

THE GRAMSCI MONUMENT- NEWSPAPER

Editors:
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and
SAQUAN SCOTT

"A periodical,
like a newspaper, a book, or
any other medium of didactic
expression that is aimed at a certain
level of the reading or listening public,
cannot satisfy everyone equally; not
everyone will find it useful to the same
degree. The important thing is that it
serve as a stimulus for everyone;
after all, no publication can replace
the thinking mind."
Antonio Gramsci
(Prison Notebook 8)



www.gramsci-monument.com

August 26th, 2013 - Forest Houses, Bronx, NY

The Gramsci Monument-Newspaper is part of the "Gramsci Monument", an artwork by Thomas Hirschhorn, produced by Dia Art Foundation in co-operation with Erik Farmer and the Residents of Forest Houses

MARCELLA PARADISE



ASKS GAYATRI SPIVAK!

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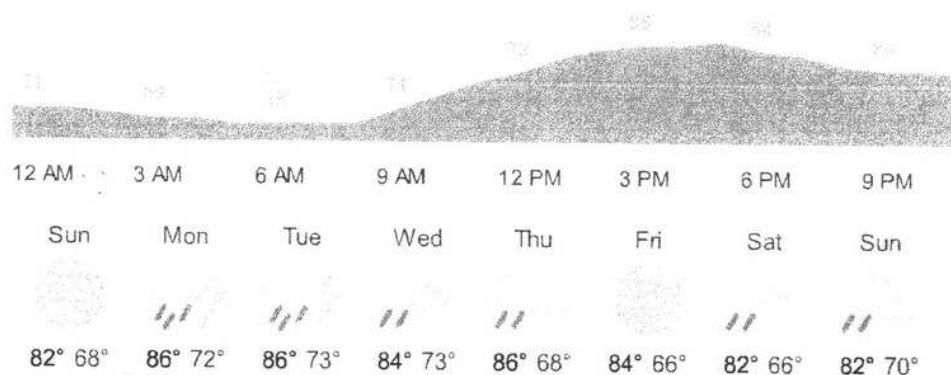
Bronx, NY 10456

Mon
Thunderstorm

 **86** °F | °C

Precipitation: 40%
Humidity: 49%
Wind: 14 mph

Temperature Precipitation Wind



A RE-CAP FROM GAYATRI SPIVAK LECTURE



Primo quaderno / e

Note e appunti

Argomenti principali:

- 1) Creazione della storia e della storiografia.
- 2) Sviluppo della borghesia italiana fino al 1870.
- 3) Formazione dei gruppi intellettuali italiani: -svolgimento, atteggiamenti.
- 4) La letteratura popolare dei «romanzetti d'apprendice» e le ~~svoluzioni~~ evoluzioni della sua persistente fortuna.
- 5) Caricature avvolgenti: la sua posizione nell'^{storia} economia e nell'arte della Divina Commedia.
- 6) Origini e svolgimento dell'Azione Cattolica in Italia e in Europa.
- 7) Il concetto di folklore.
- 8) Esperienze della vita in carcere.
- 9) La «questione meridionale» e la questione delle isole.
- 10) Osservazioni sulla popolazione italiana: suoi componenti, funzione dell'emigrazione.
- 11) Americanismo e fordismo.
- 12) La questione della lingua in Italia: Manzoni e G. P. Ascoli.



- 13) *Il senso comune* (cp. 7)
- 14) *Riviste tipa*: teorica, critica storica, di cultura generale (diretta da Gramsci).
- 15) *Neo-grammatici e neo-linguisti* (questa tavola rotonda è quadrata).
- 16) *I nipotini di padre Bressiani*.



LETTERS FROM GRAMSCI TO PIERO SRAFFA

AN EXCERPT FROM LETTERS FROM PRISION VOL. 1

EDITED BY FRANK ROSENGARTEN



10 and 11. Two portraits of Piero Sraffa. The photo on the left shows Sraffa in the mid-to late 1920s, at about the age of twenty-eight. The photo on the right was taken about thirty-five years later. With Tania Schucht, he became a mainstay of Gramsci's material and intellectual support system in prison.

Ustica, December 11, 1926

My dear friend,¹

I arrived at Ustica on December 7, after a somewhat uncomfortable (as you can understand) but very interesting journey. I'm in excellent health. My stay at Ustica will be pleasant enough from a purely animal standpoint, because the climate is excellent and I can take extremely salubrious walks: as for general comforts, you know that I'm not very demanding and can get by on very little. I'm a bit worried about the problem of boredom, which it will not be possible to solve simply with walks and the contacts with friends: up until now we are fourteen friends, among them Bordiga. I ask you to do me the kindness of sending me some books. I would like to have a good treatise on economics and finance for my studies: a fundamental book, I leave its choice to you. Whenever possible send me a few books and a few magazines of general culture that you think might interest me.² My dear friend, you are acquainted with my family situation and you know how difficult it is for me to receive books except from a few personal friends: believe me that I would not have dared trouble you in this way unless driven by the necessity of solving this problem of intellectual degradation that especially preoccupies me. I embrace you affectionately.

