

## THEORY AND PRACTICE IN GRAMSCI'S MARXISM

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DURING the past decade there has been a growing interest among European socialists in those Marxist writers and activists of the period immediately preceding and following the October Revolution, whose theories grew out of the collapse of the Second International and the failure of the revolutionary wave which swept Europe in 1917-20. The emergence of reformist tendencies in the socialist parties in the pre-war period, the subsequent capitulation of the German SPD, the failure of the socialist leaderships to combat factional tendencies within their parties and their fatal inaction in the face of events immediately following the war, created a situation in which only radical new departures could create new theoretical solutions and hence new practical possibilities. Both Lukacs and Gramsci responded in different ways to this need, moving beyond the terms of the earlier "revisionist debate"—both "revolutionaries" and "reformists" had remained locked within the same basic problematic—carrying out a new diagnosis and prognosis from their experience of the postwar defeat, placing a renewed stress on the active, voluntary component of historical change, on the problem of agency in the making of a revolution.

For the increasing incapacity of European social-democrat leaderships, nakedly revealed in the postwar crisis, was itself the outward manifestation of a more profound malaise; the ossification of bureaucratic structures of organization went hand in hand with an "official Marxism" based on a rigid set of categorical doctrines, "laws of social development" of the natural-scientific type. The need for a renewal of Marxism in these circumstances was urgent. Both Lukács and Gramsci reacted energetically against these positivistic inroads into Marxism, the positivist-scientism which was the theoretical basis of the Second International's orthodoxy. With the imposition of the new orthodoxy of Stalinism during the '30s, however, these theories became, and have largely remained, a subordinate current within the international socialist movement, and it was only after the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956 that their rediscovery became widely possible. The recurring tendency of Marxism to become petrified into a schematic system of fixed categories, eternally valid, invoking concepts rather than rediscovering them in relation to each new conjuncture,

has made the work of Gramsci particularly relevant to the problems of postwar socialism in the west. The 2,800 pages of the *Prison Notebooks*, which began to be published after the war and the collapse of Italian fascism, constitute the most wide-ranging and sustained attempt to renew Marxism, reformulating old categories and inventing new concepts through the confrontation of contemporary social and cultural developments, to have come from the pen of a twentieth-century western Marxist. Gramsci's work represents above all a model of that type of critical-development, as opposed to blind exegesis, of Marxism, which "actualizes" theory in relation to each specific conjuncture, locating the changing centres of contradiction in the capitalist world and elaborating the appropriate strategy. At every point, new insights produce new theoretical solutions as a means, not of rejecting all existing reality, myopically intent on retaining the purity of the original formulations, but of coming to grips with reality, revealing its contradictions, locating the focal points of change as a means to guiding and directing action towards revolutionary socialist goals. The need for an integral "rethinking" of Marxism in the post-Stalinist period, not only in economic terms but in relation to the totality of social and cultural developments in the capitalist west; the continued dependence on traditional forms of organization in the socialist movement, as well as the increasing passivity of strategic options on the Left have made incumbent a confrontation with "the one genius", as Eugene Genovese has aptly remarked "who posed and faced western socialism's most difficult problems".

## I

What were the general features of Gramsci's renewal of Marxism? A precondition for such a renewal was for Gramsci, as for Lenin or Lukacs, the rejection of "economism" in all its forms, the tendency to reduce the various levels of superstructure to the status of "appearance" or "phenomenon". In the hands of the "professorial" Marxists of the Second International, this tendency had produced an evolutionary-determinist conception of history, governed by objective laws whose unfolding lay beyond the scope of active human intervention. The practical result was a catastrophic fatalism in the face of events, sustained by a blind belief in the "forces of history", in the inevitable collapse of capitalism due to its internal contradictions. It was in relation to this deviation of Marxism that Gramsci entitled an early article of November 1917 "The Revolution against 'Das Kapital' ", in which he hailed the Bolsheviks for having broken the iron timetable of the stages of history.<sup>3</sup> In the prison notes, fatalism is characterized as "an immediate ideological 'aroma' " of Marxism, a "form of religion and

a stimulant (like a drug) necessitated and historically justified by the subordinate character of certain social strata", maintaining perseverance in periods of defeat and adversity: "I am defeated for the moment but the nature of things is on my side in the long run", etc." But in periods of organic crisis, when the subordinate becomes potentially "directing", it becomes a substitute for taking real initiatives; the result is vacillation, passivity and "imbecile self-sufficiency". For this reason, "the pretension (presented as an essential postulate of historical materialism) of interpreting every fluctuation of politics and ideology as an immediate expression of the structure must be thoroughly combated as a primitive infantilism".<sup>4</sup> Citing Engels' remark in his correspondence, that "only in the last analysis is the economy the determining force in history", he goes on to dismiss the possibility that "by themselves economic crises directly produce fundamental events. . . . The question of economic malaise or health as a cause of new historical realities is a partial question of the relation of forces on their various levels."<sup>5</sup>

This rejection of economism was coupled with a rejection of the positivist tendency to objectify the discrete atomistic data of immediate actuality, dissolving the totality of social processes into the fragmentary "facts" of contingent reality, thereby declaring its categories universal. In his critique of Bukharin's *Theory of Historical Materialism* (1921) Gramsci rejected the crude materialism and "false objectivity" of Bukharin's method, in which Marxism was conceived as a means of predicting future events with the exactitude of the natural sciences. Echoing an earlier critique by Lukács, Gramsci insisted on the impossibility of prediction which diverted attention from the possibilities of active political intervention; Marxism's "laws of social development" were "laws of tendency" only. Vulgar materialism and technologism merely reproduced the categories of bourgeois science and ignored the dialectical nature of the Marxist totality.<sup>6</sup> Gramsci's critical effort was directed towards the restoration of the dialectic and hence the possibility of conscious praxis, the interplay between subjective and objective in the historical process, within which the specific forms of superstructure, cultural, political and ideological, have a relatively autonomous existence, irreducible to the status of "emanations" of the economic structure, conceived of as an idealist "essence". In his unwavering opposition to that deformation of Marxism represented by a long arc of official theory from Plekhanov<sup>7</sup> to Kautsky and Bukharin, encrusted with evolutionist determinism, Gramsci clearly prefigures more recent theoretical developments of the post-Stalin period, the recognition of the need for a more integrated and total Marxism as opposed to the eclecticism of recent tendencies, with an emphasis on the specific role of the superstructures, of historical con-

juncture and the complexity of the Marxist totality, determined only in the last instance by the economic. As Althusser has put it: "From the first moment to the last, the lonely hour of the last instance never comes".<sup>4</sup>

It is therefore the range, the all-inclusive scope of Gramsci's Marxism which is its distinctive feature. Economism was not merely unable to explain crucial aspects of contemporary social and political reality, the role of Catholicism or the rise of Mussolini; not only were its theoretical insights mediocre, but it was also a partial vision of the socialist future limited to the alteration of the economic structure. In place of this it was imperative to affirm a total vision based on a total critique. Private ownership of the means of production is a *necessary* but not a *sufficient* basis of capitalist domination; similarly, because socialism reorganizes the economic structure, this does not mean that "the problems of superstructure should be abandoned to themselves, to their spontaneous development, to a hazardous and sporadic germination". Gramsci's Marxism was not limited to the material conditions of existence but included also the content of existence, the integral development of human potentialities over the whole field of experience and the vast expansion of creative possibilities which socialism would make possible. This widening of focus required a new emphasis on the role of consciousness and ideas in the transformation of society, which Gramsci developed through a life-long confrontation with the neo-idealists, represented in Italy pre-eminently by the philosopher-historian Benedetto Croce, the most influential spokesman of speculative liberalism throughout the period. Just as the theory of Lukács was the result of a synthesis with the anti-positivist sociology of Weber and Simmel, Gramsci's Marxism developed out of his critique of Croce. The European-wide reaction against positivism from the 1880's onwards thus found its dialectical response within the Marxist tradition itself. Gramsci's concept of Marxist orthodoxy is "not based on this or that follower, or this or that tendency linked to currents outside the original formulation . . . but on the fundamental conception of Marxism as 'sufficient to itself, sufficient to create an entire civilization, total and integrated'".<sup>5</sup>

This integral Marxism was in turn made concrete by the enormous project Gramsci set himself during his long imprisonment: to rework, to actualize theory in relation to a specific national experience and culture in order to present a global critique and challenge to existing social reality. It was his refusal to apply schematic solutions to a particular "effectual reality" that made him underline the specificity of the conjuncture of forces, national and international, which determine the form a crisis will take in any particular case and hence the strategy of the revolutionary movement. In the prison notes he attacked

"closed and definitive systems" and added that "the unity and systematic quality of a theory is to be found not in its external and architectonic structure but in its intimate coherence and fertile comprehension of each particular solution".<sup>11</sup> In his note *Against Byzantinism* we read: "The correspondence of effective reality determines the identity of thought and not vice-versa. From this we deduce that every truth, while being universal and capable of being expressed in abstract form (for the tribe of theoreticians) derives its efficacy from being expressed in the language of particular concrete situations: if it is not expressible in 'particular languages', it is a byzantine and scholastic abstraction serving only as a pastime for phrasemongers".<sup>12</sup> The particular requirements corresponding to each situation cannot be fixed in advance: "Reality is rich in bizarre combinations and it is the theoretician who must out of this confusion find the proof of his theory, 'translate' into theoretical language the elements of historical life; not, on the contrary, reality which must present itself according to the abstract schema. This can never happen and in consequence this conception is the expression of passivity."<sup>13</sup> Each national conjuncture is "the result of an original, unique combination (in a certain sense) and it is in the context of this originality and specificity that the combination must be understood and conceived if one wishes to overcome and direct it". There is no one road to socialism applicable for all cases: "The development is in the direction of internationalism but the point of departure is 'national' and it is from here that one must start".<sup>14</sup> It was this overriding concern for national conjuncture, in contrast to the formal internationalism of Trotsky and of Rosa Luxemburg,<sup>15</sup> that enabled Gramsci to discern the specificity of the problematic in the case of western countries and to adapt the experience of Leninism and the Russian Revolution to the different conditions of the West.

