
International Gramsci Society

Newsletter

August 1996
Number 6

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Editorial

The vitality and richness of Gramscian studies continue to manifest themselves across the world in a variety of ways. Nothing is more important for the dissemination and the deepening knowledge of Gramsci's work and thought than direct access to his writings. It is, therefore, especially gratifying to note the numerous editions of Gramsci's works that have been recently published or are currently being prepared for publication.

In Italy, the appearance of Antonio Santucci's new critical edition of the *Lettere dal carcere*—which in many respects parallels Frank Rosengarten's edition of the *Letters from Prison*—represents a singular milestone in Gramscian studies. In Germany, where the volumes of the complete critical edition of the *Gefängnishefte* (edited by Klaus Bochmann and Wolfgang Fritz Haug) continue to appear with admirable regularity, a new initiative has been undertaken by Ursula Apitzsch and her collaborators—they have already produced the first of four projected volumes of Gramsci's *Gefängnis Briefe* that will include the texts (accompanied by a critical apparatus) of all the letters written by and to Gramsci during the years of his detention. In France, the final volume of Robert Paris' critical edition of the *Cahiers de Prison* was published by Gallimard in March. The second volume of Joseph Buttigieg's complete critical edition in English of the *Prison Notebooks* will be published by Columbia University Press in October, 1996.

Gramsci's presence is also quite widespread in "cyberspace." Anyone scanning the internet in search of Gramsci is likely to come up with numerous interesting items. One such item (Charlie Bertsch's article on the "discovery" of Gramsci by the guru of the American right, Rush Limbaugh) is reproduced in this issue. Recognizing the immense value of computer technology and the global reach of the internet system, John Cammett has established a website entirely devoted to "Resources on Gramsci" which, among other things, provides researchers with extremely convenient and speedy access to an exhaustive and regularly updated Gramscian bibliography. The fully integrated "electronic" bibliography, with its highly sophisticated search engines, enables its users to conduct searches of much greater complexity and specificity than is possible when utilizing the printed versions. The website also provides access to the complete text of previous issues of the IGS *Newsletter*, as well as to other useful information and links. (See p. 10 of this issue for details.) In the meantime, Dario Ragazzini is in the final stages of preparing a computer based version of the *Quaderni*.

Equally indicative of the keen interest in Gramsci's work and thought is the founding of new "Gramsci Society" groups in different countries. This issue contains information about the establishment of the Italian section of the IGS which has already been very active. In addition to a conference in Naples, our Italian colleagues organized a formal "presentation" of Antonio Santucci's edition of the *Lettere* which was held in the hall of the Library of the Chamber of Deputies in Rome. Speakers at the event included Valentino Gerratana, Giuseppe Fiori, Dacia Maraini, Rossana Rossanda, and Enzo Santarelli. The IGS-Italia is now planning a conference to be held in Naples in 1997 to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of Gramsci's death.

In Mexico, the "Sociedad Gramsci" was established with its legal seat at the Centro de Estudios del Movimiento Obrero y Socialista in Mexico City, and its research center at the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco. The document of its constitution is also reproduced in this issue of the *Newsletter*. Plans are also being made to establish a German section of the IGS at a conference on Gramsci that will be held in Berlin on 18-20 April 1997 (for detailed information see pp. 41-43 of this *Newsletter*). Furthermore, we have received news from Maria Clara Andrade in Brazil of plans to establish the "Núcleo de Estudos Antonio Gramsci" as the Brazilian section of the International Gramsci Society.

The formation of national or regional sections of the International Gramsci Society can be of great help in facilitating the dissemination and exchange of information about Gramsci and his work on a global scale. The benefits of such organizations can already be seen in this issue of the *Newsletter*—the Italian section was compiled by members of the IGS-Italia. Special thanks are due to Guido Liguori for his coordinating activities, and especially for furnishing the bibliographical update. We hope that in the future we will be provided with similar valuable materials for publication by other national and regional Gramsci societies and study groups.

Gramsci on the World Wide Web

John Cammett has created a World Wide Web page entitled:

Resources on Antonio Gramsci

The resources now available through this new electronic site include:

a) an online searchable version of the complete *Bibliografia gramsciana*. This research bibliography, which comprises 10,350 items, combines and integrates the two previously published bibliographical volumes—the *Bibliografia gramsciana: 1922-1988* by John M. Cammett (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1991) and *Bibliografia gramsciana: Supplement Updated to 1993* by John M. Cammett and Maria Luisa Righi (Rome: Fondazione Istituto Gramsci, 1995). The published volumes were sponsored and supported by the Fondazione Istituto Gramsci in Rome.

b) an Introduction and Appendices to the bibliography

c) the complete text of all past issues of the International Gramsci Society *Newsletter*

d) a link to the home page of the Fondazione Istituto Gramsci in Rome

The electronic address of **Resources on Antonio Gramsci** is:

<http://www.soc.qc.edu/gramsci/index.html>

LETTERE DAL CARCERE

Antonio Santucci's new critical edition of Gramsci's prison letters provokes a heated controversy and a lawsuit

One would have to go back several decades to find a period in which the name of Antonio Gramsci appeared as frequently and prominently in the Italian press as it did during the first six months of this year. What triggered all the attention and the accompanying commotion was the news that the Sellerio publishing house of Palermo planned to publish a new two-volume complete critical edition of *Lettere dal carcere* edited by Antonio Santucci.

A brief, unsigned article in the 11 January 1996 issue of the weekly news magazine *Panorama* contained a sketchy report on two highly significant projects directly related to the publication and dissemination of Gramsci's best known texts, the *Prison Notebooks* and the *Letters from Prison*. The *Notebooks*, the article reported, would soon enter "cyberspace" thanks to the efforts of Dario Ragazzini who has been constructing an electronic edition of the *Quaderni*, complete with hypertext. (Information about this important project has appeared before in previous issues of the IGS *Newsletter*.) Such an edition, which would be of incalculable value to Gramsci scholars—by, potentially, giving them access to the entire text of the *Notebooks* in the form of a cd-rom and/or through the internet—is in the final stages of preparation. The other project on which the *Panorama* article reported, namely Santucci's new edition of the *Lettere*, appeared to be, at first sight, a traditional work of philological scholarship by a well-established and widely respected Gramscian specialist that would be published in conventional book form. Yet, it was Santucci's edition that attracted all the attention and caused a storm of controversy that culminated in a lawsuit—for reasons that seemed to have more to do with "property" rights than with philological accuracy or scholarly integrity.

The need for a new complete Italian critical edition of Gramsci's *Lettere dal carcere* has been evident for quite some time. More than three decades have passed since the appearance of Elsa Fubini and Sergio Caprioglio's edition, published by Einaudi in 1965 and last reprinted in 1975. In the meantime, a substantial number of additional letters have been discovered. As the *Panorama* article pointed out, a striking anomaly existed: the most complete and reliable text of Gramsci's prison letters was available not in Italian but, rather, in English translation—i.e., Frank

Rosengarten's complete two-volume critical edition of the *Letters from Prison* published by Columbia University Press in 1994. Santucci's edition would rectify the anomaly by including all the prison letters that have come to light thus far, correcting the errors of transcription and restoring the excised parts in the Fubini and Caprioglio edition, and providing a critical apparatus that incorporates the insights and discoveries made by Gramsci scholars over the past thirty years. There was one more novelty, however, connected with Santucci's edition; a novelty that had little to do with its contents, but that immediately seized the attention of the *Panorama* reporter. Santucci's edition of the *Lettere dal carcere* was being published in Palermo by Sellerio Editore; whereas, previously, the major editions of Gramsci's texts had all been brought out first by Einaudi of Turin.

"Einaudi is, thus, no longer Gramsci's publisher," the *Panorama* reporter writes. He then quotes a statement by Elvira Sellerio, the owner of the Sicilian publishing house: "We have not taken anything away from anybody. The [publishing] rights are in the public domain, and the family has never made any claims. Besides, Gramsci belongs to everyone, and we are ready to publish him, even if we lose money doing it." Before long, Sellerio's decision to publish Gramsci's letters made headlines in the cultural pages of the daily newspapers. The title of an article by Dino Messina, in the *Corriere della Sera* of 19 January, declared: "*Lettere dal carcere: Gramsci cambia editore*" (*Letters from Prison: Gramsci Changes Publisher*). The sub-heading of the same article explained, "L'opera uscirà da Sellerio con una ventina di scritti inediti. Einaudi l'aveva pubblicata nel '47 e nel '65: il problema dei diritti" (The Work Will Be Published by Sellerio with Some Twenty Previously Unpublished Texts. Einaudi Had Published it in '45 and '65: The Question of Rights). Messina opens his article by recalling that in 1947 Palmiro Togliatti decided to publish Gramsci's letters with Einaudi (an independent publisher with no ties to the Italian Communist Party), rather than by the Party's press, precisely because he wanted to underline the fact that, as Croce himself had affirmed, "Gramsci belonged to all Italians." Since that time, all major editions of Gramsci's work bore Einaudi's imprint—although it is important to remember that the PCI's publishing house, Editori Riuniti, also brought out less expensive (but reliable) editions of a great number of Gramsci's writings. In any case, for Messina, the publication of Gramsci's prison letters by Sellerio "marks the end of an epoch" and "it raises the question of publications rights. Who owns the rights of the founder of the Italian Communist Party? The ex-PCI? Gramsci's son, Giuliano, who still lives in Moscow?" Marini quotes Santucci as saying: "What inspired me to undertake this project was the publication by Columbia University Press of Frank Rosengarten's complete edition of the *Letters from Prison*—a richer and more up-to-date edition than Einaudi's 1965 edition." Similar observations were made in a short unsigned article in the cultural pages of *La Repubblica*, 19 January 1996. There, too, it is pointed out that

"the first thing that strikes the eye is the publisher: Elvira Sellerio and not Giulio Einaudi, historically the publisher of Gramsci's writings."

