsci and his followers organized a "School of Culture and

Socialist Propaganda” to interpret the meaning of the self-activity of the workers towards a new social order. Gramsci also founded a newspaper, *L'Ordine Nuovo*, to further workers' education with features such as “The Battle of Ideas.”¹³ After the failure of the councils in 1921, Gramsci would come to define the PCI's role in educational terms. “Only through education,” writes John Cammett, author of an excellent biography of Gramsci, “could the workers attain the maturity to seize state power; hence Gramsci wanted to convince the working class through the councils that ‘it is in their interests to submit to a permanent discipline of culture, to develop a conception of the world and the complex and intricate system of human relations, economic and spiritual, that form the social life of the globe’ ”¹⁴.

To what extent does Gramsci's conception of political education represent a break with the tradition of Marx and Lenin? In his early philosophical writings, particularly in the Paris Manuscripts and the Theses on Feuerbach, Marx argues that labouring and thinking men are their own tutors. Breaking with the Platonic (philosopher-king as tutor) and Hegelian (history as tutor) traditions, Marx postulated that workers formed their consciousness through self-activity (praxis). It appears that the early Marx believed that the “harsh but hardening school of labour” (the phrase is from *The Holy Family*), that is, the factories, was the best school for acquiring a critical consciousness.

But, in Marx's later political and strategic writings the “school of labour” does not seem to be enough. What Marx never addresses adequately is the question of how workers who have been stripped of their mental and physical power, who are “appendages of the machine,” achieve the break-through to revolutionary consciousness. Marx ends up, I believe, appealing to the necessity of outside educators. Socialist intellectuals were to point out and bring to the fore the common interests of the entire proletariat (the proletariat's interest is fragmented and sectional), give a theoretical form to working class self-activity (the working class autodidacts lack a scientific education) and provide political leadership (the workers are on the march but they can easily get sidetracked). For Marx, it seems, the common interest of the proletariat and theoretician lies in an objectivist fit between the scientifically-based ideas of socialist intellectuals and working class praxis. Marx is silent on the pedagogical form of the relation between revolutionary intellectual and worker.¹⁵

In his educational treatise *What is to be Done?*, Lenin formulates the pedagogical relationship between educator (socialist intellectual) and those to be educated (peasants and workers) in bluntly instrumental and directive terms. While it is true that the historical context of *What is to be Done?* must be taken into account (the years 1872 to 1903 were marked by the absence of revolution), no amount of exegetical wizardry can conjure away the vanguard subordination of the working class to the Leninist educator. For Lenin, socialist consciousness “could only be brought to them from the outside.”¹⁶ The socialist intellectuals are the locus of critical consciousness; the workers and peasants are viewed as incapable, without outside tutelage, of grasping the link between exploitation and the political structure of the bourgeois state. Socialism thus emerges as the natural and inevitable outcome of the development of the thought of revolutionary intellectuals. The proletariat is to submit to the tutelage of theory.

Gramsci's conception of political education represents a decided advance from Marx and a radical break with Lenin's non-dialectical formulation. Unlike Marx, Gramsci confronts head-on the limitations of the “harsh but hardening school of labour” as generator of critical consciousness. Believing that every man is a philosopher and deeply concerned with creating intellectuals rooted in and capable of guiding the aspirations of their own class, Gramsci specifies both the institutional structures and non-totalitarian pedagogical form necessary for the creation of self-active and

culturally informed men and women fit to rule society. In this specification lies the advance beyond Marx and the rejection of Lenin's political pedagogy.