It is all the more essential to emphasise this close link between theory and actual movements within society since the tendency to interpret Gramsci's theories as an "idealist Marxism" overlooks the unity of theory and practice, linked indissolubly with the needs of concrete struggle, which underlay his work. Gramsci's weapon against both materialism and idealism was "the energetic affirmation of unity between theory and practice".<sup>16</sup> The underlying thematic of his philosophical, historical and cultural studies was a response to an essentially political problem. The traditional organizations and leadership of the working class had proved unable to surmount the dilemma which faces every socialist movement, working at once within bourgeois society and utilizing its institutions, while at the same time working for its overthrow. The result was generally a defensive and corporatist posture coupled with declamatory and utopian appeals for mass-action

from the Left (syndicalism and spontaneism). This was particularly true in the case of the "Maximalist" leadership of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI), which, in spite of its nominal allegiance to the Third International at the Congress of Bologna (1919), proved incapable of moving beyond the twin polarities of opportunist participation in society or isolationist withdrawal from society. It therefore failed to come to grips with the situation of the postwar crisis, or to provide an active revolutionary leadership: the result was a fatal kind of inaction, barricaded behind old-established positions and empty rhetoric. The same tendency towards isolationism was reproduced by the dominant faction of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) in the early period from its foundation at the Congress of Livorno in 1921. The sectarian "abstentionism" of the group led by Bordiga represented the same inability to intervene actively in the political arena, based on the same mechanistic assumptions that underlay the inaction of the PSI and in glaring contrast to the policies laid down by the Comintern. Lenin had already condemned this "Left-Wing Communism" in 1920: "Comrade Bordiga and his 'Left' friends draw from their correct criticism of Turati and Co. (the reformists) the wrong conclusion. . . . Not only in the parliamentary field, but in all fields of activity, communism ~~cannot~~ *introduce* (and without long, persistent and stubborn effort it will be *unable* to introduce) something new in principle that will represent a radical break with the traditions of the Second International."<sup>17</sup> Gramsci's early opposition to the PSI leadership, culminating in the experience of the factory councils movement in Turin, became after 1921 a struggle against the sectarianism of the early PCI, only won with his rise to leadership of the party in 1924. This position was again accentuated by the change of Comintern policy in 1929-30. During a series of political discussions with fellow prisoners in late 1930, he is reported to have strongly criticized the recrudescence of "the old maximalist phraseology" and the failure of the party to confront fascism: "they do not know how to adjust the means to different historical situations".<sup>18</sup>

Against this political background, the defeat of Italian socialism and the triumph of fascism, Gramsci's lasting achievement remains that of having overcome, both in theory and in his political practice, the sterile alternatives of participation and abstention, through a radical redefinition of the essential problem, the nature of power in western society; underlining the active work of politicization and mobilization of the masses, restoring the possibility of revolutionary initiative by a conscious political agency based on an ideological and political unity between the "intellectuals" and the "masses" malting up the revolutionary bloc. The problem was to elaborate the specific character of a "collective will" which would make possible the passage from a sec-

toral, corporate and hence subaltern role of purely negative opposition, to a hegemonic role of conscious action towards revolutionary goals; not seeking a partial adjustment within the system, but "posing the question of the state in its entirety".<sup>11</sup> For this to be possible, the partial, determined character of opposition must become a **universally-oriented** challenge over the whole range of social relations, so that "the structure of external forces which overwhelms man and renders him passive may be transformed into a means of freedom, an instrument for creating a new ethico-political form, making possible new initiatives". The passage to the hegemonic moment represents the transformation of the "objective" into the realm of "intersubjectivity", from "the merely economic moment (of egoistic passion) to the ethico-political moment; that is, the superior elaboration of the structure into superstructure in the minds and consciousness of **men**".<sup>12</sup> This transition from the purely economic struggle required a new conception of the role of ideology, of the "intellectuals" (in a broad sense, of all those who have an organizing and educative role), an emphasis on the voluntary character of the revolutionary organization as an agency bringing about the transformation of consciousness and cultural renewal at all levels of society.

It was Gramsci's great strength that he posed these problems in terms which admitted of practical solutions. The disjunction of theory and practice was seen as the root cause of the debility of strategic options on the Left. This signified that socialism was still passing through "a relatively primitive phase. one that is still economic-corporative, in which the general framework of the structure is being transformed only in quantitative terms and the appropriate "quality superstructure" is in the process of arising but is not yet organically formed".<sup>13</sup> The divorce of theory from concrete struggle, from the specific possibilities contained within society, produced "arbitrary" schema in the place of that "organic" unity which alone could restore a creative dialectical relationship between objective situation and revolutionary initiatives. Gramsci's long isolation in prison, far from leading to disinterested contemplation, was compensated by an enormous effort of political engagement. His "intellectual" and "political" roles were inextricably linked and the tendency to separate them—particularly tempting in his case, since the division corresponds to the two periods, of political activity (including political journalism) 1916–26 and imprisonment 1926–37—can only lead to a disjunction between his theories and his intentions, which gives at best a partial view. Such schematic and *unilinear* interpretations do less than justice to the originality and underlying coherence of the prison notes, despite their fragmentary character. Gramsci was saved from any idealist or formal solution by his close grounding in political reality. "All con-

crete analyses of relations of forces cannot be ends in themselves (unless one is writing a chapter of past history); on the contrary, they only acquire meaning in so far as they serve to justify practical activity, an initiative of will.<sup>23</sup> His analyses are never limited to the adumbration of purely conceptual alternatives; their unity and coherence lie in the theoretical-practical framework which constituted his field of research. This involved taking into account the limits present and possibilities open; "a research into the conditions necessary for freedom of action towards certain ends. . . . It is not a question of establishing a *hierarchy of ends* but a *graduation of ends to be attained*".<sup>24</sup> This cannot be "the result of a rational, deductive process proper to 'pure intellectuals' (or 'pure donkeys')", but an organic process in which theory finds its authenticity in practice, in which analysis is guided towards strategy, in which analysis is "active" rather than "descriptive".<sup>24</sup> The final test of any analysis was its "practical efficacy" in terms of "effective reality".

To understand better the nature of this "collective will" in Gramsci, it is necessary to turn to the crucial role of ideology and the superstructures in his analysis of the power structure in western societies.

## II

Gramsci's polemic against economism was based on the need to reformulate the "problem of the relation between structure and superstructure, which must be precisely posed and resolved if one is to achieve a true analysis of the forces operating in the history of a determined period and to define their relationship".<sup>25</sup> The "economist" hypothesis affirms an "immediate element of force" directly produced by the determinism of the structure. The result is the identification of "state" with "government" or repressive-coercive apparatus only, proper to a "faction of the directing group, who wish to modify not the structure of the State, but only the direction of the government", for whom "it is a question merely of the rotation of directing parties, not the foundation and organization of a new political society and even less of a new type of civil society".<sup>26</sup> The conception of an unmediated element of force is not enough. In this case "the analysis of the various degrees of 'relations of forces' can only culminate in the sphere of hegemony and ethico-political relations".<sup>27</sup>

The concept of hegemony is thus linked to Gramsci's aim to re-define the nature of power in modern societies in more comprehensive terms, allowing for the articulations of the various levels or instances of a given social formation, political, cultural or ideological, in the determination of a specific power structure. In a letter from prison in 1931 he outlines the place occupied by the problem of intellectuals in

his programme of research, which entailed the "further elaboration of the concept of the State as the equilibrium between political society (either dictatorship or coercive apparatus to conform the popular masses according to the type of production and economy of a given moment) and civil society (or the hegemony of a social group over the entire national society by way of the so-called private organizations, such as the Church, the unions, the schools, etc.)".<sup>27</sup> The concept of state thus assumes "a wider and more organic sense" which includes "elements which belong to the notion of civil society (in the sense, one could say, that state = political society + civil society, that is, hegemony tempered by coercion)".<sup>28</sup> The state becomes, in this wider sense, "the state proper ~~and~~ civil society" or "the whole complex of practical and theoretical activities, through which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its domination, but succeeds in obtaining the active consent of the governed".<sup>29</sup> The conception of power is thus extended to include the whole complex of institutions through which power relations are mediated in society, ensuring the "political and cultural hegemony of a social group over the entire society, as the ethical content of the state".<sup>30</sup> The function of "dominio" (coercion) is complemented by that of "direzione" (leadership by consent) as the two modalities or "moments" of power relations. The significance of Machiavelli in Gramsci's research lay, not only in his political realism, but in the "double nature" of his Centaur, both beast and human, containing both "degrees" of force and consent, of authority and hegemony.<sup>31</sup> Gramsci's conceptual approach transcends the categories of political science and sociology; the state is no longer a mere apparatus of coercion but itself has a retroactive influence in the sphere of civil society through "the multiplicity of particular associations and agencies", which constitute the "hegemonic apparatus of a social group over the rest of the population (or civil society), the basis of the 'State', in the *narrow* sense of coercive-governing apparatus".<sup>32</sup>