In no time at all, the question of publication rights exploded into an acrimonious frontal confrontation. Bruno Gravagnuolo's article—"Lite sulle lettere di Antonio Gramsci: Il direttore della Fondazione diffide la Sellerio dal pubblicare gli scritti inediti" (A Row Over Gramsci's Letters: The Director of the Fondazione [Istituto Gramsci of Rome] Warns Sellerio Not To Publish Previously Unpublished Writings)—in *L'Unità* of 20 January 1996, quoted a "very severe warning written personally by Giuseppe Vacca", the director of the Fondazione Istituto Gramsci, that stated, among other things: "there has been no relationship whatsoever between the publisher Sellerio and the Fondazione Gramsci which holds the rights to the letters in question. . . . I am, therefore, compelled to engage a lawyer on behalf of the Fondazione in order to take legal action against the publisher in Palermo." Gravagnuolo also interviewed Santucci for his article and reported him as questioning the Fondazione's claims to exclusive publication rights: "After 1984, the PCI turned over the papers and other materials to the Fondazione; but who is in a position to affirm that Gramsci's legacy is indeed the property of the PCI-PDS?" Gramsci, as Gravagnuolo pointed out, did not leave a will. Santucci, furthermore, explained that although his edition contained some letters that had not been previously published in Italy, those same letters had already appeared in English translation in Rosengarten's edition. An additional complication in the whole affair, Gravagnuolo reported, was the fact that the Istituto Gramsci of Sicily helped finance Sellerio's edition.

Four other dailies—*La Stampa*, *Il Messaggero*, *La Repubblica*, and the *Corriere della Sera*—carried articles on the legal dispute in their issues of 20 January. They all reported that Vittorio Bo, the director of Einaudi, strongly agreed with and fully supported Giuseppe Vacca's determination to take legal action aimed at blocking Sellerio from publishing the *Lettere*. The article in *La Repubblica*—"Caso Gramsci, le lettere finiscono in tribunale" (The Gramsci Case: The Letters End Up in Court)—opens on a note of lamentation: "What gloom; Gramsci ends up in the law courts. In the name of 'copyright.' Who owns the publishing rights of the great Sardinian intellectual? Around this question, feelings are heating up. And the *Lettere dal carcere* end up in the hands of lawyers." Dino Messina, writing for the *Corriere della Sera*, quoted Vacca as saying: "Where did Dr. Santucci, a former collaborator at the Fondazione Gramsci and editor of the Sellerio volume, get hold of certain writings, such as certain letters by Tania Schucht and Piero Sraffa? I have to infer that he appropriated them arbitrarily when he worked for us." Vacca, moreover, pointed out to Messina, that his objection to Santucci's edition was not only legal but also philological. According to Vacca, the Fondazione Istituto Gramsci has been working for a number of years on a more complete edition (prepared by Chiara Daniele and Aldo Natoli) that would also include the letters written to Gramsci by his sister-in-law Tania Schucht, his wife Giulia Schucht, and his

close friend Piero Sraffa. To all of this, Messina reported, Santucci responded as follows: "I never appropriated anything. The letters to which Vacca refers are reproduced from two books published by Editori Riuniti—Aldo Natoli's *Antigone e il prigioniero* (1990), and *Lettere a Tania per Gramsci* (1991), edited by my mentor, Valentino Gerratana. . . . For heaven's sake! I am not a lawyer and I cannot dispense legal opinions; but the publication rights would belong to Gramsci's relatives, if they ever claimed them. In that case, they should be the ones asking for compensation now—and not from a small publisher but from Einaudi which has been publishing Gramsci's work since 1947." As for Vacca's argument that a truly complete edition should also include the letters written to Gramsci, Santucci told Messina: "Gramsci's *Lettere dal carcere* constitutes an autonomous literary work recognized all over the world. . . . I am convinced, more than ever, that the autonomous literary character of the work should be preserved." The article in *Il Messaggero*, by Renato Minore, stressed the oddity of the situation in which the Fondazione Istituto Gramsci of Rome was seeking to suppress a project funded by the Istituto Gramsci in Sicily. A similar point was made in the article in *La Stampa* where Elvira Sellerio is quoted as saying: "I must point out that the edition of Gramsci's *Lettere* is being brought out with the full consent of—indeed, it is being sponsored by—the Istituto Gramsci of Palermo. Furthermore, I find it incredible that a work whose last edition is twenty years old is now being defended as if it were a matter of life and death; just because a publisher has decided to offer it anew to the Italian public."

The following day, 21 January 1996, Simonetta Fiori shifted the focus of the controversy to Moscow with an article in *La Repubblica* that appeared under the heading, "Giuliano Gramsci: 'Il copyright di papà? Beh, ora che ci penso . . .'" (Giuliano Gramsci: 'My Father's Copyright? Well, Now That I Think About It . . .'). Fiori had a telephone conversation with Antonio Gramsci's son, Giuliano, who still lives in Moscow. When told about the forthcoming new edition of the *Lettere*, Giuliano's initial reaction was enthusiastic: "How wonderful! I am delighted that the young are still reading Gramsci." Fiori admits, in her article, that she found it difficult to explain to Giuliano Gramsci that things were not that simple. "How does one go about explaining to him that within the family of Italian Gramscists . . .one could hear the loud sound of sabre rattling, in the name of copyright? How does one go about telling him that the director of the Fondazione Gramsci, an institute that is funded for the purpose of disseminating Gramsci's writings, wants to block the publication of the new edition by Sellerio because of a question about publishing rights?" When asked directly who owns Gramsci's copyright, Giuliano responded: "I have never received a penny. Yes, sometimes I thought about it. . . . Ultimately, the heirs are myself and the widow of my brother, Delio, a colonel in the Soviet navy who died at the age of 57. But I never raised the issue, I never wanted to create controversies. . . . So much time has passed. Those were different times. . . . A delicate question, you know; the Party . . . It is now more than fifty years since my father died." At this point, Simonetta Fiori informed Giuliano Gramsci that according to the new

Italian law, the rights are protected for seventy years; in Gramsci's case, then, they do not lapse until 2007. To which he responded: "In that case I should make a visit to Italy." Fiori also interviewed Elvira Sellerio and asked her whether she was willing to pay royalties to Gramsci's heir. "I would be happy to do it," said the Sicilian publisher, "I am ready to give him all that he is entitled to. After all, in this entirely sad affair, I never wanted to run roughshod over anyone. Perhaps I should have made a phone call to my friend Giulio Einaudi. But I was so proud of the fact that I'd be the publisher of the *Lettere*."

Articles on the controversial edition continued to appear in various newspapers, even though there was nothing really new to report. The conflict was deadlocked and the asperity of the accusations that were being levelled made it evident that no out-of-court settlement could be hoped for. In an interview published by *Nuova Sardegna* (24 January 1996), Giuseppe Vacca went so far as to label Sellerio's publication "a pirated edition." The only justifiably new edition possible, Vacca insisted, would be one that included all the correspondence by and to Gramsci during his prison years. In Vacca's view, even Rosengarten's American edition is not really "new." On 27 January 1996, *L'Unità* devoted an entire page to the polemic. One large section was devoted to an article by Roberto Roscani on the project of Aldo Natoli and Chiara Danieli who were entrusted by the Fondazione Gramsci with the task of editing the entire correspondence of Gramsci's prison years. By and large, the article reiterates the theses that Natoli had advanced six years ago in his *Antigone e il prigioniero*. On the other part of the same page, *L'Unità* published an interview with Antonio Santucci by Guido Liguori. By way of an introduction, Liguori recalled that Santucci had previously edited two volumes of Gramsci's writings, both of which were published by Einaudi—one, a volume of pre-prison writings, *L'Ordine Nuovo: 1919-1920*, co-edited with Valentino Gerratana was published in 1987; the other, a critical edition of Gramsci's pre-prison letters, *Lettere: 1908-1926*, was brought out in 1992. "How, then," Liguori asked, "did Sellerio enter the picture?" Santucci's answer: "As I said, the last time Einaudi reprinted the *Lettere* (in an edition already published in 1965) was twenty years ago. I remember very clearly that Elsa Fubini, who was the curator of Gramsci's letters at the Istituto Gramsci and who co-edited the 1965 edition with Sergio Caprioglio (who worked at Einaudi until some years ago), repeatedly suggested a new edition of the *Lettere*, but nothing was done. Einaudi's edition of the "Opere di Gramsci" [i.e. the multi-volume edition of Gramsci's complete works of which the two volumes edited by Santucci are a part], as all scholars know, has been dormant for years. The pre-prison writings, for example, are stalled in 1920, with the 1987 volume edited by Gerratana and me. Perhaps, the Turin publishing house, like several other publishers I have contacted, regards Gramsci's work as something burdensome, unprofitable, for which there is no market. Therefore, I looked for someone willing to subsidize, at least in part, the book that I wanted to publish . . ."

