

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

Sub Fac

Our Education
Is *Not* Liberating

Publisher's Note

The following is a book written by one of NEPH's publishers on education in the old society and the question of education in the new society. It is written with a primarily British audience in mind, however, the Anglo-American conceptions of education, like everything else, have spread so far across the globe it can likely be said to have some use everywhere. Such an undertaking took the author over a year to complete, working out among other students and progressive youth the conclusions you will find in this book. He now will be moving on to writing articles to aid in the work of providing solutions to the problems facing the people, in order to open society's path to progress.

The vectors and cover were designed by Comrade Lucha.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

This book is written to be as accessible as possible to the youth of Britain and other countries. Very complex and advanced concepts are investigated, but they are accompanied by definitions of key terminology in citations whenever necessary. These definitions are also included as an appendix.

This book has gone through a lengthy editorial and drafting process, as well as a wealth of social investigation, to ensure that it is valid to the general conditions of the youth today.

This book can be read individually but it could be helpful to discuss the key ideas and points in reading or discussion groups at schools/colleges/universities, using these points for discussion. As such, open-ended reading group questions are at the end of every chapter; these questions compel readers to apply the concepts of the book, concretising them.

This book is not a passive bookish analysis, but a call to action. It is a revolutionary investigation, not a stuffy academic exercise.

INTRODUCTION



I — WHY AND HOW SHOULD WE INVESTIGATE OUR EDUCATION?

Why should we investigate our education?

It is time for progressive students of all ages in Britain to seriously investigate the nature of their education. Education is central to our lives. It is the way we are formed and it inscribes us with indelible behaviours, instincts and knowledge. In Britain, children spend a minimum of twelve years in education, from age four to sixteen, and may continue further to college and university. Education takes up and determines one's childhood. Exams like GCSEs and A-Levels practically determine one's future prospects and career. These exams and academic pursuits consume a vast proportion of one's childhood.

Thus, understanding and assessing education and how it operates is of profound personal and social interest to everyone. We need to take an active role and ask certain questions.

What is the function of our education? How and why does it function this way? Do we need to change it? These are the questions that should be investigated.

To investigate something is to pass beyond its superficial appearance and attempt to see an object in its interrelations and development. To investigate something is to not merely accept a static definition. If someone yesterday told you the weather is sunny, you should not expect the weather to remain sunny today or tomorrow. Phenomena are in a constant state of flux and one must continue to study this development rather than hold on to what is outdated. Even more still, you should not continue to take for granted that the weather is sunny and will remain so if the person telling you such a fact is a sun cream vendor. The same applies to education.

The Department of Education abounds in grandiose rhetoric about their role too and about the function of education in our current society:

“At our heart, we are the department for realising potential. We enable children and learners to thrive, by protecting the vulnerable and ensuring the delivery of excellent standards of education, training and care. This helps realise everyone's potential — and that powers our

economy, strengthens society and increases fairness.”*

But to investigate is to go beyond the superficial appearance. It is to go beyond the phrasemongering of a government. It is to go beyond the juridical forms of education and to see the real relations. We need to analyse the function of education and its methodology to assess what it means for us. By doing so, we can assess whether the Department of Education has given a truthful account of the function of education or if they are snake oil salesmen.

Social practice is the root of knowledge

This method of investigation — to see things concretely in their concrete connections — is perhaps unfamiliar. Often, we wrongly suffice just to accept “facts” as they are.

But the material world does not consist of just isolated and static “facts.” One can not become omniscient through the memorisation of trivia books. Knowledge is something attained actively. Knowledge does not exist on its own. This was the objective idealism** of Plato and his Platonic forms. Knowledge does not exist innately in our heads. Knowledge is achieved through *social practice****. It is achieved through actively “finding out.”****

If you want to know what a pear tastes like, that knowledge doesn’t exist latently in your mind already, as objective idealists claim. Nor is a pear a fiction and figment of your imagination, as the solipsistic***** subjective idealists may say. To gain knowl-

* <www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about> [Accessed, December 2022]

** **Idealism:** The philosophical idea that the external world is merely a fiction or a result of human subjectivity, ideas and thoughts. That the world does not exist objectively. There are different forms of idealism, notably subjective idealism, which posits the world as nothing but existing in one’s head, and objective idealism which asserts that reality is constituted by objective ideas.

*** It is called social practice as individuals do not live on their own but exist within a given society, and thus, practice and interaction with the material world, such as labour, occurs socially. Therefore, as well, ideas and knowledge are social, being transferred between people.

**** Bains, H. (1967). *Necessity For Change!*. National Publications Centre.

***** **Solipism:** The inevitable result of idealist philosophy. The ultra-individualist, unfalsifiable idea that the only thing that is real is oneself and everything else is just a product of one’s imagination.

edge of the taste of the pear, you must taste the pear.

This may seem like a truism so far. However, it is very important to grasp that social practice is the ultimate origin of knowledge. Otherwise, you can quickly lose sight of investigation and fall into the quagmire of fideism* and dogmatism as many so do.

Perception and conception

This is to engage in social practice — to engage in definite interaction with the material world external to us. This interaction begets *perceptual* knowledge. This means that the knowledge still very much remains isolated and basic. We can identify isolated elements of knowledge from that social practice, but not sufficient to make any conclusions of *conception*. However, after more social practice, after we eat more pears, this perceptual knowledge *qualitatively* advances to *conceptual* knowledge. This is the knowledge that is only possible through being advanced from perceptual knowledge. It is being able to generalise features of the pear and to understand interconnections, development and reasons behind certain things.

Perceptual knowledge of the taste of the pear may be to conclude that it was good or it was bad, that it was brackish, bitter, sweet, or sour. Conceptual knowledge subsumes these isolated and elementary ideas and is able to come to abstract conception** based upon knowledge of the whole totality. A conception of the pear may be to conclude that it tastes brackish and bitter *because* it is rotten and that this owes to its negative development from over-ripeness.

To leap from perception to conception is incredibly important in investigation. If we are investigating the conduct and character of our teachers or lecturers, we need to advance from perceptual knowledge, isolated impressions of our teachers, to conceptual knowledge — understanding the function and reason behind teachers' conduct as a totality.

For instance, we may gain perceptual knowledge through social practice that teachers can often be peremptory, curt and

* **Fideism:** The idea that knowledge comes from faith or revelation.

** Cornforth, M. (1955). *The Theory of Knowledge*. Red Star Publishers. (ch. 5).

It is important to note that all ideas are necessarily abstractions, but there exists the distinction between elementary and abstract ideas, the latter being conceptions which are not directly perceptible and thus more abstract.

dogmatic. These are isolated perceptions. To leap qualitatively to conception would be to try to find a reason *why* behind these isolated phenomena. Because in reality — in the objective reality that exists outside of us — teachers are not peremptory, curt and dogmatic for no reason. These qualities are certainly not isolated from one another.

The double negation of social practice and ideas

So students, perhaps after perceiving the behaviours of their teachers, may come to a conception: teachers are peremptory, curt and dogmatic because they are all biologically predisposed to such behaviour. This is to say that teachers are selected for their posts due to these qualities. This is a conception that is subsumed through a number of perceptions — isolated perceptual knowledge has been used to arrive at a conception.

Is this conception true though? Is this actual knowledge?

No, it is not. As much as this might be the conception reached by the frustrated student, I think we can agree that such a conception is the wrong one — it is an illusionary idea.

Why is this though?

Knowledge does not exist in metaphysical* qualities of true and false per se: “Really scientific works therefore as a rule avoid such dogmatic and moral expressions as error and truth.”**

Truth means the correspondence between ideas and reality. Absolute truth would therefore mean an absolute correspondence between ideas and reality, something entirely practically unachievable.

Outside basic statements of facts or trivia (e.g., the Battle of Bosworth was in 1485), social ideas are limited and approx-

* **Metaphysics:** The philosophical tendency to consider objects as completely fixed abstractions. This gives these objects a faux isolation and staticness. For instance, a rose is considered a static rose, despite being in a dynamic process of growth or decay. An individual is seen as an abstract and distinct thing even though they are the product of civil society and are in constant development. Hence, philosophical metaphysics means that one loses sight of the internal contradictions inherent in development as well as its connections. Metaphysics is a staple of bourgeois philosophy. However, it is important to note that metaphysics has been given a host of definitions in philosophy, either just as a general pejorative or to mean something “more than physics.” The first definition, the one laid out by Engels in *Anti-Dühring* and Cornforth in *The Open Philosophy and The Open Society*, is the one we are using.

** Engels, F. (1877). *Anti-Dühring*. International Publishers. (ch. 9).

imate because social practice is limited. Social ideas are more true than others because the social practice which has heralded them is more informed. The methodology of conception as well as through principles of formal logic and mathematics — as well as the dialectical method* — increases the truth of social ideas because it contextualises and attempts to see nature in an inter-related manner.**

So the students who conclude that their education is unsatisfactory, purely on the basis that teachers are somehow biologically predisposed to unhelpful attitudes, will soon realise such a conception was not true as it will be proven to be false through future social practice — for instance, a student may have a positive experience with a teacher or may discover other factors in play that compel teachers' conduct.

Thus, social practice and social ideas do not develop linearly. Nor are social ideas established and can we be content to assume that that is the whole truth forever. How social ideas develop is through “double negations.” What does this mean?

This means that:

- 1) Social practice is carried out.
- 2) This social practice is *negated* into ideas about the objective world.
- 3) These ideas are once again *negated* into future social practice, by guiding it, which makes it more advanced. Social practice is carried out on a higher level and this social practice will yield more true ideas.

This is the principle of “double negation” or the “negation

* **Dialectics:** The principles of development of all things universally. First developed by Hegel and removed from its idealist shell by Marx and Engels. The main principle of dialectics is the unity and struggle of opposites in contradiction, and therein follow the laws of quantity into quality and negation of negation.

** Cornforth, M. (1968). *The Open Philosophy and the Open Society*. The November 8th Publishing House. (ch. 4).

It is important to note that formal logic and mathematical principles are ultimately derived from social practice as well — they are just another stage of abstraction from it. Principles of formal logic and mathematical principles are not *empirically* falsifiable because they deal with categories in abstraction (e.g., “1” or “2” do not exist in quantities in isolation in objective reality but exist in combination with a thing “1 tree” or “2 trees.”) Dialectics, in dealing with category-connections, is also abstracted but nevertheless is the result of, and derived from, social practice, which eventually revealed the necessity for the study of dialectical principles.

of the negation.” As with many phenomena in nature, ideas and social practice have a progressive development in the form of double negations, like a spiral.

As, Engels said in *Anti-Dühring*, negation is not just “saying no.” Unlike how we use the word negation normally, negation here does not mean a complete rejection, but rather, when negations occur, elements of the Old are retained in the New but the form may change.

For instance, when we develop new social ideas about why our education is the way it is, we may still retain the idea that teachers have the tendency to be peremptory and dogmatic, but we attribute these qualities to a different cause rather than an essentialist one. Ideas are often *negated* by future experiments, but not outright rejected, and rather, refined.*

“For example, to find out how Britain is governed we must first examine the actual institutions — how they are constituted, and what the persons who administer them do. We must establish such facts as that there is a monarch, and discover what the Queen actually does. From this, we may pass to a more concrete analysis and formulate (as was mentioned earlier) the theory that existing institutions of government are adapted to the function of preserving the dominance of monopoly capital. After that we shall have something more to say about the Queen than was in the original observation of her behaviour — we shall have more to say than that she attends race meetings, confers honours, has a guaranteed income, and signs Bills.”**

In sum, we should understand that our knowledge from our investigation is not canon. Our knowledge and analysis of our education are not canonised either. Social ideas continue to develop in correspondence with the new social practice and the constant development of material reality. As much as we may have the urge to set our knowledge in stone as absolute, like the statue of Ozymandias, the Old is always overcome by the New. The fatal error we can fall into in our investigation of education is dogmatism.

* This is sometimes called negation and affirmation.

** Cornforth, M. (1968). *The Open Philosophy and the Open Society*. The November 8th Publishing House. (pp. 93-4).

“The point is to change it”

“The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it.”*

Marx’s *Theses on Feuerbach* remain a landmark and concise defence of these correct principles of our investigation.** We have talked about how ideas are not innate — they don’t drop from the sky — but are the negation of our social practice, our interactions with the objective world external to us. The mechanical materialists,** like Feuerbach, rejected the fact that the subjective, ideas, are an *active* reflection of material conditions. After all, ideas are not incorporeal — they exist physically in the brain as atoms and electrical impulses. Our knowledge leads us to new social practice which is how we change the world.

Therefore, when we gain knowledge of what our education *actually* entails, we are not just content to just sit on our hands afterwards. If our analysis as students reveals that our education system does not work for us, that is a call to action.

This knowledge we gain from our investigation of our education — as we have said — is not just simple, perceptual and mechanical understanding either. It is conceptual. We attempt to form a generalised understanding of education as a totality. We want to avoid ill-formed analysis which does not go to the root. Conceptual knowledge is not just content to see things as static and *as they are*. A conceptual investigation does not see any change that occurs as random or inexplicable but seeks to find the cause of changes. On this point, empiricists**** and positiv-

* Marx, K. (1845). *Theses on Feuerbach*, in: *Marx and Engels Selected Works One Volume*. Lawrence & Wishart.

** By the use of the word “study” in this section, I mean “epistemology.”

*** **Mechanical materialism:** Mechanical materialism or mechanism was the philosophical tendency of the emerging bourgeoisie. It was progressive initially for the fact that it rejected idealist mysticism. It posited that the universe was constituted by unchanging, indivisible particles interacting mechanically. However, it lapses into idealism and metaphysics insofar as it 1) necessitates the understanding of a supreme being/god/creator to begin this random process of matter, 2) reduces development to externality rather than seeing internal contradictions and struggle within things and 3) can not account for new qualities and new forms, often assuming emergence of new qualities as completely random and development as completely unpredictable.

**** **Empiricism:** The vulgar bourgeois philosophical idea that sensation is the only basis for knowledge. This means that all knowl-

ists also stumble over themselves. Dry formal logic and the attempt to guide investigation without any conceptual framework will get us nowhere.* If we only deal with finding the effects of a deeper issue in our investigation of education, we can never remedy that problem.

Our revolutionary investigation will help guide our social practice that will supplant the old with the new.

To begin, we must first approach the parameters of the question.

Reading group questions

Why is investigating education a very important task for us students?

What are examples of times when you, or people you know, have fallen into objective idealist assertions about the world — instead of finding out through social practice?

What are some concrete examples of the perceptual knowledge being negated into conceptual knowledge?

What are some concrete examples of the negation of the negation of social practice into theory back into social practice?

edge to empiricists is merely perceptual and fragmented, and is unable to qualitatively develop to conceptual knowledge.

* And of course, as I explain later, postmodernism also is guilty of this charge; its incredulity to conception, which it imputes as “meta-narratives,” means that its analysis is therefore constricted to fragmentation, eclecticism and mechanism.

II — IS OUR EDUCATION LIBERATING?

The Main Question

This is the principal question. And it is undeniably the most important question to us. Is our education liberating?