A. Gramsci

My address: A.G. Ustica (Palermo province)

1. Piero Sraffa.

2. In his reply to Gramsci of December 13, 1926, Sraffa told Gramsci that he had sent him a package of books and that he had already opened an account for him at the Sperling & Kupfer bookstore in Milan. (Gerratana, ed., *Lettere a Tania per Gramsci*, p. xxiii)

short, we have tried to adjust the need for a gradual scholastic progression to the fact that the students, though sometimes semiliterate, are quite developed intellectually. The courses are followed with great diligence and attention. By means of the school, also frequented by a number of functionaries and inhabitants of the island, we have avoided the danger of demoralization that is very great. You cannot imagine to what a state of physical and moral degradation the common convicts have been reduced. For the sake of drink they would sell even their shirt; many of them have sold their shoes and jackets. A good number of them no longer dispose freely of the government *mazzetta*, which amounts to four lire daily, because they've pawned it with the money lenders. Usury is being repressed, but I don't believe it is possible to eliminate it, because the very convicts who are its victims will not report the usurers, except in very unusual cases. The interest on a ten lire loan is three lire a week. The interest is collected with an iron hand because the money lenders are surrounded by a small group of sycophants who for a glass of wine would disembowel their great grandfathers. The common convicts, save for rare exceptions, show us great respect and deference. The island population is most courteous. After all, our arrival has brought about a radical change in the place and will leave a deep mark. We are planning to install electricity, since among us political detainees there are technicians able to carry through such a project. The clock on the bell tower, which hasn't worked for six months, was repaired in two days: perhaps we shall revive the project of building a pier in the inlet where the steamer docks. Our relations with the authorities are most correct.

I would like to send you a few impressions gathered during my journey, especially in Palermo and Naples. I stayed in Palermo eight days: I attempted the crossing four times, and three times, after an hour and a half of being tossed on a stormy sea, I had to turn back. This was the worst part of my entire transfer, the one that tired me most. We had to get up at four in the morning, go to the port with manacles on our wrists; always bound and attached to the others with a chain, descend into a small boat, climb up and down several ladders on the steamer, where we remained bound by a single wrist, suffer from seasickness both because of the uncomfortable position (bound by one wrist and attached by half a meter of chain to the others and

so unable to lie down) and because the steamer, which is very small and light, bounces about even when the sea is calm—only to turn back and resume the same story the following morning. In Palermo we had a small, very clean dormitory, prepared especially for us (deputies), because the jail is overcrowded and they avoided putting us in contact with the arrested Mafia men.³ All through the journey we were treated with great correctness and even with courtesy.

I thank you for having taken the trouble to send me eggs. Now that the holidays are over, I should find very fresh ones right here. If you don't mind sending it to me, I'd really enjoy some Swiss condensed milk. I wouldn't know what to ask you for, even if I wanted to: here we lack a bit of everything and it is difficult to procure certain items; it usually involves long searches. There is no courier service with Palermo. I'd be grateful if you'd send me a bit of toilet and shaving soap and a few common medicinals that are always useful, such as Bayer aspirin (here the aspirin even drives the dogs crazy) and tincture of iodine, and a few compresses for headaches. Let me assure you once again that in case of need I will write to you: didn't you see how I took ample advantage of your book offer? Besides, I must confess that I am still somewhat dazed and have not completely finished getting my bearings in regard to many things. Write to me often: in my situation correspondence is my one true pleasure. Whenever you read an interesting book, such as the one by Lewinsohn,⁴ send it to me. A fraternal embrace.

Antonio

Send me a small bottle of Cologne. I need it to disinfect myself after shaving.

1. Piero Sraffa.

2. As Gramsci says further on in this letter, the "school" was open to political prisoners and to other adult residents of the island. Ordinary criminals could not attend the courses, since the law forbade this kind of contact between them and the political prisoners.

3. Gramsci is probably alluding here to "small-fry Mafiosi," since the system of high-level collusion and collaboration between the big Mafia bosses and central Italian government authorities on the mainland came to a temporary end in the early years of Fascism. By destroying the parliamentary system, the Fascist regime "destroyed the political nexus between Mafia bosses in Sicily and the mainland political class in Rome." As a result, "the most powerful Mafia bosses were simply integrated into the hierarchical system of Mussolini's political machine," leaving the petty Mafiosi to the police. (Coppa, ed., *Dictionary of Modern Italian History*, p. 248).

4. Richard Lewinsohn, *Histoire de l'inflation: Le déplacement de la richesse en Europe, 1914-1925*, trans. Henri Simondet (Paris: Payot, 1926).

AN EXCERPT FROM LETTERS FROM PRISION EDITED BY LYNNE LAWNER

Letter from Tatiana Schucht,
in Rome,
to Piero Sraffa,
King's College, Cambridge
May 12, 1937

Dear Friend,

Please don't be angry with me because I waited so long to answer and to describe our great misfortune in detail.