The connection with Moscow was kept open by the journalist Chiara Valentini who published an interview with Giuliano Gramsci in *L'Espresso* of 2 February 1996 (that reached the newstands a week earlier). In the course of the interview, Giuliano Gramsci reminisces about the day when the trunk containing his father's possessions was delivered and opened at the house in Moscow where he lived with his mother and his older brother Delio. After the war broke out and Germany threatened to invade Russia, Giuliano recalls, Giulia Schucht consigned Gramsci's manuscripts to Togliatti. In order to safeguard them, Togliatti placed them in a protected place in the autonomous Republic of Bashkir. When Togliatti returned to Italy in 1944, he took Gramsci's manuscripts with him. "Did he also carry with him any document from your mother, the legitimate inheritor, ceding the rights to the PCI?," asked Chiara Valentini. "At the Fondazione Gramsci, they have searched the archives from top to bottom in the hope of finding this piece of paper; but in vain. Do you know anything about it?" Giuliano Gramsci responded, saying: "I do not believe my mother ever signed such a document." "At the Fondazione Gramsci, however," Valentini went on, "they say that there exists a letter from Eugenia Schucht to Dimitrov, the Comintern secretary, permitting the use of Gramsci's writings." "I know nothing about it," said Giuliano; "we, the children were kept in the dark about these matters at that time. To be sure, my aunt Eugenia was the most 'official' individual for she had been the secretary of Krupskaya, Lenin's widow. . . . I want to be very clear about this. I have no desire to enter into a conflict with the Fondazione Gramsci which has inherited my father's papers. My family owes a debt of gratitude to Togliatti and the Italian Party. All my connections in Italy have been through the Fondazione Gramsci and I have warm feelings and respect for Giuseppe Vacca. . . . With regards to Einaudi, however, things are different. I do not want to create scandals; but I must say that in all these years I was never approached by anyone from Einaudi—it is as if we, the heirs, did not exist. I am not seeking to punish Mr. Einaudi, but his behavior has not been proper. . . . I will come to Italy to look after my rights and the rights of Delio's widow, especially since I have been told that with the new regulations of the European Economic Community the rights no longer lapse after fifty years but after seventy years from the author's death. Among other things, I have learned that the Einaudi publishing house has now become part of Berlusconi's empire. It seems paradoxical to me that my father's publication rights have ended up in possession of that gentleman. I find it difficult to understand what is going on; but I believe that I should do something." Valentini concluded the interview by asking Giuliano Gramsci whether he agreed that Sellerio should publish the new edition of the *Lettere*; to which he responded: "I cannot but be pleased. For years, a great silence has enveloped my father's work. Then this explosion occurred. I hope that, at the very least, it will help bring attention back to his works." Giulio Einaudi responded to Giuliano Gramsci's comments with an open letter published in the form of an article under the title "Caro Giuliano per noi Gramsci è una bandiera" in *L'Unità*

of 31 January 1996. In it, Giulio Einaudi recalled all the works by and on Gramsci brought out by his publishing house over the years and reiterated his determination to remain Gramsci's publisher.

Shortly afterwards, an article by Rossana Rossanda in *Il Manifesto* of 16 February revived an old controversy that was only tangentially related to the polemic over publication rights. Rossanda questioned whether the Fondazione Gramsci held or was aware of the existence of unpublished documents related to Gramsci that placed Togliatti and the PCI in an embarrassing light. Is there reason to believe, Rossanda queried, that Togliatti and others had an interest in scuttling efforts to obtain Gramsci's release from prison? Articles on this issue appeared in *La Stampa*, *La Repubblica*, and *Il Corriere della Sera* on 17 February. Giuseppe Vacca responded with a long article, "La verità su Gramsci" (The Truth on Gramsci), in *L'Unità*, three days later, wherein he gave an account of all the relevant documents gathered and held by the Fondazione Gramsci. He stressed, among other things, that all the materials in the archives of the Fondazione were available for consultation by all interested scholars. Nonetheless, the questions raised by Rossanda continued to intrigue the press. Articles keeping this aspect of the intense polemic alive appeared in *Il Manifesto* of 29 February 1996, *Il Corriere della Sera* of 29 February and 1 March, and *L'Espresso* of 8 March 1996.

During March and April the controversy subsided as the question of rights was being deliberated by a court of law. Gramsci reappeared in the headlines on 1 May 1996. "Gramsci, bufera sui diritti" (Gramsci: A Storm Over the Publication Rights) was the big headline in *L'Unità*, where the sub-heading revealed the decision of the court: "Il Tribunale di Palermo dà ragione alla Sellerio: non c'è prova che il copyright sia della Fondazione" (The Court of Palermo Rules in Sellerio's Favor: There Is No Proof that the Copyright Belongs to the Fondazione). On the same day, an article by Dino Messina in *Il Corriere della Sera* appeared under the heading: "Gramsci: niente sequestro, vince la Sellerio" (Gramsci: No Confiscation, Victory for Sellerio). Also on 1 May 1996, *La Repubblica* reported the court's decision under the heading: "Gramsci, primo round alla Sellerio" (Gramsci: Sellerio Wins the First Round). Two days later, on 5 May, *L'Unità* and *La Stampa* each published a small item reporting that the Fondazione Gramsci and the Einaudi publishing house intended to appeal the court's decision. In the meantime, Antonio Santucci's new complete critical edition of the *Lettere dal carcere* published by Sellerio in two handsome boxed volumes was on display in bookstores all across Italy. Sales figures were reported to be very high; in all likelihood, the controversy contributed significantly to the marketing success.

"Sellerio's new edition," Valentino Gerratana wrote in *L'Unità* of 1 May 1996, "fills a void that was created by the fact that over the past few years the old editions had gone out of print and, in many respects, had been rendered obsolete." Now it is to be hoped that Santucci's philological efforts will inspire readers to take a fresh new look at Gramsci's *Letters from Prison*—an extraordinarily poignant document that has been justifiably described as a twentieth-century classic.

GRAMSCI RUSH: LIMBAUGH ON THE “CULTURE WAR”

by

Charlie Bertsch

When you hear about “the Culture War,” ladies and gentlemen, know that this is what it's all about. It's a war of competing ideas and worldviews. On one side, you have people who believe in living by a set of divinely inspired moral absolutes—or, at the very least, they believe that following such a moral code represents the best way to avoid chaos and instability. On the other side, you have people who insist that morality is simply a personal decision. Any attempt to enforce it is viewed as oppression.

Rush Limbaugh's second book of political commentary, *See, I Told You So*, shows every sign of being as big a hit as his first, *The Way Things Ought To Be*. Like Pearl Jam's second album, *Vs.*, it was shipped in massive quantities prior to release—its initial print run of two million copies set a publishing industry record—and rushed to the top of the charts after its first week out in stores. In other words, the book is exactly the sort of “success” American leftists have traditionally dismissed out of hand. Since we at *Bad Subjects* try to fly in the face of conventional leftist wisdom, however, I made a point of picking it up while waiting in an airport this past December. Imagine my surprise when I opened the book to read that “in the early 1900s, an obscure Italian communist by the name of Antonio Gramsci theorized that it would take a 'long march through the institutions' before socialism and relativism would be victorious.” I read on to learn how “Gramsci theorized that by capturing these key institutions and using their power, cultural values would be changed, traditional morals would be broken down, and the stage would be set for the political and economic power of the West to fall” (p.87). I was taken aback and felt much the same way I had two years earlier upon learning that Nirvana's *Nevermind* had topped the Billboard charts. “When did the Left get so big?” I wondered to myself.

I continued reading to find that although "the name Gramsci is certainly not a household name...his name and theories are well known and understood throughout leftist intellectual circles," that "leftist think tanks worship at Gramsci's altar," and that "Gramsci succeeded in defining a strategy for waging cultural warfare -- a tactic that has been adopted by the modern left, and which remains the last great hope for chronic America-bashers" (p.87). After my initial shock, my first intellectual response to Rush's argument was that he was right about a lot of things, but was, for obvious reasons, grossly overestimating the Left's power and influence. I mean, after all, the people who practice the sort of "cultural studies" the Bad Subjects Collective admires really *do* "worship at Gramsci's altar." Famous names in the field like Stuart Hall and Lawrence Grossberg have devoted article after article to updating Gramscian arguments for contemporary situations. Indeed, quite a few of our own articles in *Bad Subjects* have strongly echoed both the style and content of Gramsci's writings. My question, however, was why a best-selling author like Limbaugh felt it necessary to point this out to his public. Why bother with the "obscure Italian communist" and his devotees?

Throughout *See, I Told You So* Rush binds together arguments familiar from his radio and TV shows and *The Way Things Ought To Be* into a comprehensive strategy for the American right. He tries to alarm his readers by arguing that America is moving "toward socialism and statism" because conservatives "have lost control of...cultural institutions" (p.87). He goes on to note that "the left has been very successful because it understands the importance of culture—of framing the debate and influencing the way people think about problems." Rush wants his readers to know that "the Culture War is a bilateral conflict" in which conservatives can take part: "Why don't we simply get in the game and start competing for control of these key cultural institutions? In other words, why not fight back?" In Gramscian terms, Rush is claiming that the liberal left is the "dominant fundamental group" in the sphere of civil society, where the masses are not militarily or legally coerced, but convinced to give their "spontaneous" consent to the "general direction imposed on social life" by that dominant group (*An Antonio Gramsci Reader*, pp. 306-7). He agrees with Gramsci's argument that the power of the ruling class must be understood both as the "direct domination" enforced by state power and the "hegemony" that class wins by achieving the spontaneous consent of the masses in civil society, but shares with many contemporary leftists a desire to emphasize the primacy of "hegemony" over "direct domination." His argument implies that the liberal left is the United States' true ruling class, *regardless of its hold on state power*, because it controls the nation's cultural institutions. What sets him apart from "the so-called 'conservative movement,'" he concludes, is that he does not have "some personal political agenda," and has no "political goal" for his radio and TV shows, books, and newsletter, but only wants to "open people's minds" and "encourage them to be confident in themselves and the principles and values they have always held sacred" (p.88). In other words, he is not interested in

the narrowly-defined field of electoral politics, but the vast plain on which the Culture War is being waged.

About a week ago I was leafing through magazines at a local newsstand and came across an article in a socialist publication offering an explanation of why the “left” was losing the “Culture War.” Curiously, the author's conclusions were a mirror image of Rush's: this time it was the “left” that was losing ground because it had allowed its enemies to take control of cultural institutions. I suddenly realized that it was not only Rush's reference to Gramsci that had shocked me, but the fact that it was embedded in the sort of argument about culture made by leftists who “worship at Gramsci's altar.” What we have in *See, I Told You So* is another example of a conservative learning to beat the left at its own game. Just as pro-lifers have schooled themselves in the aggressively non-violent tactics honed in the 60s and 70s by left-liberal demonstrators for civil rights, environmental causes, and the peace movement, Rush is schooling himself and his readers in the construction of a Gramscian argument about culture while explaining *who Gramsci is and why he is so dangerous*. He is thus acknowledging, perhaps unconsciously, that he has turned Gramsci on his head and made him useful to the right.