In advanced capitalist countries the autonomous role of the superstructures is fully developed: the superstructures are "an effective and operating reality".<sup>33</sup> While the various political and ideological formations correspond to the interests of the dominant class, they cannot be reduced to mere emanations or epiphenomena of the structure, and are susceptible to different historical forms and combinations which in turn react upon the structure. It is through this "unity in multiplicity" that it becomes possible, by the analysis of relations in forces within a determined historical situation, to establish the objective co-ordinates of the political struggle as a whole, taking account of the possibility of error or unforeseen results of actions on the part of the agent.<sup>34</sup> Gramsci makes a distinction between "organic" movements of the structure which reveal its "incurable contradictions", giving rise to

relatively permanent groupings, whole classes within society, and potentially challenging the very existence of the superstructure: and "incidental" movements of "conjuncture", which are limited to adjustments within the existing power structure. The failure to establish the precise dialectical relationship between these two "either by expounding as directly operative causes that instead only operate indirectly, or by asserting that immediate causes are the only efficient causes" leads on the one hand to economism; on the other hand to idealogism, "an exaltation of the voluntarist and individual element". On the basis of this general principle, he analyses the various "moments" of the dialectic of structure and superstructure, from the basic social relations of production to political and organizational groupings. These depend on different degrees of homogeneity, organization and political consciousness, from the "elementary" solidarity of the economic-corporative phase to the wider solidarity of the class "for itself", but still acting within the existing political-judicial framework of society; finally the most distinctly "political" moment, "which marks the clear passage from the structure of the sphere of complex superstructure", in which a group surpasses the limits of its corporate interests. These become the interests of other allied and subordinate groups; the sectional interest is superseded and becomes politically "diffused over the whole area of society, creating a unity, not only of economic and political aims, but an intellectual and moral unity, posing all the issues which arise, not on the corporative level but on the 'universal' level", in which particular group interests must be conceived and "co-ordinated concretely with the general interests of subordinate groups". The political moment, in order to become universal must move beyond "interest", surpassing the economic categories of existing society, to constitute an integral challenge, political, cultural, ideological, a qualitative affirmation of the new social order.

Hence the crucial role of ideology and the means by which consciousness is mediated in capitalist society, preserved and protected behind the whole complex of institutions, private and public, which legitimize bourgeois dominance, rendering its values and definitions universal because accepted as the definitive values of society as such. Developing his analysis from Mam's *Preface of 1859*— that "it is in the sphere of ideology that men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out"—Gramsci developed, through the Sorelian concept of *historical bloc*, a theory of the role of intellectuals as "experts in legitimation", in mediating the ideological and political unity of the existing hegemonic structure, rendering it acceptable to allied and subordinate groups, universalizing its dominance. The establishment of this intellectual and political hegemony in the nineteenth century

occupies a large part of Gramsci's historical analysis, particularly in the case of post-Risorgimento Italy. Thus he dwells on the process of "molecular absorption", through which the national "revolutionary" forces, represented by the Party of Action, were cut off by their failure to mobilize a mass support among the peasants of the south and without any organic class basis, failed to challenge the dominant historical bloc formed by the northern bourgeoisie in alliance with the southern landowners. In this way the Moderates were able to build up the hegemony of a coalition of agrarian and industrial interest-groups and their clientele, exercising a "spontaneous attraction" on the southern intellectuals and functionaries.<sup>43</sup> This process of "trasformismo" represented the gradual widening of the social base of the Italian ruling class bloc, the absorption of opposition and allied groups by "private" individual initiatives, in which, as in the case of republican France from 1870, corruption and bribery played a significant role "characteristic of certain situations in which the exercise of the hegemonic function becomes difficult, while the use of force would involve too many dangers".<sup>44</sup> Only in periods of organic crisis was naked coercion rendered necessary, since the ruling class stood isolated and hence vulnerable, the exercise of hegemony becoming impossible. The resolution of such a crisis would depend on the forces available; the arbitration by a charismatic mediator claiming to represent the "national interest", the Caesarist solution, was the result of a static stalemate.<sup>45</sup>

This resort to the "moment of force" is a sign of great weakness; normally the hegemonic equilibrium is characterized by a "combination of force and consent which are balanced in variable proportions, without force ever prevailing too much over consent—on the contrary, making it appear that force is applied by the consent of the majority, expressed by the pretended organs of public opinion—newspapers and other associations—which to this end are sometimes multiplied artificially".<sup>46</sup> In western democracy the degree of institutionalization has made the superstructures peculiarly "dense" and "civil society has become a complex structure, resistant to catastrophic irruptions of the immediate economic element (crises, depressions, etc.)".<sup>47</sup> In his last report to the party on the general situation, before his arrest in 1926, Gramsci observed that in the countries of "advanced capitalism", which are the "key stones of the bourgeois edifice", "the dominant class possesses political and organizational reserves, which it did not possess, for example, in Russia. Even the gravest economic crises do not have an immediate repercussion in the political field. Politics always lag considerably behind economic development". In the more peripheral countries like Italy the existence of "large intermediate strata" between capital and labour, with their own political and ideo-

logical influence, especially on the peasantry, creates further super-structural peculiarities.<sup>41</sup> In the case of democratic forms of government the principle of the division of powers, of "impartial arbitration" by the executive "who reigns, but who does not govern", helps to ensure the consent of the governed, masking the real nature of power relations in capitalist society behind a façade of formal and abstract, juridical, notions of citizenship. Under these conditions consciousness is mediated and fragmentary, refracted through the existing hegemonic apparatus of bourgeois "direction", while conflict is regulated to ensure that disputes are kept within the narrow bounds of procedural compromise, registered by the election vote.<sup>42</sup>

These considerations imply, in terms of strategy, that the "war of manoeuvre" becomes progressively the "war of position". Borrowing the military terminology of the first world war, Gramsci wrote: "Before 1870 . . . society was still, so to speak, in a state of fluidity . . . the apparatus of the state was relatively little developed, with a greater autonomy of civil society in relation to the state." With increasing bureaucratization, "the massive structure of modern democracies, either in terms of state organization or the complexity of associations in civil life . . . constitute 'trenches' and 'permanent fortifications' on the front in the war of position", against which an artillery attack only destroys "the exterior surface, leaving the defence lines still effective". This is a problem specific to modern states, not to backward countries or colonies, in which "the structures of national life are loose and embryonic and cannot become 'trench' or 'fortress' ". This in turn meant that the "1848 doctrine of 'permanent revolution' was superseded in political science by the formula of 'civil hegemony' ".<sup>43</sup> Whereas in Russia for instance, "the state was everything, civil society was primitive . . . in the west the state was only an advanced trench, behind which lay a robust chain of fortresses". The "accurate recognition of national characteristics" made it necessary to "translate" Lenin's practice into the terms appropriate for a "war of position", the only possible one in the west, a strategy of siege to challenge and breach the hegemonic apparatus of the bourgeoisie.<sup>44</sup>

The passage to the "war of position" becomes increasingly the key to western strategy in Gramsci's analysis; the "war of reciprocal siege" represents the most difficult, but the most decisive phase of the struggle, which requires an "unprecedented concentration of hegemony", a mobilization on the part of the dominant groups of "all the hegemonic resources of the state" through controls of every kind, to "organize permanently the 'impossibility' of internal disintegration".<sup>45</sup> In his notes on *Americanism and Fordism*, Gramsci analyzed the corresponding trend towards the rationalization of the work force and the internalization of control over the whole area of the worker's

life in the most advanced sectors of capitalist production, which represented "the final extreme point . . . in the successive attempts by industry to overcome the 'tendencial law' of the fall of the rate of profit".<sup>48</sup> Such developments of hegemony in the productive processes themselves, the adaptation to new forms of psychic discipline, together with the existence of a "working class aristocracy with its bureaucratic . . . and social-democratic connections" demanded "a more complex and long term strategy and tactics than were necessary to the Bolsheviks in . . . 1917", he wrote in a letter of 1924.<sup>49</sup> Under these circumstances the reliance on "conditions", on the principal contradiction of capitalism, to "produce" an opposition was a vain delusion, for the "determination which in Russia launched the masses on the revolutionary path was complicated in western and central Europe by all the political superstructures created by the greater development of capitalism".<sup>50</sup> An integral opposition could only come about by the properly political work of organizing and mobilizing the masses, not in terms of corporate interest, but in terms of the hegemonic leadership of the working class organized in a revolutionary party with an active mass basis. Only in this way could that transformation of consciousness take place, which would make possible a transcendence of the existing categories of society, both in theory and in revolutionary practice, transforming both workers and intellectuals into intellectuals of a new type through the active educative and political work of the revolutionary organization. "The existence of objective conditions and possibilities of struggle is not enough; it is necessary to 'know' them, to know how to use them, to want to use them."<sup>51</sup> Both the sectarian and the syndicalist positions underestimated this active work of mass organization in the formation of a "collective will". Gramsci's authentic Leninism lay in his rejection of all forms of spontaneism and syndicalism, which he criticized in Sorel and Rosa Luxemburg.<sup>52</sup> the tendency among the critics of the Second International to assume the existence of a revolutionary agency in society and to appeal to the "direct action" of the masses, without the necessary intervention of political organization. Neither was political organization in itself sufficient; the sectarian resort to the opposite extreme reproduced the same result in practice, the divorce between the party, the intellectuals and the masses, the failure to create that "organic" relationship which alone could establish a revolutionary hegemony, overcoming the fragmentation created and sustained by the dominant bloc and building a new coherence, capable of responding to the needs and aspirations of all exploited groups on a national scale.