Does our education provide the means of liberation or is it actually the chains with which we grapple? Does our education “realise the potential” of us, the students, or does it curtail this potential?

We need to first qualify specifically what it means to be “liberating.” To be liberating means to guarantee or be a means to freedom. Education is liberating if it begets freedom. So what is freedom?

Dualist errors in the understanding of “freedom”

What is freedom? The definition of freedom is one that has been consistently misused and vulgarised on a philosophical level.

Classes throughout history have used the concept of “freedom” in their own terms and have used it to galvanise the masses in favour of their respective programme. The ruling class today is the bourgeoisie, the capitalist class.* They are the ruling class because they have political power over the state and capitalist economic relations predominate. The idea of “freedom” for the bourgeoisie is the ability to own property without feudal constraints.** But the “freedom” of John Locke is not the same “freedom” of William Wallace and it again is not the same freedom of the Soviets. “Freedom” as a term has a class character and has been used in the banner of many classes. We as students need to understand what freedom means for us and masses of people.

* **Bourgeoisie:** The ruling class in capitalism. As a term can be used interchangeably with capitalist. The bourgeoisie owns the means of production in society and buys the proletariat’s labour-power. They own capital. **Bourgeois** is the adjective form, e.g., bourgeois “education” system. **Bourgeois** can also mean an individual member of the bourgeoisie.

** Caudwell, C. (1934). *Pacifism and Violence: A Study in Bourgeois Ethics*, in: *Studies in a Dying Culture*. Marxists Internet Archive.

Freedom is understood as the ability to work towards definite ends. This much is true. However, how is this ability guaranteed?

Some mistakenly believe that this ability, that “freedom” is somehow independence from restraints or necessity. That you are truly free when there are no laws, social or physical. This tenuous concept is often called *negative freedom*.

However, such a concept is completely wrong. It is based on dualism.* Dualism is the mystical philosophical idea that consciousness is some transcendental substance different to the material world. But we as progressive students engaged in revolutionary investigation know that consciousness, the subjective, is comprised of the objective. Our thoughts, consciousness and ideas exist *materially*. The subjective is a subsumption of billions of neurons and electrical impulses. Consciousness “is simply a characteristic of some facts of organic behaviour.”** To think of consciousness without the brain is to think of digestion without the stomach.***

Of course, each one of these neurons does not possess the quality of consciousness in isolation, but in a specific *conjuncture* and quantity, this quality *emerges*.**** This nuance would once again elude the idiot metaphysicians who have been scratching their heads over the concept of emergence for centuries.

So what does this mean? This means that some “free will” or consciousness does not exist as some incorporeal substance outside of the material world. The subjective is ultimately objective, it is part of the material world itself. Therefore, people’s consciousness and ideas develop along the same lines as everything else. It is materially determined.

Freedom and necessity are not mutually exclusive but are rather one of the same. Freedom is one’s knowledge of necessity and material reality, and the ability to use this knowledge to work towards definite ends.

* Plekhanov, G. (1898). *On the Role of The Individual in History*, in: *Essays in Historical Materialism*. Foreign Languages Press. (ch. 2).

** Martin, E. (1924). *Psychology*. The People’s Institute Publishing Company. (ch. 5).

*** Cornforth, M. (1968). *The Open Philosophy and the Open Society*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 49).

**** Shirokov, M. (1937). *A Textbook of Marxist Philosophy*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 7).

So, what is freedom?

As Engels summarised:

“Freedom does not consist in the dream of independence of natural laws but in the knowledge of these laws, and in the possibility of systematically making them work towards definite ends.”*

We can not dream of being independent of the laws of thermodynamics for example. It is these laws and objective reality which provide the framework for our freedom. Since freedom is knowledge of necessity and being able to use that knowledge to work towards definite ends, it would be *impossible* for you to be free if nature existed in a state of complete randomness and contingency.**

“Let’s use an example in regard to society. Let’s say I am meeting a friend. I, wanting to be courteous, extend my hand for a handshake. I am free in this instance to greet my friend courteously as, through previous social practice, I have knowledge that it is a social convention in Britain to shake another’s hand to be courteous when greeting them. It is precisely my knowledge of objective social laws and etiquette that allows me to work towards this definite end (being courteous). However, if these implicit social laws and cues, which act as ‘restraints,’ did not exist, I would not have the freedom to be courteous because when I extend my hand for a handshake I would be completely unaware as to what would happen and how it would be received.”***

We can’t wish away the world, we can only become conscious of it and use that knowledge to work towards definite ends. And we also need knowledge too of *how* to work towards those definite ends.

This understanding of freedom is “constructed entirely and

* Engels, F. (1877). *Anti-Dühring*. International Publishers. (p. 130).

** Of course, we understand the subsumptive nature of accident and necessity. This will be elaborated on later when we take down the proponents of the great man theory of history.

*** Sub Fac (2022). *What is Freedom and How Do We Win It?*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 9).

exclusively upon the epistemology of dialectical materialism,”*
** the correct principles of investigation we have outlined.

Freedom can never be absolute: necessity and accident, the mutability of phenomena

As I also stated in my last essay, it is important to realise that we can not achieve *absolute* freedom as that would mean having *absolute* knowledge, something that is practically and physiologically impossible. What we call necessity and the general development of things, as Engels said in *Anti-Dühring*, is comprised of accidents. Necessity is a subsumption of contingency.

“One knows that what is maintained to be necessary is composed of sheer accidents and that the so-called accidental is the form behind which necessity hides itself.”***

This may sound like a sudden capitulation to mysticism and defeatism. That development is truly random and can not be predicted through scientific analysis of any type.**** That we should just give up finding out about the world. This is not the case. To say that something is a contingency is to say so relatively. An event or occurrence may be a contingency relative to the general development of a thing, but this does not mean that it has no cause. Within every contingency, there is also a necessity, a definite objective development and a cause. And in that necessity, contingency once again. And so on and so forth.

Everything consists of two opposite sides in contradiction *****

* **Dialectical materialism:** The philosophical basis of Marxism-Leninism, the revolutionary students and the proletariat as a whole. It combines a materialist conception of phenomena with a dialectical conception of development.

** Lenin, V. (1908). *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Wellred Books. (ch. 3).

*** Engels, F. (1886). *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*. Marxists Internet Archive. (ch. 4).

**** This is basically the idea of postmodernists like Foucault and the empiricists like Popper who rejected the “historicism” of Marx.

***** **Contradiction:** A term in dialectics to mean the essential two opposites within a thing or process. These two aspects are in constant struggle but also unity. Contradictions can be between two clearly opposing forces, like the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Or contradictions can be between two opposites essential in a thing, like content and form. What is important is to understand their mutually penetra-

which determines their self-development. For example, capitalism is comprised of the opposite poles of the proletariat* and the bourgeoisie which are in contradiction. But within these opposite sides, there are even further contradictions — some antagonistic, and some non-antagonistic.** Various imperialist blocs and corporations are in contradiction which subsumes the bourgeoisie as a whole, and individual bourgeois subsume these corporations and so on. The decisions of individual participants of society are relatively *accidental*, and these accidents in subsumption comprise *necessity*.

But the decisions of individuals are not *truly* accidental in the sense that they can't be predicted and are completely random. The actions of individuals are determined by concrete internal contradictions in the form of biological processes and, most importantly, they are conditioned by the social relations they have in society and the interactions they have with the external world. Form determines content as much as content determines form. Necessity is a subsumption of accidents just as much as these accidents occur within a given necessity.

This means that we are able to build an *increasing* knowledge of phenomena through conceptual analysis, understanding things within their real relations and contradictions, but we can never build an *absolute* knowledge of things as that would mean having a complete understanding of every contradiction that comprises the universe to the smallest sub-atomic level. Thus, relative accident still remains to some extent in our social practice and we can never achieve *absolute* freedom.

Moreover, because of the universality of contradiction and opposite sides, objective reality is necessarily in constant development. Engels said that is just as impossible to conceive of matter without motion as it is to conceive of motion without matter. Natural science concurs.

“The dialectical method shows us that since nature

tive nature. Their struggle necessitates the opposite's existence. There can be no bourgeoisie without the proletariat and vice versa. You can not have something with only content or only form.

* **Proletariat:** The working, oppressed class of capitalism. They live entirely off the sale of their labour-power. **Proletarian** is either an adjective to describe something that is comprised of the proletariat or is proletarian in nature, e.g., the proletarian party. Proletarian can also be used as a noun to mean a single member of the proletariat.

** The latter meaning that the resolution of the contradiction does not require an elimination of one of the opposites.

and society is constant flux, constant struggle and development, the truth itself is mutable. What was the truth before may no longer be the truth today. The truth is not immutable; that would be pure dogmatism. As Enver Hoxha said, we should canonise nothing and go ahead boldly to discard all that is outdated. Through social practice, we are always working towards absolute truth, absolute knowledge, but it can never be practically achieved. We must do our best to achieve as deep and conceptual knowledge about all things in development, take all measures to mitigate the role of the accident in our social practice and we can get within the closest proximity of absolute knowledge, but even then, we believe that complete knowledge is just not realisable — we can not “round off” knowledge. Therefore, neither can we possess absolute freedom.”*

This also relates to a main and important principle of our investigation. That we can never fall into dogmatism and allow the correspondence between our ideas and reality to grow, and the truth to decrease. What was true ten years ago may not be true now. What was true ten seconds ago may not be true now. We are always working towards absolute knowledge but will never practically achieve it.** Thus, we need to make sure to constantly apply a revolutionary method in our theory and see things in contradiction.

Summarised principles of freedom

To summarise in simple terms:

1) We can not be “free” or independent of material reality — our consciousness itself is material reality and therefore everything is ultimately determined in a necessity.***

2) Knowledge/truth is the correspondence of the idea with material reality.

3) Freedom, therefore, is the most knowledge of necessity and objective material reality to allow for someone to work towards definite ends.

* Sub Fac (2022). *What is Freedom and How Do We Win It?*. The November 8th Publishing House. (pp. 15-16).

** Cornforth, M. (1955). *The Theory of Knowledge*. Red Star Publishers. (p. 141).

*** This was the idea of Spinoza.

4) However, we can not achieve absolute freedom practically as we can not achieve absolute knowledge. We can work towards more and more freedom through social practice but we can not have *absolute* freedom.

5) Therefore, freedom is not a have or have not quality but people have differing degrees of freedom.

6) To describe something as liberating is to say it creates conditions that allow for someone to achieve knowledge of material reality to work towards their definite ends.

A liberating education

A liberating system of education should provide its students with the best possible means for the achievement of knowledge of objective reality.

And as we have said before in our principles of investigation, knowledge is not something that can just be dogmatically memorised as a catalogue of things. Knowledge is achieved actively through social practice. A liberating education system recognises this fact and provides a theoretical basis for students to procure knowledge of necessity heuristically.**

A liberating education system, as well as facilitating the active intellectual development of the child and student, should also encourage political, cultural, physical and social development.

We maintain that the current education system in Britain *does not and can not* perform the function of a liberating education system. By its nature, it is an oppressive “education” system.

It becomes the task of the student, like ourselves, who is at the mercy of this oppressive education system to seek to investigate *why* the education system is not liberating and work to change this fact.

The methodology of our investigation of our education

The investigation of our education must be liberating in itself. It must provide us with actual conceptual knowledge which is gained through the combination of theoretical understanding with social practice. This is a difficult task because we are condi-

* **Heuristic:** Pedagogical methods which are not anti-conscious but encourage conscious and creative application in learning.

** Kim Il Sung (1977). *The Theses on Socialist Education*, in: *Socialist Education in Korea*. Iskra Books. (p. 83).

tioned in our investigation and epistemology in an “education” system which is *not* liberating.

This is why the principles of investigation and social practice laid out in the previous pages, whilst ultimately being very intuitive, may still seem very foreign and complex. This is for the simple reason that we are not taught them in school. We are not given the instruments by our “education” to expose the oppressive nature of it. Almost every student enrolled at every level of education in Britain feels disillusioned with “education.” Students (rightfully, to some extent) see the content and form of education as a waste of time, and they become frustrated with education. Students are frustrated by the increasing stress and unnecessary workload levied by schools and exam boards. Students are frustrated by the arbitrary discipline that usually abounds particularly in primary and secondary education. Students are frustrated by the unresponsiveness of the school administration to their plights, difficulties and demands. Students are upset that their entire future prospects and “societal value” in the eyes of the bourgeois employers come down to a set of arbitrary marks on exams.

We all see the problems with education. But we see it in a fractured sense. In a perceptual sense. That is why we as students can not fully conceptualise what exactly is the cause of our frustration and alienation in education. The purpose of this book is to arrive at a conceptual understanding of education. And that should be the point of education on the whole anyway: “We must teach the masses clearly what we have received from them confusedly.”*

To fully examine education as it is, it is important to utilise the dialectical method and throw away all metaphysics, mechanism, idealism, conjecture and fideist speculation which are present in any bourgeois attempt to examine education. An important way to conceive of dialectical development is through the understanding of the categories of form and content.

Content and form in education

Content refers to the essential nature of elements within something whereas *form* refers to the mode of how these elements are organised. Differing content allows differing forms and the form in which content is organised can change its char-

* Mao Tse-tung, quoted in: Malraux, A. (1968). *Anti-Memoirs*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. (p. 375).

acter and limit it. Content is the mobile element and has in it the potential of qualitatively changing the form and therefore itself. Certain qualities can only emerge when a certain form, a certain conjuncture. We already talked about this when discussing how consciousness is not a quality possessed by any single atom, molecule or neuron of the human brain, but is the result of a specific form of its content.

Why is an analysis of content and form important?

The contradiction between content and form is important in dialectics as it completely shatters the mechanism of bourgeois philosophy. It forces one to analyse something dialectically and in flux.

This is how the book is structured. It first is necessary for us to study the *form* of education. Most notably, the social function of education. Also included in the form below is the structure of education and its general principles of development and operation — the form of the anti-consciousness,* examination, teachers and social policy.

We must also investigate the oppressive *content* of education. This includes an analysis of the content of social sciences “education” as well as moral “education.” It is from this we can understand that the oppressive and falsified content of this “education” is conditioned by the form of education and that the form of education arises as a result of the nature of the content.

When we are talking about today’s “education” in Britain, we put it in quotations. Because we do not recognise it as education as such. It does not liberate us.

Then, the final chapter is concerned with conceptualising what a liberating education would be like in both form and content specifically. It is not enough to just write a long list correcting every erroneous aspect of content in the current education system and expect that it will be fixed. We understand that as long as the oppressive form of the current education system continues, oppressive and erroneous content will soon follow. Therefore, it is necessary for education to be liberating in both form and content. Also contained is how we get from A to B. There is no point sitting around imagining what the perfect education system would look like. There is no point engaging in utopian exercises. Liberation is a call to action!

* **Anti-consciousness:** The tendency for social ideas to be accepted as immutably and self-evidently true, and the act of finding out or scrutinising these ideas to be discouraged. The oppressive bourgeois “education” system tries to instil anti-consciousness within students.

Reading group questions

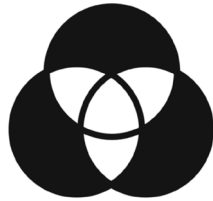
Has this changed how you understand freedom?