First of all, I want you to write to me whether you think it useful, or, rather, absolutely necessary, that you put Nino's manuscripts in order. Clearly, only someone competent should undertake this work. On the other hand, Nino expressed the desire that everything be transmitted to Giulia and be kept by her until other instructions of his come to light. I thought it best to put off sending anything in order to find out whether you are willing to take charge of, and revise, this material, with the help of one of us in the family. Also, I want Giulia to be well informed about my sending you these writings, so that she can claim them before any are lost or interfered with by anyone.

The cremation has already taken place. It was difficult to obtain permission for it, but finally we succeeded. I arranged for a photograph of the corpse to be taken and a death mask made. Now I will have the latter cast in bronze along with the right hand. The plaster



model came out pretty well, but I hope the bronze cast will be even better, since I turned the work over to a sculptor.

I also have some photos taken at Formia after Nino received his liberty-under-surveillance booklet. I haven't tried to locate the booklet yet. Nino suffered a cerebral hemorrhage the evening of April twenty-fifth. That same day, at 12:30 P.M., I had brought him the booklet with the signature of the registrar of the judge in charge of surveillance of the Rome Law Courts, and a statement by the office of surveillance to the effect that as soon as the period of conditional liberty was up, there would be no more security measures taken with regard to Nino.

That day, Nino didn't seem to feel worse than usual. On the contrary, he was far more serene than he had been. I came back to the clinic, as I always did, around 5:30 in the afternoon. As usual we discussed the events of the day; and when I prepared to study a bit for a lesson on French literature, thinking he would continue reading on his own, he objected, insisting that I had come to keep him company and, in any case, shouldn't have taken a job that demanded specialized knowledge and that would exhaust me. Even so, we looked up some words together in the *Larousse*. He didn't want me to read Corneille to him. Afterwards we talked until suppertime. When I suggested taking the booklet down to show to the authorities or calling the Police Commissioner, he said that there was no hurry, I could do it another time.

For dinner he ate the usual soup with pasta, fruit compote, and a piece of sponge cake. He left the room to go to the bathroom, but was brought back on a chair carried by several people. Walking along, he had lost control of his whole left side, but spoke coherently and explained how he had weakened several times yet had not struck his head against anything and had crawled to the door and called for help. A patient who happened to walk by called a nurse, who told him to try to open the door himself, and he succeeded, leaning on his right side. Unfortunately, this cost him an enormous amount of energy when he should have stayed quiet. After he was put back in bed, one of the doctors in the clinic at that time came. Dr. Marino refused to give injections containing stimulants, saying that they

could make him get worse, while Nino continued insisting that they give him these injections, asked for a cordial, pleaded for a double dose—in other words, was entirely himself, able to give a detailed account to the doctor of what had happened. When they brought him a hot-water bottle for his feet, he told me it was too hot, then remarked that the left foot didn't feel very much heat. Professor Puccinelli was expected from one moment to the next for an emergency operation. I gave instructions to the doorman and operating-room staff to tell him to visit Nino as soon as he arrived. About 9:00 P.M. he came in with an assistant, examined the perfectly immobile left side, arm and leg, ordered ice to be put on the head, the hot-water bottle taken away from the feet, and a salt enema, which Nino said he didn't want. He explained to Puccinelli just what he had felt in the bathroom, and clarified the fact that he hadn't fallen unconscious, only lost the sensitivity and mobility of his left side. Puccinelli tried to get him to move the lower limbs, mechanically repeating Nino's own words, "The left leg is weak, yes, it's weak." He ordered that Nino be bled. Nino still spoke clearly, showing some signs of weariness, which Puccinelli noted. The doctor said that he should keep absolutely still; whereas when he had arrived, he had found him on his stomach and had to turn him over. Nino kept trying to find a more comfortable position, grasping the iron bars of the bed with his only free hand. I had to warn him not to lean out too far on his paralyzed left side for fear he would fall out of bed. He understood exactly what I meant and forced himself to move over to the other side. Unfortunately, an hour passed before they came to bleed him, and during this time he vomited several times. Even though I was alone, I was able to help him. He asked to urinate, but while he did, he kept on vomiting. Then he tried to blow his nose, which had become stopped up with food, talked, searched for a handkerchief without saying anything, groped around, then closed his eyes, while continuing to breathe with difficulty. When the bleeding failed to have the effect that it should have, Dr. Belock communicated to the sisters that the patient's condition was extremely grave. I was forced to protest violently against the priest and sisters who came in, so that they would let Antonio alone. Instead, they

kept on insisting on asking him if he wanted this or that. The priest even informed me that I was not the person in charge there. The next morning, about 10:00, Frugone came. All that night the situation remained the same.

When I asked Frugone exactly what condition the patient was in, he said that he was very sick and that he himself had nothing to say, just as an architect has no opinion to express when a house falls down. However, he ordered that leeches be placed on the mastoids and some injections be given. In the afternoon, Nino seemed to breathe more easily. But twenty-four hours after the attack, the violent vomiting began again, and his breathing became terribly painful. I kept watch over him all the time, doing whatever I thought best, wetting his lips, trying to help him to get his breath back artificially when it seemed about to stop. But then he took a last deep breath and sunk into a silence that never could change.