The politicizing of the worker meant the transcendence of his corporate interests as a wage-earner, which are themselves determined

by the capitalist wage-relation. "The proletariat, in order to be capable of governing . . . must rid itself of every corporatist residue, of every syndicalist prejudice or incrustation."<sup>54</sup> The Trade Union, Gramsci wrote in *L'Ordine Nuovo* in 1919, is a "form of capitalist society, not a potential overcoming of capitalist society. It organizes the workers, not as producers, but as wage earners, that is as creatures of the capitalist régime of private property, as sellers of their labour as commodity".<sup>55</sup> The problem was therefore to develop institutions which would allow the worker to develop his autonomous initiative as a producer. In the conditions of postwar Italy the means of mobilizing the working class in Turin as a revolutionary force was through the factory council movement, which represented the direct democratic control of the productive process by all the producers in the factory; the introduction of direct democracy of producers organized as an autonomous force, in the area of production itself, the one area where democracy was crucially denied in capitalist society, at work, was seen by Gramsci as the key to the future society, in which the producers became, "instead of simple executors, agents of the process; from being cogwheels in the mechanism of capitalist production, become subjects".<sup>56</sup> Cammett shows in his recent study how the factory council represented a means by which the "workers could educate themselves as producers"; it could not therefore be subjected to the trade union and PSI bureaucracy, but had to be organized on an autonomous basis. The tendency to see the factory councils movement as a form of syndicalism ignored their role as a politically educative institution.<sup>57</sup> "The dictatorship of the proletariat is incarnated in the type of organization specific to the activity proper to producers and not wage-earners, slaves of capital. The factory council is the first cell of this organization,"<sup>58</sup> the means by which the proletariat can "educate itself, gather experience and acquire a responsible awareness of the duties incumbent upon classes that hold the power of the state".<sup>59</sup> In his report of July 1920 to the Comintern, Gramsci described the Turin councils as "the transfer of the struggle . . . from the strictly corporatist and reformist domain to the sphere of the revolutionary struggle, the control of production and the dictatorship of the proletariat". This meant the direct control of the councils by the producers themselves, "not through the official channels of trades union bureaucracy".<sup>60</sup> In this way, the "Turinese communists posed concretely . . . the question of the 'hegemony of the proletariat', in other words of the social basis of the proletarian dictatorship and the workers' state".<sup>61</sup> The factory council was the means by which the party, as the conscious vanguard of the struggle, could be directly linked to the active mass participation of the working class as producers, conscious of their responsible and liberated role. The factory council was "the model of the proletarian

state", in which political society itself would progressively be "organically" absorbed by civil society.<sup>62</sup>

It was essential that this transition from a corporate to a directing function take place before the actual conquest of power; instead of a mechanical symmetry between base and superstructure a dialectical relation enables the revolutionary movement to exercise a *de facto* leadership in civil society this side of power. "A social group must already become 'directing' before the conquest of power (this is itself one of the principal conditions of the conquest of power); afterwards, when it exercises power and even while it retains a firm grasp on it as the 'dominant' group, it must continue to be 'directive'." This meant that the working class could not establish its hegemony "without some sacrifice of its immediate interests" to the interests of all its potential allies in society; in particular, in Italy, it would have to ally itself with the rural masses of the south. The "southern question" has been rightly described as the "primordial problem" of Italian socialism; to Gramsci the Turin movement had "one undeniable merit", that of having "brought the southern question to the attention of the vanguard of the working class, formulating it as one of the essential problems of the national policy of the Italian proletariat." The future of the workers' movement in the north and the peasants' movement in the south were indissolubly linked; the workers had an immediate interest in not allowing "southern Italy and the islands to become a capitalist counter-revolutionary base". At the same time in the establishment of the workers' state lay the salvation of the peasantry. "If this alliance is not created "the proletariat cannot become the 'directing' class and those strata, which in Italy represent the majority of the population will remain under bourgeois direction, enabling the state to defeat and resist the proletarian impetus". The mechanical formulae of both the PSI leadership and the Bordighin group towards any autonomous initiative, either of the workers or towards the peasants,<sup>67</sup> was one of the major factors in the defeat of socialism in the postwar crisis.

The problem of alliance raised the whole question of the cultural and ideological preparation of the socialist movement. For the "moment in which a subaltern group becomes hegemonic and autonomous, projecting a new type of state, demands concretely the construction of a new intellectual and moral order, that is a new type of society, and hence demands the elaboration of more universal conceptions, more refined and decisive ideological weapons".<sup>68</sup> The creation of this new intellectual and cultural unity was itself a condition for the "directing" function: the integration of culture was a vital complementary task of socialism. Hence the crucial role of the intellectuals in the "cementing" of the revolutionary bloc: "Critical self-consciousness signifies

historically and politically the creation of an elite of intellectuals; a human mass does not 'distinguish' itself, cannot become independent of its own accord, without organizing itself; and there is no organization without intellectuals or leaders (*dirigenti*), that is to say without the theoretical aspect of the theory-practice nexus being concretely distinguished in a group of people specialized in conceptual and philosophical elaboration".<sup>10</sup> The theoretical-practical relation necessitated in practice a new relation between the "intellectuals" and the "mass", a new unity of consciousness through a unified political practice. In this sense the discovery by Lenin, "in the field of political organization and practice, of the concept of hegemony as complementary to that of 'state-as-force' " represented "a *philosophical* as well as *practical-political* progress, since it necessarily involved an ethical and intellectual unity which has surpassed 'common sense' and become . . . *critical*".<sup>11</sup> The political unity of the revolutionary alliance requires a corresponding ideological coherence, and a new "total" conception of culture, in which the party, the intellectuals and the masses are brought into an "organic" relationship, qualitatively projecting an integral vision of the new civilization in all spheres of life.

### III

The work of cultural renovation, of "intellectual and moral reform" was therefore a crucial correlate of socialist hegemony; that of "breaking up the unity founded on the traditional ideologies, a rupture without which the new force cannot acquire the consciousness of its autonomous personality".<sup>12</sup> Through his confrontation with Croce, Gramsci derived "the importance of the cultural moment in practical (collective) activity; every historical action cannot but be accomplished by 'collective man', that is to say it presupposes that a cultural-social unity has been attained, which transforms a large number of scattered wills, with heterogeneous goals, into one goal, on the basis of a common conception of the world".<sup>13</sup> Through the existing ideological and cultural forms, the bourgeoisie is able to "universalize" its "direction" of society, to hold together disparate and even opposition groups on the basis of a consensus. The consciousness of subordinate groups is thus mediated and partial; theory is often in contradiction with actions. This is not due to "bad faith", an explanation which would apply to individuals, but to the uncritical "borrowing of conceptions" which "binds the individual to another social group, influences the . . . direction of his will in a more or less powerful way, and this can reach the point where the contradiction of his consciousness will not permit any action, any decision or choice, producing a state of moral and political passivity".<sup>14</sup> Hence the vital importance of the critique of existing

culture and ideology, not in the sense of negation, but revealing its partial nature, the universality of which, now distorted in metaphysical terms, will be realized in the passage to socialism.<sup>51</sup> Through this process of demystification on the intellectual level, the fragmentary state of "common sense" gives way to "critical self-consciousness" and the "old collective will becomes disintegrated into its contradictory elements", giving rise to a new cohesion.<sup>52</sup>

Gramsci's emphasis on the educative aspect of socialism, achieving through the mass transformation of consciousness the "creation of a new civilization", a universal and integrated culture, is developed from the earliest of his articles in the Turinese socialist weekly *Il Grido del Popolo*, which he edited from 1917 to 1918. In contrast to the anti-intellectualism of Bordiga ("One does not become a socialist through education, but through the real necessities of the class to which one belongs") or the traditional socialist populism of the previous editor, Maria Giudice ("When the masses feel in a socialist way . . . they will act in a socialist way"),<sup>53</sup> Gramsci's lucid and Socratic articles were aimed at educating the worker to his role in the leadership of the revolutionary struggle. Journalism became in his hands a means of "elaborating, making to think concretely, transforming, homogenizing according to an organic process which leads from simple common sense to systematic and coherent thought".<sup>54</sup> In part this emphasis was a product of his own experience as a scholar from Sardinia, one of the most backward provinces in Italy, and the enormous intellectual effort it had required "to overcome a backward way of life and thought, such as that of a Sardinian at the beginning of this century, to reach a way of life. . . that is no longer restricted to the region and the village, but is national".<sup>55</sup> Even more important, however, was the fact that he was well placed, as a provincial newcomer in the most industrialized city in Italy, to observe the "borrowing of conceptions" in the corporatist and exclusive socialism of the PSI leadership, which looked upon the south as the "backland", an obstacle to economic progress and source of cheap labour.<sup>56</sup> Italian socialism had "suffered the sad fate of being approximated to the most arid, sterile thought of the nineteenth century, to positivism".<sup>57</sup> In the hands of Marxists like Loria, for whom "Facts" were "divine, principles human", or Colajanni ("In the hedonistic principle alone and exclusively lies the justification of the class struggle")<sup>58</sup> Marxism had become a drab evolutionism in the dress then *à la mode*; to Gramsci this tendency was especially dangerous since it sanctified the corporatism of the socialist movement. "Every revolution," he wrote in 1916, "has been preceded by an intense work of cultural penetration, of penetration of ideas" and he added: "It is urgent to cease conceiving of culture as encyclopedic knowledge, in which man is considered only as a recipient

of . . . empirical facts, of disconnected brute facts which he must then store in his brain as in the columns of a dictionary . . . responding passively to stimuli. . . . This form of culture is catastrophic, *especially for the proletariat*. . . . Gramsci's struggle against positivism was at the same time a struggle for the unity of the revolutionary bloc. "The first task of the Turinese communists was that of changing the political orientation and general ideology of the proletariat itself, as a national element, which lives inside the complex life of the state and undergoes unconsciously the influence of the schools, the newspapers, of the bourgeois tradition." The Socialist Party had "given its blessing" to the "whole 'southernist' literature of the clique of so-called positivist writers. . . . Once again, 'science' had turned to crushing the wretched and exploited, but this time it was cloaked in socialist colours".<sup>84</sup>

