

# THE GRAMSCI MONUMENT.

# NEWSPAPER



"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 5)



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# WE

# WELCOME



# !

# CHRISTINE

# BUCI-GLUCKSMANN

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. COVER PAGE (CHRISTINE BUCI-  
GLUCKSMANN)

2. TABLE OF CONTENTS/WEATHER

3-10. ESSAY BY CHRISTINE BUCI-  
GLUCKSMANN

11. A DAILY LECTURE BY MARCUS  
STEINWEG

12-13. PICTURES FROM FIELD TRIP TO  
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS

14. RESIDENTS OF THE DAY

Bronx, NY 10456

Saturday

Chance of Storm

86 °F | °C

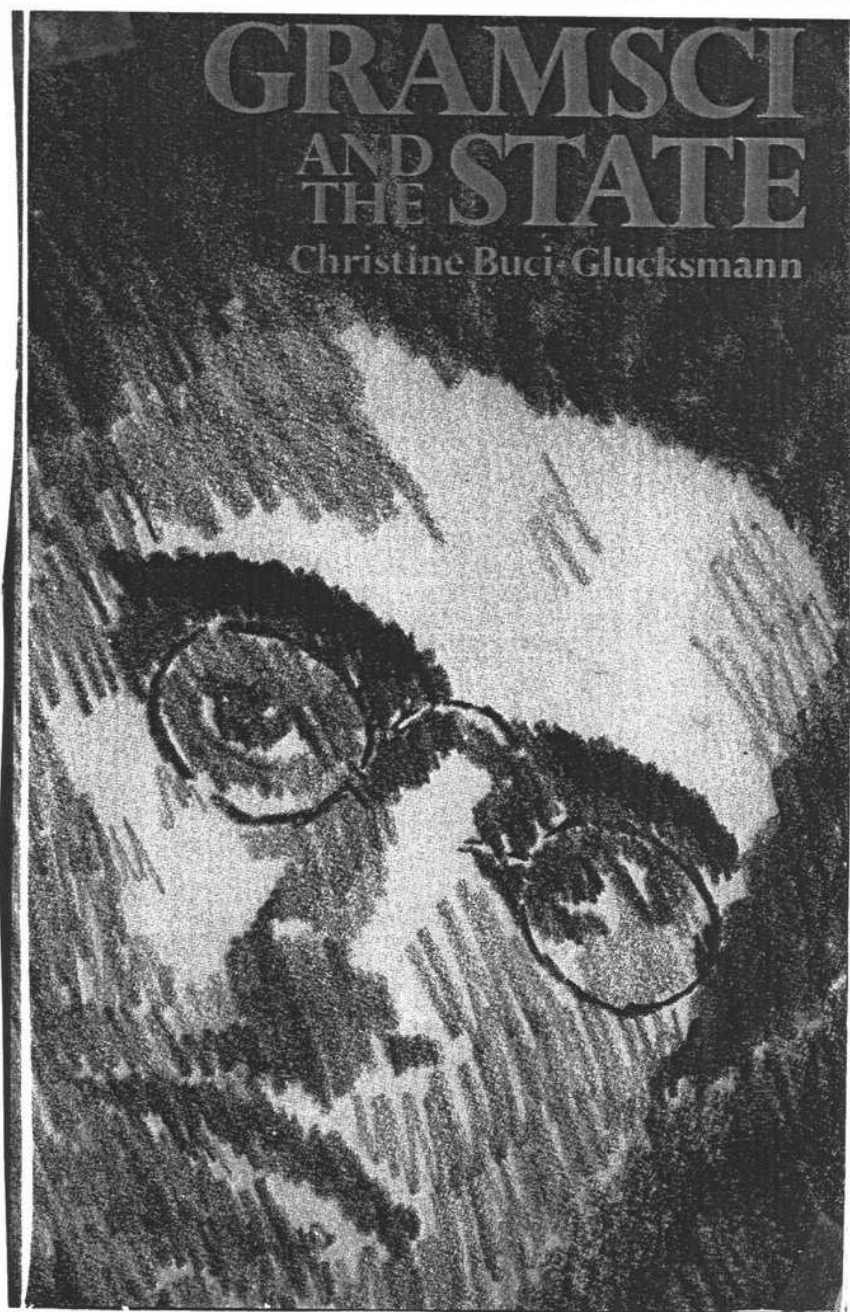
Precipitation: 20%

Humidity: 63%

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## Chapter 1

### *From the Question of the Intellectuals to the Question of the State*

The place of the intellectual in the class struggle can only be determined, or better still chosen, on the basis of his position within the production process (Walter Benjamin, 'The Author as Producer').

#### I. THE FIRST INDICATIONS OF A NEW INVESTIGATION

Gramsci was arrested on 8 November 1926, but only in February 1929 could he begin to work effectively, after finally obtaining permission to write. 'Now that I can make notes in a notebook, I am going to read *according to a plan* and go into certain particular subjects.'<sup>1</sup> This work-plan and the themes Gramsci intended to cover go back in fact to his letter of March 1927, in which he already expressed his intention to develop at greater length the thesis of his interrupted essay on the Southern Question. To this end, he set himself a study programme on 'the Italian intellectuals, their origins and groupings in relation to cultural currents'.<sup>2</sup> In conjunction with other subjects, this study presented itself to him at that time as a contribution to a more general study of 'the popular creative spirit'.<sup>3</sup> Returning to this plan in November 1930, he still stressed the historical aspect of his intended work: 'I've concentrated on three or four main subjects, one of these being the cosmopolitan role played by Italian intellectuals until the eighteenth century'.<sup>4</sup>

In relation to this programme, Gramsci's letter of 3 July 1931 displays a state of crisis in the face of the vast scope of a project that would really require proper library facilities and a series of learned studies that could not be conducted in the prison context. This was also the point at which Gramsci sought to make a preliminary intellectual stocktaking, as was to be specified in his letter of September 1931. In August, Gramsci linked the special interest that Italian intellectuals had in history with 'my desire to make a thorough examination of the concept of the state' . . . and 'my attempts to extend my knowledge of certain aspects of the Italian people's historical development'.<sup>5</sup> All in all,

this was a predominantly historical project, though not without implications for political theory. The September letter more explicitly suggests a theoretical connection between the question of the intellectuals and that of the state. The break with the traditional humanist approach dominated by the 'great intellectuals' entailed and demanded a transformed conception of the state.

This research will also concern the concept of the State, which is usually thought of as political society – i.e. a dictatorship or some other coercive apparatus used to control the masses in conformity with a given type of production and economy – and not as a balance between political society and civil society, by which I mean the hegemony of one social group over the entire nation, exercised through so-called private organizations like the Church, trade unions, or schools.<sup>6</sup>

All these organizations form precisely what in *Notebook 1* is called the hegemonic apparatus of a class, with its various articulations and sub-systems: the educational apparatus (from primary school to university), the cultural and publishing apparatus (from libraries to museums), the organization of information (magazines, daily papers, reviews), not forgetting the Church, the everyday environment and even the names of streets.

Gramsci's letter of 2 May 1932 already suggests that the question was a particularly complex one, and that Gramsci himself was often hesitant as to the proper method of approach:

I don't know if I shall ever send you the outline I promised of my work on 'the Italian intellectuals'. The standpoint from which I observe the question changes periodically; maybe it's too early yet to summarize and make a synthesis. The material is still in a fluid state, and has yet to undergo its final elaboration.<sup>7</sup>

And yet Gramsci had already written several *Notebooks*, as well as his celebrated 'methodological' text on the intellectuals. Hesitation and perplexity are both apparent. In 1932, Gramsci was working first and foremost on his text against Croce, and no doubt the variations in his standpoint must be seen against this critique of idealist philosophy, which was to become the object of special *Notebooks*. Such a critique was in no way simply something 'between philosophers'. Via Croce, Gramsci was radically challenging a certain type of intellectual and his relationship to culture and the state. A month later his perspective became more clear. Starting from an analysis of the formation of the Italian ruling class and its practice of 'transformism' (or the gradual

absorption of the leaders of opposing classes), he locates the case of Croce in the history of this Italian ruling class:

Croce's activity is one of these ways and means; indeed, his teaching produces perhaps the greatest quantity of 'gastric juices' to assist the process of digestion. Set in its historical context, the context of Italian history, Croce's work appears to be the most powerful mechanism for 'conforming' the new forces to its vital interests (not simply its immediate interests, but its future ones as well) that the dominant group possesses, and I think that the latter has a proper appreciation of his utility, superficial appearances notwithstanding.<sup>8</sup>

To sum up, the idea of Croce as the 'philosopher of freedom', a great intellectual and specialist in 'pure theory', disguised something quite different: 'A constructor of ideologies for governing others.'<sup>9</sup> His anti-fascist position in 1925 could not conceal the laxism of a liberal conservative thought in search of a strong state, very little democratic and very anti-Jacobin.