When I called the doctor, he confirmed my fear that it was all over. The time was 4:10 A.M. on the twenty-seventh. At 5:15 the sisters carried the body to the mortuary chamber. After following them down, I stayed there for a while, then came up to meet Carlo, who was supposed to come the same morning. While waiting for him, I telephoned a friend to ask him to send someone to make a death mask. When Carlo came, I asked him to go in search of a photographer. Meanwhile, my friend came with the man who was to make the death mask. It was difficult to get them admitted, but I insisted that formalities be taken care of afterwards and that this was an emergency. Luck was on my side somehow, so that we were able to do the work. Before going out, these persons had to make all sorts of written declarations about their relationship to me, etc.

Then the photographer came. He had to be interrogated, too. And when Carlo returned in the afternoon and headed toward the mortuary chamber, to see his brother, the door was closed in his face. After he refused to give an account of himself, he was told that the prohibition was an order from the Ministry. No one was supposed to see the corpse. We were subjected to an interrogation about the mask and the photographs and had to declare whether we had sent out announcements of his death or not, and whether the

funeral would be a private one. Carlo and I were the only persons present except for the numerous police guards who followed the body out and watched the cremation. In fact, since we didn't yet have a license for the cremation and since Carlo had to go to Sardinia first for the papers, the funeral parlor informed us of a police order which stated that the cremation be done at once; otherwise they would come themselves to bury the corpse. When we appealed to the Ministry, they told us that they didn't know anything about the whole matter and that we should try to find out who had sent the warning to the funeral parlor. Now the ashes have been deposited in a zinc box laid inside a wooden one and set in a place reserved by the government, where it can remain ten years without payment. I will request authorization to transport it. The news of Gramsci's death was broadcast by the radio and published in the newspapers. All of them used the same expression. I'm sending you what appeared in the *Messaggero*. It's shocking. I don't know how to go about protesting. I received a letter from Fabrizio Maffi to the Gramsci family, in which he says that he would be honored to do something in memory of Gramsci. Best regards. I hope that you will write to me.

T.

Piero Sraffa

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Piero Sraffa (5 August 1898 – 3 September 1983) was an influential Italian economist whose book *Production of Commodities by Means of Commodities* is taken as founding the Neo-Ricardian school of Economics.



Early life

He was born in Turin, Italy, to a wealthy Italian Jewish family, to Angelo and Irma Sraffa.^[1] His father was a Professor in commercial law and later dean at the Bocconi University in Milan. Despite being raised to a Jewish family, he later on became an agnostic.^[2] Sraffa studied in his town and graduated at the local university with a work on inflation in Italy during and after World War I. Notably, his tutor was Luigi Einaudi, one of the most important Italian economists and later a president of the Italian Republic.

From 1921 to 1922 he studied in London at the London School of Economics. In 1922, he was appointed as Director of the provincial labour department in Milan, then as Professor in Political economy first in Perugia, and later in Cagliari, Sardinia. In Turin he met Antonio Gramsci (the most important leader of Italian Communist Party). They became close friends, partly due to their shared ideological views. He was also in contact with Filippo Turati, perhaps the most important leader of Italian Socialist Party, whom he allegedly met and frequently visited in Rapallo, where his family had a holiday villa.

In 1925, he wrote about returns to scale and perfect competition, underlining some doubtful points of Alfred Marshall's theory of the firm. This was amended for British readers and published in 1926 as *The Laws of Returns under Competitive Conditions*.

Major works

In 1927, Sraffa's yet undiscussed theory of value,^[3] but also his friendship with Antonio Gramsci, a risky and compromising endeavor in the context of the Italian fascist regime, considering Gramsci had previously been imprisoned, (Sraffa had brought him the material, literally pens and paper, with which Gramsci would write his *Prison Notebooks*), brought John Maynard Keynes to prudently invite Sraffa to the University of Cambridge, where the Italian economist was initially assigned a lectureship.

That Sraffa hated lecturing is normally explained by his shyness. But perhaps he declined teaching an economic theory he found wanting. So, he stopped collaborating in the making of Keynes' *General Theory* as Keynes used a subjective *propensity to consume*. After a few years, Keynes created *ex novo* for Sraffa the charge of Marshall Librarian.

Sraffa joined the so-called "cafeteria group", together with Frank P. Ramsey and Ludwig Wittgenstein, a sort of informal club that discussed Keynes's theory of probability and Friedrich Hayek's theory on business cycles. In 1939, Sraffa was elected to a Fellowship at Trinity College.^[4]

Ricardo's works and correspondence

John Eatwell wrote of Sraffa's work on Ricardo:

[Sraffa's] reconstruction of Ricardo's surplus theory, presented in but a few pages of the introduction to his edition of Ricardo's *Principles*, penetrated a hundred years of misunderstanding and distortion to create a vivid rationale for the structure and content of surplus theory, for the analytical role of the labor theory of value, and hence for the foundations of Marx's critical analysis of capitalist production.^[5]

Sraffian economics

Sraffa's *Production of Commodities by Means of Commodities* was an attempt to perfect Classical Economics' theory of value, as originally developed by David Ricardo and others. He aimed to demonstrate flaws in the mainstream neoclassical theory of value and develop an alternative analysis. In particular, Sraffa's technique of aggregating capital as "dated inputs of labour" led to a famous scholarly debate known as the Cambridge capital controversy.