The development of a revolutionary consciousness required a new emphasis on the role of ideas in changing the objective reality of external phenomena. While Gramsci's early intellectual formation took place under the aegis of neo-idealism, he underlined his "complete break" with this tradition, in terms of a radical historicism, shorn of transcendental and ahistorical categories. To confront Croce's speculative historicism, in which "history becomes a formal history, a history of concepts and in the last analysis an autobiographical history of the thought of Croce", it was necessary to "reduce it to its real significance as an immediate ideology, divesting it of the brilliance with which it is accredited as a manifestation . . . of serene and impartial thought, situated far above the miseries and contingencies of daily life, in disinterested contemplation".<sup>85</sup> Croce represented the "lay Pope" of bourgeois hegemony, comparable to the position of Erasmus in relation to the Reformation. The failure of the idealists lay in the exclusiveness of their ideas, in "not having known how to create an ideological unity between the elite and the masses, between the intellectuals and the masses". Their conception of education lacked any "organic character"; it "resembled the first contact between English merchants and negro Africans". The ultimate failure of idealism was the divorce of theory from the real struggles of history, through which history became reduced to an arbitrary and abstract schema: Gramsci's method, in combating both idealism and "crude materialism", was "the 'logical' passage of every conception of the world to the morality conforming to it, from every 'contemplation' to 'action', from every philosophy to the political practice dependent on it . . . One could say that this is the central link of (Marxism), the point at which it becomes 'actualized', in which it lives historically, that is socially and not any longer within individual brains, at which it ceases to be arbitrary and becomes necessary. . . ."<sup>86</sup> This emphasis on the practicality of theory, the intentionality of "philosophy", is directed above

all to the practical problem of the mass diffusion of Marxism as a world conception; the many references to "philosophy" passing into "real history" have this polemical-indicative sense. Althusser has recently suggested, on the grounds of the "latent" tendency of every historicist problematic, that this results in an underestimation of "theoretical practice" itself, a confusion between theory and ideology, in which "philosophy" becomes reduced to an expression of a historical "essence" in a Hegelian-type "expressive unity". Theory thus becomes a reflection of history, a "historically-determined abstraction", resulting in an empiricist approach on the one hand or an idealist voluntarism on the other." Without entering into the general sense of Althusser's discussion, it may however be questioned that Gramsci represents this historicist tendency; Althusser overlooks the theoretical-practical field of Gramsci's research, in which theory is not a passive "reflection" of history, but an essential moment in the overcoming and surpassing of existing structures, reacting against them in terms of conscious praxis. Gramsci's historicism represents the means by which both theory and practice are "actualized", within the determined context. He therefore avoids both spontaneism and voluntarism; the relationship between "philosophy" and "history" is a *critical* one, and by no means precludes the theoretical dimension as *such*."

Gramsci's critique of idealism was not only a confrontation with the most significant philosophy of the time, of abstract man divorced from his social environment; it was also above all part of his critique of "pure intellectuals", of the "cosmopolitan" tradition in Italian culture, expressed in the supra-national institutions of Empire and Papacy, which in turn had determined that fundamental Italian problem, of a country whose history had long been marked by a severe disproportion between social and economic backwardness and pre-eminence in the artistic and cultural field, by the wide gap between the enlightened lay culture of a small minority and the religious superstition of the masses. In Italy, he noted, the term "national" had a restricted sense, not coinciding with that of "popular", "since. . . the intellectuals are removed from the people, that is from the 'nation', and are on the contrary linked to a tradition of caste. . . the tradition is 'bookish' and abstract. . . and the typical intellectual feels more linked to Hannibal Caro or Hippolitus. . . than to the peasant of Apulia or Sicily". In relation to the people the intellectuals were "a caste and not an element organically linked to the people themselves".<sup>20</sup> It was the absence of any "national-popular" culture which constituted the primordial weakness of Italian society, which in turn had made the achievement of national unity a "passive revolution" governed by external forces, rather than developing its own internal *dynamic*.<sup>21</sup>

Gramsci uses the term "Jacobin" in two distinct senses: first, to refer to the intellectualist and abstract divorce of theory from the concrete possibilities contained within society, in the sense that "Trotsky had the Jacobin temperament without any adequate political content", while in Lenin there was "Jacobin temperament and content . . . not according to an intellectualist *etiquette*".<sup>41</sup> His criticism of the sectarian position was thus linked to that of idealism: "The position of 'pure intellectual' becomes either a really deteriorated form of 'Jacobinism'—and in this sense 'Amadeo' (Bordiga) can, on a different intellectual level, be compared to Croce—or a disdainful Pontius-Pilatism, or even both *simultaneously*".<sup>42</sup> In the second sense, Jacobinism refers to active *intervention* in the creation of a "national-popular collective will", the "protagonist of a real historical drama"; in this sense, the "precocious Jacobinism" of Machiavelli is traced to his proposed reorganization of the Florentine militia, bringing the peasants "simultaneously" into political life.<sup>43</sup>

These considerations govern Gramsci's redefinition of the role of intellectuals and that of the hegemonic party as a "collective intellectual". There exists "no independent class of intellectuals, but every social group has its own group of intellectuals or tends to form one", to give it "homogeneity and knowledge of its function, not only in the economic field, but in the social and political field as well; the capitalist entrepreneur creates with himself the industrial technician, the political economist, the organizer of a new culture, of a new law, etc."<sup>44</sup> These "organic" intellectuals, who usually represent "specializations of certain partial aspects of the primitive activity of the new social type to which the new class has given birth" are distinguished from the category of "traditional" intellectuals, which are "pre-existing" and which appear as "representatives of a historical continuity, uninterrupted by the most complex and radical changes in social and political forms".<sup>45</sup> The relation between intellectuals and the world of production is "not immediate, as in the case of [social classes], but 'mediated' in different degrees by the whole social fabric, the complexity of the superstructures, of which they are the *functionaries*".<sup>46</sup> To the intellectuals, in this broad sense, in terms of their function which is "to direct and to organize, that is educational, which means intellectual", falls the role of mediating the hegemony of the dominant group, ensuring that "'spontaneous' consent given by the wide masses of the population to the orientation imprinted on social life by the dominant class", carrying out the *work* of "organization and connection" as "functionaries of the dominant group for the exercise of subordinate functions of social hegemony and political government".<sup>47</sup> It becomes imperative therefore for the revolutionary movement not only to win over elements of the "traditional" intellectuals, but above all to

develop its own "organic" intellectuals to create "favourable conditions" for the expansion of its own class from a subordinate to a directing capacity. The restoration of the theory-practice nexus required "that organic unity of thought and cultural solidarity, which can only be realized if between the intellectuals and the non-intellectuals there exists the same unity that must exist between theory and practice, that is, if the intellectuals become organically the intellectuals of these masses, elaborating and making coherent the principles and problems which the masses pose in their practical activity—thus constituting a cultural and social bloc".<sup>99</sup> This involved the development of a new type of revolutionary intellectual, "who arises from the masses but remains in close contact with them, to become the 'stay of the corset'".<sup>100</sup>

The essentially educative relation implied by the term "organic" becomes the basis of the hegemony of the revolutionary bloc; the dialectical relation between the "intellectuals" and the "masses", the party and the active participation of its social base. This relationship is an "active relation, a reciprocal relationship" in which "every teacher is always a pupil and every pupil a teacher".<sup>100</sup> In contrast with previous "world-conceptions", Marxism "does not seek to sustain the people in their primitive philosophy, but to lead them to a higher view of life", making possible "the intellectual progress of the masses and not only of a few intellectual groups".<sup>101</sup> All men are to a certain degree intellectuals, in that they participate in a world-conception; in this wider sense of "intellectual", Gramsci writes of changing the relationship between intellectual and muscular effort to create a "new equilibrium", and a new type of intellectual, who is "actively involved in practical life", combining specialist technique with science and humanism, thus becoming a "leader' (specialist + politician)".<sup>102</sup> Society itself becomes a system of educative relationships "between individuals, between intellectuals and non-intellectuals, between governed and governing. . . . Every relation of hegemony is necessarily an educative relation. . .".<sup>103</sup> One is reminded of Che Guevara's writing of the need for "the development of a consciousness in which all the old categories of evaluation become changed. Society in its complexity must become a gigantic school".<sup>104</sup>

In 1919 Gramsci had developed, in the factory councils programme, the means through which such a relation could be expressed, "corresponding to the latent aspirations and real forms of life" among the Turin workers. "At that time," he later recalled, "no initiative was taken that was not tested in reality . . . if the opinions of the workers were not taken fully into account. For this reason, our initiatives appeared as the interpretation of a felt need, never as the cold application of intellectual schema".<sup>105</sup> The task was always, for Gramsci, to

find the "present form of the struggle", the form that would activate a response, since it corresponded to the "revolutionary thread" in the real historical situation; in this way making possible the passage from science to action, "not pure action", the Bergsonian abandonment to the irrational, which Gramsci criticized in Sorel, "but the real, impure action in the most profane and worldly sense".<sup>106</sup> While the problem of hegemony was posed in this way by the *Ordine Nuovo* group in 1919-21, they had few illusions about the likelihood of failure. The "optimism of will" was always tempered by a "pessimism of awareness", to use a phrase characteristic of Gramsci. In the absence of political leadership at the national level, the Turinese movement was isolated; "abandoned by all, the Turinese proletariat was obliged to confront alone. . . national capitalism and the power of the state".<sup>107</sup> The Socialist Party had become a mere "spectator of the unfolding of events", had failed "to give a general direction to unify and concentrate the revolutionary action of the masses". The Party had shown itself to be a "mere bureaucratic organization, without soul or will", with the result that "the working class tends instinctively to constitute another party or slides into anarchistic tendencies. . .".<sup>108</sup> The factory councils could not in themselves provide a solution; as Togliatti put it in 1920: "The constitution of councils only has value if it is viewed as a conscious beginning of a revolutionary process. . . Control of production has meaning only as an act . . . in this process."<sup>109</sup> To Gramsci, the existence of a coherent leadership was "the fundamental and indispensable condition for the experience of the workers' councils; if this condition does not exist, every . . . experimental proposition must be rejected as absurd".<sup>110</sup> The need for a new conception of political leadership was the lesson to be drawn from the defeat of the Italian revolution. Gramsci's concern was to develop a leadership that would "move ahead" of events, with a coherent strategy, "maintaining the permanent confidence of the masses, in such a way as to become their guide, their thinking head".