Between 1927 and 1932, therefore, Gramsci's letters from prison bear witness to the difficult progress of his study of the intellectuals. It was as if a predominantly historical study gradually took on an unsuspected political-theoretical importance. As if the initial reflection had to be constantly restructured, reorganized, and subjected to different and multiple standpoints when it touched on the state and the status of philosophy. How can we explain such a movement – this very particular internal connection sketched here between the analysis of the intellectuals and the theoretical problematic of the state?

It is highly revealing to read the early *Prison Notebooks*, those prior to the thematic reorganization that Gramsci made of them in 1932. His writing is fragmentary and broken, and yet in the economy of a text proceeding by annotations, *Notebooks 4* (1930–32), *6* (1930–32) and *7* (1930–31) exhibit a certain qualitative leap, a readily perceptible change of ground: the transition to a multi-dimensional functioning of a theoretical-philosophic instance. While the greater part of the concepts deployed in the first *Notebook* (1929–30), i.e. intellectuals, hegemony, hegemonic apparatus, appear in specific historical analyses, the formation of the unitary Italian state, and the Southern question, *Notebook 4* on the other hand opens with an astonishing 'return to Marx'. Gramsci's three directions of criticism: of idealist revisionism (Sorel, Gentile, Croce, Bergson), of the official orthodox Marxism of the Second International, and of certain interpreters of 'Marxism' such as

Bukharin in the Third International, converge on the same focal point: his incessant search for the 'philosophy of Marxism'. Suddenly there are no more footholds, no more reassuring supports, no more established orthodoxy. Or rather, there is only one orthodoxy, the revolutionary character of the theory, the calm assurance, often repeated, that Marxism contains in itself the material for constructing a total philosophy, a total vision of the world. This intervention of Marxism's philosophical instance, this search in the wake of Lenin, and further back of Labriola, for an 'autonomous and specific' Marxist philosophy, gradually comes to pervade all the problems of historical materialism, including those of the state and the intellectuals. Gramsci's theoretical recasting of Marxist philosophy is accompanied by a further simultaneous reorganization: that of politics as a science. There is an endless intertwining of notes in which Marx links up with Machiavelli in a common project: to theorize a practice, to educate those who are ignorant, i.e. the people, the revolutionary class of their time. For by way of Machiavelli, Gramsci is exploring a new field that concerned him all his active life: that of the modern Prince, the political party in its relationship to the state, as can be seen in one of the earliest fragments devoted to this, which dates from the middle of 1930:

Marx and Machiavelli. This subject can involve a double task: a study of the real relations between the two as theorists of militant practice, of action; and a book that would extract from Marxist theories a coherent exposition bearing on political actuality, on the model of the Prince. Its subject would be: the political party in its relations with classes and the state. Not the party as sociological category, but the party that seeks to found a state.<sup>10</sup>

Structured into this double connection, philosophy never functions as a separate instance cut off from the movement of scientific research and class struggle in which it intervenes. It is rather a theoretical and experimental laboratory in which Gramsci tries out his 'theses' and tests them. To apply the distinctions made by Althusser in his analysis of the young Marx,<sup>11</sup> we could say that in the objects studied in the *Prison Notebooks* – the intellectuals, the vanguard party, hegemony, the state, etc. – politics occupies the dominant position, and philosophy the central position. For it is philosophy that 'guarantees the theoretical relation between the political position and the object of Marx's thought'.<sup>12</sup>

From that time on, the question of the state always involved the two

only makes sense when all its aspects are connected with the problematic of *capitalist development* and with the functioning of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the construction of socialism.

This requires that the *Prison Notebooks* be seen in their full temporal dimension, isolating the various modalities of a work leading from a deeper investigation of the question of the intellectuals, as posed already in *Notebook 1*, to a new problematic of the state as *integral state*. This problematic was mastered bit by bit, at the cost of unprecedented difficulties, on the basis of a materialist retranslation of concepts reputedly 'suspect' by virtue of their idealist origins (civil society, political society, ethical state), yet it is the *sine qua non* for Leninist reflection on the state in the developed capitalist countries.

Once again, this problematic finds in Lenin the theoretical operator that authorizes an extensive definition of the state. For it was Lenin who 'gave new weight – in opposition to the various "economist" tendencies – to the front of cultural struggle, and constructed the doctrine of hegemony as a complement to the theory of the State-as-force...'.<sup>14</sup>

## 2. THE EXPANSION OF THE CONCEPT OF INTELLECTUAL AND ITS PROBLEMS

*From The Southern Question (1926) to Notebook 1 (1929–1930)*

In 1929, after some brief fragments on Machiavelli, then on Freud, the first *Prison Notebook* suddenly finds its proper rhythm and centre: a predominantly historical study devoted to the Southern question, the Risorgimento, and the immediate post-war period. The apparently historical character of this reflection should not give rise to any misunderstanding as to Gramsci's deeper motivation, which is political. The conversations held in prison towards the end of 1930, which Athos Lisa has faithfully recounted, are evidence of this. These are a document of first importance for confirming the direction of Gramsci's political thought at this time, contemporary with the earliest *Notebooks*.

One question returns, stabbing and obstinate, at the intersection of the various others that are also discussed: the intellectuals, the Communist Party, the Constituent Assembly as an anti-fascist slogan. This is the question of fascism itself. For after the failure of the revolution, and the consolidation of the dictatorship, new strength can come only from knowledge: 'It is necessary to direct one's attention violently towards the present as it is, if one wishes to transform it. Pessimism of the intelligence, optimism of the will.'<sup>15</sup>

major axes of Gramsci's research: political research (the relations of state/class/party/historic bloc), but also philosophical research involving the position and function of philosophy in the superstructure. This latter is more a point of arrival than one of departure, and bears on the revolutionary significance of work in the superstructure. Hence the impossibility of presenting Gramsci's theoretical propositions independent of the historical and political context in which they appeared. Conversely, his political thought in prison requires a long detour through the methodological and philosophical process that underlies it.

A double movement is involved here:

(1) In *Notebook 1*, the question of the state is never dealt with frontally, but always indirectly, by a historical bias: the study of the unitary Italian state. The concept of the intellectual, on the other hand, already seems to have been established in 1929–30.

(2) In a turn that is both rectification and deepening, *Notebooks 4* and *8*, in which work in the fields of philosophy and politics turns around the dialectic of base and superstructure, make it possible to refocus on the question of intellectuals and assess its full scope. Little by little, this becomes the index and symptom of a broader theoretical and strategic question, that of the relationship between state and middle strata, and the question of a strategy for the revolution in the West: the 'war of position'. The approach to the question of the intellectuals as sketched in *The Southern Question* then undergoes a genuine mutation, which has been very well perceived by E. Garin:

With the theme of the intellectuals, Gramsci translated into Italian a question that was at that very period tormenting the most far-seeing section of European culture as a whole, those who sought to define the possible function of the 'scholar' in contemporary society (whether capitalist or not).<sup>13</sup>

This European and international dimension of the question of the intellectuals seems to me to be central for any deeper understanding of Gramsci's purpose. As against a whole line of interpretation which has seen the question of the intellectuals as a special question in dealing with civil society or the 'historic bloc', we would argue that it is vitiated once it is detached from its overall context: the crisis of 1929, the origin of fascism and its mass base in the petty and middle bourgeoisie, analysis of the state and the political parties. The 'question of the intellectuals'

But in order to transform this particular present, it is still necessary to know its distant origins, its genesis. Past and present, this constant theme of the *Notebooks*, is illustrated in this excerpt from the prison conversations:

Fascism, as it presents itself in Italy, is a particular form of bourgeois reaction, related to the specific historical conditions of the bourgeois class in general, and those of our country in particular.<sup>16</sup>

A specific form: in order to explain the distant origins of fascism, it is necessary to go back to the formation of the unitary Italian state, and analyse the lack of political unity in the Italian bourgeoisie, the absence of a 'genuine bourgeois-democratic revolution in Italy'.<sup>17</sup> The question of the intellectuals, their place and their role in the class constitution, is located in this context, extending and going beyond the points made in the celebrated essay that was interrupted by Gramsci's arrest: *The Southern Question*.