Economists disagree on whether Sraffa's work refutes neoclassical economics. Many post-Keynesian economists use Sraffa's critique as justification for abandoning neoclassical analysis and exploring other models of economic behavior. Others see his work as compatible with neoclassical economics, as developed in modern general equilibrium models, or unable to determine a long period position, just like the W.L. [6]

Born	5 August 1898 Turin, Italy
Died	3 September 1983 (aged 85) Cambridge, England
Nationality	Italy
Field	Political economy
Alma mater	London School of Economics
Influences	David Ricardo Luigi Einaudi
Influenced	Michał Kalecki Joan Robinson John Maynard Keynes Luigi Pasinetti Pierangelo Garegnani Amartya Sen John Eatwell Ludwig Wittgenstein Murray Milgate Heinz Kurz Ian Steedman Nobuo Okishio Paul A. Samuelson Krishna Bharadwaj Steve Keen Robin Hahnel Fernando Vianello

A DAILY LECTURE BY MARCUS STEINWEG

57th Lecture at the Gramsci Monument, The Bronx, NYC: 26th August 2013

ONE STEP BEYOND

Marcus Steinweg

1. Can there be an equality of subjects who can rely on nothing but the absence of substantial guarantees?
2. What would this community of equals be?
3. Would it not be at first the community of those who participate in the incommensurable?
4. In the incommensurable which is another name of this absence or groundlessness over which the subject is held in its irreducible singularity that differentiates it from every co-subject.
5. The subject includes this ontological hovering.
6. To think the concept of equality, to give it a meaning that reaches beyond the status of a normative axiom requires short-circuiting it with the category of the subject, with the subject as the bearer of its incommensurability, likewise its primordial release from transcendent imperatives, but its emancipation also from *contexts* in which it is assumed too quickly, and too comfortably that they completely dominate the subject.
7. Neither does the subject read itself off its past, off its status as product, nor does it decipher itself as the effects of an anonymous texture which is in this sense already transcendent.
8. The subject includes this infinitesimal reaching beyond itself as the object of hetero-affects.
9. The concept of equality must therefore be opened up to this excess which transfers the subject to its inequality with itself as well as with the other.
10. There is equality here only on the ground of factual as well as ontological inequality, in the dimension of elementary asymmetry.
11. Equality is the assertion which no thinking that conceives of itself as emancipative can do without, for the concept of equality denotes the heart of self-rising of a subject that begins to demarcate itself from itself as an object of alien decisions — not by negating its factual object status to succumb to the temptation of idealism, but by taking away the ground from underneath the necessity of such a negation, for there is no contradiction in being an object *and* a subject in one.
12. Kant's cleaving of the human subject into the dimensions of receptivity and spontaneity, which Heidegger's determination of Dasein as *cast casting* follows, already brings together the object dimension with the subject dimension, or, translated into older categories, the subject's finitude with its infinitude.
13. The idea of equality (supposing it is an idea) has its room for play precisely in this crevice between finitude and infinitude.
14. It can be assimilated neither to the order of objective facts and the laws controlling them, nor to the sphere of absolute autonomy.
15. Above all, it does not stand in any contradiction to the subject's inequality with itself because it arises from this cleft that distances the subject originarily, i.e. by definition, from itself. Distance or difference from the self is the horizon of equality that does not misconceive itself as being equal or making equal.
16. Against the horizon of equality, the subject identifies itself with the incommensurable that prevents any valid self-enclosure in any kind of positive model of egoity because the incommensurable is nothing other than the impossibility of such a self-enclosure.
17. In contact with this impossibility, the subject experiences equality as a demand which correlates with factual inequality, the inequality that affects already its *self* and its *ego*.
18. The question concerning equality touches the phantasm of the ego that can be described as the cardinal fantasy of Western metaphysics.
19. This fantasy includes a demand on the subject that it be a unity with itself, a unity that resists the possibility and the danger of an ultimate scattering and non-equality with itself.
20. Equality in the sense of self-equality has this meaning: to build up a resistance against the dispersive self-loss of the subject in the sphere of the non-subjective that is the domain of matter, of objects, of history and also of becoming in its trans-horizontality.