Gramsci's conception of the party follows closely the general framework of his ideas on the intellectuals, hegemony and the specificity of the superstructures. The party is not reducible to an epiphenomenon of "class"; it is the political agency of the working class responsible for developing and organizing the political conditions for the foundation of the workers' state. Gramsci developed his notion of the hegemonic party through his opposition to the sectarian tendencies of the early PCI, but already by 1921, he wrote: "An association can be called a 'political party' only in so far as it has succeeded in making concrete . . . its own notion . . . of the State, in concretizing and diffusing among the masses its own programme of government, organizing, in terms of practice, that is within determined conditions, in relation

to real men and not abstract phantasma . . . a State".<sup>112</sup> His long struggle against sectarianism was due to the fact that the party was not conceived "as the result of a dialectical process, in which the spontaneous movement of the revolutionary masses and the organized and directive will at the centre converge, but only as something nourished on air, which develops in itself and by itself. . .".<sup>113</sup> The result was passivity and inaction, the failure to intervene actively in the work of building up the ideological and political unity of the revolutionary class and its allies. "In the modern world, a party is such—whether integral or the fraction of a larger party—when it is conceived, organized and directed in such a way as to develop into a State (in the integral and not technical-governing sense) and into a conception of the world."<sup>114</sup> The hegemonic party is based on a continually progressing dialectic between the proletariat and its conscious vanguard, an active, reciprocal relationship, that by far surpasses the categories of the Nennian "democratic" and the "totalitarian" interpretations of many commentators, vitiated by the language of Cold War ideology. Mr. Lichtheim, for example, in his summary treatment, claims that "his (Gramsci's) own approach was quite consistent with the totalitarian assumption that revolutions are made by élites".<sup>115</sup> Yet no reading of Gramsci, however casual, could support such an assertion. All his opposition to sectarianism was precisely directed *against* any tendency in the party towards authoritarianism or "party vanity", against the error of regarding as self-sufficient the organization itself, "which meant only to create an apparatus of functionaries who would be 'orthodox' towards the official conceptions".<sup>116</sup> In the face of Stalinism, his strictures against party bureaucracy in the *Prison Notebooks* have an unambiguous ring; the bureaucratic tendency represents a "most dangerous . . . conservative force; if it ends by becoming solidified . . . and feels independent from the masses, the party becomes anachronistic and in moments of crisis becomes emptied of its social content. . .".<sup>117</sup> And writing of "the morbid manifestations of bureaucratic centralism, due to lack of initiative and responsibility from below", he described the resultant "unity" as that of a "stagnant marsh, superficially calm but 'mute' ".<sup>118</sup>

In contrast, Gramsci's conception of the party was based on the premise that "a party cannot exist by virtue of an internal necessity" but through an organic relationship with the class it represents, expressed by his formula of "spontaneity and conscious direction". Defending the factory councils' experience against the accusation of voluntarism, he wrote: "This leadership was not abstract; it did not consist in repeating mechanical formulas; it was applied to real men . . . in a determined historical situation, with certain kinds of outlook, sentiments . . . etc., which resulted from a certain . . . milieu of pro-

duction. This element of spontaneity was not neglected, even less despised; it was *educated*, orientated . . . giving the masses a theoretical consciousness, as creators of historical and institutional values, as founders of states. This unity of 'spontaneity' and 'conscious direction' . . . is precisely the real political action of the subaltern classes, in so far as this represents mass-politics and not simply an adventure by groups who invoke the masses."<sup>119</sup> "Conscious direction" must be applied if spontaneous movements are to become a positive political factor; from the postwar experience, Gramsci learned that "the decisive element in every situation is the force permanently organized . . . which one can advance when the situation is favourable—and it is . . . only to the extent that such a force exists . . ." <sup>120</sup> But this "force" the political party, was not to be organized on rigid lines, nor on the basis of a doctrine, "artificial and mechanically super-imposed" but rather "organically produced . . . historically . . . in the *struggle*".<sup>121</sup> The party could only successfully move beyond the existing political framework and actively promote the surpassing of existing society and politics, if it became the elaborator "of new, integrated and **all-embracing** intellectual systems . . . the annealing agent of the unity of theory and practice in the sense of real historical process". It was therefore necessary that the party "should be formed through individual enlistment and not in a 'Labour Party' way (through affiliation) because, if the aim is to lead organically 'the whole economically active mass', it must be led not according to the old (existing) schemes but by creating new ones". Hence the need for a leadership, but organized on the principles of "democratic centralism", a "centralism in movement"; when the party is progressive, "it functions 'democratically' (in the sense of democratic centralism); when the party is regressive it functions 'bureaucratically' (in the sense of bureaucratic *centralism*)".<sup>122</sup> Only as an "organism in perpetual movement", rather than a rigid structure, "a continual re-adequation of the organization to the real movement, a constantly renewed balance between forces from below and orders from above, which . . . ensures continuity and regular accumulation of experience", could the party, while it "neither reigns nor governs juridically", represent nevertheless a "*de facto* power, exercise its hegemonic function, thus balancing the various interests in 'civil society' which, however, is so closely interwoven in fact with political society, that all the citizens feel that it reigns and governs".<sup>123</sup> Finally, parties come into existence within a historical context; since they represent the "nomenclature" of social classes, the ultimate goal of a party which aims progressively to educate the masses to self-management, to widen vastly the sphere of the "political" in civil society, is its own disappearance.<sup>124</sup>

The underlying thematic of Gramsci's Marxism thus finds its unity and coherence in his creative confrontation of the social and historical realities of his world. His renewal of Marxism was never the detached work of a "scientist" but rather the product of a lifetime of political struggle. In one of his earliest articles he wrote: "To live means to take sides" and in a letter from prison: "My whole intellectual formation was of a polemical kind and to think 'disinterestedly'. that is to study for study's sake, is difficult for me. Only occasionally, I manage to forget myself . . . and find, so to speak, the interest in things in themselves to apply myself to their analysis. Normally I have to move from a . . . dialectical standpoint; otherwise I feel no intellectual stimulus." The result was a Marxism adapted to the actual problems and needs of the Italian struggle. The conception of socialism as concerned above all with the qualitative, rather than quantitative, transformation of society was never confined to an abstract level but directed towards its concrete realization, in terms of the fundamental political task, which was to "define the collective will in modern terms . . . as the working protagonist of a real historical drama"; to bring the "objective" into relation with a programme to be realized; to apply the will to the creation of a new equilibrium of existing and operating forces, based on the force considered to be progressive, thereby "moving always in the field of effectual reality, but to dominate it and overcome it, or to contribute to that goal. In this way the 'ought' becomes concrete . . ." In spite of imprisonment and appalling conditions, illness and isolation, Gramsci remained in a real sense a "political activist": like that other exile from political life, Machiavelli, his armies were "only armies of words" and he was reduced to "concretely showing how historical forces *should have* operated to be effective".<sup>128</sup>

Gramsci has recently been called "the theoretician of revolution in the west".<sup>129</sup> Certainly it is true that no Marxist has confronted with such lucidity the problem of organizing and sustaining a socialist movement in the conditions of advanced capitalism. While it would clearly be against his whole spirit to adopt his ideas uncritically in a new and different context, the unity and range of his Marxism, the absence of fixed categories in his work, its practical and active rather than passive approach, still constitute a vital source for the corresponding development of an authentic *British* Marxism and the renewal of the socialist movement in Britain.

#### NOTES

The author acknowledges the help and advice of John C. Cowley during all stages of the preparation of this article. He also expresses gratitude for the services provided by the Gramsci Institute, Rome, during a period of study in 1964.