Can you think of ways in which some people confuse a futile escape from reality and laws of necessity as “freedom from it”?

What ways today is our freedom is denied?

Can you think of some examples of the contradiction between content and form? Why is this contradiction so essential?

IN FORM



III — THE FUNCTION OF EDUCATION

Education in a historical sense: what is its basic function?

We must first understand education as a superstructural apparatus rather than some immutable concept to determine the actual function of education.

Education, like all things, is historically concrete. Many philosophers have attempted to ascribe some grandiose definition of education but they have fallen short of summarising the content and form of education as a totality.* Education differs massively in content and form throughout different periods of history and can not be fit into some mystical phrasemongering.

In primitive societies, education as a concept and institution took on a primitive form and content. In the slave societies education was different from feudal societies and yet again different from capitalist societies. The nature of education sometimes differs drastically in social formations** that historically co-exist. Education, as it exists today, is by no means globally homogenised. Education is obviously differentiated in structural complexity. Education is differentiated in content, what specifically is taught — how it is taught and when it is taught. Education is also differentiated in its level of access. In Britain, education is compulsory and has been since the 1880 Education Act; this means that, ostensibly, there is full and equal access for the whole population of children in Britain. However, this has not always been the case.

Especially in the older class societies, education was tightly restricted to children of the ruling classes. Public education did not exist and education as a formal institution was exclusive. Today, in many countries, particularly the exploited countries under the yoke of imperialism, access to education is still restricted and is an institution reserved for the children of the

* Simmons, M. (1901). *Education and Socialism*. International Socialist Review.

** **Social formation:** Term for an historically concrete society. It is similar to the mode of production but the mode of production refers to a more general model of society with a single homogenous class struggle, whereas social formations refer to these historically concrete societies where there may be multiple class struggles, with some old classes disappearing and new classes emerging.

compradors.*

Thus, education has not been an immutable institution since the dawn of *Homo sapiens*. Julius Caesar did not preside over OFSTED. Why does education differ in form and content throughout social formations?

This is because education is an aspect of the superstructure** and therefore corresponds to some degree or another to the relations of production of material life. The nature of the economic base of society conditions the superstructure, of which education is a part, and permits or inhibits certain aspects. In primitive societies, complex divisions of labour do not exist.*** Neither do any reliable productive forces**** like agricultural or large-scale pastoralism that could assure surpluses. Due to this very basic nature of production, education in a formal sense, in the form of schools, colleges and universities, obviously would not have a material basis to exist.

With the advent of class society***** arose the material basis for a formal education institution of some kind as well as the necessity for one. The increasing technical divisions of labour, and the emergence of the state apparatus, required that the children of the ruling classes be taught the reigns of administration.

* **Comprador:** The bourgeoisie in imperialised countries that have an objective interest in perpetuating these imperialist relations. This is opposed to the national bourgeoisie who have an objective interest in some level of independence or autonomy.

** **Superstructure:** The superstructure is the totality of social ideas, laws, customs and culture that corresponds to a particular epoch of class rule. The economic base and the superstructure are in a mutually penetrative contradiction. It is often hard to draw a sharp line between what is considered the base and what is the superstructure. The superstructure's development is often very dynamic and has an extreme amount of relatively contingent particularities which means it can not simply be mechanically understood from the economic base of society. For instance, no two capitalist social formations are the same superstructurally, even if they are at an almost identical economic development.

*** Mental and physical labour may have arisen at this point, which will be discussed later.

**** **Productive forces:** Refers to the aggregate development of the instruments of production and productive techniques in use in a given society. There exists a law of correspondence between the relations of production and the productive forces. The former can accelerate or fetter the development of the latter.

***** **Class society:** A society where there exist antagonistic classes on the economic level. For example, capitalism is a class society.

Education was to reproduce these ideal administrators, Plato's aristocrats to steer the ship of society. Education functioned to teach students indispensable technical skills. And, also importantly, education would function to teach students the social ideas of the time — civil, religious and political ideas — so that the students would grow up with the “correct” ideas and a profound admiration and loyalty for that given regime.

For example, feudal “education” — which was only available to the clergy and the children of the nobility — was completely subordinate to feudal theology. Secular educational pursuits available to the ruling classes like neo-Platonism were still in correspondence with feudal theology.* Why? The learning of theology was what was needed for this loyalty to the given regime. The future political representatives of the feudal class needed to be armed with corresponding social ideas.

These are a multitude of specific functions but they can all be subsumed into a single function: *education functions to reproduce the economic base to which it corresponds.*

This is the simple and rather intuitive function of education. Quickly, the phrasemongering of the Department of Education's speel about “realising potential” begins to slip away. Of course, the individual administrators and teachers of the education system may very sincerely believe those lofty moral platitudes are the purpose of education but the objective purpose and necessity of education is very simply to reproduce the economic basis.

The role of education becomes the *realisation of students' potential* only when the *realisation of students' potential* becomes conducive to the reproduction of the economic basis. This can only happen in socialism. And as we will see later, the demands that the objective political-economic laws of capitalism place upon education are such that it is required that a certain number of students do not realise their potential.**

Of course, it is important to note that the correspondence between education and the economic base — and base and superstructure on the whole — is not a mechanical one. The economic base and the superstructure are in constant development and the superstructure often develops particularities which in turn condition the development of the base. Therefore, this correspondence is a dynamic one.*** Vestiges of the old and new may

* Sison, J. (1982). *Basic Principles of Marxism-Leninism*. Foreign Languages Press. (pp. 50-51).

** Au, W. (2009). *Unequal By Design*. Routledge.

*** Due to particular objective conditions, it can even be the case

co-exist in the superstructure and continue on past their hitherto economic causation.* To claim that you can deduce the nature of education purely from the study of the economic base is vulgar economism ****; such a claim would be a gross oversimplification of historical materialism,**** and one that often plays into the hands of bourgeois sociology. The imputation of Marxism as “economically deterministic” seems to be the most leant on criticism of Marxism by bourgeois sociologists and is an edict blurted desperately by any half-wit A-Level sociology teacher.

Education as a state apparatus

It is important to understand education as one of the many instruments of the state. It is important therefore to discuss what the state is.

What is the state?

The state is a product of a class society. It arises from class struggle:***** “an admission that society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself.”***** The state exists as

that education in certain class societies can inadvertently sew the seeds for that class society’s displacement by another class society.

* We will discuss this later when talking about the role of religious education in Britain today.

** **Economism:** A revisionist, anti-Marxist trend where one considers the economic base of a society in a very mechanical, vulgar way, and in doing so, also reduces the role of the subjective factor and class struggle and the superstructure. Economism can occur in essentially two distinct but mutually penetrative trends: 1) subjective economism, which focuses only on the economic struggle at the expense of the political and cultural aspects of class struggle, and 2) objective economism, a mechanical view of the law of correspondence between the relations of production and productive forces, leading to accelerationist or reformist ideas. Marx and Engels refuted the economist interpretations of their work, and Lenin played an instrumental role in repudiating the economism of the Mensheviks.

*** Engels, F. (1890). *Letter to J. Bloch*. Marxists Internet Archive.

**** **Historical materialism:** The Marxist-Leninist science of history. It applies dialectical materialism to an investigation of history. It understands history’s principal contradiction to be that of class struggle.

***** **Class struggle:** The contradiction/struggle that exists between classes in history: for example, between bourgeois and proletarian, lord and serf, etc.

***** Engels, F. (1884). *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*. Penguin Books.

a weapon of the ruling class. Without the state, the ruling class could not retain power. The bourgeoisie today in Britain needs bourgeois politicians to pass bourgeois acts, bourgeois judges to posit bourgeois jurisprudence, bourgeois police to enforce the bourgeois law and a bourgeois education system to inculcate bourgeois attitudes and capitulation in the workers. The state as such provably did not exist in classless society as there was no economic basis for its existence.*

Today — and for a long time — the bourgeois intellectuals try and have tried to mask this fact, conceiving that the state is somehow above or abstract from class. They argue that the state does not have a class character, or *should* and *could* theoretically not have a class character. Think of Karl Popper’s idea of an *open society* and Manneheim’s naive idea of the “free-floating intelligentsia.” Imagine entertaining such an idea for a second. Any analysis both surface-level and deep of current events in Britain renders such a conception ludicrous. We live in a time where the state media slanders and censors the mildest of trade union leaders, a time where the state police kettle progressive protesters of all hues and where the politicians unapologetically hustle through unprecedentedly repressive anti-strike legislation.

Some bourgeois “thinkers” will attempt to falsify our understanding of the class character of the state by trying to identify bourgeois state actions or policies that have ameliorated the position of the working class. They may point to the minimum wage, voting rights or labour legislation to postulate that the state is “above class” and seeking out benefits for everyone. Social-democratic measures as these are merely the reluctant concessions of the bourgeoisie to try to placate the ardent fighters of the proletarian class struggles. Such “philanthropic” measures such as the minimum wage and voting rights are small but necessary concessions that attempt to stave off the inevitable victory of the proletariat. An idea that is also transmitted in bourgeois “education” is that democratic rights and labour legislation have been paternalistically handed down by the bourgeoisie and the state out of the goodness of their hearts. In reality, our limited democratic rights are written in the red ink of the blood spilt by the chartists. Every single penny earned by the wage worker was won by the unions. This is not to mention the fact that measures like the minimum wage and labour legislation actually benefit and freshen capitalism *as a whole* by reducing the fre-

* And therefore, in the higher phase of communism, when all class struggle has withered away, so will the state once more.

quency of cyclical overproduction crises.* However, the bourgeoisie in characteristic myopia will continue to try to drive and abolish these concessions, sowing seeds for their destruction, and tying the noose around their neck. Mr Sunak's corruption and anti-strike legislation, whilst benefiting him and the other capitalists *individually* in the short run, only serve to quicken total collapse.

Thus, we see that the state is very much a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. But it is a dictatorship of the, necessarily,** myopic and cannibalistic who will always find some "ingenious" way to destroy themselves.

Because the class character of the state is evident, bourgeois intellectuals may even go so far as to recognise that classes and class struggle exist but the state is somehow a positive arbiter "reconciling" the two. In a class society, the state is necessary for "order." This petty-bourgeois*** idea was the hot idea among the Russian Socialist-Revolutionaries (SRs)**** in Lenin's time.***** But with such a conception, we as revolutionary students must have to inquire what they mean by "order." This entire conception of the state relies on the euphemism of "order." Order means the maintenance of the current system of class domination. It means the continuation of this bloody system of mass murder, imperialism, neo-colonialism, ecological plunder, theft, war, rape and despotism. When we fully grasp that the "order" referred to is really the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, we begin to realise that the "reconciliation" theory of the state is really just using socialist phraseology to justify bourgeois dictatorship. We as progressive students have no interest in defending this old "order." We want to supplant it! We want an education

* Luxemburg, R. (1899). *Reform or Revolution?*. Pathfinder Press.

** We say necessarily because capitalism operates on the law of surplus-value and requires complete competition to exploit. The myopia of the capitalist system is thus an invariable feature.

*** **Petty-bourgeoisie:** An ever-diminishing transitional class in capitalism. Comprised of self-employed, small business owners, intellectuals and others. Owing to their limbo, they can vacillate between the support of the proletariat and the support of the bourgeoisie. We should aim to win them over.

**** **Socialist-Revolutionaries:** Agrarian populist party and heirs of Narodism in pre-revolutionary Russia during the early 20th century. They had large political importance during 1917 but their bourgeois stands were exposed by Lenin.

***** Lenin, V. (1917). *The State and Revolution*. The Leftist Public Domain Project. (p. 5).

system which corresponds to all that is new and liberating!

In sum, the state is the organ of the ruling classes throughout history. It does not and can not stand above class. It arises and exists in the class interests of the current ruling class. The state is a feature of the superstructure we mentioned earlier — it thus functions to maintain the economic base.

So where does education as an aspect of the state fit in specifically?

Education is what is called an *ideological state apparatus*, an aspect of the state that functions primarily through ideology to fulfil its function on behalf of the ruling class. This is distinct from the more commonly thought of *repressive state apparatuses* like the police, military and so on which function primarily through direct repression.

However, we emphasise that it is important to not drive a metaphysical categorisation between what constitutes an *ISA* and *RSA*. This is because *ISAs* necessarily rely on repression and an *RSA* has clear ideological content. We will see this later when we analyse the repressive aspects of bourgeois “education,” like examinations and teacher discipline. Moreover, bourgeois ideology is just another form of repression — it is repressing the proletariat from pursuing their class interests and repressing the knowledge and execution of their necessity, their freedom.

Thus, we would say that whilst education is predominantly ideological, it must necessarily consist in repression too.

So what is particular about education as a state apparatus?

It is different from many other of these *ideological state apparatuses* in that it is directly in state control, at least in Britain. Whilst there are some private schools, a majority of education is state education and therefore not in the “private domain.” Even the private, boarding, religious and other fee-paying schools are tethered to the state insofar as students have to sit the same standardised exams and must therefore have similar curriculums.

Other *ideological state apparatuses* are in this “private domain” which means they are still very much bourgeois in their content but have superficial autonomy from the state.*

But like all bourgeois state apparatuses, education is incorrigible. It can not merely be inherited and reformed by us. It will never become liberating in the capitalist system and if we simply inherit it as it is now for socialism,** it will destroy the revolu-

* Gramsci, A. (n.d.). *The Formation of Intellectuals*, in: *The Modern Prince & Other Writings*. Foreign Languages Press.

** **Socialism:** Socialism is lower-phase communism. It is con-

tion. As Marx said:

“the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes.”*

“Education is a weapon,”** and that weapon should lie in the hands of us, the workers, students and progressive people.

As students, we have the task of revolution under the leadership of the revolutionary party. The task is to supplant the bourgeois “education” system. The task is to supplant the wider bourgeois state, which is required for the former. There can be no reconciliation!

Education’s specific functions today

We have illustrated that the principal function of education in any society is ultimately to reproduce the economic base and class domination. So how does this principal function manifest into specific functions today?

We must list the specific functions of the oppressive “education” system. We will then later in the book expand upon these ideas further.

First and foremost, education is the most potent ideological weapon at the bourgeoisie’s disposal. It is the principal medium through which bourgeois social ideas are transmitted to the workers at their most vulnerable age.

As we will discuss later, it is not only bourgeois ideological *content* that the bourgeois schools impose upon the student (e.g., falsified views on an immutable egoistic “human nature” or falsified views about the history of socialism) but a bourgeois form of ideological thinking. An innately bourgeois outlook that riddles the student through and through like woodworm: the tendency of *anti-consciousness*.

Through the “filters” and restraints of exams, as well as the

structured — and must continually be developed — once the proletariat, which has political power, has managed to remove antagonistic classes from the economic level of society. The class struggle still occurs in socialism against any external capitalist enemies and internal bureaucratic errors or capitalist remnants.

* Marx, K. (1871). *Civil War in France*. Foreign Languages Press. (p. 61).

** Stalin, J. (1934). *An Interview with H.G Wells*. Marxists Internet Archive.

encompassing and universal nature of the educational institution in children's lives, the students adopt bourgeois thought as second nature and sincerely believe the earmarks of bourgeois reaction they hold are their own ideas. Such is the ideological potency of bourgeois education.