This still doesn't adequately explain Rush's intentions in naming Gramsci. Most right-wing movements that have borrowed from the left have tended to do so in a general way, adopting useful tactics without acknowledging any specific source. Rush, on the other hand, informs his readers that he is acquainted with the theoretical source for the notion of “cultural warfare.” Does he want them to know that he is well-read, that he has done his homework? After all, most of them will have never heard of Gramsci. Or does he have some other motive? Superficially, of course, he is merely following in a whole line of red-baiters who seek to impart to a mass audience the secrets they have unearthed about dangerous lefties. On this level, Rush's reference to Gramsci is no different from J. Edgar Hoover's elaboration of Marxist thought in *Masters of Deceit: What the Communist Bosses are Doing to Bring America to its Knees* (1958). What's different about Rush, however, is that, unlike Hoover, he concedes the terms of debate to his enemy's argument. Indeed, throughout large portions of *See, I Told You So*, particularly in chapters like “Are Values Obsolete? Or How to Win the Culture War,” “The Politically Correct Liberal Lexicon,” and “The Many Purposes of Culture,” Rush elaborates a notion of “Culture War” that he admits to having found in the theories of that “obscure Italian communist.”

I think Rush concedes the terms of debate to Gramsci for a very specific reason. As a leftist, the most frustrating thing about reading *See, I Told You So* is the way leftists and liberals are lumped together as “left liberals.” “Wait a minute,” I kept wanting to say, “we leftists spend the vast majority of our time offering scathing critiques of liberal ideology: how can you pretend that we're part of the same bloc as liberals?” Now obviously in the realm of electoral politics the differences between liberals and leftists are glaring: vast numbers of liberals hold political office; all

but a few leftists do not. In the world of culture, on the other hand, the distinction is a lot blurrier. Self-proclaimed leftists *do* have positions in cultural institutions like NPR, PBS, the movie and music industry, and, above all else, universities. They frequently share the same taste-preferences with liberals: glossy, expensive paperbacks -- think Vintage -- by multicultural and Modernist authors that are the wrong size for the shelves at Waldenbooks or B.Dalton; folk and “world” music; natural fibers and other L.L. Bean-ware; and nouvelle or ethnic cuisine of the sort not easy to come by in Peoria. And they often do share with liberals a “moral code” predicated on a tolerance for difference *as such* that actually does aspire to the cultural relativism Rush and his readers fear. By focusing all his attention on the cultural sphere, Rush is thus able to transform mild-mannered liberals into leftists and take advantage of the residues of anti- communism that still saturate American society to discredit liberal ideology.

But he's also able to transform “radical” leftists into liberals, which should give the American left pause. Do we who call ourselves leftists really want to be functionally equivalent to liberals? On the one hand, it would mean that we're winning the Culture War Rush is talking about, the one in which tolerance for difference, heartfelt condescension towards those “poor” oppressed people whose lives make for vivid fiction, and an unwillingness to thwart “diversity” by deeply probing *any* argument because “everything's relative” all *are* winning out over the old ways, however much the right-wing backlash might have slowed them down. On the other hand, however, it would mean that we're letting things be as the ideology of “laissez-faire” capitalism would like us to. So what other options do we have? While there are some aspects of Rush's critique of left-liberalism that a seriously radical left might do well to adopt, there are others that are antithetical to the most fundamental leftist principles: we can't just change sides in the Culture War. What we *could* do, however, would be to work out a position that synthesizes elements of both the right and liberal-left and, yes, I do mean thinking dialectically.

Arguing *against* the educational reformers who transformed the Italian educational system in the early 1900s, Gramsci states in the prison notebooks that the new curricula will bring about a situation in which “we will have rhetorical schools, quite unserious, because the material solidity of what is ‘certain’ will be missing, and what is ‘true’ will be a truth only of words: that is to say, precisely, rhetoric.” He laments the “degeneration in the secondary school” where “previously, the pupils at least acquired a certain ‘baggage’ or ‘equipment’ (according to taste) of concrete facts” but now “the pupil does not bother with concrete facts and fills his head with formulae and words which usually mean nothing to him, and which are forgotten at once” (p.313). Gramsci goes on to argue the virtues of a classical education, noting that “it will always be an effort to learn physical self-discipline and self-control” (p.320) but that such effort is necessary if pupils are to learn the skills serious study requires. This is *not* the argument of the hyper-tolerant liberal-left Rush rails against. Indeed, it actually sounds similar to arguments made by conservatives like Allan Bloom,

Bill Bennett, and Rush himself. But in the end, it is fundamentally irreconcilable with such arguments' intentions, because Gramsci's aim is "to produce a new stratum of intellectuals" from the proletariat in order to make possible the overthrow of capitalism. The point here is that it is quite possible to critique the left-liberal notions Rush attacks without ultimately adopting a conservative position. Just as Rush argues that the left has no monopoly on cultural warfare, we must assert that the right has no monopoly on the "critique of pure tolerance" that questions the virtues of the "freedom" made possible by letting things be.

I could have written an article detailing the ways in which Rush distorts the "facts", noting how he makes the mistake of equating leftists with liberals, how he misrepresents Gramsci by turning him into an atheist above all else, and how he grossly underestimates the power conservatives already have in cultural institutions. This would have been the sort of article Noam Chomsky writes, a rational accounting of the ways in which conservatives distort the truth. And I wouldn't want to argue that there is no place for such an article. However, as members of the Bad Subjects on-line collective recently argued in a thread on Chomsky and intellectuals, there is a way in which the absolute conviction Chomsky has in his own correctness and the confidence with which he debunks mainstream conceptions can come across as self-righteous, or even paranoid, and thereby serve to further discredit the left. Not to mention the fact that, if the right is busy learning from the left, while the left is convinced that the right has nothing to offer, the right is going to end up with a lot more useful knowledge about contemporary society. My conclusion, then, is that serious leftists should borrow from the right in order to transcend it. As you may know, this is not a new thesis for *Bad Subjects*. The editor's column in issue #1, Steven Rubio's "Dan Quayle Was Right," our manifesto in issue #7 this past September, and numerous other pieces have argued similar points. However, as Gramsci says, when a group challenges notions people take for granted, such as the idea many left-liberals have that the right should merely be denounced or dismissed, it is necessary for that group "never to tire of repeating its own arguments (though offering literary variation of form)," for "repetition is the best didactic means for working on the popular mentality" (p.340).

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Gramsci dans le Monde Arabe

Michele Brondino and Tahar Labib (eds.)

(Tunis: Alif—Les Editions de la Mediterranee, 1994)

This collective work on Gramsci in the Arab world was brought together by a leading Italian specialist on North Africa and by the secretary general of the Arab Sociological Association with contributions from Dalal El-Bizri, the Lebanese sociologist, Ali El-Kenz, the Algerian sociologist and from Aziz Krichen, the Tunisian sociologist. It is the first such work. It bears some comparison to the pioneering writing on Gramsci in Latin America by Jose Arico. It was influenced by the Italian conference on “Gramsci in the World.”

In the case of the Arab world, according to Labib, the use of Gramsci seems to follow availability of his texts in Arabic. This has favored writers in Beirut, Cairo, and Tunis. The introduction of Gramsci in the Arab world, as elsewhere, seemed to be part and parcel of the breakdown of state-centered development, a trend which became apparent in the 1970s. As elsewhere, so in the Arab world, writers were concerned with the breakdown of civil liberties which followed, or so one can read into the preoccupations with such categories as civil society, the state, and the intellectuals. A number of writers of the Arab world, like many in other countries, have long employed elements of a Gramsci-type analysis without the benefit of direct contact with his writings. An example given was that of Mahdi 'Amil, the famous Lebanese political writer. In addition, the Arab reader has become familiar with Gramsci through the passing comments of writers such as Edward Said and Hisham Sharabi, writers whose works have been translated into Arabic, through the writings of Samir Amin on North and South, and through that of others as well. This is attested to by a number of special issues of journals and academic colloquia which make use of these concepts.

In her chapter, El-Bizri takes the concept of civil society to be a historically mutable one, and sketches the components of civil society as understood in societies affected by tribal structures, oil rent, Islam, etc. In his essay, Ali El-Kenz comments on the appropriation of Gramsci, offering the impression that, of all the current movements in the Arab world, it is the Egyptian Muslim Brothers whose strategy most closely approximates a war of position. Aziz Krichen applies the theory of intellectuals in his study of the role of state-sponsored education in Tunisia. Michele Brondino

gives an overview of recent advances in Gramscian thought in general. Part of his focus is on the little known linguistic research of Lo Piparo.

The reader interested in critical thought will benefit from reading this brief guide to this piece of Arabic thought more than reading the better part of the well-known works on Islam and modernity in the Arab world, works which nowadays are being produced and then reviewed in the trade journals as if that were all that there is.

Peter Gran
Temple University

* * *

A GRAMSCI LIBRARY / BIBLIOTECA GRAMSCIANA

In Ales, Antonio Gramsci's birthplace, a group of librarians and archivists has been working for four years to establish a library that is entirely dedicated to Gramsci's works and to writings on Gramsci. The goal is to house under one roof a comprehensive collection of Italian and foreign editions of Gramsci's writings, as well as all the works listed in the two volumes of the *Gramsci Bibliography* compiled by John Cammett and Maria Luisa Righi.

A number of technical and organizational issues concerning the cataloging and storage of materials have already been resolved. The collection is starting to take shape.

Once the collection is moved to its permanent location—which is expected to be the house at Ales where Gramsci was born—the project will enter its final stage of development. A “service” operation will be put in place to facilitate the use of the library by readers and researchers and to provide the means whereby international scholars can have access to the materials electronically or through other methods of duplication and transmission.