The revolutionary role of the common school

Reflections on formal schooling are peppered throughout Gramsci's writings and letters.¹⁷ Only one section in the *Prison Notebooks*, "On Education," offers any sustained analysis of the curriculum and the organization of schooling. And even these notes are quite cryptic and somewhat ambiguous; Gramsci had to disguise his views in order to circumvent the prison censor. Of particular interest in these notes is that Gramsci, as part of his revolutionary strategy, argued that the education of the children of the subordinate classes must be considered an essential element in any strategy aimed at building an oppositional, counterhegemonic culture. One could not mortgage a working class or peasant "child's future and . . . constrain his will, his mind, and his developing consciousness"¹⁸ and expect that his or her cultural and political education as an adult, no matter how rigorous, would compensate for the psychic losses incurred from a narrow and technistic schooling. The proletariat, Gramsci contended, needed a "free school where initiative can be taken freely, not a school of slavery and mechanization. Even the sons of proletarians must have before them all the possibilities, all the areas open, in order to but realize their own individuality and thus develop in the most profitable way for themselves and for the collectivity. Professional schools must not become incubators of little monsters, who are aridly educated for a job, without general ideas and a general culture, without spirit, and with only a sharp eye and a strong hand."¹⁹

Gramsci's analysis of the organization of formal schooling and the curricular structure must be set against the backdrop of the reform of education introduced in 1923 by Benito Mussolini's education minister, the idealistic philosopher Giovanni Gentile. The Gentile reforms moved in two directions: a critique of the existing school system which downplayed cultural transmission and accentuated "educativity" and "active education" and a commitment to multiply the number of vocational schools which moved educational policy away from a "general, humanistic, formative"²⁰ schooling for all youth.

For Gramsci, the steady growth of specialized vocational schools, which predetermined the proletarian child's future, kept at most only a small-scale version of the "disinterested" (not serving immediate occupational interests) or "formative" school to serve a tiny elite. Gramsci well understood that the fundamental division into classical and vocational schools reflected the development of an industrial base both in the cities and in the countryside, as well as the process of differentiation and specialisation in society. But there can be no doubt that Gramsci felt that a rational solution to the educational crisis ought to proceed along the following lines:

First, a common basic education, imparting a general, humanistic, formative culture; this would strike the right balance between the development of the capacity for working manually (technically, industrially) and development of the capacities required for intellectual work. From this type of common schooling, via repeated experiments in vocational orientation, pupils would pass on to one of the specialised schools or to productive work.²¹

The common school, or school of humanistic formation (taking the term 'humanism' in a broad sense rather than simply in the traditional one) or general culture, should aim to insert young men and women into social activity after bringing them to a certain level of maturity, or capacity for intellectual and practical creativity, and of autonomy of orientation and initiative.²²

This formative, humanistic education would accomplish two things for proletarian youth: they would receive the same formative training as youth from other social classes and they would acquire the "fundamental power to think."²³

What kind of curriculum did Gramsci think was needed to prepare working class and peasant youth to struggle for a new socialist order? A superficial reading of "On Education" might lead one

to believe that Gramsci was eulogizing the “old” curriculum. Gramsci really did believe that the classical humanist education embodied a principle essential for developing a counterhegemonic educational strategy, i.e. the traditional Italian school taught a historical, dialectical conception of the world. This principle, however, was only implicit in the old curriculum and had to be concretized in new curricular forms appropriate to the emergent industrial age. And if we accept Hoare and Smith’s suggestion that Gramsci was really disguising his future (ideal, i.e. socialist) system as the past in order to critique the present,²⁴ then the “philosophy of praxis” (Marxism), which Gramsci thought was an “integral and original philosophy which opens up a new phase of history and a new phase in the development of world thought,”²⁵ would be the integrating focus of this new curriculum.