The first *Notebook* opens with some methodological remarks concerning the uneven development of political and cultural transformations. The former can take the form of 'rapid explosions', the latter have a slower rhythm. But in the history of Italy, where the South has the role of a colony of the industrial and developed North, this uneven development in the superstructure assumes certain specific forms:

The relationship town/country, North/South, can be studied in its cultural forms.<sup>18</sup>

From this standpoint, the great Southern intellectuals such as Benedetto Croce or Giustino Fortunato 'stood at the beginning of the century at the head of a cultural movement in opposition to the cultural movement of the North (futurism)' (*Notebook 1*, 43). This explains, moreover, how the Turin working class was able to show a certain sympathy for futurism, at least in its beginnings which were connected with industrial forms, striving to shake off the tradition of bookish and academic culture and demanding 'modernism', before it fell into irrationalism.

But it was a different 'uneven development' that interested Gramsci, and one far more strategic. Uneven cultural development reflected 'a different structure of the intellectual classes', an asymmetry in their relationship to the state.

In the South, capitalist development was practically non-existent,

with the domination of large landowners and prevalence of traditional intellectuals such as lawyers 'who make contact between the peasant masses and the landowners via the intermediary role of the state apparatus' (ibid.).

Nothing is very new here in relation to *The Southern Question*. Gramsci had already discussed this uneven development of cultural and political consciousness: 'Intellectuals develop slowly, far more slowly than any other social group, by their very nature and historical function.'<sup>19</sup> As for the traditional rural intellectuals coming from the rural bourgeoisie (small and medium landowners), who 'make up three-fifths of the state bureaucracy', they already fulfilled the role of political mediation between the unorganized peasant masses and the landed proprietors. Notaries, priests, officials, lawyers, under the ideological control of the 'great intellectuals' (Croce), these formed the reactionary corner-stone of the entire system, and constituted the 'flexible but extremely resistant armour of the agrarian bloc'.<sup>20</sup>

And yet, as against the various theories of the Mezzogiorno that already existed, the 'backwardness' of the South is to be explained neither by the existence of a 'historical residue' in the form of its semi-feudal structure (Salvemini), nor by the absence of a liberal intellectual elite that could carry through a genuine 'intellectual reform' (Dorso): the backwardness of the South is the condition for the capitalist development of the North. This is why the state role of this rural petty bourgeoisie is relevant to the analysis of capitalist development, in its relationship to the state.

In the North, by virtue of the same 'uneven development', it is a different type of intellectual that prevails, the modern intellectual: 'The factory technician type, who serves as link between the working-class mass and the capitalist class' (*Notebook 1*, 43)

But this is not a political link that places the working class under the domination of the bourgeois class, with the technician transformed into some kind of 'political ideologist' of the bourgeoisie. And the reason for this is one that *Notebook 1* stresses quite specifically.

The class situation of these 'new intellectuals', bound up with the development of capitalist production, is radically different from that of the traditional rural intellectuals:

In the North, as opposed to the South, the link between the working class and the state did not depend on a completely new intellectual stratum, but rather on the trade-union organizations and political parties (ibid.)

The political function of organizing consent that fell specifically to the rural intellectuals and to the great intellectuals, as direct agents of the dominant class, was not reproduced in the same form for the urban intellectuals. Indeed, the situation here is literally reversed, by the influence of the working class and its (political) 'organic intellectuals'. More directly bound up with production, the urban intellectuals, far from presenting themselves as 'ideological organizers of the dominant class', found themselves under the political influence of the working-class struggle, which had to organize and rally them to its side. Hence the continuous effort that Gramsci made during the Turin factory occupation movement of 1920 to get the salaried staff, technicians and engineers to take part in the factory councils.<sup>21</sup>

This fundamental asymmetry between the two types of intellectual in their relationship to the state undoubtedly enables us to go back to those pages of *The Southern Question* that Gramsci judged 'very rapid and superficial' (in his letter to Tania of 19 March 1927).

The prevalence of one type of intellectual rather than another was in no way original; it was a function of the degree of capitalist development:

The old type of intellectual was the organizing element in a society with a mainly peasant and artisanal basis. To organize the State, to organize commerce, the dominant class bred a particular type of intellectual. Industry has introduced a new type of intellectual: the technical organizer, the specialist in applied science. In the societies where the economic forces have developed in a capitalist direction, to the point where they have absorbed the greater part of national activity, it is this second type of intellectual which has prevailed, with all his characteristics of order and intellectual discipline.<sup>22</sup>

From the moment that the proletariat puts itself forward as the modern protagonist of Italian history and the Southern question, it has not only to break the Southern agrarian bloc in order to enable the peasant masses to organize, with an autonomous political leadership. It has also to induce a left position among the intellectuals as a mass social stratum. Recalling the role played by Piero Gobetti, a liberal intellectual who collaborated with *Ordine Nuovo* and viewed the factory councils movement favourably, without however being a Marxist, Gramsci ended *The Southern Question* by drawing a double relationship between the working class and the intellectuals:

(1) In order to organize itself as a class, the proletariat needs intellectuals, in other words leaders:

It is certainly important and useful for the proletariat that one or more intellectuals, individually, should adopt its programme and ideas; should merge into the proletariat, becoming and feeling themselves to be an integral part of it.<sup>23</sup>

As *Notebook 4* spells out, this intellectual, by joining the party, becomes one of the intellectuals of the proletariat itself, its organic intellectuals: 'An intellectual who enrolls in the political party of a social group is integrated into the organic intellectuals of that group.'

The function of the vanguard party, moreover, is to 'weld together the organic intellectuals of a group and the traditional intellectuals'.<sup>24</sup> But supposing that the party trains the maximum number of organic intellectuals, its own political cadres, would the overall question of the intellectuals be thereby resolved?

(2) In a fairly elliptical phrase, Gramsci suggests, that the alliance between the proletariat and the intellectuals as a mass requires something other than this:

Now, we are interested in the mass of intellectuals, and not just in individuals... it is also important and useful for a break to occur in the mass of intellectuals: a break of an organic kind, historically characterized. For there to be formed, as a mass formation, a left tendency, in the modern sense of the word: i.e. one oriented towards the revolutionary proletariat.<sup>25</sup>

What does this mean if not that in the motive forces of the Italian revolution, alongside the two basic national social forces who carry the weight of the future, the proletariat and the peasantry, it is necessary to add a third potential force: the intellectuals as a mass?

But *The Southern Question* stops short here, without the socio-historical foundations of this 'left split' being deepened or even conceived. And it is here that the first *Notebook* contributes its new elements, making a qualitative leap, which has unquestionably been underestimated but appears to me essential. Gramsci proposes a new concept of the intellectual at a very general theoretical level, defined by his function as organizer in society and all spheres of social life:

The term intellectual must be taken to mean not only those social strata who are traditionally termed intellectuals, but in general the whole social mass that performs functions of organization in the broad sense: whether in the realm of production, culture or public administration (*Notebook 1*, 43).

The determination of the position of the intellectuals, therefore, does not depend simply on the superstructures or on ideology. It is based on

what is specific in the mode of production and the modern productive forces: the production apparatus. The notion of organization, in fact, indicates a double break made by Gramsci in relation to the traditional approach to the intellectuals.

Much stress has been laid on Gramsci's rejection of the humanist conception of the intellectual, as the 'great intellectual', man of letters, philosopher, etc. And it is true that Gramsci attacks any idealist and humanist definition of the intellectual as disinterested creator, producing a 'pure' philosophy not contaminated by social relations. As if all knowledge did not also involve a practical relationship to knowledge, and therefore an ideological relationship. No 'internal criterion' of intellectual activities is sufficient to define them. Treated on the basis of their social being, their position in the relations of production, intellectuals are located in a certain division of labour, and perform definite functions.<sup>26</sup>

It has not been sufficiently understood, however, that a break of this kind, which opens up a materialist theory of philosophy to which we shall return at considerable length, is accompanied by a further and less visible imperative that is closely bound up with Gramsci's Leninism. In his relationship with the working class, the intellectual's specific function is not to give it its homogeneity, unity, and vision of the world, as in that ideological model of Hegelian-Lukácsian origin that proliferates in 'Western Marxism' (from Sartre to Marcuse). In 1926, at the PCI Congress in Lyons, Gramsci rebuffed with uncommon critical brusqueness the petty-bourgeois ideology of the intellectuals (even if of the Left) who 'believe they are the salt of the earth and see the workers as the material instrument of social transformation rather than as the conscious and intelligent protagonist of revolution'.<sup>27</sup>

The refusal of a potential dissociation between philosophical class consciousness and its real agent, the proletariat, rules out any problematic of the intellectuals that would transform them into the depositories of class consciousness (as in the young Lukács) or into guarantors of the critique of the capitalist mode of production.