This ideological indoctrination occurs through direct and indirect means. The most direct means is that of moral education — something we will investigate in depth later on. Moral education can have many different names in different schools, like PSHE, *Citizenship* or just the content of *Tutorial*. Moral education is the direct transmission of bourgeois morals and ethics; it is the unabashed propagation of illusionary ideas that arise from the bourgeois intelligentsia that serve the interests of class domination. It is essential to the bourgeoisie that moral education prunes the students of their revolutionary spirit. It is to instil them with moral attitudes that make them virulently hostile to their own interests and themselves.* In Britain, this initiative has been given the euphemism of the “Fundamental British Values.” Under these “Fundamental British Values,” a vicious war against the minds of children is fought, through the mediation of the invasive, sinister and draconian *Prevent* initiative.**

Bourgeois education must secondly instil subsidiary ideological ideas conducive to its domination, owing to particular subjective conditions. Education in Britain has an instrumental part in galvanising chauvinist and backward attitudes in students — attitudes of misogyny, racism and bigotry. These chauvinist attitudes are an invariable result of the objective laws of political economy in imperialism — the bourgeoisie needs to continue to exploit these groups, to extract as much surplus-value as possible. They will not work against their class interest. The subjugation of women also is not random but arose historically with class society and is necessitated by private property.*** ****

This has also been subsidiarily said to be the “divide and

* Krupskaya, N. (1917). *Youth League*, in: *On Education*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 145).

** **Prevent:** The so-called counter-terrorism initiative of the British bourgeois state, founded in 2003, which operates in schools.

*** **Private property:** Property owned by the bourgeoisie that is a means of production for capital accumulation. Does not typically refer to personal property, i.e. people's possessions they use for personal consumption.

**** Engels, F. (1884). *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*. Penguin Books.

rule” tactic of education.* These chauvinist ideas are enforced through form and content. Up until recently, the subject choice available to boys and girls explicitly perpetuated the “traditional” division between men and women. Boys would study metalwork, resistant materials, carpentry, etc., whereas girls would be constrained to home economics and sewing. Thus, this function of education was to reproduce the idea that women should not pursue paid employment, and instead, aspire to labour domestically as the property of their husbands. The liberation of women and their participation in socialism is not possible if they are imprisoned within “traditional” domestic obligations.**

Whilst such this explicit imposition of a gendered division of education has ceased in Britain — and let’s remember it very much continues around the world, and in many of the countries in the U.S. imperialist bloc where girls are still denied access to any form of education — only a liberal charlatan would subscribe to a “march of progress” view and assume that all chauvinist attitudes have been or can be eventually eradicated in the framework of the oppressive capitalist “education” system.

It is also important to realise too that a darkened reaction continues even if it has seemingly been liquidated *explicitly*. It would be of incredible naivete and cognitive dissonance to assume that racial or misogynist bigotry in education has ceased. No. Our study goes beyond the “judicial forms.” It seeks to see things concretely in their real relations. We see that these attitudes continue but more implicitly. Even bourgeois sociologists recognise this.*** This bigotry continues in the content and form of education, which we analyse in more depth later. It remains very present and ready to bring to the forefront when necessary.

We will also see later that the postmodernist**** trend that has embedded itself in “education” is just, if not more perniciously, racist than ordinary reaction.

* Freire, P. (1968). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Penguin Books. (p. 114).

** Kollontai, A. (1920). *Communism and the Family*, in: *The Plight, Struggle and Liberation of Women*. The November 8th Publishing House.

*** Davies, B. (1989). *The Discursive Production of the Male/Female Dualism in School Settings*, in: *The RoutledgeFalmer Reader in Sociology of Education*. Routledge.

**** **Postmodernism:** A trend in bourgeois sociology that rejects the validity of science and proposes relativism. It sees “liberation” as being something purely cultural, “discursive” and fragmented to certain intersectional groups.

Thirdly, *bourgeois education must promote a style of work most conducive to surplus-value extraction and obedience.* This specific function is of essential importance to bourgeois education. Bourgeois education is rearing the next generation of wage workers, proletarians. Therefore, bourgeois education must yield workers ideal for capitalism's fundamental economic law, the law of surplus-value.* This means acclimatising children, not only to the content of bourgeois social production but the essential form.

Children are learned in the tolerance of complete rule from above; they are given no say in educational policy that directly affects them the same way the wage worker has no workplace democracy and must unflinchingly obey the arbitrations of their boss. The mimicking of the style of work from school to the workplace is coined as the "correspondence principle."**

Principally, the style of work children are taught to adhere to is a dogmatic and formalist one. Concern only for output and activity without concern for revolutionary thought and direction. A dry *American efficiency* without a *Russian revolutionary sweep*.*** To not combine *American efficiency* with a *Russian revolutionary sweep* means to be instilled with an attitude of tireless work but for this attitude to be rigidly formalistic without taking their own creative initiative or understanding the purpose of such work. This is because if the student was to take a second to analyse the nature of their work in the bourgeois "education" system, they would soon recognise its purposelessness and unnecessary onerousness.

Children do worksheets, revise tirelessly, do exams, read extracts, read and highlight textbooks but they are never explained to or encouraged to ask why and for what purpose. How does such a style of work enrich them? This is once again the manifestation of *anti-consciousness*.

In private schools, as well as higher education, the *anti-consciousness* does not cease. However, there are notable differences between the style of work inculcated in them. Public education teaches obedience, to "make slaves out of the workers' children."**** In private and higher education, the children of the

* Stalin, J. (1951). *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 47).

** Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. (1976). *Schooling in Capitalist America*. Haymarket Books.

*** Stalin, J. (1924). *The Foundations of Leninism*. Foreign Languages Press. (ch. 9).

**** Krupskaya, N. (1927). *The Young Pioneer Movement as A Pedagogical Problem*, in: *On Education*. The November 8th Publishing

ruling class* learn instead an insidious individualism, arrogance and a disdain for the masses.

And when inevitably, the stresses, the alienation and the directionlessness that emanate from such a formalist “education” system take a toll on the mental health of the student, they are once again taught to be accustomed to a bleak fatalism by their counsellors and their teachers. That this is the only such existence. The student is once again taught to bottle up and normalise their anxieties, depression and feelings of purposelessness just as the worker is expected to — rather than deeply evaluate their conditions and strive to alleviate the external causes of their suffering through revolutionary activity. They are taught that there is no alternative to the Old. That there is no alternative to the oppressive “education” system and bourgeois state power from which it heralds.

Fourthly, bourgeois education must reproduce the technical nature of capitalist production and the divisions of labour. Bourgeois education needs to equip some workers with specific technical skills to fill the evergrowing divisions in labour in capitalist social production. It must give the workers a “crumb” of technical knowledge, as well as basic fundamental abilities like the ability to read and write.**

In previous modes of production, the learning of technical skills was primarily on the spot in long-term apprenticeships. Whilst apprenticeships are still a fixture of education in Britain, they are far less ubiquitous and are of a different character than apprenticeships of the old.*** Now specialist techniques and knowledge are increasingly learned inside the school.

So instead of a balanced education, students become very one-sided technically. They develop into one-sided specialists. This is detrimental to their individual prospects. With the continued development of productive forces, more divisions of labour are becoming automated or obsolete. Specific technical

House. (p. 128).

* And the rare few children of the working class who are able to make it through to higher education and Oxbridge.

** And it is ironic because these abilities sew the seeds of the bourgeoisie’s downfall.

*** Picard, L. (2004). *Elizabeth’s London*. Orion Books. (pp. 214-237).

Educational apprenticeships of the old, under the direction of the 1563 Statute of Artificers for example, lasted much longer and the apprentice became the virtual property of the producer. Thus, semi-feudal apprenticeships are of a fundamentally different character.

jobs in industry, logistics and financial analysis are becoming increasingly automated. The effort of the specialist to gain proficiency in their narrow field and qualifications can become completely worthless.* Workers in these fields are unsure of their tomorrow.

A liberating education is not one that produces one-sided specialists, soon to be rendered obsolete and jobless by the developments of the productive forces.

Polytechnical education is an important aspect of the liberating education. Education where the students become aware of production as a whole, its methods and its development.

“[Polytechnical] education will enable young people quickly to familiarize themselves with the whole system of production and to pass from one branch of production to another in response to the needs of society or their own inclinations. It will, therefore, free them from the one-sided character which the present-day division of labour impresses upon every individual.”**

However, it is vital to note that polytechnical education by no means precludes specialisation.

The point of polytechnical education is not to create *jacks of all trades*. In a liberating education, specialisation still remains “necessary and expedient.”*** Rather, a polytechnical, liberating education must create specialists of a new type: *socially minded specialists*.**** Specialists who are not shut away in some narrow speciality and become alienated from other people. Specialists who are not merely rendered surplus to requirements once a new development of production emerges. The specialist reared by the liberating education system possesses rich universal skills and mindset, owing to a polytechnical education, meaning that they are not completely constrained to a speciality and may be able to adjust quickly to another branch of production if so needed. But most importantly, the liberating educa-

* Krupskaya, N. (1930). *The Difference Between Professional and Polytechnical Education*, in: *On Education*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 203).

** Engels, F. (1847). *The Principles of Communism*. Marxists Internet Archive.

*** Stalin, J. (1946). *Problems of Leninism*. Foreign Languages Publishing House. (p. 598).

**** Kammari, M. (1950). *Socialism and the Individual*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 53).

tion creates specialists who combine “the profound study of his particular speciality with the study of the principles of Marxism-Leninism, with the study of the science of the laws of development of society.”* This allows the specialist to think creatively and correctly. To think in a progressive and anti-dogmatic way. Just like our methods of study. Without a combination of this study with their speciality, they degenerate into formalism and one-sidedness — the hallmark of the bourgeois specialist. It is on this basis that the specialist from the liberating education keeps their love for the people and does not grow alienated, disdainful and aloof from the people like the one-sided specialists of capitalism.**

How does this one-sided specialisation concretely manifest in Britain today? There is a prevailing trend towards mathematics in education, evidenced by Mr Sunak’s intent to make mathematics compulsory until the age of 18. This is to build specialised skills for the evergrowing sector of engineers, computer scientists and war logisticians in Britain. Mathematics is an indispensable technical skill for these fields.

It is also important to note how this drive for the teaching of mathematics has often occurred in a very *anti-conscious* way. A conceptual understanding of maths has been purposely withheld from the average student. Students in primary and secondary school learn arithmetic and basic mathematical concepts without learning their interrelation, application and the greater logic behind maths. As an old Privy Council declaration stated: “Arithmetic is the Logic of the poor.”*** This is to say that the overwhelming majority of students are taught in a dry, formalist and one-sided way as this is more conducive to capitalist production. This leads us to the fifth specific function of bourgeois education.

Fifthly, bourgeois education must necessarily deny education and “knowledge” to a large mass of workers, through “filtering.”

* *Ibid.* (p. 53).

** This disdainful, anti-social and aloof nature of bourgeois specialists and intellectuals is even ubiquitously parodied by bourgeois culture itself. The main fixture of the dull and unentertaining bourgeois situational “comedy,” *The Big Bang Theory*, is the character Sheldon Cooper, a theoretical who is shown to be profoundly anti-social, arrogant and neurotic owing to his one-sided specialisation and abstraction from the people.

*** Lawvere, W. (1996). *History and Philosophy of Mathematic Reform*. Hardial Bains Resource Centre Archives.

The nature of capitalist political economy requires that most students do not reach the upper echelons of education and are cast aside to a miserable life of poorly paid unskilled labour and the ranks of unemployment.

Students stay in education long enough to be stamped with bourgeois ideological myths and the bourgeois work ethic but they are “filtered out” before they can receive technical or intellectual qualifications requisite for decent employment.

This used to occur through blatant denial of access to education to working-class children.* In light of the struggle for universal education in Britain, methods of filtration have become more subtle and superficially justifiable.

The primary method of “filtering” is through standardised closed-book exams, GCSEs and A-Levels. This is justified by bourgeois eugenicist ideals — that role allocation occurs through some arbitrary concept of biological merit.** We will investigate this theory of “role allocation” through examinations later.

The second casual method of “filtering” is through objective economic and ideological pressures on students, particularly those of proletarian class origin. These students are disadvantaged in education through a panoply of factors. Students of 16-18 in sixth-form college often have to get part-time, poorly-paid employment, usually in the service industry, to financially support themselves and to “earn their keep.” This has a drastic effect on their educational attainment, precluding them from persistence in education. There is also significant social trepidation in the pursuit of higher education, feeling isolated from their class kin who are not interested in such pursuits, leading to a social “cost of persistence.”*** Mass educational failure is also invariably the result of the measures of austerity placed upon it. The failure of many students must also be seen as a product of their misplaced frustration with the alienating nature of “education” which results in truancy and exclusions from a young age.

In sum, bourgeois education must necessarily restrict higher education to the wide masses of the youth, so that the underachievers are forced into low-paid employment in the service industry and the ever-growing “gig” economy.

* Lenin, V. (1913). *The Question of the Ministry of Educational Policy*. Marxists Internet Archive.

** Davis, K., & Moore, W. (1945). *Some Principles of Stratification*. American Sociological Review.

*** Boudon, R. (1986). *Theories of Social Change*. Polity Press.

The interrelation of these functions

It is important that when we summarise the basic specific functions of bourgeois education, we do not fall into metaphysics.

We as revolutionary students must study everything in its interrelation. These specific functions do not and can never exist in isolation from each other and the ultimate function of “education”: upholding capitalism.

For instance, the transmission of chauvinist attitudes can not be achieved by the first overall transmission of bourgeois ideology as a whole.

The formalist and dogmatic style in work which is promoted by the “education” system is also an invariable outcome of general bourgeois ideology, non-polytechnical education and filtering.

The great mystery of the “sociologists of education”

However, we see that these functions of education are missed by the pitiful analysis of the “sociologists of education.”

The “sociologists of education” only study education in a superficial way. They are only concerned with optimising education’s pre-existing functions and grappling with demographic access to education. They do not engage in revolutionary investigation, as we do.

The issue is that all these “sociologists of education,” whether consciously or unconsciously, begin from the presupposition that education itself has no class character and is ahistorical. Education, just like the economy, gains a “phantom objectivity.”*

Because they do not strive to study education like the revolutionary student, by studying education in its concrete objective and subjective conditions, the “sociologists of education” fall into essentialist and arbitrary nonsense.

The first strand of “sociologists of education” seek to analyse education from the standpoint of its technical function in bourgeois society. They conclude that education is indispensable for the existing order through its technical function: the Davis-Moore hypothesis. But of course, they do not go as far as to seriously analyse the existing “order,” to view it in its de-

* Lukacs, G. (1923). *Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat*, in: *History and Class Consciousness*. Foreign Languages Press. (p. 101).

velopment. They start from the idea that society is immutable and thus conclude education is one method of reproducing its immutability. We as revolutionary students understand such a position to be bogus. All equilibria are relative and temporary. Equilibria contain within them an active contradiction.* Class struggle is the law of societal development, not some imagined “class reconciliation.” The former is not understood by the functionalist position, but if it was, would terrify to the core all those who pay lip service to the bourgeoisie.