Gramsci insisted that the ideal Italian common school must combat traditional conceptions of the world. “The scientific ideas the children learned,” he says, “conflicted with the magical conception of the world and nature which they absorbed from an environment steeped in folklore; while the idea of civic rights and duties conflicted with tendencies towards individualistic and localistic barbarism — another dimension of folklore.”²⁶ Schools had the task of teaching a modern outlook

based essentially on an awareness of the simple and fundamental fact that there exist objective, intractable natural laws to which man must adapt himself if he is to master them in his turn — and that there exist social and state laws which are the product of human activity, which are established by men and can be altered by men in the interests of their collective development. These laws of the State and of society create that human order which historically best enables men to dominate the laws of nature, that is to say which most facilitates their work.²⁷

In other words, learning about the world of things (natural science) taught youth that rational laws governed the natural world and that, once understood, could be placed in the service of humankind and learning about social reality (state and civic society) taught youth that they were the makers of history, of the laws and norms governing social life. The educational principle latent in the primary school, Gramsci claims, is the “idea and fact of work.”²⁸

The discovery that the relations between the social and natural orders are mediated by work, by man’s theoretical and practical activity, creates the first elements of an intuition of the world free from all magic and superstition. It provides a basis for the subsequent development of an historical, dialectical conception of the world, which understands movement and change, which appreciates the sum of effort and sacrifice which the present has cost the past and which the future is costing the present, and which conceives the contemporary world as a synthesis of the past, of all past generations, which projects itself into the future. This was the real basis of the primary school. Whether it yielded all its fruits, and whether the actual teachers were aware of the nature and philosophical content of their task, is another question. This requires an analysis of the degree of civic consciousness of the entire nation, of which the teaching body was merely an expression, and rather a poor expression — certainly not an *avant-garde*.²⁹

Gramsci believed that a knowledge of history, the essence of a humanistic education, was essential for the working class and peasantry if they were become a “new stratum of intellectuals.”³⁰ To be able to situate oneself in history and acquire self-discipline in pursuit of an ideal one must, in the young Gramsci’s words, “know others, their history, the successive efforts they have made to be what they are, to create the civilisation they have created and which we seek to replace with our own.”³¹ Nothing is more “immediate and relevant”, Gramsci asserts, than having a consciousness of the world’s “historicity, of the phase of development which it represents and of the fact that it contradicts other conceptions.”³² The past must enliven the proletarian struggle — “tamed, as a servant and not master, who enlightens without obscuring.”³³ In one of the last letters Gramsci wrote to his son Delio he expressed his passion for history. “I think you like history, as I liked it at your age, because it concerns living men; and everything that concerns them — as many men as possible, all the men in the world, insofar as they unite in society and work and strive to improve themselves — must necessarily interest you more than anything else.”³⁴

Gramsci thought that if working class and peasant children were to develop into "organic intellectuals," they had, in learning how to study, to learn "physical self-discipline and self-control."³⁵ What came relatively easy for middle and upper class children — sitting still, concentrating more easily — had to be acquired, often painfully, through diligent and precise labour over texts. Many people, Gramsci says,

think that the difficulty of study conceals some 'trick' which handicaps them — that is, when they do not simply believe that they are stupid by nature. They see the 'gentleman' — and for many, especially in the country, 'gentleman' means intellectual — complete, speedily and with apparent ease, work which costs their sons tears and blood, and they think there is a 'trick.' In the future, these questions may become extremely acute and it will be necessary to resist the tendency to render easy that which cannot become easy without being distorted. If our aim is to produce a new stratum of intellectuals, including those capable of the highest degree of specialisation, from a social group which has not traditionally developed the appropriate attitudes, then we have unprecedented difficulties to overcome.³⁰

Gramsci did not think that the school could be immediately relevant or linked directly to the activities of the community. "There is no unity," he says, "between school and life, and so there is no automatic unity between instruction and education."³⁷ Gramsci, it seems, was not sympathetic to Marx's belief that the education of the child should combine work with academic learning. However, the academic work of the school was indeed relevant to the real world. In the old curriculum, by studying ancient cultures and languages students learned "to reason, to think abstractly and schematically while remaining able to plunge back from abstraction into real and immediate life, to see in each fact or datum what is general and what is particular, to distinguish the concept from the specific instance."³⁸ Through the eight years of *ginnasio* and *liceo* (studying the movement of language over time) children of the elite acquired, without conscious intent, a disposition that can relate the concrete and the abstract. Although Gramsci thought it necessary to replace Latin and Greek as the fulcrum of the formative school, he felt this disposition should be retained in the new curriculum. For without this critical disposition, the "individualistic and localistic barbarism" of the traditional peasant outlook could not be broken through.