From this standpoint, Gramsci's position in Western Marxism turns out to be extremely conflictual. This may be shown by a rapid comparison with Lukács's problematic of the 1920s, the distant origin of the committed intellectual of the Sartrean variety, or the critical-contestatory intellectual in his Marcusean version.

In reading *History and Class Consciousness*, it is possible to discover a subtle mechanism of reversal that tends to make the proletarian

intellectual the continuer of the bourgeois intellectual, and make philosophy into 'the concrete and historically determined content of working-class consciousness'.<sup>28</sup>

Lukács's whole apparent purpose seems to be to relate this class consciousness to the class itself, in its autonomy (and not to the party, at least at the beginning). But this autonomy and class consciousness is never the product of its objective situation in social relations, its social being. The capitalist mode of production is defined by the 'fetish character of the commodity', and not on the basis of the antagonistic relations of production. Fetishism as the general form of dissociation of object and subject, as reification, becomes 'a general phenomenon constitutive of the whole of bourgeois society'.<sup>29</sup> There is no difference between the social being of the proletariat and that of the bourgeoisie when both are prey to this philosophy of fetishism; reification is 'a — formally — unified structure of consciousness that embrace[s] the whole society'.<sup>30</sup>

For lack of any internal difference in class situation, class consciousness derives solely from class position. The proletariat as subject of the historical process assumes a limit position ('possible consciousness'): to make the grasping of itself as a totality coincide with consciousness of history and society. As Lukács says, the proletariat is 'itself nothing but the contradictions of history that have become conscious'.<sup>31</sup>

This is why the subject of history turns out to be the class, the proletariat, since the totality of society is transferred into the consciousness of the proletariat itself. In this way, Lukács structures into philosophy the very effect of the October Revolution as a total revolution (primacy of the category of totality), touching on all domains of existence and knowledge.

Isn't this historical process the same as classical German philosophy conceived in its categories? To translate: if the class is the support of its ideological self-formation, the true subject of history, then it can only hold this position as a philosophical subject, realizing and suppressing the antinomies of earlier philosophy, and German idealism in particular (Kant, Hegel).

The theoretical power of *History and Class Consciousness*, and it is a strongly seductive power, is that a practico-political death of philosophy can be reversed into its opposite: an assumption of philosophy as the true consciousness of history, the content of the revolutionary process, the resolution of the antinomies of bourgeois

thought (object/subject, theory/practice). In this way the traditional function of the intellectual as depository of truth, of historical consciousness, is safeguarded at the price of a shift to the proletarian subject.

Recognizable here is the matrix and departure-point for other positions of the same kind, even if they have neither the same importance as Lukács nor the political commitment of his critique.

Marcuse: in the face of a world reified by technique and science (the instrumental and analytic calculatory reason so dear to the Frankfurt School), in which the working class is bourgeoisified, philosophy with its grasp of the totality has the function of redefining the real content of the revolution.<sup>32</sup>

Sartre: in the face of a 'detotalized' history subject to analytical reason and seriality, the philosopher serves as depository of the negative, subsequently of commitment, in as much as he is the depository of the totality, even if this is at the expense of science.

In all these variants the relationship of the intellectuals to reality, to the working class, is above all an ideological fact (a fact of consciousness), and not the consciousness of their own situation in social relations. In this way they can become the real protagonists of an ideal unification of all processes of 'dis-alienation'.

Gramsci, however, breaks with this model. The organic intellectual of the proletariat is not the person who considers himself as such (primacy of the ideological-critical moment), but rather the person who becomes the proletariat's political intellectual. It is not the intellectuals as such who enable a subaltern class to become a leading and ruling class, a hegemonic class. This function is performed by the modern Prince, the vanguard political party as the basis from which the intellectual function has to be considered afresh, together with the relationship between research and politics, and their reciprocal tension. To put it another way, the relation between intellectual and class turns out to be different in the case of the proletariat from that of the bourgeoisie. With the bourgeoisie, the intellectuals play a direct role in the class's constitution. With the proletariat, they play an essential role, but within a broader political process, that of the political organization of the class, the dialectic that unites conscious leadership and spontaneity, and is specific to the party as the 'collective intellectual'.

As evidence of this we have Gramsci's many criticisms of the Enlightenment conception of the intellectual as the 'enlightened philosopher':

The formation of a unitary collective consciousness requires various initiatives and conditions. The diffusion of a homogeneous mode of thinking and acting, on the basis of a homogeneous leadership, is its principal condition, though it cannot be the only one. A very widespread error is the belief that every social stratum develops its specific consciousness and culture in the same manner and with the same methods, i.e. with the methods of the professional intellectuals (*Notebook 1*, 43).

This method of intellectual Taylorism or cultural messianism always rests on the same illusion, the belief that it is sufficient to formulate 'clear principles' theoretically, for reality to be transformed.

Further evidence is the decisive fact that all members of a vanguard party are 'intellectuals' in that they perform a function of organization. The party selects its own cadres, functioning as an experimenter in philosophy.

What is involved in these two breaks is not just something methodological. In proposing a unified problematic of the intellectuals, defined according to their social function, Gramsci is inserting into the realm of theory his own earlier practice as an activist, his own class position. The intellectuals, accordingly, are conceived in terms of an institutional approach that opens the way to a differentiated analysis of the distinct types of apparatus in which they are located (economic, cultural and state). But Gramsci does not thereby fall into an institutionalist thesis (the primacy of apparatuses over the class struggle). In the same fragment 43 of *Notebook 1*, immediately after having defined the intellectuals in the broad sense, Gramsci stresses the essential criterion of their psychological position in relation to the classes in play:

Do they (the intellectuals) have a paternalist position towards the workers [*classi strumentali*] or rather consider themselves to be their organic expression? Do they have a servile attitude towards the leading classes, or rather consider themselves to be leaders themselves, an integral part of these classes?

These attitudes of mind are in no way simply subjective, for the class position of the intellectuals involves a materialist analysis of differentiations within the functions of social and political hegemony. As Athos Lisa recalls, Gramsci made use of a whole series of parallels between the organization of production and military organization in order to clarify his arguments.<sup>33</sup>

In both factory and army alike, Gramsci distinguished three levels:

the leadership, the intermediate stratum (elaboration/execution) and the 'base'. In the factory, intellectuals and semi-intellectuals assume a specific function, one not reducible simply to the tasks of material execution:

'The intellectuals "give concrete expression to the work project as laid down in broad terms by the leadership" (for example, the engineers);

'The semi-intellectuals have the task of "technical and administrative supervision over the correct execution of the work" (for example, the works manager and clerical employee).'

It is similarly possible to differentiate in the military organization of an army:

'The intellectuals: higher officers to whom the general staff entrusts the realization of its strategic and tactical plan;

'The semi-intellectuals: those who take charge of the execution of the plan and supervise its realization.'

This differentiated approach to intellectual skills on the basis of the type of activity performed and the place in the social hierarchy can be found at all levels of society (see next page). The purpose of this is 'so as not to confuse the type of intellectual in whom the party may be interested with the specifically bourgeois elements'.<sup>34</sup> Athos Lisa's conclusion is that: 'In Gramsci's analysis, the managing director of a firm, an army general and the spiritual head of a philosophical school must be considered as the purest representatives of the bourgeoisie'.<sup>35</sup> But not so the others, the majority.