As we will explore later, this traditional functionalist view of education** is also bound up and in league with Malthusian*** and social “Darwinist” conceptions of the role of education.

Such “thinkers” belonging to this strand include Durkheim, Parsons, Munro, Hargreaves, Spencer, Sorokin, Davis and Moore to name but a few.

The second strand of “sociologists of education” seek to analyse education from a piecemeal, individual and fragmented basis. They believe they can make worthwhile conclusions about the nature and development of education by looking at singular cases in abstraction. They develop arbitrary and jejune theories pertaining to “labelling,” “social capital,” “typifications” and all manner of asinine postmodernist discursive “theories.” To them, education is merely a disparate collection of inexplicable interactions between people. This is often called a *micro-sociological* outlook.

Their piecemeal analysis means they focus on disparities in educational achievement between demographics and they give haphazard and superficial suggestions on how to alleviate these differences. For this reason, they are seen to be *progressive* sociologists. But what are they progressing?

Their postmodernist sociologists under the banner of *identity* and *difference* obscure the origin of the oppression in capitalism. They see racial, gendered and other forms of oppression as innate and not a result of capitalism. More insidiously still, the postmodernists through inherited Nietzschean difference theory**** deplore that any united action is taken against all these

* Engels, F. (1883). *Dialectics of Nature*. Progress Publishers. (pp. 243-256).

** In conjunction with the theory of equilibrium.

*** **Malthusianism:** Bourgeois theory that economic crises are caused by indissoluble overpopulation. Leads to social-Darwinist and genocidal ideology.

**** In short, the idea is that difference is innate within humans.

sites of oppression all at once.* On the other hand, we the revolutionary students realise we can not fight oppression fragmentedly and in abstraction from the root cause. A revolutionary movement must be united and monolithic.

The second strand of these “sociologists of education” again do not look at the actual function of education. They do not view education as historically constituted — they do not even recognise history as a concept and just imagine current conditions to have fallen out of the sky.**

These strands of “sociologists of education” are not mutually exclusive but are rather “two wings of the same bird,” as you may say, two interpenetrating opposites. They are not isolated from each other in any way. They are both an expression of the bourgeois ideological structure attempting to reproduce itself. Therefore they contain contradictory features of the other strand in themselves. The first strand is seen as *macro-sociological*, attempting to analyse structures that subsume the individual wills of people. However, such “thinkers” of the first strand, in their advocacy for “equilibrium” and conservation of some imagined “consensus,” degenerate into empiricism and pragmatism. This is best illustrated by the works of Michael Oakeshott and is also illustrated with Karl Popper’s “thoughts” on social engineering and institutions. The incredulity of conceptual ideology or theoretical knowledge in favour of dry, piecemeal empiricism and positivism is therefore something that is ultimately common in both strands.

Similarly, it is clear and obvious that the first strand *reifies**** education in connection with the economy — they see it as some naturally occurring thing outside the realm of class struggle, social relations and politics. And, on the other hand, one may be forgiven in saying that the second strand does not do this. In fact, the only thing they do is look at education in terms of social relations, albeit in a fragmented and idealist way. However, they *reify* education on the basis that they see the *individuals* as

This idea stemmed from a repugnance of socialism. This theory of Nietzsche was used by the postmodernists but also by Heidegger and the Hitlerites.

* Siraj (2018). *Postmodernism Today*. Foreign Languages Press. (ch. 14).

** *Ibid.* (ch. 15).

*** **Reification:** When social relations between people are given a false eternal or natural status. Ruling classes for instance tend to **reify** their rule as natural or god-given.

being ahistorical, essentialist and abstract from social relations, to whom they apply their arbitrary *micro-sociological* analysis as ahistorical. They see actions and the psyche of individuals as completely abstract from economic life. For instance, a sociologist of the second strand may say girls perform differently in education than boys because they are “socialised” differently. But instead of attempting to understand the root cause of why there exists a differential socialisation of boys and girls in wider society and the school — by investigating how the oppression of women and girls is necessitated by the economic structure and private property — they degenerate into essentialism just like the thinkers of the first strand.

We will return to an analysis similar to this when we see the trends in bourgeois historiography in the social sciences “education.” This unity of opposites between the two trends of bourgeois thought, the first seeing history as consisting of “immutable, eternal laws of nature” and the second seeing history as “blind forces... or great men.”*

Summary

Therefore, it is our duty as revolutionary students to always understand education in its objective context, as being an aspect of the superstructure of society, and an aspect of the bourgeois state more specifically. We must understand the necessary class character of education and how it functions specifically for its class purpose. We must uphold our revolutionary understanding of education in the face of the bourgeois “sociologists of education” who obscure the class nature of education by essentialising it and fragmenting it.

Bourgeois “education” is tied to the rule of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois state. We can not procure a liberating education in isolation. A true liberating education for all can only occur through revolution and socialism, led by the party of the working class. This revolution must not only uproot the bourgeois “education” system but *all* aspects of bourgeois rule and methods.

The liberating, socialist education system represents the triumph of the new over the old.

* Lukacs, G. (1923). *Class Consciousness*, in: *History and Class Consciousness*. Foreign Languages Press. (p. 62).

Reading group questions

What are some different historical examples of education that are very different to education today?

Can you think of specific institutions of the current bourgeois state, and how they function to uphold capitalism?

Can you think of overt ways, and give concrete examples, of how “education” today upholds and reproduces our capitalist society?

What are some ways you have seen “education” reproduce chauvinist and bourgeois attitudes?

Can you name any bourgeois sociologists or political commentators you have seen and how they uphold and reify today’s “education”?

IV — ANTI-CONSCIOUSNESS AND DOGMATISM

What is anti-consciousness?

The concept of anti-consciousness is very important as it is the essential forming principle under which the oppressive, bourgeois education system occurs. When we understand what it means for something to be anti-conscious or promote anti-consciousness, we begin to understand the nature of the “education” system more clearly.

Anti-consciousness means to fundamentally discourage the pursuit of discovery or study, the act of finding out new knowledge. Anti-consciousness is to consider all knowledge to be ready-made and definite. All reality to immutable and matter-of-fact. It is the “forced acceptance of a set of beliefs or values which are, in fact, not acquired by the act of finding out but by the act of consciously suppressing any findings which might contravene and contradict”^{*} them.

The important thing about anti-consciousness is that it is not merely a positing of incorrect conjecture subject to correction. Anti-consciousness as a principle means that the conjectures *don't* have to attempt to justify or support themselves but *just* are.

It is the epistemological concept of “because I said so.” This is the ideological core of the bourgeois “education” system.

The bourgeois “education” system is by its nature anti-conscious. It demands unconditional obedience to a set of values or “knowledge” without attempting to justify or explain the validity or usefulness of its content.

The curriculum is treated like a prayer book from which there is no room to deviate. The curriculum is comprised of set-in-stone, “ready-made” facts.

Anti-consciousness is irreconcilable with freedom

A student could ask naively, “what is wrong with the curriculum being set in stone and not up for debate? As long as the curriculum contains *true knowledge* then we should adhere to it anti-consciously and not just petulantly keep trying to question

* Bains, H. (1967). *Necessity For Change!*. National Publications Centre.

it and get it to consistently justify itself.”

This is the attitude of the mechanical materialists we talked about earlier. Simply put: “why should we deplore the anti-conscious and dogmatic methods in education if they are teaching us the *truth*?”

However, we as revolutionary students understand that anti-consciousness is irreconcilable with liberation — the procurement of knowledge and our ability to work towards our definite ends.

Why is this?

It is because objective reality is in constant development. Our ideas must change in adherence to this development if they are to continue to correspond to objective reality. Facts and knowledge are not ready-made. The truth is mutable and not static — it can not be contained within an immutable textbook alone. The anti-conscious attitude, to declare that fact A or fact B is the finalised form of reality, is incongruent with achieving knowledge, and as such, is incongruent with freedom.

The revolutionary student must discard the anti-conscious attitude. They must understand that the ideas contained within these textbooks are not of divine origin. There is no indubitable knowledge contained within the textbooks. The authors of these textbooks and learning resources are not abstract from society but are part of it. They are partisan to a class. They are conditioned by their material circumstances and have at their disposal an historically constituted level of *social knowledge*. “Educational” resources of the monastic schools of feudalism and textbooks of the bourgeois schools in capitalism differ in *content* because they were created under different prevailing ideological trends, under different ruling classes. But their *form* is the same insofar as they are anti-conscious and claimed to be indubitable. The Marxist-Leninist* philosopher Cornforth notes:

“One should never say, without qualification, ‘This textbook summarises knowledge of the subject,’ but rather, ‘It summarises knowledge so far as it has been won by using certain techniques in certain circumstances.’ Consequently most scientific textbooks have to be periodically revised, and old ones replaced by new, not because their authors made mistakes but because knowledge has

* **Marxism-Leninism:** The ideology of the proletariat in the era of imperialist capitalism.

itself changed.”*

The textbooks we use in the bourgeois “education” system are not even revised frequently. Especially when it comes to the social sciences. There is no consistent evaluation, criticism or revision of educational textbooks. Students are actively discouraged from engaging in criticism of the textbooks. Revisions and new editions of textbooks happen very infrequently and occur arbitrarily. Revisions often do not rectify content whatsoever, but instead, just *modernise* the graphics of the textbook, to make all the textboxes, fonts and pictures look prettier. Why is this?

Firstly, because of the anti-conscious. The intellectuals and textbook authors believe in their own myth. They believe that they are indubitably correct and the content in these textbooks is ready-made facts.

But secondly, it is also important to identify a definite economic motive and cause of the anti-consciousness. Due to the economic laws of capitalism, exam boards and intellectuals have no motivation to rectify their own errors and innovate. It is much easier for them to just re-package and rehash previously intellectual work and not actually criticise it.

Therefore, it is only through recognition of the mutability of knowledge and the truth that we can avoid anti-consciousness and subjectivism. It is only through “the dialectical doctrine of the identity of relative and absolute truth makes it possible to avoid any subjectivism, agnosticism, or scepticism, which arise on the basis of either relativism** or of a metaphysics which asserts the absoluteness of truth.”***

When we speak of the relativity and mutability of truth and knowledge — as Lenin said in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* — this in no way refutes the objective character of reality:

“the mutability of human conceptions of space and time no more refutes the objective reality of space and time than the mutability of scientific knowledge of the structure and forms of matter in motion refutes the ob-

* Cornforth, M. (1968). *The Open Philosophy and the Open Society*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 94).

** **Relativism:** Denial of objective reality by saying there are “multiple truths,” all equally valid or invalid. Relativism is a trend of the idealists like pragmatists, neo-Kantians and postmodernists.

*** Shirokov, M. (1937). *A Textbook of Marxist Philosophy*. The November 8th Publishing House. (s.1, ch. 4).

jective reality of the external world.”*

In simpler words, by understanding the partial, limited and relative nature of the human conception of the external world, we are upholding materialism. If we were to uphold the idea that humans and textbooks had a complete, infallible, encyclopaedic account of everything, we would reject the material world as a static catalogue of things and we would imagine that we had complete mastery over the universe like a god. What progress could be made if natural scientists saw everything in a textbook as an immutable conception and did not bother attempting to expand upon it?

How we can use textbooks in a liberating manner

In our repudiation of the anti-consciousness nature of the bourgeois education system in Britain, its belief that “knowledge” consists of “ready-made facts” it is important we do not bend the stick too far.

Books are indispensable in education if they are used correctly. It is true that the textbooks that litter our classrooms today are written by low-life charlatans. They abound in all these factual inexactitudes, dogmas and overall laziness. They have little value at all. When we rightly discard these books, it is not tantamount to blind empiricism, to the rejection of theoretical advancement and conception, but precisely because these sordid textbooks contain no meritable theoretical content, because it is all metaphysics and perceptual “knowledge.”

As we have mentioned before, knowledge contains two stages: the perceptual and conceptual. The first is the unrefined perception of isolated things and the second is the sublation and the “higher level” of this perception into generalised, theoretical knowledge. This is only possible through the dialectical method.

Therefore, educational textbooks should serve to aid in the second stage and are necessary for building conceptual, theoretical knowledge. Educational textbooks should not act as a substitute and prevention of students’ consciousness and heuristic initiative but temper and embolden it by illuminating the methodology of dialectical materialism.

Educational textbooks should outline the dialectical method as we understand it today as it is wholly indispensable in the

* Lenin, V. (1908). *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Wellred Books. (p. 142).

liberating outlook and drawing together of perceptions into formalised and general theoretical conceptions.*

Thus, to educate oneself using books is not to uncritically accept all the facts and theses, but to utilise the Marxist dialectical materialist methodology contained within these liberating texts.** This methodology allows oneself to discard any content that is old, which no longer corresponds to the concrete conditions.

But we must remember the second stage is only possible with the first. We have to concretely apply the dialectical method to perceptual knowledge, and to not understand the particularity and instead only understand dialectical laws and principles in abstraction, gets you nowhere.*** For instance, a dialectician could not *a priori* make advancements in the field of quantum physics with an understanding of the basic principles of dialectics alone. They would first have to have a significant understanding and basic perceptual knowledge of the particularity before trying to advance this perceptual knowledge conceptually.****

Similarly, Marx did not conclude the necessity of the negation of the capitalist mode of production***** through revolution on the simple dialectical principle that nature is mutable; he conducted a comprehensive, scientific analysis of the political economy and historical intricacies of capitalism to conclude this fact.

So liberating textbooks must concretise these conceptual laws of development with examples. If they do not do this, then these general and conceptual laws become anti-conscious and dogmatic themselves.

This is why one would say that practice is more important

* Much to the bemusement of the “positivists” who do not do this second stage. This is also to the bemusement of the postmodernists who abhor conceptual knowledge, seeing them as “meta-narratives” or “grand-narratives.”

** Lukacs, G. (1919). *What is Orthodox Marxism?*, in: *History and Class Consciousness*. Foreign Languages Press.

*** Cornforth, M. (1953). *Materialism and the Dialectical Method*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 136).

**** We will explain later and criticise the grave errors of Mikhail Pokrovsky when he asserted that students should not learn particularities in history (i.e., particular historical events/studies) and should only learn the general laws of social development.

***** **Mode of production:** The general form social production takes under the rule of a specific class (e.g., capitalist mode of production, feudal mode of production).

than theory but this is in no way a rapprochement with empiricism and pragmatism* — rather because saying that theory is more important than practice would be cart before the horse. Practice must always come first.

In summary, we must see clearly how the anti-conscious nature of “learning” in the bourgeois “education” system is completely irreconcilable with liberation. In the construction of liberating education, we must root out anti-consciousness methods and attitudes. A liberating education must provide students with the dialectical method so they are able to think creatively on their own initiative and be able to criticise the content and form of the curriculum in correspondence with their own social practice and appraisal of the development of objective reality.

The nadir of book worship

The anti-consciousness in bourgeois education takes the form of the most grotesque form of *book worship*.**

If it is written in a textbook it is true and that is the end of it. No further study is required.

We have talked about anti-conscious book worship and how liberating education should use textbooks. Yet, I think for those who are not currently in education, it is important to emphasise how prevalent book worship is.