What pedagogical methodology is suitable for the formative school and the creation of proletarian intellectuals "capable of thinking, studying, and ruling — or controlling those who rule?"³⁹ In the first four years of common schooling, where the child learns the "first 'instrumental' notions of common schooling — reading, writing, sums, geography, history," a "dogmatic approach . . . must inevitably characterize these first years." The didactic problem facing educators in this period, made even more challenging given the cultural baggage of children from subordinate classes, is of "rendering more fertile the dogmatic approach."⁴⁰ But in the rest of the course, which should not last more than six years, the child should pass to the "creative phase, the phase of autonomous, independent work."⁴¹

By contrast, therefore, the last phase of the common school must be conceived and structured as the decisive phase, whose aim is to create the fundamental values of 'humanism', the intellectual self-discipline and the moral independence which are necessary for subsequent specialisation — whether it be of a scientific character (university studies or of an immediately practical-productive character (industry, civil service, organisation of commerce, etc.) The study and learning of creative methods in science and in life must begin in this last phase of the school, and no longer be a monopoly of the university or be left to chance in practical life. This phase of the school must already contribute to developing the element of independent responsibility in each individual, must be a creative school.⁴²

In the creative phase, on the basis that has been achieved of 'collectivisation' of the social type, the aim is to expand the personality — by now autonomous and responsible, but with a solid and homogeneous moral and social conscience. Thus creative school does not mean school of 'inventors and discoverers'; it indicates a phase and a method of research and of knowledge, and not a predetermined 'programme' with an obligation to originality and innovation at all costs. It indicates that learning takes place especially through a spontaneous and autonomous effort of the pupil, with the teacher only exercising a function of friendly guide — as happens or should happen in the university.⁴³

Gramsci's pedagogical methodology, emphasizing the spontaneous and autonomous effort of the pupil, harmonizes with his commitment to create self-active intellectuals from the subordinate classes who are capable of governing society and creating culture. It is more than a little surprising, in the light of my exposition of Gramsci's ideas, that one recent interpreter of Gramsci, Harold Entwistle, has suggested that Gramsci advocates a "conservative schooling for radical politics."⁴⁴

One almost shudders at the complexity and difficulty of the task facing Gramscian revolutionary educators. Revolutionary movements in the advanced capitalist and Third World countries have, by and large, followed in Lenin's dangerous footsteps. Social democratic movements in Europe and North America have been content to call for the extension of existing educational services to the masses. But this is not to say that Gramsci's thought is not without its weaknesses. It seems to me that Gramsci's conception of the split between political and civil society, upon which the notion of counterhegemonic educational struggle depends, may need revision. As cultural historian Raymond Williams has recently argued, the "effective-dominant" culture now increasingly rationalizes all civil society. The sheer pervasiveness of the "effective-dominant" culture suggests that serious reflection is needed to discover points of access within structures where a counterhegemonic social force could organize itself without being incorporated or co-opted.⁴⁵ And the working class in advanced capitalist societies, fragmented, beleaguered, embourgeoisized, may well not be the group embodying far-reaching, universal, social interests. Here we can simply point to the rudimentary nature of Gramsci's thought concerning the psychological process whereby a subordinate, exploited class moves from ordinary to critical consciousness. One wonders, too, about Gramsci's vision of a Marxian humanist, formative school. Is this school, as Gramsci foresees it, only possible when a social movement, after winning state power, institutes radical reforms in the organization and form of public schooling? What would Gramsci settle for in the period prior to the overthrow of the ruling class? Yet, in spite of the schematic nature of his thought, as well as the serious theoretical and practical problems of a counterhegemonic educational struggle, Gramsci has posed fundamental educational questions for those committed to replacing capitalist society with a more egalitarian, humane one.