Running through these first approaches to a fundamental question, one cannot but be struck by the double orientation of research: historical (the role of the intellectuals in Italian history), but also sociological. For the expansion of the concept of intellectual is such that Gramsci does not bring together under a single concept simply the agents who produce ideology or knowledge and the new, modern intellectuals: managerial staff, technicians, engineers; he also includes functionaries in the state and in administration, cultural organizers and the leaders of political parties: a large number, in fact, of what those who might be classed among the 'middle classes' (excluding the petty bourgeoisie in the strict sense, i.e. the retail trader and small farmer). As Gramsci was subsequently to remark: 'the meaning of the expression "middle class" changes from country to country'.<sup>36</sup> Originally bound

STRATIFICATION OF INTELLECTUAL FUNCTIONS

	ARMY <i>General Staff</i>	PRODUCTION <i>Management</i>	CULTURE	POLITICAL PARTY
Category 1	Higher officers draw up plans	Managers, engineers	Creative figures; Representatives of a philosophical school (Croce)	Leaders
Category 2	Subaltern officers ensure their execution	White-collar workers, foremen, technicians; Technical and admin- istrative function; Supervision	Employees in the cultural apparatuses	Intermediate personnel
Category 3	Rank-and-file soldiers	Workers	Public	Militants at the base

This is no more than an approximate table, reconstructed from Gramsci's various notes. Category 1 are the 'intellectuals' proper, category 2 the 'semi-intellectuals'. There is one discrepancy in that with the vanguard (Communist) party, all members are (organic, political) intellectuals, without, however, performing an intellectual function as such.

up with the specific English social development, it relates to a type of capitalist development in which the bourgeoisie does not lead the people.

In Italy . . . the term 'middle' has gone down a rung. 'Negatively', middle class means non-popular, i.e. those not workers or peasants; positively, it means the intellectual strata, the professional strata, the public employees.<sup>37</sup>

In the light of this new concept of the intellectual as 'organizer', the functionaries of the state apparatus are 'intellectuals' as much as the intellectual strata in the stricter sense of the term, performing subaltern functions in maintaining the social and political hegemony of the bourgeoisie. But for all that, Gramsci's notion of 'semi-intellectual' and his shifts in vocabulary underline the difficulties involved in this enterprise, of which he became more and more aware. In *Notebook 4*, for example, where the major methodological text on the intellectuals is located, unresolved internal tensions can be readily noted.<sup>38</sup> On the one hand, Gramsci rules out any criterion internal to intellectual activities for understanding the intellectuals, and lays the emphasis on their social function. As elements of social cohesion in a bloc of forces, the intellectuals have 'the function of organizing the social hegemony of a group and its state domination'.<sup>39</sup> The result is 'a very great extension of the concept of intellectual'.<sup>40</sup> This we accept. But it does not remove certain residual difficulties that preoccupy Gramsci. There are, for instance, different degrees of intellectual activity, when this is viewed in terms of its intrinsic characteristics. Thus Gramsci distinguishes between the highest level, with 'creators of the various sciences, philosophy, art, etc.', and the lowest with 'the most humble "administrators"'. 'The function of organizing social hegemony and state domination certainly gives rise . . . to a whole hierarchy of qualifications'. But does this not lead to reintroducing an internal criterion for specifying the external criteria of social function?

A further difficulty lies in the predominant definition of the intellectuals as 'organizers and mediators' of consent, which transforms the intellectual into an ideologist, into a direct agent of the class in power. But this in no way exhausts Gramsci's field of study, as he constantly comes back to the specificity of certain intellectual and artistic practices. The artist is not great by virtue of the correctness of his work's ideological content.<sup>41</sup> And even the traditional philosopher, for all his professional idiocy and caste spirit, still possesses a certain knowledge of the history of philosophy.<sup>42</sup>

A final difficulty is that in Gramsci's methodology, the relation of the intellectuals to politics is rooted in their position in social relations. They may not form a class, but they still constitute a mass. And since the development of the intellectual functions is the result of a 'democratic-bureaucratic' system characteristic of modern society,

In the modern world the category of intellectuals, understood in this sense (i.e. as organizers of hegemony), has undergone an unprecedented expansion.<sup>43</sup>

So far so good. But this mass formation has led to contradictory consequences: the standardization of individuals, competition between different professional groups, educational over-production, emigration, unemployment, and the formation of trade unions. This standardization affects above all the modern urban intellectuals, who tend ever more to become 'a genuine industrial general staff'. It is readily apparent that these objective and conflictual conditions (Gramsci remarked on the risk of unemployment as early as 1930) create forms of political consciousness that are very different from those of the intellectual as direct agent or 'deputy' of the ruling class.

The conclusion must be that the question of the intellectuals bears within it a quite different problem, the need for a frontal investigation of the relations between state and society.

3. FROM THE INTELLECTUALS TO THE STATE

Throughout this initial theoretical trajectory focused on *Notebook 1*, we have seen a kind of methodological and political bipolarity of Gramsci's analysis of the intellectuals.

On the one hand, the traditional intellectuals with their caste spirit really do form a governing élite charged with achieving consent between state and society. They are 'superstructural functionaries' in the strong sense, direct agents of the dominant group, who exercise the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government. Study of these traditional intellectuals involves that of the different hegemonic apparatuses of the dominant class, whose expansion they ensure. This position excludes the possibility that these intellectuals are affected in their own social being by the antagonistic contradiction of the capitalist mode of production (between forces and relations of production), even though it might be argued today that the social being of salaried intellectuals brings them right up against this constriction in a way that

challenges any 'élitist model'. It could be said that their position in these very apparatuses comes into contradiction with their social being. The experiences of de-skilling and unemployment, and the perspective of a possible development of science and technology that is free from the goal of profit, open up an ideological and political breach in the position that the monopoly bourgeoisie assigns them in the reproduction of its system of domination.

And yet Gramsci's analysis involves more than this one model, even if this is the dominant one. Certainly, journalists, men of letters and philosophers may still think that they are the true intellectuals. However, 'in the modern world, technical education closely bound to industrial labour even at the most primitive and unqualified level, must form the basis of the new type of intellectual'.<sup>44</sup> What does this mean, if not that the ideological intellectual meets his match in the productive intellectual?

Opposed to the rural intellectuals, largely traditional, for whom professional and political mediation are one and the same, Gramsci defines another type of modern intellectual, on the model of the technicians he had met during the Turin factory occupations. In this sense, *Ordine Nuovo's* struggle to promote 'a new intellectual culture' already prefigured one of the major problems Gramsci faced in prison: the creation of the proletariat's organic intellectuals.

The mode of being of the new intellectual can no longer consist in eloquence, which is an exterior and momentary mover of feelings and passions, but in active participation in practical life, as constructor, organizer, 'permanent persuader' and not just a simple orator.<sup>45</sup>

The question then arises whether an organic intellectual of this type does not have to reconcile in himself the bipolarity sketched above. In the description given by Gramsci, this new intellectual, as 'specialized and political', progresses from 'technique-as-work' to 'technique-as-science', 'and to the humanistic conception of history, without which one remains "specialized" and does not become "directive"'.<sup>46</sup> Further evidence that Gramsci's reflection on the intellectuals has to be linked with that on the party in its relations to the working class and to the intellectuals as a mass. The party must fulfil two tasks, one principal, the other secondary. The function of 'welding together the organic intellectuals of a given group - the dominant one - and the traditional intellectuals' is accomplished in dependency on a further principal function, the formation of its own intellectuals: 'qualified political

intellectuals, leaders and organizers of all the activities and functions inherent in the organic development of an integral society'.<sup>47</sup> Put another way, to form the political intellectuals capable of developing a hegemonic class struggle in all the hegemonic apparatuses of the dominant class; capable of performing all the functions of an integral society (economic as well as political and cultural). Real hegemony, the ability to lead in an organic way, rather than just administratively or bureaucratically (not to speak of the sorry use of the police), depends on precisely this. It is a project that is unrealizable without a deeper analysis of society and the state. Hence the real question, only little discussed, is why Gramsci is so interested in the question of the intellectuals. The answer is that this political and sociological question is the little cog needed to come to grips with the double-headed Machiavellian centaur: force and consent, in other words the state.

*The Sociological Question of the Intellectuals: From Italy to France*

From the time he invited Henri Barbusse to Turin for discussions with the workers, Gramsci never abandoned his passionate interest in French culture and its relationship to politics. In his youth he had sympathized with Romain Rolland, whose *Above the Battlefield* had symbolized the anti-militarist intellectual position during the war. In 1916, as a young socialist leader, Gramsci himself devoted one of his first lectures to Rolland, before a workers' circle in Borgo San Paolo. Three years later, the *Ordine Nuovo* group took up as its motto Rolland's phrase: 'Pessimism of the intelligence, optimism of the will', thus paying homage to the man whom Gramsci did not hesitate to call 'the Maxim Gorki of Latin Europe'. 'Rolland felt intuitively what Lenin proved: the historical necessity of the International.'<sup>48</sup>

By way of Rolland, Barbusse, and the *Clarté* group, whose programme was published by *Ordine Nuovo*, Gramsci sought a new relationship between culture and politics. Here literature is the symptom of a mass cultural transformation, such as Russia in the 1920s seemed to embody.