The organizers of the project wish to have the **Biblioteca Gramsciana** operating as soon as possible. Their success in meeting their goals depends almost entirely on the cooperation and generosity of editors and authors who have produced books and articles by and about Gramsci. Everyone—especially members of the International Gramsci Society—who has published work on or by Gramsci is strongly urged to send copies to the project director:

Luigi Manias
Via Amsicora 27
09091 Ales (OR)
ITALY

Gramsci Bibliography: Recent Publications

During the past nine months a number of publications related to Gramsci have been sent to us or brought to our attention by members of the International Gramsci Society. We are providing here a description of these publications. See also the bibliographical update by Guido Liguori in the Italian language section of this issue.

Antonio Gramsci. *Lettere dal carcere. 1926-1930. 2 vols. Ed. Antonio A. Santucci. Palermo: Sellerio Editore, 1996.*

Thirty years have passed since the publication of the complete critical edition of Gramsci's letters from prison prepared by Sergio Caprioglio and Elsa Fubini (Turin: Einaudi, 1965). In the meantime, a number of additional letters written by Gramsci during his incarceration have come to light. Furthermore, scholars and researchers have, in a variety of ways, greatly enhanced our interpretation of Gramsci's letters and our understanding of the context of their composition. The need for a new edition that would embody the many discoveries and insights garnered over the past three decades has been widely recognized for quite some time. For anglophone readers, this need was addressed by Frank Rosengarten's edition of the *Letters from Prison* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994). Now, Antonio Santucci has provided us with a philologically rigorous and critically thorough edition of Gramsci's prison letters in their original language. It is virtually impossible to overstate the importance of Santucci's new edition both for the general reader and the specialized scholar.

"The present edition," Antonio Santucci explains in his preface, "contains a total of 494 letters written by Gramsci during the period of his detention. I have decided, however, that 16 of these letters should be distinguished from the rest and placed in Appendix 1. These sixteen letters, in fact, consist of petitions addressed to judicial, ministerial, and governmental authorities—these texts have a significant documentary value but they are of a different kind from the body of the private correspondence. This leaves a total of 478 letters; an addition of 50 letters with respect to the edition published by Einaudi in 1965." Santucci also restored some omissions and corrected a number of errors that occurred in the transcription and typesetting of the text of the earlier edition.

Santucci, moreover, enriched his edition with the reproduction of some other important documents. These are gathered in Appendix 2, the contents of which are described in the preface: "Appendix 2 contains 12 letters to Gramsci by Tatiana and Giulia Schucht, Giuseppe Berti, and

Ruggero Grieco, as well as a letter which Umberto Cosmo sent to Sraffa (in which he responds to questions concerning Dante which had been passed on to him from Gramsci). This selection of letters reproduced in their entirety, is meant to enable the reader to reconstruct first-hand certain important exchanges of letters involving Gramsci that have been the subject of recurrent discussions and controversies.” Many more passages from other relevant letters, most significant among them letters by Tatiana Schucht and Piero Sraffa, are quoted in the critical apparatus of Santucci’s edition.

Other notable features of this very handsomely produced, attractive two-volume edition, include: an extremely valuable introductory essay, a critical apparatus that is packed with important information and yet does not interfere with the reading of the main text, a detailed chronology of Gramsci’s life, and indexes. Antonio Santucci’s edition of the *Lettere dal carcere*—much like Valentino Gerratana’s masterful edition of the *Quaderni*—represents a major milestone in the study and dissemination of Gramsci’s life and thought.

Antonio Gramsci. *Gefängnisbriefe. Vol. I: Briefwechsel mit Giulia Schucht*. Ed. Ursula Apitzsch. Hamburg: Argument-Verl. and Frankfurt/Main: Cooperative-Verl., 1995.

This is the first of the four projected volumes of a critical edition in German of the complete correspondence of Gramsci during his years of detention and incarceration. Unlike other editions of Gramsci’s prison letters, this one reproduces the texts of the letters written to Gramsci as well as those written by him. The first volume, which opens with a substantial introductory essay by Ursula Apitzsch and a forward by Mimma Paulesu Quercioli, contains the entire correspondence between Gramsci and his wife Giulia Schucht between 1926 and 1937.

Table of contents:

A. Einleitender Teil

Ursula Apitzsch: “Gramscis Briefe aus dem Gefängnis: Kritische Theorie der Selbstkonstruktion des Menschen”

Mimma Paulesu Quercioli: “Erinnerungen an Giulia”

B. Briefe: November 1926 — Januar 1937

Kapitel I: Rom und Ustica 1926/27

Kapitel II: Mailand 1927/28

Kapitel III: Turi 1928-1933

Kapitel IV: Formia/Rom 1935-1937

Anhang. Unveröffentlichte Briefe Giulia Schuchts an Antonio Gramsci

C. Index der Briefe

D. Verzeichnis der Abkürzungen und Siglen

Other scholars and researchers, besides Ursula Apitzsch, who participated in the preparation of this volume include Elisabeth Schweiger, Peter Kamerer, Armin Bernhard, and Eleonora Beltrani. The editorial board overseeing the entire project is composed of Ursula Apitzsch, Peter Kamerer, Aldo Natoli, and Mimma Paulesu Quercioli.

Antonio Gramsci: Clásico de la Filosofía Política. A special issue of the Mexican periodical Dialéctica, Vol. 17, No. 26 (1994).

The various essays in this special issue of the quarterly, *Dialéctica*, which is entirely devoted to Gramsci (and edited in collaboration with Istituto Gramsci of Rome), are centered around a common theme, as Dora Kanoussi explains in her introduction: “Los trabajos que se presentan aquí son parte de este intento de seguir nuevas hipótesis de interpretación de la obra gramsciana. Los ensayos de por sí afines, como se dará cuenta el lector, tienen un eje común, pensamos consistente en el gran tema de la hegemonía como el del americanismo, de la reforma intelectual y moral, del conformismo y del individuo. Y todo para analizar la cuestión de si Gramsci da o intenta dar respuestas que en la época contemporánea tienen sentido.”

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Gabriel Vargas Lozano: “Presentación: Gramsci, hoy, en América Latina”

Dora Kanoussi: “Introducción”

Giuseppe Vacca: “Gramsci en nuestro tiempo. Hegemonía e interdependencia”

Francesca Izzo: “Gramsci, intérprete de lo moderno”

Claudia Mancina: “Individualidad y conformismo”

Michele Ciliberto: “Renacimiento y Reforma en los *Cuadernos* de Gramsci”

Alfredo Salsano: “El corporativismo tecnocrático en una perspectiva internacional”

Mario Teló: “Gramsci, el nuevo capitalismo y el problema de la modernización”

Gianni Francioni: “Gramsci entre Croce y Bujarin: sobre la estructura de los *Cuadernos* 10 y 11”

Silvia Disegni (ed.). Un Gramsci ancora sconosciuto? A special section of the Italian review Il Cannocchiale: Rivista di Studi Filosofici, No. 3 (September-December 1995)

Half the issue of *Il Cannocchiale* (no. 3) is devoted to an inquiry conducted by Silvia Disegni on the status of Gramsci’s work and thought in a variety of fields (politics, linguistics, philosophy, anthropology, the theater, history, and literary criticism) and in different countries (with special attention to Italy, France, and the United States). The results of Disegni’s project appear in the form of a series of interviews, each one which focuses on a single topic. The interviews are reproduced in a manner that retains the colloquial and lively tones of conversation; but they are also carefully edited, so that they have the coherence and thematic integrity of individual articles.

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- Brunella Antomarini: “Prefazione”
- Silvia Disegni: “Introduzione: Un Gramsci ancora sconosciuto?”
- Giuseppe Vacca: “Anni '90: Gramsci politico nel mondo”
- Giorgio Baratta: “Nuove interpretazioni gramsciane in Italia”
- Alberto Asor Rosa: “Anni '70: Gramsci e la cultura”
- Joseph A. Buttigieg: “La fortuna di Gramsci negli Stati Uniti”
- Tullio De Mauro: “Gramsci e la linguistica”
- Franco Consiglio: “Gramsci e la filosofia”
- Alberto Cirese: “Il contributo di Gramsci alla antropologia”
- Dario Fo: “Gramsci e la cultura popolare nel teatro”
- Rosario Villari: “Anni '50-'70: Gramsci e la storia”
- Alberto Lecco: “Gramsci e il gramscismo culturale del Pci”
- Jacqueline Risset: “Francia anni '70: Gramsci e la critica letteraria”

Peter Gran. *Beyond Eurocentrism: A New View of Modern World History.* Syracuse, N. Y. : Syracuse University Press, 1996.

Peter Gran’s recent book is not about Gramsci but it contains much that is of interest to students of Gramsci’s work and thought. In his comparative study of modern world history and in his critique of the Eurocentrism of mainstream historiography, Gran employs a number of Gramscian approaches and categories—among them, hegemony, the analysis of folklore and, most importantly, the treatment of the “Southern question.” The blurb on the back cover of the book provides the following broad outline of Gran’s study:

Eurocentrism influences virtually all established historical writing. With the rise of Prussia and, by extension, Europe, eurocentrism became the dominant paradigm for world history.

Employing the approaches of Gramsci and Foucault, Peter Gran proposes a reconceptualization of world history. He challenges the traditional convention of relying on totalitarian or democratic functions of a particular state to explain and understand relationships of authority and resistance in a number of national contexts. Gran maintains that there is no single developmental model but diverse forms of hegemony that emerged out of the political crisis following the penetration of capitalism into each nation.

In making comparisons between seemingly disparate and distinctive nations and by questioning established canons of comparative inquiry, Peter Gran encourages people to recognize the similarities between the West and non-West nations.

In his introductory chapter, “Eurocentrism and the Study of World History”, Peter Gran discusses at considerable length the reasons why and the ways in which he employed Gramsci’s ideas in his

study. Elsewhere in the book he also deals with Gramsci's interpretation of Italian history as well as his unique contribution to the critical analysis of the "southern question."