Notes

¹ In her introduction to Gramsci's prison letters, Lynne Lawner writes: "The first thing to strike the public was the dramatic background against which these writings were produced; for it soon emerged that these small squares of paper, every inch of which was crowded with a minute, perfect calligraphy, represented the efforts of a man fighting from the beginning against the avalanche of devastating illnesses — vomiting, insomnia, arteriosclerosis, tuberculosis, Pott's disease, and numerous other ailments. Gramsci literally rotted away in prison, writing while his teeth fell out, his stomach was destroyed, and his nerves collapsed" (p. 5). Lynne Lawner, ed. *Antonio Gramsci: Letters from Prison* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973). For the details of Gramsci's life, see John Cammett, *Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism* (Stanford University Press, 1967) and Alastair Davidson, *Antonio Gramsci: Towards an Intellectual Biography* (London: Merlin Press, 1977).

² For a discussion of "western Marxism" see Perry Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism* (New Left Review Books, 1976).

³ Lawner Letters, p. 235. For discussions of Gramsci's concept of hegemony see Carl Boggs, "Ideological Hegemony and Class Struggle," in *Gramsci's Marxism* (Pluto Press, 1976); Jerome Karabel's excellent essay, "Revolutionary Contradictions: Antonio Gramsci and the Problem of Intellectuals," *Politics and Society*, vol. 6, no. 2, 1976; Joseph Femia, "Hegemony and Consciousness in the Thought of Antonio Gramsci," *Political Studies*, vol. XXXIII, No. 1 (29-48), 1975; Gwyn Williams, "'Egemonia in the Thought of Antonio Gramsci: Some Notes on Interpretation,'" *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Oct.-Dec. 1960; A. Martinelli, "In Defense of the Dialectic," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, vol. XIII, 1968.

⁴ Giuseppe Fiori, *Antonio Gramsci: Life of a Revolutionary* (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), p. 238.

⁵ A. Pozzolini, *Antonio Gramsci: An Introduction to his Thought* (Pluto Press, 1970), pp. 14-15.

⁶ Romano Giachetti, "Antonio Gramsci: The Subjective Revolution," in Dick Howard and Karl Klare, eds. *The Unknown Dimension* (New York: Basic Books, 1972), p. 164.

⁷ Karabel, p. 159.

⁸ Antonio Gramsci, *Il Materialismo Storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce* (Turin: Einaudi, 1949), p. 5.

⁹ Pedro Cavalcanti and Paul Piccone, *History, Philosophy and Culture in the Young Gramsci* (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1975), p. 23. The original article appeared in *Il Grido del Popolo* (The Cry of the People), January 29, 1916.

¹⁰ Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Smith, ed. and trans., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), p. 424.

¹¹ Antonio Gramsci, "Soviets in Italy," *New Left Review*, vol. 51 (Sept.-Oct. 1968). For detailed studies of the council movement see Martin Clark, *Antonio Gramsci and the Revolution that Failed* (Yale University Press, 1977) and Gwyn Williams, *Proletarian Order: Antonio Gramsci, Factory Councils and the Origins of Communism in Italy, 1911-1921* (Pluto Press, 1975). Gramsci wrote that:

The factory council is the model of the proletarian state. All the problems inherent in the organization of the proletarian state are inherent in the organization of the council. In the one and in the other, the concept of the citizen declines and is replaced by the concept of the comrade; collaboration to produce wealth . . . multiplies the bonds of affection and brotherhood. Everyone is indispensable; everyone is at his post; and everyone has a function and a post. Even the most ignorant and backward of the workers, even the most vain and 'civil' of engineers eventually convinces himself of this truth in the experience of factory organization. Everyone eventually acquires a communist viewpoint through understanding the great step forward that the communist economy represents over the capitalist economy. The council is the most fitting organ of reciprocal education and development of the new social spirit that the proletariat has succeeded in creating . . . Working-class solidarity . . . in the council is positive, permanent, and present in the joyous awareness of being an organic whole, a homogeneous and compact system that, by useful labor and disinterested production of social wealth, asserts its sovereignty, and realizes its power and freedom as a creator of history (cited, Cammett, p. 82).