I will supplement this understanding with an anecdote so non-student readers can fully conceive of the grotesqueness of book worship and anti-consciousness.

In a history lesson in my first year of college, I was idly flicking through a textbook and I identified a clear clerical error. In one of the side “fact boxes” of this textbook, it mentioned the people’s democracies of Eastern Europe and named the Hungarian communist leader as “Miklos Rakosi.”*** This is a clerical error. The name of the leader of Hungary was *Matyas Rakosi* (or *Rakosi Matyas* given the surname-first naming convention in Hungarian). I imagine this error was made out of confusion as the comprador regent of Hungary was called Miklos Horthy. In any case, such a clear error in the textbook is only indicative of

* Kammari, M. (1960). *The Revisionist Theory of The “Liberation” of Science from Ideology*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 41).

** Mao, T. (1930). *Oppose Book Worship*, in: *Selected Works of Mao Tse Tung, Volume VI*. Foreign Languages Press.

*** Rowe C. & Waller, S. (2016). *Revolution and Dictatorship: Russia 1917-1953*. Oxford University Press.

the evident lack of effort that went into creating it.*

After spotting this mistake in the textbook, I turned to one of the students sitting next to me with whom I was already engaged in conversation and I pointed it out. Their response, rather than to conceive of the fact the textbook had a clerical error, was to state “well then his name must be Miklos Rakosi” and remain flummoxed that I was contradicting that.

This is the strength of the anti-conscious tendency. The bourgeois “education” system corrupts students into such an anti-conscious attitude that they are unable to even question a clerical or transcription mistake in a text let alone the facts and the concepts of the text itself.

Hardial Bains said: “the acceptance without questioning of the fundamentals involved in a statement, an analysis or a concept is laying the basis of fascism.”** Blind anti-conscious acceptance is a fascist act. The bourgeois education system through its examinations and pedagogical methods has scared the student to the extent they are even willing to accept spelling errors without questioning. Such is the extent of anti-consciousness.

The students’ disenchantment with anti-conscious methods filters them from the education system

Unsurprisingly, students become disillusioned with the anti-conscious nature of the “education” system. They are alienated from the content, the form and the teacher.

Most students are worn down by the anti-conscious methods of “teaching.” Their heuristic sharpness is blunted. Their creative and revolutionary spark is dampened. They internalise conformity and obedience to the anti-consciousness under the duress that their entire quality of life in the future depends on arbitrary test marks. Other students misbehave and develop a detest of school. They become truant and resentful of the concept of education.

The bourgeois “sociologists of education” and politicians believe it a *fact of life* that students bunk off from school. In all children’s TV shows, the children can’t wait for the summer holiday and detest school and teachers. Children are naturally inclined to hate school, but this is just a *fact of life*. This is not

* I will single out this textbook specifically as one of the most hideous examples of bourgeois charlatanism.

** Bains, H. (1967). *Necessity For Change!*. National Publications Centre.

the case. We once again must put education in its historical context. Children detest *bourgeois* "education." All the aspects of school that children dislike are aspects *exclusive* to education in class society: the anti-conscious methods, arbitrary discipline of teachers, lack of personal initiative, unnecessary workload, closed-book examinations, asinine individualistic bullying, anti-social behaviour... the list goes on.

In reality, students are enraptured with liberating education. They are enraptured with the pursuit of knowledge and their own intellectual, cultural, social and physical development. It is no secret that with the victory of the great proletarian revolution in Russia, the children of the proletariat, who had hitherto been denied education, jumped at the liberating education enthusiastically. Despite the many material and organisational limitations of the Soviet education system and Narkompros in the 1920s, the youth and the Komsomol possessed a boundless enthusiasm and joy for learning.* Their passion was a key factor in the construction of the liberating education system in the Soviet Union, the first socialist education system in the world.

Hence, the youth are not naturally averse to education, but the contrary. What they despise is the anti-conscious subjection called "education" by the bourgeois state.

As such, the invariable alienation caused by anti-conscious methods is a principal aspect of the "filtering" of bourgeois "education."

In the liberating education system, there would not be this filtering. There would not be this pervasive current of truancy. There would not be a ubiquity of exclusions and expulsions in the education system. Students would not become disillusioned with education but instead enchanted with it. Education ceases to become an alien and harmful system imposed upon the student by the bourgeois state but instead becomes the actual expression of the revolutionary student.

As for the rest, there is a remainder of students that slug through to education and make it to the pinnacle. Even at this point, the student is not happy. All they have is a "prestigious" degree and CV.** But even the ontological security they have

* Fitzpatrick, S. (1979). *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union 1921-1934*. Cambridge University Press. (pp. 45-50).

So much so, their enthusiasm actually caused organisational problems. Many students tried to push into higher education despite not having the cultural or intellectual requisites.

** **Curriculum Vitae**; similar to a resume.

gained through this piece of paper is barely worth the time.

It is no secret why the “prestigious universities” of Oxford and Cambridge are the only universities to not publish student satisfaction results. It is for the simple reason that a majority of its student body is miserable and over-encumbered with onerous and dogmatic “educational” material. These students end up dulling the anxiety of their directionlessness through drugs and anti-social behaviours.*

In sum, the anti-conscious form of bourgeois “education” and one’s obedience to it separates the unemployed from the academics, not some innate intelligence. It is the anti-consciousness that sullies the youth’s natural passion for learning and self-development.

The faux rhetoric of “meta-cognition” and student “initiative”

Some may argue that the anti-conscious pedagogical methods in the British “education” system are breaking down with the onset of new teaching initiatives in recent years. New grandiose initiatives and buzzwords are now all the rage in primary, secondary and college education. Are these initiatives a genuine attempt to encourage heuristic, anti-dogmatic learning?

No. They are instead pure demagoguery.

“Meta-cognition” is one such buzzword. According to the *Education Endowment Foundation*:**

“Metacognition and self-regulation approaches to teaching support pupils to think about their own learning more explicitly, often by teaching them specific strategies for planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning. Interventions are usually designed to give pupils a repertoire of strategies to choose from and the skills to select the most suitable strategy for a given learning task.”***

So what does this really entail? You could be forgiven for thinking that this emphasis on meta-cognition is similar to learning the principles of investigation. If so, “meta-cognition”

* The Bullingdon is such an example of this thuggery.

** A charity founded on a £125m Department of Education grant in 2011.

*** <<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-and-self-regulation>> [Accessed February 2023]

would be a liberating aspect of education. This however is not what it means in this context. Instead, meta-cognition means that schools should encourage students to evaluate the effectiveness of different revision techniques.

Under this *innovative banner* of “meta-cognition,” students sit through power-points to encourage them to try out different *revision techniques* like flashcards, *blurting*, *mind-mapping*, highlighting, practice testing, etc. to see what works best for incorporating pointless facts into their short-term memory.

Instead of being a challenge to dogmatism and anti-conscious “educational” methods, this initiative of “meta-cognition” is rather encouraging students to find out how to optimise their dogmatism and revision of pointless facts. Instead of promoting revolutionary investigation and the balanced development of the youth, schools’ emphasis on meta-cognition is compelling students to engage in the *Sisyphus labour* of the mechanical memorisation of fragmented “facts.”

Another anti-conscious aspect with a faux anti-dogmatic buzzword is “synoptic understanding.” This is prevalent in the natural sciences curriculum which drills into students that they need a “synoptic understanding” if they want to get the top marks. What does this mean? One would assume this means that one should have a holistic understanding of the field which allows them to creatively apply concrete knowledge in a novel way. Instead, “synoptic understanding” is reduced to the ability to be able to regurgitate passages of the textbook into unfamiliar contexts. It is merely just a lazy mongering of phrase and is not encouraged consistently as a method of thought itself but as an added bonus if one has time. A liberating natural sciences education should be innately taught in a way that the internal contradictions in and between phenomena are exposed readily to the student in a way that shows that they are the cause of development, not in a way that reduces interconnection to something extra and inessential to development that it can be tacked on as an afterthought.*

Let us turn to another faux rhetoric of bourgeois “education”: the notion of students “saying things in their own words.”

* And the insistence that “synoptic understanding” is something reserved for the highest performing students a) reaffirms the Malthusian ideology of filtering which we will talk about next chapter and b) implies that understanding the interconnection between phenomena is inessential and that a completely mechanical and metaphysical conception of development suffices.

What does this mean exactly?

This general principle is applied by often well-meaning and conscientious teachers. The idea is that instead of the student just repeating a given definition or explanation directly from a textbook, which is the common practice, they should instead “say it in their own words.”

This way, in theory, the student is compelled to think consciously about the concept. They actually internalise the learning rather than just repeating it.

On a superficial level, this sounds like a potent counter to anti-consciousness. However, we must investigate this further.

From what basis is the student defining a concept fundamentally? In the last instance, they are just sourcing their information of the concept from the textbook and source material anyway. Let’s say a bourgeois history textbook says that “Henry VII’s foreign policy was prudent, non-interventionist but wholly reactive.” The student when called upon by the teacher may then say, *in their own words*, “Henry VII’s foreign policy was successful.” The only thing that is different is that they are mediating the anti-conscious definition “in their own words.” Except for finding basic synonyms for words in the bourgeois textbook, they have not really performed a conscious act. They have not studied multiple interpretations and prioritised certain aspects. They have not taken perceptual knowledge and facts and conceptualised them into their own judgement. It is merely repeating the definition but with extra steps.

And what exactly are the students’ “words”?

Teachers are really referring to here as a simplification. The student’s “own words” are supposed to be a simplification or an abridged version of the initial definition in the textbook.

This illustrates that the teacher sees the student as subordinated to the word of the textbook and not an innovator of it. The textbook is again used anti-consciously. The textbook is able to stand above the student with its verbosity. Bourgeois sociologists and linguists identified this differential in the parlance of students and teachers. The difference between “restricted code” and “elaborated code” in education.”* In classic interactionist and postmodern fashion, the bourgeois sociologists attribute these linguistic differences in isolation or as the cause itself, and not a phenomenon of the class struggle. As it is noted in Stalin’s *Marxism and Problems of Linguistics*:

* Bernstein, B. (1961). *Social class and linguistic development*, in: *Education, Economy and Society*. Free Press. (pp. 288-314).

“It has been said above that language, as a means of intercourse between the people of a society, serves all classes of society equally, and in this respect displays what may be called indifference to classes. But people, the various social groups, the classes, are far from being indifferent to language. They strive to utilize the language in their own interests, to impose their own special lingo, their own special terms, their own special expressions upon it. The upper strata of the propertied classes, who have divorced themselves from and detest the people — the aristocratic nobility, the upper strata of the bourgeoisie — particularly distinguish themselves in this respect. “Class” dialects, jargons, high-society ‘languages’ are created.”*

Thus, the request to the student to “say it in your own words” reproduces an anti-conscious subjugation to the textbook. At the same time, it precludes conceptual development and understanding:

““Say it in your own words.” This injunction is very attractive to teachers, who know that understanding requires a conscious act by the individual. However, the whole atmosphere of the school often mandates that ‘in your own words’ should mean ‘as imprecisely as possible’ thus destroying the acquisition of concepts in any usable form.”**

Therefore, once again we see an initiative that at face value seems to be challenging the innate dogmatism, formalism and anti-consciousness of bourgeois education, but instead perpetuating it.

The parental factor in anti-consciousness

Anti-consciousness is not only exclusive to internal school “education” but also exists in the household. As a component of home education. What bourgeois sociologists refer to as “prima-

* Stalin, J. (1950). *Marxism and Problems of Linguistics*. Foreign Languages Press Publishing House.

** Lawvere, W. (1996). *History and Philosophy of Mathematic Reform*. Hardial Bains Resource Centre Archives.

ry socialisation.”

Parents who work long shifts in capitalism are limited in the amount of time they are able to spend with their children. This very much strains their bond and relationship with their children. This has a detrimental effect on the intellectual, social, emotional and methodological development of the child, particularly young children.*

As such, in lieu of positive relations, the impatient and tired parent imposes an anti-consciousness onto their children: they have a “because I say so” attitude.

The problem does not lie with parental authority. Parents should and must have authority and responsibility over their young children. The problem lies with the fact that parents often exercise a blind, one-sided and anti-conscious authority. They do not mutually explain their authority. They do not encourage initiative from their children, just formalistic obedience. They are reluctant to self-criticise when they make an error for fear that this will break down the authority over their children and lead to disobedience and disrespect.** This of course has the opposite effect, with many children becoming resentful of their parents in later life for this failure of self-criticism and their inability to rectify errors.

How will this problem be remedied?

The problem surrounding the content and form of the family unit in capitalism and its upheaval in socialism requires much further analysis, outside the scope of our investigation. But in short, society as a whole should assume more involvement in the developmental stages of infants, lifting a burden from the working parents.***

Secondly, with the victory of socialism over capitalism, working parents will be able to spend more time with their children. No longer will they have to work multiple jobs in order to procure enough funds to keep food on the table. This will allow them to develop a stronger and more mutual bond with their children, being able to help them in intellectual, cultural and physical development. This will mean they will not have to

* Kim Il Sung (1977). *On The Full Implementation of The Theses on Socialist Education*, in: *Socialist Education in Korea*. Iskra Books. (p. 123).

** We will also examine that this exists with the bourgeois teacher.

*** Kollontai, A. (1920). *Communism and the Family*, in: *The Plight, Struggle and Liberation of Women*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 174).

resort to anti-conscious authority.

It is also plausible that the anti-consciousness is generationally residual. Parents impose anti-conscious parenting on their children because that is what they also experienced. Similarly, parents would have also experienced the anti-consciousness in school as well. Thus we see the interrelation of the form of bourgeois public “education” with the “private” sphere of the bourgeois family.

Hence, it is clear that the breakdown of the anti-consciousness both in the education system and parental relations can not occur overnight, but will be a long process. To ensure this process occurs, the working class and its instruments, including its Party, must lead ideological struggle both inside and outside the school.

In sum: to destroy anti-consciousness

We have exposed the anti-conscious nature of bourgeois “education.” Anti-consciousness is the primary form in which the content of the bourgeois “education” is transmitted.

Our struggle against anti-consciousness as revolutionary and progressive students is not borne from some infantile incredulity toward authority. We instead understand that for an education to be liberating, it must require conscious action from the student. Education should serve to sharpen the intellectual and cultural level of the student. It should allow them the ability to conceptualise nature and society in accordance with materialist dialectics, the principles of revolutionary investigation. With this, the anti-conscious method is irreconcilable.

Textbooks should not exist to be worshipped dogmatically but should exist to present our current understanding of general laws of development,* and should be subject to criticism and scrutiny by students and teachers alike.

As long as the rule of the bourgeoisie and capital exists, anti-consciousness in education is necessary. It is indispensable to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The heuristic and enthusiastic instincts of the youth must be curbed. Otherwise, their relentless study and investigation would inevitably lead them to the understanding of the necessity for the new society.

* And particularities which showcase the applicability and validity of these laws.

Reading group questions

Can you give an example of the anti-conscious methods at school?

Can you give an example of the anti-consciousness of your classmates?

