



Gramsci - Boggess - (P. 2)

Hegemony + WH

No Ideology  
Change

The 2nd chapter, however, is where Boggess is beginning to conceptualize everything. He does introduce you, however, to Gramsci's original interpretation of hegemony, and the 3rd PCI Congress in Leone in 1926, and he is also good in contrasting Gramsci's view of consciousness and hegemony from Lukacs' reified consciousness: "In fact, Gramsci found that disequilibrium rather than ideological stability was the rule for most of European history" (p.40). He also singles out Gramsci's greater concern with women's struggles against patriarchal oppression, which definitely shows that though the family is definitely one more way of keeping the ideological domination of the proletariat and especially the women, it is by no means total. When Boggess, however, tries to draw a parallel to HM's One-Dimensional Man, he's off the deep end.

War of position

On pp.52-53, Boggess brings in the first reference to the dichotomy between 'war of position' and 'war of movement', as different ways of saying 'organic' and 'conjunctural': "Whereas the Leninist focus on the 'conjunctural', or 'war of movement', was in some respects successful in the case of Tsarist Russia, where 'the state was everything and civil society nothing', a new strategy would be needed in the West to take account of the greater ideological 'enrichment' of the bourgeoisie..." (p.53).

In Chapter 3, on Mass Consciousness and Revolution, he has a quotation from Gramsci before he was a Communist (1916) that is magnificent and shows him as a revolutionary: "This means that every revolution has been preceded by an intense labor of social criticism, of cultural penetration and diffusion" (p.59). The beginning of the tendencies once the CP gets born in 1921, between the sectarianism of Bordiga, the right-wingism of Tasca, and Gramsci's position which finally gets free of both of them and becomes the dominant one, starts at that Leone Congress, whereupon his return to Italy, he gets arrested. (Look up pp.63-64 especially.) pp 82-3

GRAMSCI - Dodds - 3

*Antonio Gramsci*  
*Turn Gramsci*

Ch. 4 is the best chapter in the sense that there is not as much known about the factory councils as there is about Gramsci's prison terms, and its that Red Year of 1920 that Gramsci not only leads the factory councils and considers both the spontaneity and the organization inseparable from the thought, but he at once fights bureaucratization (p.93).

I will have to take a 2nd look at Ch. 5, which deals with "The Prince," but I'll be darned if I can get very interested in Machiavelli. Perhaps (p.114), where he speaks on the counter-hegemony ideological struggle that "Gramsci was able to impart coherent theoretical meaning to both the Machivellian dream of a unified Italy and the principles of primary politics with the quotation from Gramsci's FW, pp.252-3, will aid me in understanding the ~~idea~~ "dual perspective" and The Prince. Surely the question of totality from both Hegel and Marx is central, and is in Gramsci when it's a question of spontaneity and organization the battle of ideas and that decisive turning point in history, the Russian Revolution. But why the heck does it have to be projected through The Prince?

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GRAMSCI - Perry Anderson

This Special Issue #100 of NLR has a serious 75-page study of Gramsci. "The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci" by Perry Anderson, its editor. But it is ~~not~~ so "total" that it is difficult to single out what is central and how he does manage to have not only endless talk of "the whole theory of the two strategies" but also Luxemburg. I cannot see, however, ~~how~~ what she is talking about--the difference between revolution and parliamentarism-- is related to Gramsci's "war of position" and "war of movement." Since he relies on RL's crucial article against Kautsky--"What Next?"

*See the issue #100*

Luxemburg, who Gramsci reproached for her "mysticism" in his central text on East and West, grasped with immediate lucidity the logic of Kautsky's contrast between the two zones. The polemic between them on just this issue in 1910 was precisely the occasion for her historic political break with Kautsky, four years in advance of Lenin, who only understood it when war arrived in 1914. Luxemburg denounced the "whole theory of two strategies" and its "crude contrast between revolutionary Russia and parliamentary Western Europe," as a rationalization of Kautsky's refusal of mass strikes and his capitulation to electoralism. She rejected Kautsky's description of the Russian Revolution of (1905) "The picture of a chaotic, 'amorphous and primitive' strike of the Russian workers... is a flowering fantasy." It was not political backwardness but advance that distinguished the Russian proletarian within the European working class. The Russian strikes and mass strikes, which gave ~~unity~~ form to so audacious a creation as the famous Petersburg Society of Workers' Delegates for the unitary leadership of the whole movement in the enormous Empire, were so little 'amorphous and primitive' that in daring, strength, solidarity, persistence, material achievements, progressive goals and organizational successes, they can ~~only~~ calmly be set by the side of any 'West European' trade-union movement." (NLR, p.64)

*RL*

Now let's return to the beginning, p.5, where Anderson at once begins with the concept of hegemony and the 1960s which finally brought Gramsci seriously to the attention of the Left. He seems to think that the archaic and inadequate apparatus of Croce and Machiavelli as Gramsci's framework ~~is~~ is the same as the "old vocabulary" of Marx beginning with Hegel and Smith, and Lenin with Plekhanov and Kautsky.

which is quite absurd, since in the case of Marx, it was the actual roots that remain and were transcended, and in the case of Lenin, that was definitely not archaic since it had to deal with those people. What is valuable in Anderson's analysis is that his takes place in the framework of today - Eurocommunism.