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1. Eurocentrism and the Study of World History
2. "Russian Road": The Russian and Soviet Experience, 1861-1990
3. The "Russian Road" in the Middle East: Iradi History, 1869-1990
4. The "Italian Road" in Italy: The Risorgimento to the Present, 1870-1990
5. The "Italian Road" in Asia: India, 1861-1990
6. The "Italian Road" in Latin America: Mexico, 1876-1990
7. The "Tribal-Ethnic Road" in Europe: Albania, 1878-1990
8. The "Tribal-Ethnic Road" in Africa: Belgian Congo/Zaire, 1885-1990
9. Bourgeois Democracy in Great Britain, 1880-1990
10. Bourgeois Democracy in the United States of America, 1877-1990
11. Conclusion

Giuseppe Vacca. *Vida y Pensamiento de Gramsci*. Mexico, D. F.: Plaza y Valdés, S. A. de C. V., 1995.

This book by Giuseppe Vacca—translated from Italian with an introduction by Dora Kanoussi—is the product of an initiative undertaken by the Departamento de Política y Cultura de la UAM-Xochimilco which plans to publish a series of works on the history of leftist thought and twentieth-century culture. In addition to a "Prologo" by Ernesto Soto Reyes and the "Introduccion" by Dora Kanoussi, the book consists of three chapters:

1. La interpretación de Gramsci en la segunda postguerra
2. Gramsci 1926-1937: La línea de sombra en las relaciones con el Comintern y el partido
3. Togliatti Editor de las *Cartas* y de los *Cuadernos de la Carcel*

Hiromi Fujioka has informed us that the **Tokyo Gramsci Society has translated into Japanese *The Antonio Gramsci Reader. Selected Writings: 1916-1935*, edited by David Forgacs. The Japanese edition has been published in Tokyo: Ochanomizu-Shobô, 1995.**

Roger-Pol Droit, "La bibliothèque transparente" in *Le Monde*, 8 March 1996.

This is an interesting review-article on the most recently published volume of the complete critical edition in French of the *Prison Notebooks*—i.e. Antonio Gramsci, *Cahiers de Prison: Cahiers 1-5*, ed. Robert Paris; trans. M. Aymard and F. Bouillot (Paris: Gallimard, 1996).

Thoughts on Gramsci Studies
And Abstract of the Dissertation *Indeterminacy, Irrationality, and*
Collective Will. Gramsci's Marxism, Bourgeois Sociology, and the
Problem of Revolution

by

Carl Dyke

The dense tangle of insights about history, social order, collective action, and political commitment generated by the marxists of this century may always invite renewed exploration. But recent political events have created a temporary marxism amnesia in some circles, as both supporters and opponents of the Soviet empire digest the demise of the narrow version of marxism that served so long as the *de facto* procrustean legitimator of marxist political discourse and its antitheses. For the moment, marxism is politically a dead dog. This has, as it should, serious consequences for the reception of studies of marxism and figures usually associated with it. The importance of understanding marxism for those who wish to understand recent history is now far more relative and partial. And for those with concerns more in the present who still manage to resist the enchantment of the market as the mode for economic, social, and political association, the recovery of alternative traditions of marxism cannot at present stand alone in yielding the elements for a more deeply textured understanding of social and political life.

Antonio Gramsci has already shown signs of being a figure who can bridge the gap between pure recovery within and transcendence of the now-limited marxist frame. In particular, his celebrated theory of hegemony has been widely cited or appropriated, though somewhat less widely understood. Gramsci's thinking has proven to have that successful quality of providing useful insights at various levels of deep excavation and superficial exploitation. And while hegemony supplies a nuanced and flexible corrective to marxist economic determinism, it represents only one aspect of a rich and varied theoretical complex.

In the present climate, a consensus seems to be emerging that there are certain approaches to Gramsci that are frankly unpromising. At the moment, study of Gramsci-as-marxist is almost automatically an exercise in antiquarianism pitched to a very small audience of true believers. Yet, those of us familiar with any sizable portion of Gramsci's enormous *oeuvre* may not be entirely

content with his reception outside of the marxist frame. Pleasure and pain are mixed in the recent boom of a small American Gramsci industry, as the few scholars devoted to Gramsci in this country have been joined by crowds seeking to fill the gaps left by other continental theory-complexes (e.g. Althusser, critical theory, poststructuralism, deconstruction). Gramsci has done well in a tendentially postmodern intellectual climate currently devoted to theoretical eclecticism. His attention to a variety of modes of social, political, and cultural formation created a particularly rich source of usable insights. And the famously dispersed and unsystematic character of his written theoretical legacy, so daunting for attempts to teach Gramsci honorably to undergraduates, appears to authorize a pleasantly unrestricted grab-bag approach by more sophisticated academic readers.

Pleasure-pain though it may be to find Gramsci cited once or twice in the indexes of book after book to which a deeper appreciation of him would have been of value, only a priesthood could seriously decry such a situation. Rather, it marks an opportunity: a “foot in the door”. To open that door, Gramsci studies must have more to sell than the pure article. Even for historians trained to appreciate past creatures in their past habitats the recitation of Gramsci's unique merits becomes wearisome. He needs now to tell us about more than just himself.

In September 1995 I defended my doctoral dissertation, written for the History Department at the University of California, San Diego and titled *Indeterminacy, Irrationality, and Collective Will. Gramsci's Marxism, Bourgeois Sociology, and the Problem of Revolution*. The dissertation is a project in comparative intellectual history that intersects the history of marxism, the development of the modern sociological imagination and theories of knowledge, and the formation of modern mass political culture and of theories attempting to account for it. Gramsci is at the center of the project, and at one level it certainly can be taken as a historical and theoretical rereading of Gramsci. But, in keeping with my introductory remarks here, the purpose of the dissertation is ultimately to shift Gramsci out of the impacted, self-referential field of focused marxism studies by shifting him into the context of the broader history of European social and political thought.

As a historian I am especially interested in the impact of emergent mass culture and politics since the French Revolution on European thinking about political motivation and action. I start with marxism because of its extravagant claims to have figured all of this out and its historical success in acting on these claims. The premise of the dissertation is that for a variety of reasons marxism entered the twentieth century as a revolutionary theory without an adequate theory of revolution. Despite the fact that the overthrow of capitalism and the creation of a new, classless society relied upon the class consciousness and collective action of the proletariat, marxists had done very little thinking about the complexity of the social elaboration of consciousness or its consequences in conflicting motivations and obstacles to solidarity. The first part of the dissertation considers the representative attempts of Bernstein, Sorel, Lenin, and Lukacs to cope

with the troublesome multiplicity of sociological consciousness. I argue that each of these theorists developed some theoretical device (what I call a space-maintainer) that allowed them to manage unruly collective action without understanding its “reasons”.

Sorel is a fascinating case because it never occurred to him to question the “reasons” of proletarian action in any way as long as action was occurring. For the others, the shared premise was that given a picture of correct class consciousness based on a universalist/rationalistic assessment of class interests as a function of the relations of production, i.e. given marxism, the sociological consciousness of the working masses looked nothing like what “socialist reason” would demand. In fact, it was characterized by radical fragmentation. As good socialists, it never occurred to any of them that the fragmentation of sociological consciousness was anything but an artifact of a “transitional” moment in world history. It was not something to be respected and understood, it was something to be *transcended*. The question was, what *technique* to use, given that the masses were temporarily sociologically blocked from acting on their true interests for themselves.

Marxists of the early 20th century operated on the indeterminacy of the social by compressing the multiple levels of social discontent to the single issue of class struggle, and then using the resulting compressed political practice to hold complexity at arm's length until the masses developed the proper understanding. (In general the reduction of politics to class was *in the service* of enabling a political practice that could stimulate socialist consciousness.) The gamble was that the *technique* chosen to maintain the space in the theory voided by the failure of sociological consciousness to conform to socialist consciousness would be successful in bridging the gap between the manifest irrationality of observable actions and the socialist reason by which “freedom” was to be made possible.

Because of his unusually strong commitment to collective liberation and willed community, Gramsci was driven to push beyond this sub-sociological shortcutting. In chapters on Gramsci's participation in the Italian socialist movement and his exposure to the intellectual tradition of machiavellian republicanism, I argue that Gramsci was unusually successful in absorbing the rich variety of theoretical and practical approaches to questions of political formation and organization that were available within the intellectual milieu of early 20th century Italy. In response to this spectrum Gramsci developed a distinctive sensitivity to the need for revolutionary theory to account substantively for the sociological reality of collective motivation and action far from any single standard of rationality (e.g., class consciousness).

By the time he began to write his *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci was treating the formation of class consciousness and the emergence of socialist political culture as complex problems of contingent social construction rather than as natural products of historical development. In the “meat” of the dissertation I argue that this shifted him out of the familiar categories of marxist

certainty (including the infamous structure/superstructure dichotomy) into a conceptual space in which social and political identities and actions could be seen as locally rational responses to a variety of contingently decisive factors. In chapters comparing Gramsci to “bourgeois” social theorists Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, I develop an argument that all three were doing what I call “the sociology of rationality”: exploring the ways in which the criteria of rationality, knowledge and action are not fixed but variably shaped by a constellation of experienced realities including class but also religion, tradition, education, occupation, history, general and particular cultures, durable institutions, and so on (we might now wish to add race, ethnicity and gender to this list). I believe that our understanding of Gramsci's place in European intellectual history can be entirely reframed on this basis, particularly in light of the recent “postmodernism” debates. The insights of postmodernism, I argue, are not new; but figures of the early 20th century like Gramsci, Durkheim, and Weber (not to mention later figures like Arendt, Camus, and Merleau-Ponty) shared a moral imperative to resist the deconstructive logic of the postmodernist imagination with some attempt at a reconstructive gamble.