In his prison studies, French culture continued to play an almost exemplary role. As against the cosmopolitan tradition of the Italian intellectuals, and the gulf separating the intellectuals from the people,<sup>49</sup> France seemed to represent a 'model' of national culture based on organic exchange between the people and the intellectuals. Inescapably, Gramsci was drawn to the revolutionary character of Enlightenment philosophy as a form of 'intellectual and moral reform' which did not

Western history'. Well before the 1929 crisis, whose real effects only began to make themselves felt in 1930–31, the crisis of classical bourgeois hegemony took the form of a crisis of the intellectuals, their identity and function. Some were driven to scepticism, others to revolt (e.g. surrealism), others still to a growing concern for the 'fate of the West' or to political commitment on the side of the working class. All so many symptoms of a period of historical transformations such that J.-L. Loubet Del Bayle could write in his book *Les Non-Conformistes des années 30* that 'the year 1932 represents a major caesura in the intellectual adventure of the twentieth century'.<sup>52</sup>

In this context, the two books by Julien Benda and Emmanuel Berl exhibit a common preoccupation: a rethinking of the function of the intellectuals in the face of this crisis, and of their relationship to politics.

For Julien Benda, on the one hand, the intellectuals, the 'scholars', have betrayed their role:

In this century, in which political passions and hatreds are gaining the upper hand, in which nationalism, authoritarianism and racism lay down the law, the 'scholars' have deserted their true post: a universal and disinterested activity which 'urges citizens to what is common and universal in man'.<sup>53</sup>

Abandoning their 'humanitarian' role, they have fallen into cheap theatrical romanticism, romanticism of the accomplished fact, pessimism and an attitude of contempt. The scholars referred to are such as Barrès, Maurras, Claudel, D'Annunzio, P. Bourget and others. Oscillating between patriotic fanaticism and nationalism, without forgetting xenophobia, 'they humiliate the values of knowledge before the values of action'.<sup>54</sup>

A diagnosis of this kind, while highly critical and often far-seeing on the thought of the Right, still leads into a dead end; the scholar is to 'proclaim himself non-practical', return to the classical role of the intellectual who 'engages in politics to defend universality, justice and reason'. The result is to reproduce the Husserlian myth of the philosopher as 'functionary of humanity'.

Now it is precisely this dead-end that Gramsci criticizes:

Benda, like Croce, examines the function of the intellectuals while abstracting from their class situation and their function, which has become still more precise with the immense spread of publishing and the press.<sup>55</sup>

The critique of 'intellectual nationalism' cannot be based on an

simply remain an intellectualist phenomenon. In 1916, in an article in *Il Grido del Popolo*, he wrote:

Every revolution has been preceded by an intense labour of criticism, by the diffusion of culture and the spread of ideas amongst masses of men who are at first resistant, and think only of solving their own immediate economic and political problems for themselves, who have no ties of solidarity with others in the same condition. The latest example, the closest to us and hence least foreign to our time, is that of the French Revolution . . .

The Enlightenment philosophy, Gramsci adds,

was not solely a phenomenon of pedantic and arid intellectualism . . . The Enlightenment was a magnificent revolution . . .<sup>50</sup>

Because culture has a critical task, and 'it was through a critique of capitalist civilization that the unified consciousness of the proletariat was or is still being formed', it is important to pay attention to all its symptoms. To investigate, via the 'crisis of the intellectuals', the signs of a new relationship of politics to culture and of the intellectuals to society. Thus very far from being limited simply to the Italian context, Gramsci's prison reflections bear on the effects of the 1929 capitalist crisis. His remarks on Emmanuel Berl and Julien Benda in *Notebook 3* (1930), and the meticulous analyses devoted to Paul Nizan, express Gramsci's astonishing 'cultural realism', a singular capacity to grasp, even through the terrible filter of the fascist censorship and press, current ideological tendencies, their political significance and the issues they involved:

Traditional petty-bourgeois France is undergoing a very profound crisis, one that is moral even more than political.<sup>51</sup>

Gramsci's precision here is surprising, for the years 1928–30 really were a turning-point in this respect. In the light of Leninist teaching on monopoly capitalism in its imperialist phase, Gramsci notes that industrial and banking concentration in France has brought about 'a crisis of the petty and middle bourgeoisie, which previously seemed in dominant place'. A crisis of the intellectuals, therefore, together with a crisis of the ruling class's modes of political leadership. Gramsci endeavoured to note certain aspects of this crisis on the basis of three essential pieces of evidence: J. Benda (*La Trahison des clercs*, 1927), E. Berl (*Mort de la pensée bourgeoise*, 1929), and Paul Nizan.

The year 1930 in France saw 'a turning-point between two periods of

abstract universalism; it must be political, and explain politically the origin of nationalism and its structural causes:

The War has precisely shown how these nationalist positions were not a matter of chance and the result of intellectual causes (logical error). They were and remain bound up with a certain historical period in which the union of all national elements can lead to victory.<sup>56</sup>

The scholars' betrayal was not a betrayal of a specific function of defending the universal. The rallying of intellectuals to nationalism, which in Italy was one of the bases for their adhesion to fascism, related to something completely different: the crisis of the middle classes as the decisive factor, putting in question their former ideological and cultural position.

To Benda's idea that the intellectuals had to continue their 'mission' by a new particularization in the context of the European spirit, Gramsci replies by distinguishing nationalism and national spirit: 'National is different from nationalist. Goethe was a German national, and Stendhal a French, but neither were nationalist'.<sup>57</sup> The only possible response to this crisis of the intellectuals is to tackle the political problem on its national terrain, without falling into nationalism.

Emmanuel Berl's *Mort de la pensée bourgeoise*, a true pamphlet against a conformist literature in thrall to dead values, reverses Benda's thesis:

I can no longer accept that if the intellectual is failing in his function, it is by being too strongly taken up with politics.<sup>58</sup>

The real betrayal is rather a false idea of politics, or even passivity: the philosophy of abstentionism, the school of acceptance. It is pointless to oppose to this school the intellectual as 'functionary of humanity'. What should be developed is the 'school of accusation', as Zola had done. There is a whole literature of submission to be criticized, a literature cut off from the people, in which the real life of the workers is absent, Berl's final conclusion being that 'the drama of the contemporary intellectual is that he would like to be revolutionary but cannot manage to be'.<sup>59</sup> This confirms what Malraux in *La Condition humaine* had found 'the most acceptable solution', and that 'thought is revolutionary or nothing at all'.

Gramsci's position towards this diagnosis is a careful one. His first attitude is approval:



It is true that literature has become removed from the people, and has become a caste phenomenon.<sup>60</sup>

But then come certain reservations, and an awareness of the difficulty of the problem. To Berl's over-simple slogan of 'return to Zola, return to the people', Gramsci objects:

The world has changed. The people whom Zola knew no longer exist today, or at least no longer have the same importance. In developed capitalism, the Taylorized worker replaces the former people, who were not yet very clearly distinguished from the petty bourgeoisie; these are the people for Zola, Victor Hugo, George Sand or Eugène Sue. What Zola describes is industry in its infancy.<sup>61</sup>

'If the writer's task is more difficult', Gramsci concludes, 'it must still not be neglected.' Neither Benda nor Berl, therefore, win Gramsci's support. As against them, his own position is significantly close to that of Nizan.

With his constant denunciation of the 'watchdogs of the bourgeoisie', of bourgeois idealism with its cult of the vocabulary: 'Justice, Reason and the Soul, all in the singular',<sup>62</sup> Nizan felt the same sympathy as Gramsci did for Berl's book. And despite the material barriers that divided them, Gramsci defends Nizan against his fascist critics and supports certain of his positions. This is in fact all based on a fundamental agreement, that a 'new literature' can only arise on a new cultural basis.

Nizan seems to pose the problem very well when he starts by defining what is meant by an intellectual renovation of cultural premises.<sup>63</sup>

In this perspective, 'the crisis of the intellectuals', the challenge to their specific traditional function and their place in the hegemonic apparatuses, imposes a new front of struggle: 'struggle for a new culture as the struggle for a new way of life'.

If literature is partisan in this class struggle, it would not be literature 'if it did not intervene in literature and the means of its production'. This is reminiscent of Benjamin, who wrote that 'an author who does not teach something to writers does not teach anything to anyone'.