What are the main reasons that you have felt disenchanted, bored or alienated in today's bourgeois "education"?

V — EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

The “stick” of education

We must turn our analysis to the “stick” of education: examinations. Examinations regulate education. Examinations are the primary means by which “learning” is assessed, qualifications are allocated, students are “filtered” out and anti-conscious pedagogy is enforced.

Students at the end of secondary school sit 8-10 GCSEs. All these GCSEs are determined by closed-book exams.*

A-Levels are also predominantly closed-book exams. Even some university courses utilise closed-book exams.

As revolutionary and progressive students, we must disregard essentialist views of examinations. Closed-book examinations have not always been and will not always be. They are a feature of the current British bourgeois “education” system owing to its particular stage of development. Our task is to understand why they have arisen at this stage of development and what purposes they serve.

Closed-book exams preclude actual learning

The principal issue with closed-book exams is that they preclude any meaningful learning. Closed-book exams are the most anti-conscious “pedagogical” method. This is especially the case in the social sciences. Closed-book exams reward the ability for students to revise and cram a mish-mash of “facts” to be able to recite off the top of their heads. They endlessly *learn* statistics, dates and names but because they are so preoccupied with just being able to memorise these facts in isolation, this actually precludes them from any meaningful understanding of the totality.

“Teachers of social science often strive to give children as many ‘facts’ as possible and overburden their memory with facts of transient or, at best, illustrative nature. They give their pupils low marks if they stumble

* Students may also opt to take BTEC qualifications instead which often, whilst having a closed-book exam component, are primarily coursework based.

over details, but it simply does not occur to them to check — if only in connection with the International Children’s Week — whether the children know the fundamentals.”*

A GCSE student may be able to recite a plethora of unsorted Shakespeare quotes or quotes from *An Inspector Calls* but when asked to elaborate on the meaning of these quotes and their overall importance to the totality of the play itself, they are less confident. Instead of actually having concerned themselves with evaluation, they focus purely on memorisation and attempt to fill the place of conceptual evaluation through “waffling” or attempting to mimic and copy the philistine interpretation of the textbook or teacher.**

An A-level history student may study the Tudors and be able to tell you precise details like that the Pilgrimage of Grace happened in 1536 or that London’s population over the entire period grew from roughly 60,000 to 200,000. What they could not tell you in any meaningful way is what laws and trends of class struggle and historical development are illustrated by these facts and statistics.

And this memorisation of random facts and statistics, abstract from actual conceptual and generalised knowledge about the subject as a totality, is of a completely *transitory* nature. No sooner than they were learned they are forgotten. This is because such facts are taught *at* the student without any conscious participation on their end, so the student after the exam is completed forgets these facts as they have no practical use to him whatsoever. The whole charade of exam revision is a complete labour of Sisyphus. One can see through TV game shows like *Are You Smarter Than A 10-Year-Old* that none of these “facts” are retained by the student into adulthood as these facts have no use to the student outside of examinations.

In a liberating education, the learning of concrete facts and particularities is shown to be useful to the student as they are used to illustrate and be subsumed by a meaningful and detailed

* Krupskaya, N. (1933). *Our Children Need Books that Would Bring Them Up as Genuine Internationalists*, in: *On Education*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 134).

** Students say openly, obviously not to teachers of course, about how they get through exams by just “waffling” and trying to fill the page with something that looks ostensibly like analysis and contemplation. This shows that they do not, and more importantly *can not*, consciously engage with the course material in any conceptual way because the course material and the nature of exams preclude actual learning.

conceptual analysis. The learning of facts and particularities will require conscious action by the student rather than passive submission. Educational regulation will focus on showing that students know the fundamental laws and skills of a given discipline and have the ability to apply them practically, productively and creatively, rather than pedantically catching students out for tripping over details and semantics.

Faux “evaluation”

It is true that *evaluation* is often stipulated as an *assessment objective* of exam boards. Evaluation would at least imply a conscious act by the student.

But what meaningful evaluation for a complex question in the social sciences can a student arrive at in a forty-minute time period in closed-book conditions? Academics spend years specifically researching and evaluating extremely niche questions. Getty’s landmark analysis of the question of the “Great Purges” in the USSR was one that took years of research and conceptual analysis, and even then it is still one that is limited by his bourgeois positions and presumptions.

An A-level history student may get a broad question on the “Great Purges” in the USSR and be given forty-five minutes in closed-book conditions to *evaluate* it. What meaningful evaluation could they even reach in such absurd conditions? Such a notion of evaluation in closed-book exams is absolutely ridiculous.

Rather, when *evaluation* or *comparative analysis* are stipulated as assessment objectives of exam boards, they are not meant in the actual sense. When exam boards, educational ministers and teachers express their keenness for *evaluation* to be emphasised in the curriculum, they do not mean it in the same sense as we emphasise evaluation and conceptual analysis in our liberating method of study and education.

“Evaluation” in GCSE and A-Level social sciences can take one of two forms, neither of which is actual evaluation or analysis in any sense of the word.

The first is to render evaluation completely simplistic and subjective. The absolute extent of evaluation to some exam boards may mean simply saying you agree or disagree with a view, or think something is good or bad, effective or ineffective. These sweeping yes or no answers and metaphysical categorisation are not evaluative. However, the student is unable to posit an actual evaluative or nuanced view instead due to exam time

constraints and the fact they have been taught this simplistic and subjectivist method.

The second is the idea that “evaluation” means that one should spend time listing manifold different interpretations and views on an issue but not conclude which view is the correct one and represents the objective reality most accurately. A good example of “evaluation” of the second type is if one has a cursory look at the essay winners for the *John Locke Institute* essay competition, an organisation subsidiary of Oxford and Princeton Universities. Some of the essays that win do not even postulate a discernible judgement. They may say how certain people argue x and other people may argue y but no attempt is made to actually come to a concrete judgement on the objective conditions. This type of faux passive *objectivity* and pluralism* is demonstrably the result of liberal and postmodernist pluralism and naked relativism in the social sciences. It stems from this complete abstraction from the objective nature of reality and thus the idea that completely contradictory views are all equally valid and can be true at the same time. In the end, it is postmodernist relativism.** Kammari notes:

“For eclectics without firm principles, who switch from one position to another and discard their principles like gloves, every firm conviction and its passionate defence is ‘religious fanaticism,’ ‘faith,’ but eclectic doubting, ideological vacillation, switching from one camp to another, naked relativism and the denial of objective truth — this is for them ‘creative development’ of science.”***

These different vulgarisations of “evaluation” are not mutually exclusive but can interpenetrate. A student could in an essay have a subjectivist and arbitrary agree-or-disagree judgement and then proceed to not substantiate but merely lay out a jumble of opposing interpretations and perceptions. An essay like this

* **Pluralism:** The faux idea that multiple ideologies, points of view, class interests and so on can and should co-exist. Closely linked to relativism.

** Lyotard, J. (1979). *The Postmodern Condition*. Manchester University Press.

This whole “incredulity to meta-narratives” and postulation of “mini-narratives” is exactly this.

*** Kammari, M. (1960). *The Revisionist Theory of The “Liberation” of Science from Ideology*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 18).

could even be marked highly by an examiner supposing it has all the correct buzzwords and “facts” in it.

Thus the anti-consciousness nature of bourgeois “education” alongside the practical and structural limitations of exams prevents any conscious evaluation of the student.

The practical problems of timed, closed-book examinations

We now move on to the obvious practical problems of closed-book examinations.

The completely high-stakes nature of closed-book examinations leads to grave psychological effects for the student — which we will explain in more depth later — but also means that results are highly contingent. A student who has excelled consistently may have an “off-day” or may be physically ill on the day of the exam, rendering years of effort null and void.

Examination marking also remains completely contingent, irregular and arbitrary. This is especially the case in closed-book examinations for the social sciences. The same essay could receive an A, B, C, or D depending on different examiners’ interpretations. This is because the actual exam criteria are arbitrary and marking is left purposely vague.

Exam markers are also incredibly underpaid. Markers are barely paid £3 per script meaning they can not afford to mark exam papers thoroughly and have to just skim papers to make their time worthwhile. Many students after receiving their results seek re-marks because they do not trust the examination boards.

There is also another issue in terms of the fact that there exists a plurality of exam boards which leads to a host of completely avoidable issues. There is a lack of standardisation of these closed-book exams which vary from exam board to exam board, meaning some teachers and schools flip from one exam board to another for a given subject on the idea that they find one exam board’s regulations as being easier.

The Department of Education often uses the mediation of exam boards as an avenue of escaping culpability and calls for reform of educational methodology.* When student and teacher

* Department of Education statement 3rd of May, 2017.

“We do not expect awarding organisations to give or allow students to have access during their exams to copies of the whole texts they have studied. Exam boards can, however, provide students with relevant extracts. The exam boards have each chosen in their sample

petitions against impractical and draconian examination methods bubble up, the Department of Education can hide behind the exam boards.

And there is widespread dissidence of these closed-book examination methods. For example, a petition to Parliament acquired over 110,000 signatures on the topic of eliminating closed-book examinations for the English literature GCSE. * However, none of these actions of petitions has been successful in the elimination of these methods because those who have levied these petitions have not investigated the situation in a dialectical way and have only looked at the superficial. They believe the system of closed-book exams to be just some random phenomenon and inconvenience without any deeper purpose. They have not seen that the impractical anti-conscious method of closed-book exams is the indispensable bread and butter of the bourgeois “education” system and the bourgeois “education” system will be forever unwilling to part with them.

Bourgeois Malthusian eugenicism and examinations

The system of closed-book exams is also opined on based on an odious, subterranean bourgeois eugenicism.

It has long been admitted, even by bourgeois sociologists, that examinations are not at all to aid in the student’s educational development. Rather, examinations are to fulfil the bourgeois eugenicist fetish of “sieving” the “naturally” “able” and “dull.”**

The idea is one of tacit “social-Darwinism” and Malthusianism. The idea is that some people must always exceed and some must always fail. This is evident by the fact exam boards on almost a yearly basis change grade-boundaries to make sure a certain group of students get certain grades. Thus, it is evident that the purpose of exams is not to prove a minimum level of competency or fundamental understanding of the subject if the exam board is prepared to lower grade boundaries.

And as we have seen as well, these closed-book exams do nothing to aid or test a student’s ability to fundamentally understand a subject. Instead, closed-book exams are a test of short-term memory and unquestioned obedience.

assessment materials to provide students with extracts of the texts they have studied.”

* <<https://petition.parliament.uk/archived/petitions/172405>> [Accessed February 2023]

** Sorokin, P. (1927). *Social Mobility*. Harper and Brothers. (p. 189).

Malthusianism is an odious attempt to explain away the unnecessary plight of the workers in capitalism. Workers are told that they are in a precarious position, struggling financially and suffering because they are inferior biologically or have inferior effort. The bourgeoisie on the other hand are “self-made” and biologically superior — they deserve the spoils and the grotesque surplus-value they extract from the brow of the worker. They vulgarise Darwin’s theory of evolution to social organisation, using it to justify bourgeoisdom and residual aristocratic privilege. Instead of the name social-Darwinism and eugenics, it is much nicer of the bourgeois to refer to this as “meritocracy.”

But firstly we understand that this idea that society consists of *atomistic individuals* to be reification; it is the *transitory* social relations of capitalism and class society, which require this cannibalistic and destructive struggle, masquerading as an *eternal* natural law. For most of human history, humans have lived socially and gregariously.* The idea that humans must consistently try to best each other or weed out the “dull” is a completely imposed concept — this concept is even refuted, albeit quietly, by all the current and the old bourgeois anthropologists.** The Malthusian “survival of the fittest” hypothesis is not only disproved by human social organisation but also by the many species of animals that rely on co-operation in hives, nests and packs.

And we also must understand that a capitalist’s own competition is not to do with their personal qualities or merits, but their ownership of capital. Plenty of more skilled, smaller and aspiring capitalists are conquered by the larger capitalists. There are undoubtedly plenty of aspiring petty-bourgeois who possess shrewdness and intelligence, traits supposedly rewarded by capitalism, who are crushed by the temperamental and blundering bigger bourgeois.

The workers — the majority of the population — do not “compete” with the capitalists the same way a finch competes with another finch for food. The workers sell their labour-power to the capitalists. They are subjugated to them. We are dealing with relations.

Hence, we argue that closed-book exams and educational filtering through other methods is the manifestation of crude,

* Engels, F. (1875). *Letter to Lavrov*. Marxists Internet Archive.

** Most notable of the recent anthropologists is the investigation of James Suzman on the attitude the Bushmen have to labour, distribution and abundance.

bourgeois eugenicist ideas. In form, they represent this erroneous idea that an internecine struggle and competition must always exist between humans. And this struggle is not even a fair or “meritocratic” one.*

In content, the exams do not test for competency, they test for obedience and short-term memory.

Transitory nature of education and employment.

Examinations are also a microcosm of the inherent uncertainty and despondence of capitalism. Life is not certain for the worker in capitalism when a periodic financial crash could plunder their entire life savings, or render them redundant and unable to pay their ever-increasing rent. Life is not certain for the bourgeois intellectual or artist who does not know whether they will have a living tomorrow; this is reflected in their despondent and hopeless cultural products, how music vacillates between shallow corporate formalism and maudlin hopelessness.** Even the life of the individual bourgeois is not certain in their own regime. Thus, the life of the youth is not certain. They can not be sure that the world they will grow up in won't be torn asunder by imperialist nuclear war, or that their specialised, non-polytechnical degree will not be made redundant by the anarchic march of capitalist social production. Enver Hoxha noted:

“The life of the youth is not certain under the capitalist regime, and when they reach an age of maturity in thoughts and work they see more clearly the insurmountable obstacles raised against them by capitalism, by private ownership, the organisation of trusts and technocracy. The youth that wants to become educated, to have schooling, has no financial possibilities for this purpose because heavy taxes and dozens of other economic, administrative, educational, class and racial obstacles prevent him from meeting a vital need, so indispensable in a capitalist world where a diploma has become the minimum possible means of earning the daily bread, otherwise the youth is, a priori, destined to swell the ranks

* And even if there was complete social mobility and fairness, we object to class domination entirely.

** Zhdanov, A. (1934). *Speech at the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers*, in: *On Literature, Music and Philosophy*. The November 8th Publishing House.

of the unemployed. Thus, such restrictions at studies are raised constantly and in an endless number against youth in capitalist countries. Thus, a first colossal selection is carried out. Then begins the second selection in examinations and the third selection in finding jobs for those who remain unplaced. Thus, misery, suffering, unemployment, humiliation lie ahead for youth.”*

Teachers and the education system use this fact to keep students in line and discipline them. You must pay attention and do well in exams, they say, or your life as you know it is curtailed. And this is true. A diploma or degree has become the minimum possible means for subsistence in the capitalist countries, especially the imperialist ones. Students with degrees struggle to even secure employment so one can only imagine the plight of those “filtered” out and left behind by the bourgeois “education” system. Thus, the “education” system and examinations provide the absolute minimum of “ontological security” in an uncertain and despondent existence: “the need for comfort, the security of purpose, which rationalises the past as past and the future as future, leaving the matter of the present as purely accidental, a temporary phase directed towards the fulfilment of some future goal.”**

Education is not liberating when the dream of the oppressed is to become the oppressor. And examinations and perseverance in the oppressive “education” system are the medium for the faux “ontological security” found in these bourgeois decadent values.