1. All references to the *Prison Notebooks* in this article are to the edition of Gramsci's collected works: *Opere di Antonio Gramsci*, Einaudi, Turin; 12 volumes, including articles from *L'Ordine Nuovo* 1919-21 (2 vols.), *Lettere dal Carcere* and *Scritti giovanili*.  
In Britain, Gramsci's work has been particularly drawn on in articles in the *New Left Review*. For translations of Gramsci's writings, see the anthology translated by Dr. Louis Marks, *The Modern Prince*, London, 1958; "In search of the Educational Principle", translated and introduced by Quentin Hoare: *New Left Review* 32, July/August 1965, pp. 52-62. A new and more comprehensive anthology of the prison writings is being prepared by Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Noel-Smith for publication by Lawrence and Wishart in 1969. For commentaries in English, see Gwyn Williams: "Gramsci's Concept of 'Egemonia'", *Journal of the History of Ideas* Vol. XXI, No. 4, October/December 1960, pp. 586 ff. See also the important recent study *Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism* by John M. Cammett, Stanford University Press, 1967, which, while somewhat unbalanced and subject to limitations of approach, provides much useful information especially for the immediate postwar period of the Turinese factory councils, and a good bibliography. Cf. Review of Cammett's book by Eugene Genovese, *Studies on the Left* Vol. 7, No. 2 (1967) p. 83 ff. For a good recent biography see Fiori, G., *Vita di Antonio Gramsci*, Bari, Laterza, 1966.  
"La Rivoluzione contro 'Il Capitale'", *Avanti!*, 24 November 1917, reprinted in the anthology *Duemila pagine di Gramsci*, 2 volumes, Il Saggiatore, Milano, 1964, ed. Ferrata and Gallo, I, pp. 265-268.
4. Gramsci: *Opere II Il Materialismo Storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce* (henceforward "MS"), pp. 13-14, 96.
5. Gramsci: *Opere IV Note sul Machiavelli; sulla politica e sullo Stato Moderno* (henceforward "Mach."), pp. 32, 48-49.
6. MS: pp. 132-133. *Mach.*: pp. 37-39. For Gramsci's critique of Bukharin's popular textbook see MS pp. 119-168. "When the question is put thus (by Bukharin) one cannot understand the significance of the dialectic which becomes degraded into a formal system of logic, an elementary scholasticism" p. 132. Cf. The informative article by Aldo Zanardo: "Il Manuale di Bukharin vista dai comunisti tedeschi e da Gramsci", *Studi Gramsciani*, Rome, 1958, pp. 337-368; in which Gramsci's position is compared to that of Lukács, who similarly pointed out "the closeness of Bukharin's theory to bourgeois, natural-scientific materialism" derived "from his use of 'science' (in the French sense) as a model". See the translation of Lukács' "Technology and Social Relations", *New Left Review* 39, pp. 27-34.
7. MS: p. 80.
8. Louis Althusser "Contradiction et Surdétermination", *Pour Marx*, Paris, 1966, p. 133; *New Left Review* 41, p. 32.
9. *Mach.*: p. 88.
10. MS: p. 157. Cf. Lukács in 1923: "It is not the primacy of economic motives in historical explanation which decisively distinguishes Marxism from bourgeois science, it is the view-point of the totality." *Histoire et Conscience de Classe*, trans. Alexos and Bois, Paris, 1960, p. 47.
11. MS: p. 180.
12. *Opere VII Passato e presente* (henceforward "P"), pp. 62-63.

13. P: pp. 58-59.
14. *Mach.*: p. 114.
15. See Nicolas Krassó: "Trotsky's Marxism", *New Left Review* 44, p. 81, and for Gramsci's comments on Trotsky's internationalism, *Mach.*: pp. 67, 114-115.
16. *MS*: p. 232.
17. Lenin: *Left-wing communism, an infantile disorder*, Progress Publishers, Moscow; Addenda pp. 92-93 (original italics).
18. Athos Lisa: "Discussione politica con Gramsci in carcere", *Rinascita* XXI, 49, 12. XII. 64, pp. 17-21; a report by one of Gramsci's fellow prisoners at Turi. For the early history of the PCI, see the recent and competent history by Paolo Spriano: *Storia del Partito comunista italiano*, Vol. 1: *Da Bordiga a Gramsci*, Turin, 1967. Cf. also Cammett, *op. cit.*, Chapter 8.
19. *Mach.*: p. 46.
20. *MS*: p. 40.
21. *MS*: p. 12.
22. *Mach.*: p. 49.
23. *MS*: p. 98. Williams, in the article quoted above, appears to make this disjunction, as a result concluding with the suggestion that Gramsci represented a purely "moral socialism". *Op. cit.*, pp. 598-599.
24. *Mach.*: p. 77; P: p. 56. Cf. Gramsci's distinction between a purely "literary" theory, the monopoly of isolated thinkers, and that of Machiavelli, who represents a "man of action", a "politico in atto". *Mach.*: pp. 9, 39, 119.
25. *Mach.*: p. 41.
26. *Mach.*: pp. 29-30.
27. *Mach.*: p. 36.
28. Letter to Tatania (7.9.1931), *Lettere dal Carcere*, pp. 479-483.
29. *Mach.*: p. 132.
30. *Mach.*: p. 79.
31. P: pp. 164-165.
32. *Mach.*: pp. 37, 141. "Russo in his 'Prolegomeni' interprets *The Prince* as a treatise on dictatorship (moment of authority and of the individual) and *The Discourses* as one of hegemony (the moment of the universal . . .). Russo's observation is correct; except that even in *The Prince* there are references to the moment of hegemony and consent as well as that of authority and force." p. 141.
33. *Mach.*: pp. 79-80, 128, 133.
34. *MS*: pp. 236-237.
35. *Mach.*: pp. 35-36.
36. *Mach.*: pp. 42-43.
37. *Mach.*: pp. 45-46.
38. Marx: Preface, *Selected Works*, Moscow, 1958, Vol. I. p. 363.
39. *Opere V Il Risorgimento*, p. 69 ff.; *Mach.*: pp. 70-71.
40. *Mach.*: p. 103. The point is made in reference to the Third Republic in France. It equally applies to the Reform League in the 1868 election in England; see Royden Harrison: *Before the Socialists*, 1965, Chapter 4.

41. *Mach.*: pp. 58-59. Gramsci distinguishes between "progressive" and "regressive" Caesarism. He also refers to a "degree" of Caesarism within parliamentary régimes, the MacDonalD coalition of 1931 being a solution of this kind.
42. *Mach.*: p. 103.
43. *Mach.*: pp. 65-69.
44. "Un rapporto inedito al partito, 1926", ed. Franco Ferri, *Rinascita—II Contemporaneo*, 14 April 1967, p. 23. The report is entitled "Situazione interna italiana; elementi per la linea politica del partito".
45. *Mach.*: pp. 20, 81, 87-88, 160.
46. *Mach.*: p. 84, pp. 65-68. Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" is related to the "war of manœuvre", appropriate to an earlier period. "In this case one can say that 'Bronstein' (Trotsky) who seems to be a Westerner was in fact a cosmopolitan, that is, superficially national and superficially western or European. 'Ilici' (Lenin) on the other hand, was both profoundly national and European." p. 67. Trotsky's theory, a "retention of the political theory of frontal attack in a period in which this can only be a cause of defeat", is thus a "typical manifestation of sectarian thought. . . . The belief in the capacity to always do the same thing even when the 'politico-military situation' has changed." *Passato e presente*, pp. 70-71.
47. *Mach.*: pp. 67-68.
48. *P.*: p. 71.
49. "Americanismo e Fordismo", *Mach.* p. 312. The special conditions of American life, which make this degree of rationalisation possible, mean that "hegemony is based in the factory and only has need, for its exercise, of a minimal quantity of professional intermediaries in the political and ideological spheres". The elaboration of the new type of man "conforming to the new type of work and productive process" was still (before the crisis of 1929) at its initial phase "of adaptation . . . through high salaries; . . . the fundamental question of hegemony has not yet been posed". p. 317.
50. Letter to Togliatti of 9 February 1924, marking Gramsci's decisive break with the Bordigan faction. Ferrata and Gallo ed., *op. cit.*, I p 673.
51. *Ibid.*
52. *MS*: p. 35.
53. For Gramsci's critique of syndicalism, which is "addressed to a subaltern class, preventing it by this theory from becoming dominant, from developing beyond the economic-corporative phase to reach the hegemonic and ethico-political phase in civil society" see *Mach.*: p. 30. For the critique of Luxemburg's theory of "mass strike" see *Mach.*: pp. 4, 65.
54. "La quistione meridionale", 1926, Ferrata and Gallo, *op. cit.* I, p. 805. Cf. "Lettera di Gramsci al comitato centrale del PCUS nel 1926". *Rinascita* 22, 1964; reprinted in Ferrata and Gallo ed., *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 824-825.
55. "Sindicalismo e consigli", *L'Ordine Nuovo*, 8 November 1919, Vol. I, p. 45.
56. *L'Ordine Nuovo* I, pp. 67. 123-127.
57. Cammett, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-88. Sorel expressed his admiration of the movement. For a "syndicalist" interpretation see N. Matteucci "Partito e

- consiglio di fabbrica nel pensiero di Gramsci", *Il Mulino* IV, 4, April 1955, pp. 350-359. Gramsci traced the defeat of the German revolutionary movement to the failure to move outside the traditional institutions of the working class, imposing external controls on the workers; hence the revolution was "shackled and domesticated". "Il Partito e la rivoluzione", *L'Ordine Nuovo* I, p. 68.
58. "Sindacati e consigli", *L'Ordine Nuovo*, 11 October 1919, Vol. I, p. 36.
59. *L'Ordine Nuovo* I, p. 46.
60. "Il Movimento torinese dei consigli di fabbrica" (report of July 1920), *L'Ordine Nuovo* I, p. 182. The dispute between Gramsci and Angelo Tasca was over this issue, of the autonomous role of the councils. Cf. Spriano ed., *L'Ordine Nuovo*, articles of June-July 1920, and Vol. I, pp. 130-131.
61. "Alcuni temi della quistione meridionale" (1926) Ferrara and Gallo ed., *op. cit.*, I, p. 799.
62. *L'Ordine Nuovo* I, pp. 37, 183. *Mach.*: p. 132.
63. *Risorgimento*, pp. 70-71. *Mach.*: p. 94.
64. "Quistione meridionale", *op. cit.* I, pp. 799, 825.
65. "Operai e contadini", *L'Ordine Nuovo*, January 1920. "The Northern bourgeoisie has subjected southern Italy and the islands and reduced them to exploited colonies; the Northern proletariat, emancipating itself from capitalist slavery, will emancipate the peasant masses of the South, at the mercy of the banks and parasitic industrialism of the North."
66. "Quistione Meridione", *op. cit.* I, p. 805. Cf. *L'Ordine Nuovo* I, p. 90: "In Germany and Hungary the proletarian movement was not accompanied by any movement of the poorer peasant strata; the city in revolt was isolated, surrounded by the incomprehension and indifference of the countryside."
67. Cammett, *op. cit.*, pp. 91, 132. Bordiga regarded the factory councils as founded on the "error that the proletariat can emancipate itself by gaining ground in economic relations, while capitalism still holds political power. . . ." Serrati expressed the maximalist position on the peasants' movement: "Everybody knows that the movement for the occupation of lands . . . was a demagogic and petty bourgeois movement aimed at *entrancing the agricultural masses.*" (My italics).
68. MS: pp. 80-81.
69. MS: p. 12.
70. MS: pp. 11, 201-201. *Lettere dal Carcere*, p. 185.
71. *Mach.*: p. 10.
72. MS: p. 26.
73. MS: pp. 6, 11.
74. MS: pp. 94, 96. "Many idealistic conceptions, or at least *some aspects* of them, which are Utopian in the reign of necessity, could become 'truth' after the passage, etc."
75. *Mach.*: p. 83. MS: pp. 3-5.
76. Fiori, G.: *Vita di Antonio Gramsci*, 1966, p. 120.
77. *Opere* III: *Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura*, p. 142.
78. *P*: p. 3.
79. Cf. Fiori, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110.