Quoting Croce's dictum that 'art is educative as art and not as educative art', Gramsci recalls that works of art are not born by 'parthenogenesis'.<sup>64</sup> In a phase of transformation and crisis, 'cultural and moral renovation is not simultaneous in all social strata'. The premises for a new literature 'cannot come about by political decision':

It is via the crisis of the intellectuals and of the middle classes that Gramsci explores the place of culture in society. If this is not just an intellectual luxury, it can become either a factor of development or an obstacle to this, an additional dimension of class struggle and the policy of the vanguard party. The party has in fact to promote 'a mass intellectual and moral reform', a dimension that was precisely lacking in Italy in the 1920s.

Though apparently giving special place to a history of the intellectuals and the formation of public spirit in Italy, Gramsci returns in fact to the difficulties met with by the Italian workers' movement in the 1920s. As Giorgio Amendola has emphasized: 'The cultural hegemony of idealism already formed a premiss for the defeat of the Italian workers' movement, which was unable in the years 1919-22 to oppose any valid cultural perspective to the victory of nationalism and fascism.'<sup>68</sup> This is readily apparent, apart from the struggle waged by Gramsci and the *Ordine Nuovo* group.

As against the liberal and Crocean idea that saw in fascism only a 'parenthesis' in Italian culture, Gramsci had pondered at great length over the cultural and philosophical tendencies that had created a favourable terrain for the formation of a fascist mass base. This mental process went beyond an analysis of the motivations that led Gentile, Pirandello or Pareto to support the Mussolini regime, to reach the deeper and more distant roots of the phenomenon expressed in these individual cases.

The facts are now well known. In 1915, the majority of Italian intellectuals were pro-war interventionists. In 1922, the majority rallied to fascism, with the exception of those linked to the workers' movement. According to Amendola, again, the 'great intellectuals' failed to protest against the fascist violence of the years 1919-22. In this crisis period of the liberal state, the majority of intellectuals saw the participation of the fascists in the government simply as a means for a subsequent normalization and the re-establishment of an authoritative strong state. In 1926, after the exceptional laws, when hundreds of Communists were arrested, 'the majority accepted the *fait accompli*'. Nationalism, the cult of order, authority and the strong state, anti-parliamentarism, contempt and even hatred for the proletariat, apoliticism or cheap theatrical romanticism converged to fuel this eclectic and 'chameleon ideology' of fascism.<sup>69</sup>

If it is useful to recall these simple facts, the reason is not to define some kind of abstract and ahistorical essence of a petty bourgeoisie

When the man of politics presses for the art of his time to express a particular cultural world, this is a political activity and not an artistic one. If the cultural world for which he is struggling is a living and necessary fact, then its expansive power will be irresistible.<sup>65</sup>

The priority of mass cultural struggle over a simple politics of art (which leads more or less to denying that art is art, and not deliberate political propaganda), rests first of all on the potential uneven development of literature and politics. While the artist 'necessarily represents, at a certain moment, something personal, non-conformist, etc., in a realist fashion', the task of politics is precisely the opposite: 'Politics imagines man such as he is, and at the same time such as he should be, in order to attain a determinate goal.'<sup>66</sup>

The result is that 'from the political standpoint, the man of politics will never be happy with the artist, and can never be happy'.

This necessity of not confusing two struggles - that for a cultural transformation in the broad sense (a transformation affecting way of life, behaviour and forms of sensibility), and that bearing on works of art (on this point, Gramsci rejects any authoritarian control) - relates to an approach to the cultural fact as something both global (vision of the world) and stratified (as a function of social classes and strata). Typical of this method of Gramsci's is the criticism (an incorrect one, as it happens) he addresses to Nizan: not to have discussed what is known as popular literature. Now it is literature of this kind, as found in magazines, adventure stories, detective novels, etc., that is the dominant fact. It diffuses ideological models and systems of attitudes that bear on the lived relationships of men and women to their world.

For Gramsci, knowledge of these practices that are seen as 'non-artistic', and of their underlying rationale, is a condition for any genuine cultural transformation. And for good reason, as there can be no genuine cultural transformation without overcoming the divorce between a so-called artistic literature for the élite and a so-called popular literature which is still the prevalent form among the masses. 'The audience we need for creating the cultural basis of a new literature can only be selected from the readers of popular magazines.'<sup>67</sup>

To overcome this gap that exists between 'cultivated' and 'popular' culture, between the intellectual and the people, it is necessary to investigate the different organizations of culture ('apparatus of cultural hegemony': publishing, press, audio-visual, etc.), so as to develop a specific struggle and break up the 'organizational reserves' that the dominant class possesses.

always given to reaction: the mass rallying of these strata to the anti-fascist struggle and the Italian Resistance is sufficient to destroy this myth. But it is this experience that underlies Gramsci's reflections on the intellectuals. Why had the crisis of the intellectuals and the middle classes taken this particular form in Italy? And how could the balance of forces be transformed in favour of the proletariat?

From as far back as 1920, when the game was not yet over and revolution still seemed possible, Gramsci had tied the question of the intellectuals to that of the state.

As distinct from other countries, where industrial capital had been able to find a ground of compromise and a system of balance with landed capital, creating in this way a 'constitutional democratic state', in Italy industrial capital had created the state by itself. The result of this mode of formation was its class unification in and by the state, a ferocious dictatorship which had put Southern Italy under a reign of fire and blood, subjecting the South to the capitalist interests of the North:

The Italian state has never been democratic, but rather despotic and a police state (one sole power, the government, with the parliament as a consultative body); it has always been a dictatorship exercised by the industrialists' against the working class and the peasant masses.<sup>70</sup>

But the industrialists' unification through the state acted to incorporate and absorb the petty bourgeoisie in the state apparatus, both the formal apparatus and the apparatuses of hegemony:

In order to develop its industrial apparatus, the state absorbed the rural petty bourgeoisie and the intellectuals in its administrative organs, in newspapers, schools and judiciary.<sup>71</sup>

In 1920, during the immediate post-war crisis which incidentally also involved an expansion of the state bureaucracy, an 'employomania' of the now declassed petty-bourgeois elements, Gramsci believed that the revolutionary situation was capable of 'shaking the entire superstructure of capitalism'.<sup>72</sup> After the victory and subsequent consolidation of fascism, however, 'the heavy artillery of the state apparatus' finally triumphed over its 'legal fiction'. Despite a formidable crisis, the superstructures resisted by organizing themselves. This made necessary a completely fresh analysis of the specific functioning of the base/superstructure relationship in the West, in the developed capitalist countries:

In the advanced capitalist countries, the ruling class possesses political and

organizational reserves which it did not possess, for instance, in Russia. This means that even the most serious economic crises do not have immediate repercussions in the political sphere. Politics always lags behind economics, far behind. The state apparatus is far more resistant than it is often possible to believe; and it succeeds, at the moments of crisis, in organizing greater forces loyal to the regime than the depth of the crisis might lead one to suppose.<sup>73</sup>

This remark of Gramsci's in his August 1926 report to the Central Committee of the PCI already sets the programme for his entire work in prison. The question of the intellectuals coincides with that of the organizational reserves of the bourgeoisie in periods of crisis. And the complex stratification of the relationship between state and society that is specific to developed capitalism requires a different strategy than that of October 1917, a strategy which in 1920 Gramsci had thought valid for Italy too.

Gramsci's response to all these questions is an expansion of the concept of the state.