Building a passionate yet stable participatory politics out of plural formations was Gramsci's goal, one he understood to be enormously complicated and difficult. Hegemony was the theoretical instrument that allowed Gramsci to hold the disparate bundle of intricate social reality together. In a short conclusion on “peeling the hegemonic onion”, I argue that in effect Gramsci's theory of hegemony yields layers without a center and thus tends to escape the class reduction of marxism altogether. The result is that Gramsci's revolutionary theory is built on a principle of contingent, *uncertain* construction (or production) of political unity in which only struggle is assured.

I hope to continue to develop this project by deepening my understanding of early 20th century Italian intellectual and political culture (a most gramscian objective) and by extending the substantive comparisons beyond Durkheim and Weber to illuminate what I see as a more general European “pre-history of postmodernism”. I welcome comments and suggestions.

È nata la IGS Italia

Lo *Statuto* della International Gramsci Society prevede esplicitamente la possibilità di creare "sezioni nazionali" per dare miglior impulso alla conoscenza e allo studio della vita e dell'opera di Gramsci. È per perseguire queste finalità che studiosi, personalità della cultura, militanti e dirigenti politici e sindacali, studenti, cittadini democratici, comunque interessati alla salvaguardia e alla diffusione del lascito gramsciano, nel corso di una assemblea svoltasi nella mattina del 16 dicembre 1995 a Napoli, presso il Palazzo Serra di Cassano, ospiti dell'Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici, presente il Sindaco della città partenopea Antonio Bassolino, hanno fondato la IGS Italia. L'assemblea ha eletto un Comitato direttivo provvisorio (il primo Comitato direttivo effettivo sarà eletto entro la fine del 1996), formato da Valentino Gerratana (presidente), Giorgio Baratta (vicepresidente), Guido Liguori (Segretario), Serena Di Giacinto e Aldo Tortorella.

All'assemblea fondativa ha fatto seguito, nella stessa sede, nel corso del pomeriggio, una tavola rotonda sul tema "Gramsci oggi, perchè", a cui hanno portato il loro saluto Antonio Bassolino, Gerardo Marotta, Giuseppe Cantillo, John Cammett e a cui hanno preso parte Giorgio Baratta, Clara Gallini, Biagio de Giovanni, Augusto Graziani, Giuseppe Lissa, Aldo Tortorella e Giuseppe Vacca.

Hanno concluso la giornata napoletana l'illustrazione, effettuata da Dario Ragazzini, del progetto di trasposizione dei *Quaderni del carcere* in cd-rom (progetto che lo stesso Ragazzini sta ultimando) e la proiezione del film di Giorgio Baratta "New York e il mistero di Napoli. Viaggio nel mondo di Gramsci raccontato da Dario Fo."

I primi mesi di vita della neonata IGS Italia non sono stati facili, soprattutto in considerazione del fatto che essa si basa per ora unicamente sul lavoro volontario degli iscritti. Tuttavia qualcosa è stato realizzato: proviamo brevemente a elencare l'attività svolta.

Tra febbraio e aprile è stato organizzato a Roma, in collaborazione col Movimento politico per l'alternativa e la Casa delle culture, un seminario settimanale su "Il mondo di Gramsci". Le lezioni sono state tenute da Renato Zangheri (*Attività e passività delle masse nella società contemporanea*), Luciana Castellina (*Il problema dell'egemonia nella società dell'informazione*), Giorgio Baratta (*Vivere da compagno*), Raul Mordenti (*Scrivere da prigioniero*), Alberto Asor Rosa (*La concezione della politica*), Aldo Tortorella (*Etica e politica*), Lucio Magri (*Gramsci e il Pci*), Guido Liguori (*Interpretazioni di Gramsci*), Tullio De Mauro (*Gramsci teorico del linguaggio*), Edoardo Sanguineti (*Lingua e letteratura nazionale popolare*), Enrico Pugliese (*Questione meridionale*

vecchia e nuova), Domenico Losurdo (*Il marxismo di Gramsci*). I testi delle conferenze saranno pubblicate dalle Edizioni Gamberetti. Va sottolineato come il seminario in questione fosse a pagamento (£. 50.000, 30.000 per gli studenti), e come gli iscritti siano stati circa 50. Dato ampio merito per ciò al Movimento politico per l'alternativa (che in questo campo ha già una positiva tradizione), il dato induce a riflettere sulla carenza di offerta da parte delle istituzioni che all'organizzazione di corsi del genere dovrebbero essere preposti, in primo luogo l'università.

Nel mese di aprile il Comitato direttivo ha incontrato alcuni iscritti che stanno promuovendo nelle rispettive città circoli, associazioni e attività culturali si richiamano alla IGS Italia. Già avviate le prime positive esperienze a Bari (soprattutto per impulso di Andrea Catone) e a Milano (dove l'attività è coordinata da Cristina Rolfini).

Il 24 giugno, a Roma, nella prestigiosa sede della Sala del Refettorio della Biblioteca della Camera, è stata organizzata la presentazione delle *Lettere dal carcere* curate da Antonio Santucci ed edite da Sellerio. Hanno presentato il libro, coordinati da Valentino Gerratana, Giuseppe Fiori, Dacia Maraini, Rossana Rossanda, Enzo Santarelli.

In questo primo semestre del '96 è stato inoltre attivato un centro di osservazione e raccolta dati sugli studi su Gramsci, di cui in questo stesso numero del bollettino compare il primo risultato, l'elenco degli scritti su Gramsci apparsi in Italia nell'anno in corso e da noi censiti. (Chiunque voglia segnalare libri, saggi o articoli sull'argomento può farlo scrivendo alla sede dell'associazione, via della Consulta 50, 00184 Roma. Per le pubblicazioni locali o di difficile reperimento si prega di inviare copia o fotocopia).

La IGS Italia, inoltre, ha raggiunto un accordo con l'Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici per effettuare, nel 1997, il sessantesimo anniversario della morte di Gramsci, il primo convegno internazionale della IGS. Iniziamo a parte, su questo stesso numero del bollettino dell'IGS, la riflessione e il dibattito sulle tematiche che saranno al centro dell'incontro napoletano del prossimo anno.

Chiunque voglia iscriversi alla IGS Italia può farlo inviando un vaglia postale di £. 50.000, intestato a Guido Liguori, presso la sede di via della Consulta. Chiunque voglia informazioni e delucidazioni può scrivere allo stesso indirizzo.

Lettere dal carcere, un classico del Novecento

Fiori, Maraini, Rossanda e Santarelli sul libro di Gramsci

“Gramsci ha rotto con Togliatti, nel 1926, dopo lo scambio epistolare sulla lotta ai vertici del partito comunista russo. Ma Togliatti (e il Pcd’I) non hanno rotto con Gramsci, non lo hanno mai abbandonato.” Lo ha detto Giuseppe Fiori, il più importante biografo di Gramsci, in occasione della presentazione (organizzata lunedì 24 giugno a Roma a cura della neonata “sezione italiana” della International Gramsci Society) delle *Lettere dal carcere*, curate da Antonio Santucci e edite dalla Sellerio.

La tesi di Fiori non è nuova. Ma non fa male ribadirla, dal momento che ha di nuovo preso piede quest’anno, negli scorsi mesi, quella che Fiori ha definito una “rubrica fissa” dei quotidiani italiani, intitolata *Gramsci lasciato morire in carcere da Togliatti*, che ha avuto ancora una volta in Giuseppe Tamburrano il suo ossessivo banditore.

La edizione Sellerio delle *Lettere* gramsciane è stata, come è noto, al centro di una violenta polemica, soprattutto per questioni economico-commerciali, legate allo sfruttamento dei diritti. Ora che una sentenza del Tribunale di Palermo ha sgombrato il campo dal problema, riconoscendo la legittimità dell’edizione in questione, resta l’altra obiezione che è stata avanzata al lavoro di Santucci: vale la pena pubblicare, far circolare e leggere le lettere di Gramsci nella loro forma più nota, senza cioè incastonarle in un più ampio (forse troppo ampio) epistolario che comprenda, con i testi gramsciani, anche le missive dei suoi interlocutori, diretti (i soli parenti avevano diritto di corrispondere col recluso) o indiretti (Sraffa e Togliatti)?

La risposta di tutti gli intervenuti al dibattito della IGS Italia (oltre a Fiori, Dacia Maraini, Rossana Rossanda, Enzo Santarelli, coordinati da Valentino Gerratana), è stata affermativa. Perché comunque le *Lettere dal carcere* sono, come recitava il titolo dell’incontro, “un classico italiano del Novecento.” Ha sintetizzato con partecipata penetrazione Dacia Maraini: “Nelle *Lettere* c’è la vita, il carattere, gli umori, il pensiero di Gramsci. Una persona che conosce l’arte della scrittura e che tramite essa documenta—come in un romanzo—il processo drammatico della propria distruzione, quella che Gramsci ha definito la propria *afasia psichica*.” La scrittura, dunque, come forma di sopravvivenza, come strategia per sopravvivere, cui Gramsci si aggrappa benchè essa gli provochi persino dolore fisico. “Quando Gramsci non ha più voglia di scrivere—ha concluso Maraini—Gramsci è vinto: l’assassinio è compiuto.” Ma rimangono le *Lettere*, “testimonianza di vita, certo, ma anche di scrittura.”

Questo libro—ha rincarato la dose Fiori—è un classico *autonomo*, fa parte della letteratura mondiale. Se paragonato ad altri epistolari, l'epistolario gramsciano dimostra subito di avere una cadenza, uno stile, una unitarietà che agli altri manca. Per questo le *Lettere* sono un classico *autonomo*, fanno parte della letteratura mondiale, hanno alto valore letterario. Ma Fiori si è dilungato soprattutto sulla famosa lettera di Grieco del '28, dimostrando come essa fosse ininfluenta per la condanna di Gramsci, ricordando la figura del giudice Macis e della sua opera di provocazione (su cui costruì una brillante carriera, rilanciata dalla sua partecipazione alla . . . guerra partigiana!). E ricordando i numerosi tentativi di liberazione (mediante scambio di prigionieri) tentati dal Pci e dal Comintern, e falliti per la personale opposizione di Mussolini alla liberazione di Gramsci.