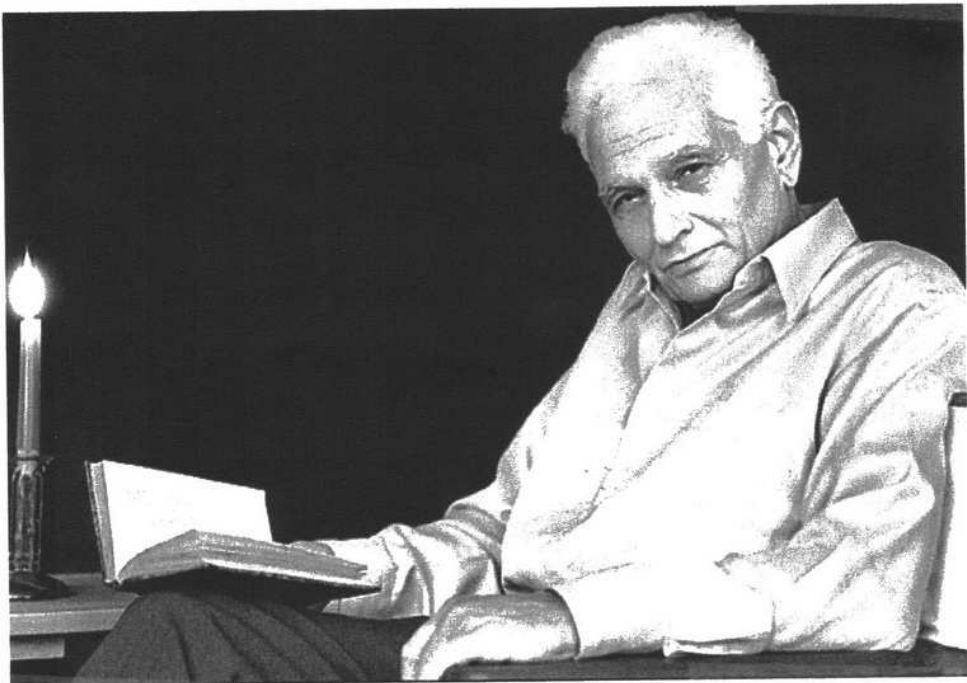
JACQUES DERRIDA BIOGRAPHY

Jacques Derrida, Ph.D., was born to an Algerian Jewish family in El-Biar, Algeria, in 1930 and died on October 9, 2004. At the age of 22, he moved to France and began studies at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris, focusing on the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl. Of particular interest for Derrida is the analysis of *écriture*, the writing of philosophy itself. He published several articles in the 1960's for *Tel Quel*, France's forum of leftist avant-garde theory. During the first half of the decade, he taught at the Sorbonne in Paris. He wrote reviews on publications devoted to history and the nature of writing, which appeared in the latter half of the 1960's in the Parisian journal, *Critique*. These works would be foundational to Derrida's highly influential work, *Of Grammatology*. Derrida was introduced to America in 1967 by the Johns Hopkins University, where he delivered his lecture "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences."

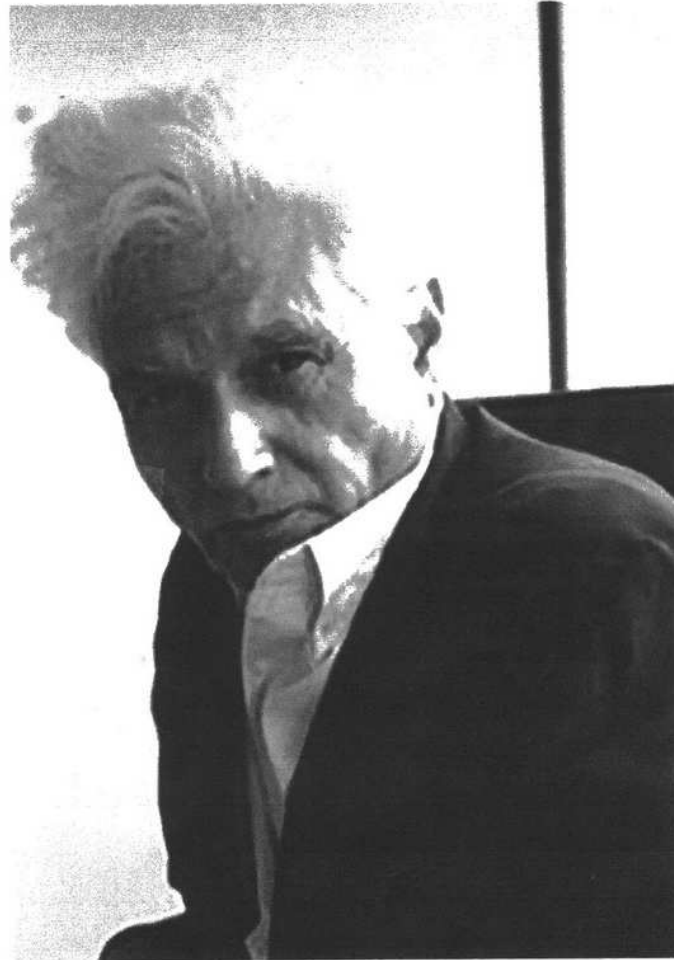
Jacques Derrida taught at the Ecole Normale Supérieure from 1965 to 1984, dividing much of his time between Paris and American universities such as Johns Hopkins and Yale. He is currently the director at the École des Hautes Études en Science Sociales in Paris. Since 1986 he has also been Professor of Philosophy, French and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine and continues to lecture in academic institutions on both sides of the Atlantic.