## List of Books by Christine Buci-Glucksmann

### In translation:

- *Baroque Reason: The Aesthetics of Modernity* (translated by Patrick Camiller). London / Thousand Oaks, Calif., Sage, 1994
- *Gramsci and the State* (translated by David Fernbach). London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1980

### In French:

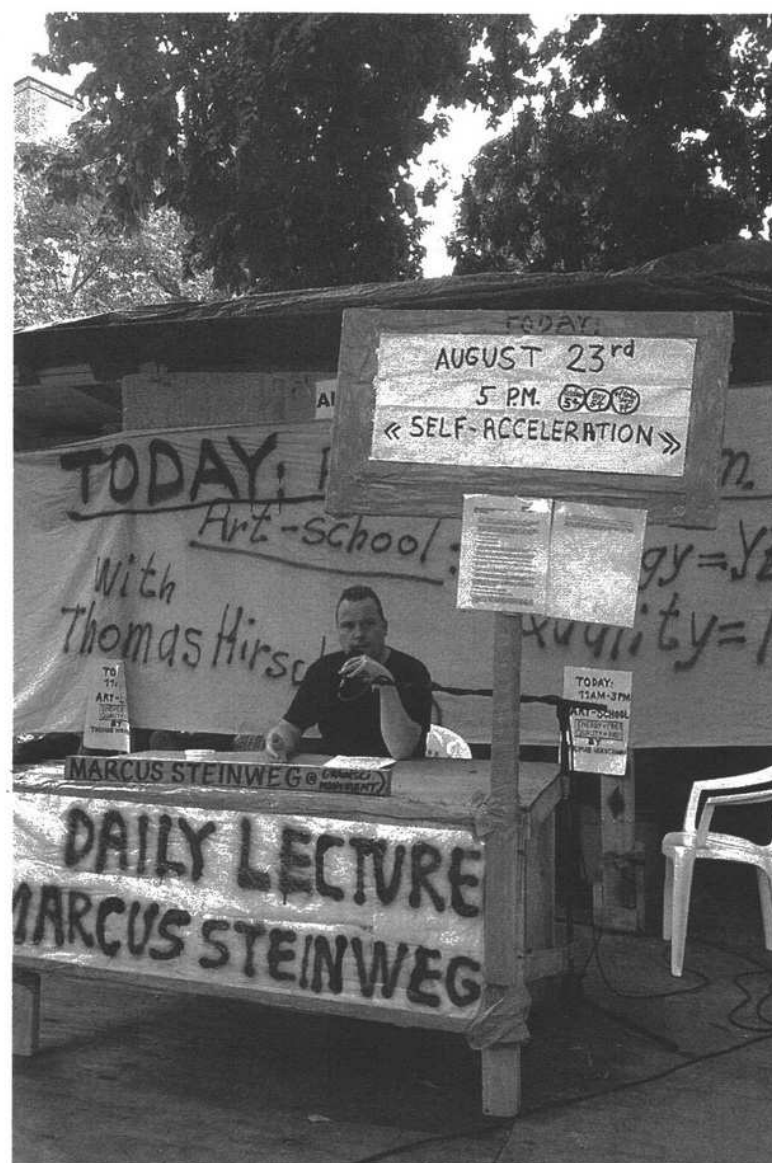
- *L'art à l'époque virtuel*, Arts 8, L'Harmattan, 2004
  - *La folie du voir: Une esthétique du virtuel*, Galilée, 2002
  - *L'enjeu du Beau: Musique et Passion*, Galilée
  - *Esthétique de l'éphémère*, Galilée
  - *L'esthétique du Temps au Japon: Du Zen au Rituel*, Galilée
  - *La Folie du Voir: De L'esthétique Baroque*, Galilée, ISBN 2-7186-0306-2
  - *Les Frontières Esthétiques de l'Art*, L'Harmattan
  - *Gramsci et l'État: Pour Une Théorie Materialiste de la Philosophie*, Fayard
  - *Histoire Florale De La Peinture: Hommage à Steve Dawson*, Galilée
  - *L'Oeil Cartographique de L'art*, Galilée
  - *Imaginaires de L'autre: Khatibi et la Mémoire Littéraire*, L'Harmattan
- 
- *Ouverture d'une Discussion: Dix Interventions à La Rencontre des 400 Intellectuels à Vitry*, F. Maspero
  - *Peinture, Trois Regards* (Christine Buci-Glucksmann, Eric De Chasse, Catherine Perret), Éditions du Regard
  - *La Raison Baroque: De Baudelaire à Benjamin*, Galilée
  - *Tragique de l'Ombre: Shakespeare et le Maniérisme*, Galilée

**Christine Buci-Glucksmann** is a philosopher and professor emerita at the University of Paris VIII. She is the author of many articles, exhibition catalogues, and books, including *The Madness of Vision: On Baroque Aesthetics* (Ohio University Press, 2013); *Philosophie de l'ornement: D'Orient en Occident* (Galilée, 2008); *Esthétique de l'éphémère* (Galilée, 2003); *L'Esthétique du temps au Japon: Du zen au virtuel* (Galilée, 2001); *Baroque Reason: The Aesthetics of Modernity* (SAGE Publications Ltd, 1994); and *Gramsci and the State* (Lawrence and Wishart 1980). She is currently working on a catalogue for the exhibition "The Metamorphoses of the Virtual: 100 Years of Art and Freedom," an independent pavilion at the 2013 Venice Biennale.

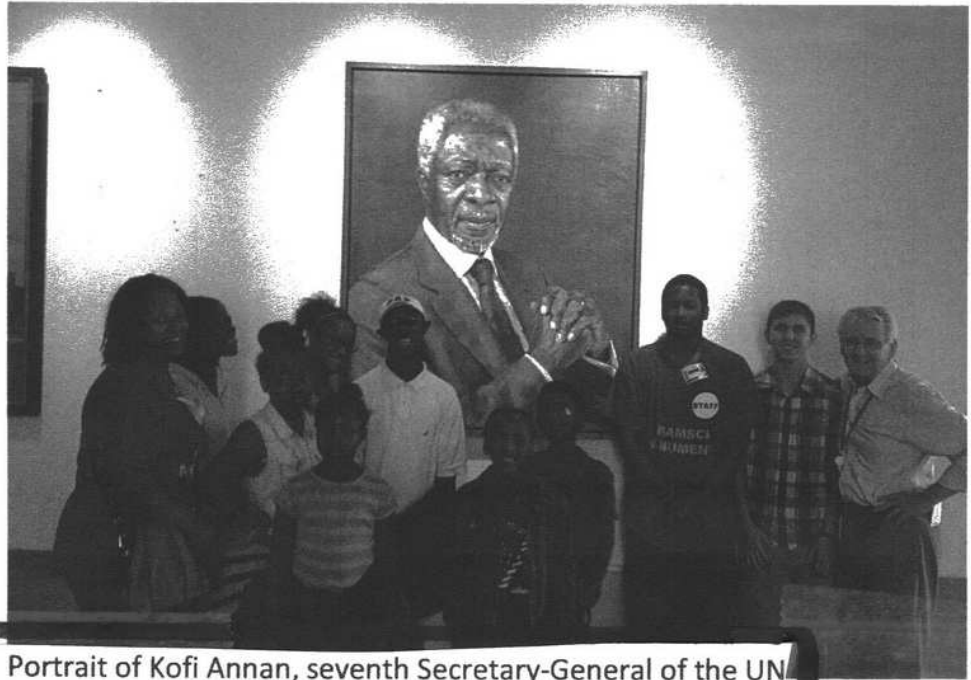
# A DAILY LECTURE WRITTEN BY MARCUS STEINWEG

**62nd Lecture at the Gramsci Monument, The Bronx, NYC: 31st August 2013**  
**YOU ARE TERRIBLY NORMAL!**  
**Marcus Steinweg**

1. I want to focus on normality.
2. What does normality mean?
3. How to be normal?
4. How not to be normal?
5. It looks like normality is not a normal thing.
6. Normality could be a challenge.
7. It could be even an exception.
8. Nowadays everyone focuses on the exception.
9. What if the real exception lies in the horror of the normal?
10. Could it be that the generalized privilege of the exception has the precise function to avoid contact with the normal?
11. If someone says to someone "YOU ARE TERRIBLY NORMAL!" what does he mean by saying that?



# FIELD TRIP: VISIT TO THE U.N. HEADQUARTERS



Portrait of Kofi Annan, seventh Secretary-General of the UN



Model of UN peacekeeper checkpoint



AK-47 Assault Rifle turned into a functional guitar by former paramilitary soldiers in Colombia



bomb-sniffing dog!

# FIELD TRIP: VISIT TO THE U.N. HEADQUARTERS

## Did you know?" Facts about the United Nations

- There are 193 member countries of the UN. South Sudan became the latest addition.
- Although the United Nations headquarters are located in New York City, the land is international territory.
- The five permanent members of the Security Council are: the United States, United Kingdom, China, France, and Russia.
- The U.N. has six official languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish. This includes the languages of the five permanent members of the Security Council, plus Spanish (included because the largest number of member states speak Spanish), plus Arabic (included after the 1973 oil crisis). The U.N. has two working languages: English and French.
- The United Nations' peacekeeping and conflict prevention programs have decreased armed conflicts worldwide by 40% since the end of the Cold War. (Human Security Report, 2005)



Façade of United Nations Headquarters, New York City



THANK YOU, THANK YOU  
GERALD AND LIAM DALY!

United Nations Flag



# RESIDENT OF THE DAY



**HECTOR PEÑA**

**RICE T.S.**