His 1st subheading starts with the Metamorphosis of Hegemony but actually roots it in the question of "position and maneuver" and even "more actually" really is talking about "the superstructures of civil society are like the trench systems of modern warfare." (p.9)

On pp.15-25, is on hegemony, but actually only pp.15 and 16 give the historic background of its use, as a political slogan which was used 1st <sup>hegemony</sup> used by Plekhanov 1883-4, but actually Plekhanov used the term "domination" and it was a way of trying to get political freedom and establish a new concept of how all classes but the proletariat were politically impotent. And thus the polemic was against economism. It's Axelrod who used the word hegemony in 1901, and it's Lenin who begins to use the word hegemony "real hegemony of the working class" in a letter to Plekhanov (Coll. Works, Vol. XXXIV, p.56). In other words, what Lenin is talking about is the hegemony of the proletariat in a bourgeois revolution. ~~Such the expression fell into disuse with the revolution.~~ (Cf. "my" HRR, p.315-316).

Anderson seems to think that <sup>Gramsci's</sup> use of the word hegemony stemmed from the first two ~~of~~ Congresses when the slogan hegemony was internationalized as the way the proletariat would win over the semi-proletariat and the peasantry, and this sounds correct. Still, in Gramsci's PN the concept is used in a multitude of ways. What Gramsci definitely included which was new was culture, that is to say, that it wasn't just the Party that would help the proletariat in its ascendancy over other classes, but the battle of ideas. He quotes Gramsci (see PN, pp.181-182, esp. regarding the union not only of

"not only of but also in the of  
of unity."

(Anderson refers to the smychka controversy and wrongly translates it as "yoking," where Lenin and LT would have been very, very careful to talk about fusion of proletarian and peasant as a very important historic fusion and not as yoking.) (p.19)

On p. 20, Anderson gets to Gramsci's extension of the concept of hegemony, from its being a perspective in a workers' state of worker and peasant, to that of the working class in a bourgeois revolution against a feudal order, and to the mechanism of bourgeois rule over the working class in a stabilized capitalist society. Gramsci... now employed the concept of hegemony for a differential analysis of the structures of bourgeois power in the West. (p.20)

It is here that dual perspective is also brought in, and the reference is to the manner in which Gramsci used the dual nature of Machiavelli's centaurs.

Anderson claims that this emphasis on culture produced "a new Marxist theory of intellectuals" (p.21), which I deny categorically. The only point that seems to me to have any relationship to what everyone is trying to drag out of poor Gramsci is that "civil society" i.e. democracy in the West does permit more room for the battle of ideas, especially when you're not ready to challenge the overthrow of the state.

(RD: Far from being new, except as a term, Eurocommunism or more precisely put, the reduction of Gramsci's revolutionary theory, the philosophy of Praxis, to class compromise directly ~~at~~ post-WWII, were the Left Socialists. Anderson refers to a PSI theorist Giuseppe Tamburrano in a 1963 publication, but I am sure that is exactly what motivated many in 1947-1959 when I was there.)

On p.30, he has a good critique of Ernest Mandel's Late Capitalism, though he states it very mildly by saying that EM's concept of the cult of the experts is a "misconception" but in fact it's a damn sight more than a misconception, as it shows that he, EM, is the one that believes in technological rationality's appeal: "Belief in the omnipotence of technology is the specific form of bourgeois ideology in late capitalism." (LC, p.501)

PA quotes Gramsci (p. 33): "In reality civil society and State are one and the same." (EPN, p. 160) in the section on "Some theoretical and practical aspects of 'economism'" - from Modern Prince

The theory of intellectual can also be found beginning with p. 44 under the subheading "The Balance Between Coercion and Consent." I'm sorry I said this because it turns out that though he calls Gramsci's theory of intellectuals as the most important and that it actually has "no equal within Marxism" (ftn. 84, p. 44), he himself doesn't develop it! That failure to develop this so-called <sup>theory</sup> ~~concept~~ of intellectuals also means that his next subheading, "A Comparison Between East and West," comes down only to a question of factionalism when <sup>Gramsci</sup> ~~he~~ begins to fight with Bordiga (p. 52).

Subhead IV "Strategy of War and Position" -- again

In part, this relates to the adventuristic 1921 actions of the German CP which Lenin attacked as infantile, and LT called a purely mechanical conception of proletarian revolution (p. 57). When Gramsci takes up this criticism of Lenin's with which he totally agrees, he evidently used the expression "war of maneuver." This reference to the March action as "war of maneuver" (p. 58) which Gramsci himself calls "war of movement" and contrasts it to "war of position." See EPN, p. 232 what he is trying to establish, it is very clear, is the need for a united front with other tendencies, and it continues because he's so opposed to the third period. (Kautsky called it "war of attrition" and it was directed against RL's general strike and had nothing on earth to do with anything they're discussing here, either in time or concept, so I have no idea why he's dragging in RL's 1910 fight with KK.)

*Yellen p. 65 is a beautiful  
Q from RL vs KK's "strategy"  
attention AND putting into "our pocket the  
Key to this creature his situation" "the  
Strategy"*



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about  
(The argument ~~with~~ RL and the 1905 Révolution goes on for more than 4 pages (pp.64-69))

The conclusion finally comes on pp.75-78. Anderson refers back again to the lessons of the debate of RL and KK, and the contrast between Lukacs and Gramsci, and is all busy with proletarian strategy which, if it's reduced to a war of maneuver "is to ~~be~~ forget the unity and efficacy of the bourgeois state and to pit the working class in a series of lethal adventures." What I want to know is when in the hell did Gramsci ever do anything like that!

And to conclude from 75 pages that it is not an archaic debate but has relevance for today, and have the climax of this relevance expressed in Régis Debray "in a famous paragraph of the constant difficulty of being contemporary with our present" WHEN REGIS DEBRAY IS THE STRATEGIST NOW FOR MITTERAND. REALLY DOES SHOW HOW CONTEMPORARY ANDERSON IS ON THE EVE OF HIS BECOMING A TOTAL TROTSKYIST.

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