Derrida published three books in 1967—*Speech and Phenomena*; *Of Grammatology*; and *Writing and Difference*, which outline the deconstructive approach to reading texts. In *Of Grammatology*, in part influenced by his friend and peer, Emmanuel Levinas, Derrida analyzes and criticizes Western Philosophy beginning with the pre-Socratics to Heidegger. He challenges the fundamental privileging of "logos" in Western Philosophy with its claims to authenticity in the proposition of a direct link between speech and act in its form, which Derrida reveals as having the presence of a centre of identity and/or subjectivity. This privileging of logos denigrates the practice of writing, though paradoxically many philosophers attempted to reveal the nature of speech of the written text to reconcile the challenge. Derrida, however, would go on to develop a method of identifying such patterns within the act of writing, which he termed "deconstruction." Deconstruction seeks to identify logocentric paradigms, such as dichotomies, and show that the possibility of presence within any contextual language is in constant "play" and "differs" continuously in relation to something else, leaving only a "trace" of the subject/object. Derrida introduced words such as "trace," "presence," "difference," "deconstruction," "logos," and "play" to the lexicon of contemporary discourse in structuralism, post-structuralism, post-modernism and post-colonialism. The strategy is not an attempt to remove paradoxes or contradictions or escape them by creating a system of its own. Rather, deconstruction embraces the need to use and sustain the very concepts that it claims are unsustainable. Derrida was looking to open up the generative and creative potential of philosophy. Deconstruction has also been applied as a strategy of analysis to literature, linguistics, philosophy, law and architecture.

Différance is a term Derrida coined in 1968 in response to structuralist theories of language such as Saussure's structuralist linguistics. While Saussure managed to demonstrate that language can be shown to be a system of differences without positive terms, it was Derrida who opened the full implications of such a conception. There is an unconceptualizable, unperceivable dimension in language in the thinking of difference without positive terms making difference itself the prototype of a remainder outside



Jacques Derrida was a French philosopher. (July 15, 1930 – October 9, 2004)



Western metaphysical thought—it is thus the very condition of the possibility of Western thought. Such a conception of difference is not brought into an order of the same in language through any concept, common sense or given identity, nor is difference an identity, nor is it between two identities. It is the deferral of difference — *différance*. Derrida developed terms whose structures are inherently double in this manner: pharmakon (both poison and cure), supplement (both surplus and necessary addition, and hymen (both inside and outside).

Further to Derrida's critique of structural linguistics is the limited and colloquial definition of writing they used in the championing of speech. Writing is seen here to be graphic, empty of all complexities, fundamentally phonetic (and hence a representation of the sound of language) utile for memory but secondary to speech. Speech is considered by the structuralists to be closer to the thought, primary emotions, intentions and ideas of the speaker. Derrida introduces a graphic element into his spelling of *différance* that cannot be detected by the voice. The effect of punctuation and spaces in the body of the text is another example of the unrepresentable dimensions available to writing, revealing both that writing cannot be thought of as entirely phonetic, nor that speech is entirely auditory. Spaces in writing are perceptible as the unrepresentable silences in speech.

Derrida's *oeuvre* could be viewed as an exploration of the nature of writing in the broadest sense as *différance*. To the extent that writing always includes pictographic, ideographic, and phonetic elements, it is not identical with itself. Writing, then, is always impure and, as such, challenges the notion of identity, and ultimately the notion of the origin as 'simple'. It is neither entirely present nor absent, but is the trace resulting from its own erasure in the drive towards transparency. Writing is neither essential nor phenomenal, it is not what is produced but what allows for the possibility of production. In meditations on themes from literature, art and psychoanalysis, as well as from the history of philosophy, part of Derrida's strategy is to make visible the 'impurity' of writing (and any identity), often by deploying rhetorical, graphic, and poetic strategies at once. Blurring boundaries between disciplines in his texts, such as in *Glas* (1974) or *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond* (1980), Derrida shows the inseparable nature between the poetic and/or rhetorical, signifying element of a text, and the content or meaning, the signified element of the text

Derrida has maintained a strongly political presence, fighting for the rights of Algerian immigrants in France, against apartheid, and for the rights of Czech Charter 77 dissidents. He seeks a consistency in his lived, political reality to his philosophy, attempting to live with as little dichotomy as possible. His works are of the most frequently cited by other academics in a wide range of fields, particularly in literary criticism and philosophy.

In 2003, Derrida was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Only one year later Jacques Derrida passed away in a hospital in Paris, France on the evening of October 8, 2004. His influence on contemporary philosophy is undeniable and he is beyond a doubt one of the most influential philosophers of the twenty first century.

FEED BACK FROM THE HOOD

WE ALWAYS GET FEEDBACK FROM DIFFERENT BLOGS, INTERNET SITES AND NEWSPAPERS ETC. BUT NOW THE GRAMSCI MONUMENT NEWS TEAM WANNA KNOW HOW THE RESIDENTS OF FOREST HOUSES FEELS ABOUT THE MONUMENT AND ITS PRESENCE.