80. "Bergsonian!" *L'Ordine Nuovo*, 3 January 1921, Vol. II, p. 13. Cf. article of May 1925: "It was the fate of Marxism in Italy to have been used as a parsley for all the indigestible sauces that the most imprudent adventurers . . . wanted to put up for sale." Ferrata and Gallo ed., *op cit.* I, p. 747.
81. Santarelli, E., *La Revisione del Marxismo in Italia*, Milan, 1964, pp. 34, 36. The astute prime minister, Giolitti, in a speech to the Chamber of Deputies (18 April 1911) declared that the Socialist Party had "so moderated its principles that Karl Marx has been relegated to the attic". *Ibid.*, p. 33 n. For the influence of positivism on the Reformists, especially Turati, see Lelio Basso: "Turati, il riformismo e la via democratica", *Problemi del socialismo*, February 1958.
82. "Socialismo e cultura", *Il Grido del Popolo*, 29 January 1916. Ferrata and Gallo ed., *op. cit.*, I, p. 190. My italics. Cf. "La città futura", 11 February 1917: "To the *natural laws*, the *fatal course of things* of the pseudo-scientists, has been substituted *the tenacious will of man*." *Ibid.*, I, p. 239.
83. "La questione meridionale", *ibid.*, p. 800. On the positivist literature, sustaining the belief in "southern backwardness" and "inferiority" see *Risorgimento*, pp. 79-80.
84. For Gramsci's early idealism see the article of 1918, "Misteri della cultura e della poesia", *Scritti giovanili*, pp. 325 ff. in which "the essentials" of Marxism are traced to "philosophical idealism" and history appears as the teleological "becoming" of a proletarian consciousness-subject. This is possibly the closest Gramsci came to the idealist position of Lukács in *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* (1923). Cf. N. Poulantzas, "Marxism in Great Britain", *New Left Review* 43, pp. 60-61. For the critique of Croce, see *MS* pp. 174, 189, 191, 217, 221. While Croce's "instrumental value" is recognized for having drawn attention to the "cultural front as essential", "it is necessary to carry out with regard to Croce's conception the same reduction that (Marx) carried out for the Hegelian conception". p. 199. See also Bobbio, N., "Nota sulla dialettica in Gramsci", *Srudi Gramsciani*, Rome, 1958, p. 81.
85. *MS*: pp. 8-9, 84-85. See also Quentin Hoare's translation "In search of the Educational Principle", *New Left Review* 32, pp. 56-57.
86. *MS*: p. 41.
87. Althusser and others: *Lire le Capital*, 1965, Vol. 2. "L'objet du Capital" V. See especially pp. 90-96.
88. For discussions of Gramsci's "historicism", see N. Badaloni "Gramsci storicista", *Critica Marxista* Quaderni n. 3, 1967 and Cesare Luporini: "Realtà e storicità: economia e dialettica nel marxismo", *Critica Marxista* n. 1, 1966. "The identification of theory and practice is a *critical act*, through which practice is demonstrated to be rational and necessary or theory realistic and rational" *MS* p. 39. It remains true however, that at times Gramsci comes close to a pan-ideologism, reminiscent of Mannheim. See for example *MS* p. 7, on the "lay-faith" derived from the Crocean conception of religion.
89. *Opere V Letteratura e vita nazionale*, pp. 105-106; *P*, p. 15; *Mach.*: p. 7; Cf. Gramsci's linguistic studies *Gli Intellettuali*, pp. 21-29.
90. *Risorgimento*, pp. 91-95, 100-104. *Mach.*: pp. 70-71.
91. *Risorgimento*, pp. 89-90, n.

92. MS: pp. 174-175.
93. *Mach.*: pp. 7, 14, 16. Cf. The failure of the intellectuals of the Party of Action to develop an "organic" rural base, "to be 'Jacobin', not only in external 'form', in temperament, but especially in economic-social content". *Risorgimento*, p. 81.
94. *Risorgimento*, p. 71, *Gli intellettuali*, p. 3. Cf. *Mach.*: p. 121 where the failure of the medieval Italian communes is traced to their not having developed their own organic intellectuals. "Religion was the basis of consent: the Church was civil society, the apparatus of hegemony of the directing group, which did not have its own apparatus, did not have its own cultural and intellectual organization." Cf. *Lettere dal carcere*, pp. 479-483.
95. *Gli intellettuali*, pp. 4-5.
96. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
97. *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 12. MS, pp. 13-14.
98. MS: pp. 8-9. Cf. p. 9 n., "This cannot come about unless there is a continually felt need for cultural contact with the non-intellectuals (semplici)." See also the need for an "organic rupture" among the intellectuals "to break up the intellectual bloc, which forms the flexible but resistant armour of the Southern agrarian bloc". "La Questione Meridionale", Ferrata and Gallo, *op. cit.*, I, p. 819.
99. MS: p. 17.
100. MS: p. 26.
101. MS: p. 11.
102. *Gli intellettuali*, p. 7.
103. MS: p. 26.
104. Che Guevara: "Socialism and Man".
105. Letter to Togliatti (27.3.1924), Ferrata and Gallo, *op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 677. *Gli intellettuali*, p. 7.
106. *L'Ordine Nuovo I*, pp. 71, 148-149; MS: pp. 44-45.
107. "Il Movimento torinese." Report of July 1920, *L'Ordine Nuovo I*, p. 185.
108. "Per un rinnovamento del partito socialista", *L'Ordine Nuovo I*, pp. 118-120. Cf. "Il partito comunista", I, pp. 159-162. The Socialist Party "which proclaims itself head of the working class, has become nothing but the *impedimenta* of the proletarian army". p. 162.
109. Cammett, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
110. *L'Ordine Nuovo I*, p. 122.
111. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
112. "Lo Stato operaio", *L'Ordine Nuovo II*, p. 3.
113. Letter to Togliatti (9.2.1924), Ferrata and Gallo, *op. cit.* I, p. 672.
114. *Mach.*: pp. 147-148.
115. Cf. also: Gramsci developed "a doctrine more totalitarian than that of his goalers" [sic] George Lichtheim, *Marxism, a historical and critical study* (1961), pp. 368-369. Or H. Stuart Hughes in *Consciousness and Society*, 1959, who writes: "As so often in Gramsci's writings, a totalitarian thought was clothed in liberal guise", p. 101; a slightly more subtle variant. For a typically "Nennian" interpretation see G. Tamburrano: *Antonio Gramsci, la vita, il pensiero, l'azione*, Bari, 1963.

116. Ferrata and Gallo, *op. cit.* I, p. 671.
117. *Mach.*: p. 51. For Gramsci's political position in prison in the early 1930's, see the testimony of his brother Gennaro Gramsci in Fiori, *op. cit.* pp. 291-292; Athos Lisa's report, published in *Rinascita* 12.xii.1964, and Giuseppe Ceresa's testimony, in which Gramsci is described as "combating those abstract, mechanical, antimarxist positions, which were based on the 'misery' factor". In Lisa's report, Gramsci puts forward the need for a hegemonic alliance against fascism: "without winning over these allies, the proletariat is precluded from any serious revolutionary movement". Fiori, p. 296. See also his report to the central committee of the CPSU on the eve of his arrest in 1926, in which he criticized the way in which party disputes were being handled, while not taking the side of the "opposition". Ferrata and Gallo I, pp. 820-826. "Unity and discipline cannot be mechanical and coercive", he wrote. The Soviet party was "running the risk of annulling the directing function which the Communist Party of the USSR had conquered through the work of Lenin", pp. 823, 825.
118. *Mach.*: pp. 76-77.
119. P: pp. 57-58.
120. *Mach.*: p. 49.
121. *Mach.*: p. 296.
122. *Mach.*: p. 26, *MS*: p. 13.
123. *Mach.*: p. 94.
124. *Mach.*: p. 23.
125. *Scritti giovanili*, p. 78. See also the article "L'indifferenza", *Avanti!*, 26 August 1916, Ferrata and Gallo I, pp. 217-218; quoted from "Indifferenti" in "La città futura", 11 February 1917, *ibid.*, I pp. 233-235.
126. *Lettere dal Carcere*, p. 390.
127. *Mach.*: p. 39.
128. *Mach.*: pp. 39-40. Eugenio Garin "Antonio Gramsci nella cultura italiana", *Studi Gramsciani*, Rome, 1958.
129. Achille Occhetto, "Un teorico della rivoluzione in occidente", *Rinascita*, 14 April, 1967, pp. 25-27.