¹² Walter Adamson, "Beyond 'Reform or Revolution': Notes on Political Education in Gramsci, Habermas and Arendt," *Theory and Society*, vol. VI, No. 3 (November 1978), pp. 436-7.

¹³ Cammett, pp. 81-82.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 82.

¹⁵ cf. Alvin Gouldner's observation on the dilemmas of Marxism and the Vanguard organization. "Marxism," he provocatively asserts,

is the false consciousness of cultural bourgeoisie who have been radicalized. 'When the (First) International was formed,' wrote Marx, 'we expressly formulated the battle cry: The emancipation of the working class must be conquered by the working classes themselves.' But who was the 'we' who formulated that battle cry? Commitment to the self-emancipation of the proletariat is an act of theory made by a theoretical elite and therefore embodies a profound false consciousness.

In holding that the working class will set itself free, there are two components of false consciousness: (1) that the class to be set free is the working class, whereas in fact it is the cultural bourgeoisie; (2) that the class to make that emancipatory act will be the working class, whereas they will succeed in doing this only under the political leadership and cultural tutelage of the cultural bourgeoisie ("The New Class Project II," *Theory and Society*, vol. VI, No. 3 (Nov. 1978), p. 371).

See also the excellent essays by Jerome Karabel, "Revolutionary Contradictions: Antonio Gramsci and the Problem of Intellectuals," *Politics and Society*, vol. 6, no. 2, 1976 and Walter Adamson, "Marx and Political Education," *The Review of Politics*, vol. 39, no. 3 (July 1977).

¹⁶ V.I. Lenin, *What is to be Done?* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 80.

¹⁷ See Lawner Letters, p. 243 for but one example.

¹⁸ Cited in Piccone, p. 35.

- ¹⁹ *ibid.*
- ²⁰ *Prison Notebooks* (PN), p. 27.
- ²¹ *ibid.*
- ²² PN, p. 29.
- ²³ *ibid.*, p. 26.
- ²⁴ Hoare and Smith, pp. 24-25.
- ²⁵ PN, p. 435. Cf. p. 395: "The philosophy of praxis presupposes all this cultural past: Renaissance and Reformation, German philosophy and the French Revolution, Calvinism and English classical economics, secular liberalism and this historicism which is at the root of the whole modern conception of life. The philosophy of praxis is the crowning achievement of this entire movement of intellectual and moral reformation, made dialectical in the contrast between popular culture and high culture."
- ²⁶ PN, p. 34.
- ²⁷ *ibid.*
- ²⁸ *ibid.*
- ²⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 34-35.
- ³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 43.
- ³¹ Q. Hoare, ed. and J. Mathews, trans. *Selections from Political Writings, 1910-1920* (New York: International Publishers, 1977), p. 13.
- ³² PN, p. 324.
- ³³ Piccone, p. 70.
- ³⁴ Lawner Letters, no. 90, p. 273.
- ³⁵ PN, p. 42.
- ³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 43.
- ³⁷ PN, p. 35.
- ³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 40.
- ³⁹ *ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 30.
- ⁴¹ *ibid.*, pp. 31-32.
- ⁴² *ibid.*, p. 32.
- ⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 33.
- ⁴⁴ Harold Entwistle, *Antonio Gramsci: Conservative Schooling for Radical Politics* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), p. 83.
- ⁴⁵ Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, Section II: Cultural Theory. cf. Adamson, "Beyond 'Reform or Revolution', p. 440.