A WALK IN ON MARCELLA PARADISE!



MARCELLA PARADISE, 62 BEEN LIVING IN FOREST HOUSES SINCE 1954. FOREST HOUSES IS WHERE SHE WAS RASIED AND RASIED HER THREE CHILDERN. MARCELLA IS A RETIRED TEACHER OF MANY SCHOOLS SUCH AS I.S.158 I.S.116 PS.98 ETC. MARCELLA STATES THE MONUMENT "IS THE BEST PROJECT THAT CAME HERE IN 20 YEARS "IT INSPIRED THE KIDS, IT GAVE THEM A CHANCE TO SHOW THEIR TALENT". MARCELLA GIVE THANKS TO ERIK FARMER FOR SEEING THE VISION FOR FOREST HOUSES AND HERSELF. WHEN MARCELLA STATED THE MONUMENT HAS BEEN THE BEST PROJECT THAT HAS CAME TO FOREST IN 20 YEARS OR SO, ABOUT 20 TO 30 YEARS BACK THERE WAS A LADY BY THE NAME OF JAN JOHNSON WHO WAS RUNNING THE FOREST CENTER AND SHE PROVIDED A LOT OF PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE KIDS

FEEDBACK FROM THE HOOD

A BREAK WITH MS. SUSIE FARMER

MRS. SUSIE M. SHAW- FARMER THE MOTHER OF MR.ERIK FARMER HIMSELF 67, HAS BEEN LIVING IN FOREST HOUSES FOR 42 YEARS. FARMER ALSO RAISED ALL HER CHILDREN HERE. MRS. FARMER IS A RETIRED TEACHER AS WELL RETIRED FAMILY SERVICE COORDINATOR. MRS. SUSIE STATES "THE MONUMENT IS GREAT IT GIVES THE KIDS ACTIVITIES, OTHER THAN RUNNING THE STREETS". MRS. SUSIE STATES ONCE THE MONUMENT LEAVES IN SEPTEMBER "IT IS GOING TO BE MISSED BY A LOT OF PEOPLE SOME PEOPLE MIGHT EVEN SHED TEARS. THE MONUMENT IS THE BEST THING FOREST EVER HAD".



A LETTER TO THOMAS

HIRSCHHORN

Dear Thomas Hirschhorn,

I watched you hold your head in agony as the man seated in front of you described your work as sculpture and social action during Odwui Enwezor's Q+ A. As another voice from the gathering, here is my perspective on his comment.

Your clear statement that the monument is transient was key to my understanding of the Gramsci Monument. It functions as a supplicant, offering itself up to possible refusal, and determined disposal, emphatically restated in your use of packing tape. Like a good guest, everyone knows the monument will eventually leave. It must. This fact also clarified a statement you made at Artist Space saying in effect, "Its my monument because I love Gramsci. Make your own monument to whoever you love, but this is mine."

For me, this site for diverse participants to honor the life of Gramsci constitutes an honest gesture of your active will to embody the phrase "I am not innocent." I took the point that your take-it-or-leave-it caravan of European culture transposed to the South Bronx posits that none of its aspects could claim to be innocent of intellectual elitism. This is especially relevant at the Forest Houses because one must be sensitive to the likelihood that, without the appropriate cultural references, much of what is offered in the monument remains alien. That you still make yourself personally and physically available is the art. You are not innocent and you are willing to embrace consequences. The art is the act of sharing.

To illustrate what I experienced as alienating, here are three examples from my visit on August 21 that I consider indicative of 'bourgeois cultural hegemony as an artificial social construct that perpetuates social-class domination' [Gramsci].

1. Odwui Enwezor, a self-identified 'lapsed poet' proclaimed attitudes still wedded to his youthful aspirations to write 'literature' and disparage slam poetry. In this sense, I could identify correspondence between his poetry and the institutionally hierarchical work that defines his cultural status for us.
2. The fervid locution of Marcus Steinweg was a lingua franca directed towards a specifically educated audience. "We all know God is dead," he began. For me that is a condescending presumption to proclaim at the Forest Houses.
3. Was the film still of Jean Seberg in *Breathless* pinned up near the bridge intended as *readable* evidence of Gramsci's intellectual progeny or coded knowledge? Or perhaps it is there to signal a late 1950's 'deconstruction' contemporaneous with the construction of the Forest Houses? But then I reconsidered, was it just something you love, since Godard loved Gramsci too?

I would claim that the point of this monument is sharing what is yours without stuffing it down anyone's throat. It can be declined without reproach. That is a liberating statement about possible freedom in a context of hubris. By placing the monument in the Forest Houses you have invited people who may not, and by circumstances usually have not been encouraged to partake of what you have. How you have shared it, allows them full rights to decline participation. The art of your doing remains intact. Thus, the art is not social action nor is it sculpture.

It was a pleasure to meet you.


Prudence Whittlesey

(The painter with the sitting request.)

RESIDENT OF THE DAY



MARIAH SPINNER