Contro la Macciocchi, che negli scorsi giorni aveva accumulato, come carnefici di Gramsci, “Stalin, Togliatti e Mussolini”, si era anche argomentatamente dichiarato Santarelli. Che non ha neanche mancato di ricordare le strumentalità con cui, a sinistra, segnatamente da parte dei sostenitori della “svolta della Bolognina”, Gramsci era stato definito, nel 1991, il primo *revisionista* e il maggiore *dissidente* del Pci: una disinvoltura ermeneutica che, calpestando ogni serietà storiografica, spalanca le porte ad ogni operazione “anti-stalinista”, del tipo di quelle portate avanti da Tamburrano e Macciocchi.

I rapporti tra Gramsci e il Pci sono stati richiamati anche da Rossana Rossanda. Che si è detta d'accordo con Fiori sul fatto che sia assurdo pensare a una cospirazione comunista per far condannare Gramsci e tenerlo rinchiuso in carcere. Del resto, Scoccimarro e Terracini non avevano essi stessi ricevuto lettere da Grieco, nel '28, senza vedervi alcuna intenzione perversa? E tuttavia resta la domanda: perchè Gramsci crede al giudice Macis? Rossanda ha ricostruito lo scontro tra Gramsci e Togliatti del 1926, a proposito della lotta interna al partito comunista russo, e ha rievocato una sua conversazione con Togliatti. Di fronte alla sua affermazione: “Gramsci aveva ragione”, il segretario del Pci le aveva risposto: “No, Gramsci aveva torto. Le uniche possibilità per il socialismo, nel 1926, stavano nelle mani dei comunisti russi e non era possibile fare altrimenti. Ma Gramsci aveva una sua immensa fermezza morale: se non fosse finito in galera, non avrebbe ceduto di fronte alle posizioni dei sovietici!”

Come sarebbe finita? Non c'è risposta a questa domanda. Né a quelle, che Rossanda ci pone e si pone, su cosa pensasse Gramsci negli ultimi mesi di vita, nel 1936, quando già si era scatenata la più feroce repressione stalinista (l'omicidio di Kirov è del '34): il comunista sardo nella clinica di Roma in cui era ricoverato non aveva più bisogno di scrivere, riceveva le visite di Tania e di Sraffa, con loro parlava. Ma l'amico più fedele e la donna che a lui tutta se stessa aveva sacrificato se ne sono andati senza dire nulla dei suoi giudizi sull'Internazionale, sullo stalinismo, su quanto accadeva a Mosca. Gli archivi russi daranno un giorno qualche risposta sui rapporti tra Gramsci e i suoi compagni comunisti, italiani e non?

I due classici della letteratura italiana per antonomasia sono *La divina commedia* e *I promessi sposi*. Senza entrare nella valutazione di queste due opere (peraltro non disponibili su uno stesso piano, come Gramsci ben sapeva), vogliamo porre una questione: verrà il tempo in cui sarà Gramsci ad essere universalmente considerato il classico italiano per eccellenza, da tutti conosciuto e citato, letto e studiato a scuola? Pensino, intanto, i ministri della cultura e della pubblica istruzione, che hanno fatto parte del partito che fu di Gramsci, a porsi il problema di fare di questo autore (e di questo libro) uno degli esempi-chiave per le giovani generazioni e per tutti i cittadini. Non per amore di partito. Ma per il contributo incomparabile che ancora Gramsci può dare alla cultura italiana e mondiale.

Guido Liguori

(da *Cominform*, n. 31, 1996)

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BIBLIOTECA GRAMSCIANA

Da quattro anni opera ad Ales, il paese natale di Antonio Gramsci un gruppo di lavoro composto da bibliotecari e archivisti, che sta costituendo una biblioteca interamente dedicata agli scritti di e su Gramsci. Si tratta di raccogliere sotto un'unico tetto tutte le edizioni italiane e straniere degli scritti di Gramsci, così come tutte le voci elencate nella *Bibliografia Gramsciana* e nel suo recente supplemento aggiornato al 1993.

Allo stato attuale dei lavori sono già stati risolti numerosi problemi tecnici, quali: la definizione dei compiti e delle competenze di quanti si stanno impegnando in questo progetto; la scelta del software per il trattamento amministrativo e biblioteconomico dei libri, dei periodici e degli articoli; l'individuazione degli spazi e delle scaffature per accogliere il materiale bibliografico, che per'altro incomincia già ad acquisire una certa consistenza.

La fase ulteriore del progetto, una volta collocata definitivamente la **Biblioteca Gramsciana**, come si prevede, nella casa natia di Gramsci, sarà quella che si può definire il "passaggio della biblioteca al lettore", con un servizio di prestito in loco e di consultazione internazionale attraverso mezzi informatici e telematici.

Vogliamo che la Biblioteca Gramsciana diventi una realtà fattiva e operante a breve termine. Questo obiettivo può esser raggiunto solo con il sollecito contributo di tutti i membri della IGS, il cui unico impegno è di spedire copia delle loro pubblicazioni al responsabile del gruppo di lavoro:

Luigi Manias
via Amsicora 27
09091 Ales (OR)
ITALIA

Aggiornamento Bibliografia gramsciana Italia, gennaio-giugno 1996

di

Guido Liguori

Chiunque abbia studiato e studi Gramsci ha potuto constatare quanto utile e prezioso sia lo strumento elaborato da John Cammett, la *Bibliografia gramsciana 1922-1988* (aggiornata successivamente, con la collaborazione di Maria Luisa Righi, fino al 1993).

Partendo da questa premessa, la IGS Italia si propone di contribuire a proseguire il lavoro intrapreso da Cammett. Naturalmente una bibliografia degli scritti su Gramsci, per la sua vastità e articolazione, non può che essere un lavoro collettivo, aperto ai contributi di molti. Quello che pubblichiamo vuole quindi essere solo un "primo elenco" di scritti. Chiediamo a tutti i lettori di segnalarci aggiunte e integrazioni, facendole pervenire presso la sede della IGS Italia, via della Consulta 50, Roma. Segnalazioni di questo genere saranno gradite anche in futuro.

La IGS Italia ha inoltre in programma di creare un "osservatorio gramsciano" per seguire l'attività degli studi su Gramsci, catalogando e raccogliendo il materiale disponibile. Il presente lavoro costituisce anche un primo passo in questa direzione.

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Una "Introduzione" a Gramsci

Tra biografia, ritratto umano, e analisi della teoria, con questa *Introduzione a Gramsci* di Marina Paladini Musitelli (Bari, Laterza, 1996) l'opera dello "scrittore" sardo (il libro fa parte della collana "Gli scrittori") è rivisitata seguendo il percorso della rielaborazione gramsciana dei due concetti di socialismo e cultura, così come avverte l'autrice nella Premessa: «*Socialismo e cultura* è il titolo di uno dei primi articoli che Gramsci scrisse per il «Grido del popolo» il 29 gennaio 1916, ma potrebbe costituire ancor oggi il sottotitolo più appropriato per ogni forma di Introduzione a Gramsci».

Dalla "vocazione intellettuale" del Gramsci adolescente alla stesura e rielaborazione dei *Quaderni*, la Paladini circostanzia ed evidenzia i momenti fondamentali del percorso culturale, teorico e politico di Gramsci. Tra questi momenti una particolare attenzione è dedicata al Gramsci critico militante delle cronache teatrali, un vero e proprio breve saggio dell'autrice che analizza il passaggio dalla considerazione propriamente letteraria del fenomeno teatrale nelle prime recensioni alla fusione indissolubile del criterio etico-estetico e della prospettiva ideologica che caratterizza le successive.

Altrettanto circostanziata è l'evoluzione del pensiero politico di Gramsci dalla riconoscimento della "spontaneità" delle masse rivoluzionarie alla convinzione della necessità di un partito rigidamente organizzato che ne centralizzi la direzione attraverso un rapporto dialettico con il loro stesso movimento spontaneo, all'elaborazione del «criterio storico-politico» dell'egemonia, cui Gramsci ispira, come afferma la Paladini, tutta la riflessione dei *Quaderni*. Il rapporto del tutto inedito che Gramsci prospetta tra le due realtà del socialismo e della cultura è sinteticamente (come richiede un'introduzione) e efficacemente presentato ai lettori. Peraltro particolarmente sviluppata e più facilmente dominabile per l'autrice nell'immenso "laboratorio gramsciano" sembra essere la riflessione culturale, e più propriamente letteraria, dello "scrittore" Gramsci.

E' proprio a partire dalla considerazione di Gramsci quale scrittore che più volte la Paladini si sofferma sul carattere estetico della sua opera e in particolare sullo stile giornalistico proponendo uno studio specifico su quest'ultimo poiché «costituisce un esempio felicissimo di prosa moderna, di una prosa cioè capace di sposare la razionalità, la chiarezza, l'efficacia dell'argomentazione con la deformazione espressionista, e di cui, non a caso, mancano esempi nella cultura italiana del primo Novecento (ma non solo)».

Serena Di Giacinto

Guido Liguori:

GRAMSCI CONTESO. Storia di un dibattito 1922-1996

(Editori Riuniti, pp. 318 circa, £. 25.000)

Dai primi *ritratti* di Piero Gobetti alla *querelle* odierna sullo stato delle pubblicazioni delle opere, vengono in questo libro ripercorsi settantacinque anni di studi, polemiche, interpretazioni concernenti la vita e il pensiero di Gramsci.

Si tratta in primo luogo di una *mappa* utile per destreggiarsi nella miriade di letture e riletture succedutesi nel corso dei decenni, che appaiono oggi spesso di difficile decifrazione sia nei loro presupposti teorici e politici che nelle loro finalità. Ma è anche la storia della cultura della sinistra italiana, delle sue diverse fasi, della sua evoluzione, dei suoi intellettuali, dai tempi del Comintern agli approdi attuali.

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