The transitory nature of education, how onerous revision for one set of all-important exams lurches quickly into onerous revision for another set of all-important exams with no respite, degrades the student mentally, rendering them a shallow anti-conscious shell.

The psychological ramifications of examinations and anti-consciousness

The psychological ramifications of examination and the

* Hoxha, E, (1968). *Our Younger Generation Marches Along the Revolutionary Road of the Party*. The November 8th Publishing House. (pp. 25-6)

** Bains, H. (1967). *Necessity For Change!*. National Publications Centre.

transitory nature of education and unemployment are immense. Students, particularly in secondary and higher education, suffer severe anxiety, depression and stress from being over-encumbered with the completely unnecessary anti-conscious drudgery of the bourgeois “education” system. This is shown starkly by UK government statistics* as well as statistics from around the world.** I have also selected *tells* from a student-run college *Tel-loym*, a site for people to submit anonymous confessions (tells), which illustrate the severity of the hopelessness that pervades the student.

“Anyone else so scared for their future like they used to be smart but is really struggling in college and now only just passing and don’t know what to do at uni [university] and don’t even know if you will get the grades to go and wants to do a useless degree but doesn’t want to be broke forever and doesn’t want to be in a dead-end job bc [because] same xx”

“Anyone else agree that attendance is so damaging if you struggle with mental health. I struggle to go into college some days but get my work done but the thought of my attendance going down and getting kicked out puts so much pressure on me”

“Honestly so done with college. My mental health is really declining cuz [because] of the pressure from college”

“Bro is anyone else like majorly struggling to cope”

These four tells were all posted on the *same day****. And such content is the norm. There are often *tells* where students express thoughts of self-harm and suicide over the uncertainty, stress and alienation they feel from bourgeois “education” and examinations.**** There are seldom positive and enthusiastic messages.

* <<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2022-follow-up-to-the-2017-survey>>

** Ministry of Foreign Affairs DPRK. (2023). *Inevitable Outcome of American Society*. <<http://mfa.gov.kp/view/article/16572>>

*** January 26, 2023

**** Which I have not shared here due to their extremely distress-

No student proclaims excitement or enthusiasm when discussing studying at college. All *tells* pertaining to exams and schooling are full of anxiousness and alienation.

When students seek counselling for the extreme stress they face in the “education” system, they are imbued with fatalism: they are told that the nature of exams and the “bourgeois” education system is essential and that it has to be like this. They just have to “suck it up” and there is nothing else that can be done. Instead of encouraging students to understand the reality of their entrapment and oppression, they are told to seek fleeting respite from the stresses of “education” through individualist and escapist “self-care” and inane and escapist bourgeois culture.

Many students, even as young as secondary school, begin abusing alcohol and drugs to cope with the stress of exams and the workload of school on top of other personal responsibilities. I knew students who would turn up to lessons before their GCSE exams either drunk or high.

Conclusion: closed-book examinations are an indispensable site of struggle

Clearly, the primary method of assessment in the bourgeois “education” system in Britain, closed-book exams, is profoundly bourgeois, repressive and anti-conscious. Closed-book examinations function to filter students from the education system along lines of bourgeois eugenicism. Closed-book examinations represent the absolute nadir of anti-consciousness, completely preclude any useful learning and cause untold psychological on the student.

Closed-book examinations are not an iron law of bourgeois “education” but are just the most overtly anti-conscious and bourgeois method of assessment. Methods of assessment in bourgeois “education” *can* take *less* oppressive forms. In the same way that the bourgeois state can manifest itself in different types, like liberal “democracy,” constitutional monarchy, military junta etc. — all of which are bourgeois in character, so necessarily oppressive, but some are clearly *more* oppressive than others.

In other bourgeois states like Finland for example, the “education” system occurs predominantly without closed-book examinations. Of course, the bourgeois character of “education”

ing content.

and the anti-consciousness still persist but they persist in a different form. The absence of crushing exams in their “education” system allows for more conducive subjective conditions for students — students have significantly better mental well-being, have better intellectual development, are less over-encumbered with onerous school work and therefore are able to be more readily exposed to revolutionary education outside of education.

Therefore, it should be the task of the revolutionary and progressive student to push for this reform. On this point of struggle, almost every student would be mobilised. This is evident through our social investigation from which we found that closed-book exams were unilaterally hated by almost every student. Lots of other organisations and people in the public eye have shown themselves to be against this Malthusian system of closed-book exams.* The “educational” administration would have to yield to the pressure of the mobilised students. The revolutionary activity of the whole student mass would be catalysed and the revolutionary capacity of the youth would be increased.

But now, it is salient to move our analysis onto the teacher in the “bourgeois” education system.

Reading group questions

Share an example of a negative experience/s you have had with an exam or exam revision.

Do you feel stressed about exams and exam revision?

Do you think that many students even imagine there is an alternative to exams?

What other assessment forms do you think should be used instead of exams?

Why do you think it benefits the bourgeoisie to impose a Malthusian attitude towards educational attainment?

What is an example of faux evaluation you have seen or written in bourgeois examinations?

* Gary Neville for instance echoed many qualms of the impractical and psychologically damaging nature of exams.

VI — THE TEACHER

The erosion of the teacher

Teachers in the bourgeois “education” system assume a certain character necessary for their role.

Most teachers enter into education with noble intentions. They have a genuine passion to teach and inspire young people. But through the objective and subjective factors* in bourgeois “education,” these noble intentions are sometimes lost. The boundless enthusiasm and passion of the teacher are eroded and in its place emerges an odious formalism and arbitrariness which is in service of bourgeois class interest.

There exist different types of teacher in the bourgeois “education” system, and the demarcation between the reactionary and revolutionary, the backwards, the ally and the intermediate, is of prime importance in our practical action.

What unites these teachers however is that they are all to some extent unaware of their real role in the bourgeois “education” system and how they are in service of capital. It is important to reject a crude voluntarist understanding that teachers are somehow completely willing agents of the bourgeois dictatorship. This is clearly not the case. Neither on an individual basis is their role and actions as overtly oppressive as other employees of other bourgeois state apparati like the thuggish police, for example, the latter being completely incorrigible on an individual basis. But in *subsumption*, the individual formalisms and oppressions that the teacher in bourgeois society imposes on the student have just as pernicious an impact as the outward brutality and terrorism of the police thugs.

It is important we analyse the objective features of the bourgeois “education” system which forms and restricts the individual teacher to their class role.

The conscientious teachers who admirably try to resist the anti-conscious methods, who go above and beyond for their students on an individual basis, and encourage criticism of the fascist bourgeois rhetoric of the bourgeois “education” system are rendered beleaguered by its constraints and are forever stepping

* **Subjective factor:** Refers to the political and organisational consciousness of the revolutionary forces. A strong subjective factor is needed to turn favourable objective conditions (a revolutionary situation) into a revolution.

on egg-shells, dicing with job insecurity.

One-sidedness and “labelling” theory

Teachers are required to implement the bourgeois curriculum in the *anti-conscious* manner we discussed earlier. Teachers have to abide by a set curriculum and inculcate a certain set of bourgeois moral values. If they fail to do so, in the eyes of exam results or OFSTED, their job security is under threat. This results in tendencies like “educational triage” where teachers actively prioritise students on the cusp of passing exams and neglect those seen as hopeless.* Principally though, this results in teachers developing peremptory and excessively disciplinarian attitudes, forcing the student to uncritically absorb the curriculum, a curriculum alien to their class position and perceptual knowledge.

Pedagogy is rendered completely one-sided. The teacher’s role thus becomes to deposit “knowledge” one-sidedly *at* the students: this is called the “banking concept of education.” The mechanical and one-sided deposition of “knowledge” into static students the same way you would deposit money into a bank. A liberating teacher works *with* the student, not *at* them. This of course does not mean the liberating teacher is a completely powerless appendage of the student. The liberating teacher in socialism still retains authority but this authority derives not from coercion and one-sided paternalism but genuine comradely respect and the mutual thirst for knowledge.

Thus, the one-sided authority and anti-conscious methods of the teacher in bourgeois society are not the result of some innate sadist impulse but find its origin in the class character of the “education” system. The teacher compensates for the incoherence of the bourgeois curriculum and their own weaknesses in a given subject with formalism, verbiage and excessive discipline.

What are some of the ramifications of this one-sided authority of the teacher?

The student is at the whim of the teacher’s various preconceptions and stereotypes. This is called “labelling theory” in bourgeois sociology. There emerges a certain “Pygmalion effect” as coined by Rosenthal in a sociological study.** The bourgeois

* Gillborn, D. & Youdell, D. (2000). *Rationing Education: Policy, Practice, Reform and Equality*. Open University Press.

** Rosenthal, R. (1968). *Pygmalion in the Classroom*. Rinehart & Winston.

sociologists conclude that a teacher's perception of a student is based upon their class origin, ethnicity, gender and so on had a direct effect on educational attainment as it would affect the quality of education and attention from the teacher the student receives as well as the self-concept of the student themselves. Students labelled as "dim" by their teachers and put in the low sets fatalistically assume themselves as such. Conversely, students who are told they have "potential" by their teachers often fulfil this potential.

How do the bourgeois sociologists attempt to solve this issue? Put simply, they don't. The bourgeois sociologists in their characteristic metaphysics essentialise and reify the "labelling" on the part of teachers. They would argue that until "classism," racism and sexism are magically abolished overnight, this is an iron law of education. Its origin in the first instance is unimportant to the postmodernists. As such the "solutions" offered by these "labelling theorist" bourgeois sociologists are nothing but some silly postmodernist posturing about "discourses," "power" and "privilege." They never get anywhere.

However, we as revolutionary students, understand that the phenomena of labelling derive precisely from the *bourgeois character of the teacher as a one-sided authority*. Labelling only has so much of an effect because the student is taught through formalist, dogmatic and anti-consciousness methods to *value themselves in the opinion of the teacher*. They see the teacher's evaluation of their calibre. The student sees the teacher's opinion of them to be more important than their own opinion of themselves.

The student begins to associate themselves with the arbitrary marks and grades they receive from revising and memorising the anti-conscious "facts" of the bourgeois curriculum. Some students grow distressed, self-hating or arrogant and complacent. In the liberating education, students and teachers will exist in a mutual relationship and therefore the impact of a teacher's "labelling" is exponentially reduced. The youth will no longer be categorised by arbitrary marks or sets but as people possessing an unextinguishable revolutionary and heuristic fire.

The complete one-sided authority of the teacher in the bourgeois classroom also means that teaching methods and content can be skewed into complete incomprehensibility by the idiosyncracies of the teachers. Teachers, through limited knowledge and their own internalised reactionary views, may espouse additional reactionary nonsense on top of the already nonsense curriculum. A teacher may imbue the students with racial prejudic-

es or misogyny. Nevertheless, the student is forced to uncritically absorb the teacher's depositions no matter how contradictory or eclectic they are.

Teachers do not engage in criticism and self-criticism, which reproduces negative attitudes in their students

Another insidious result of this one-sided authority of the teacher in bourgeois "education" is that they are unable to engage in self-criticism for fear of losing or lessening this authority.

Self-criticism is seen as a weakness. This is a common bourgeois and petty-bourgeois attitude. One would rather brush their mistakes under the rug or off-load blame onto someone else. We see this in the ultra-cannibalistic and careerist realm of the bourgeois politician. It is also a required feature of the teacher.

A teacher may transgress. They may be overtly rude or demeaning to a student. They may make a mistake in their lesson content. When they are called out for an error by a student it is the essential instinct, of the formalist and incorrigible reactionary teachers at least, to deny they made a mistake. They offload blame onto someone else or blame the student themselves. The teacher realises that they must be seen as infallible if their word is to be uncritically and passively absorbed by the student.

On the other hand the revolutionary teacher — and all revolutionaries for that matter — as Dzerzhinsky states,

“...must not fear criticism, or gloss over shortcomings; on the contrary, it is necessary to help to make them known and to see nothing discreditable in doing so. Only he can be discredited who conceals his shortcomings, who is unwilling to fight against evils, that is, precisely the man who ought to be discredited. It is necessary to be able to see the truth and to imbibe it from the masses and from all who are taking part in production. There is nothing worse than self-praise and self-satisfaction. It is possible to go forward only when, step by step, evils are sought out and overcome.”*

More insidiously still, this also means that students, particularly in their young formative years, do not learn how to self-crit-

* Dzerzhinsky, F. (1924). *From a Circular Letter to the Managements of Syndicates and Trusts and to Red Directors*. Marxists Internet Archive.

icise or criticise either.

Children learn not to self-criticise, but how to nominally apologise for actions and feign sincerity. They learn to emotionally manipulate to self-preserve. They are not truly sorry or apologetic. Misbehaving youths will “apologise” to their peers but will continue to do the same actions. Of course, in classic bourgeois eugenicist fashion, such students are seen to be naturally unruly. It does not occur to the teachers that these students keep on transgressing because their self-criticisms and apologies are improper and they are not consciously engaging with their actions.

This insufficient education of the youth can also lead to adventurist attitudes. Imagining that any mistakes no matter how large and sincere can be simply made up by a retrospective and sheepish apology. Of course, we have understood that knowledge of material reality is necessarily relative and partial, and therefore so is the accuracy of our social practice. But this should not lead us down the road of some fatalistic adventurism, lurching from mistake to mistake for the sake of it on the premise that this is how we develop. This is how the bourgeois “education” system teaches “learning from your mistakes” due to the shallowness of the “apologies” modelled in school. The hallmark of the revolutionary on the other hand is to try to predict potential errors, mistakes and deviations in our social practice before they even happen, thus mitigating potential mistakes and the sphere of operation of accidental elements.*

In sum, criticism and self-criticism are one of the most indispensable weapons in the armoury of the revolutionary people and students. It is the real motive force of our development.** But this weapon is hidden from the students in bourgeois “education” and is blunted to the point of vulgarisation, so much so that the average student is incapable of serious self-criticism. Criticism and self-criticism therefore must be showcased by the liberating teacher in the liberating education. This forms an essential part of inculcating a new revolutionary attitude. That way students develop as beautiful flowers adapting to their changing conditions and mistakes rather than parasitic weeds developing through intrigue, deception, arrogance and adventurism.

* Cornforth, M. (1955). *The Theory of Knowledge*. Red Star Publishers. (196).

** Zhdanov, A. (1947). *Speech at a Conference of Soviet Philosophical Workers*, in: *On Literature, Music and Philosophy*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 107).

The metaphysics of the bourgeois teacher

Another contributing reason behind this “banking concept of education” is the teacher in the current bourgeois “education” system develops a metaphysical outlook of their students and sees them as passive and static objects for this “knowledge” “deposition.”

What do we mean by this? A metaphysical or mechanical outlook is to see phenomena as static and immobile until an inexplicable external force acts upon them. It is to see the objective world as a catalogue of isolated, ready-made things, rather than processes in self-development.

For instance, a shopper may purchase a rose. They buy this rose as an ostensibly static commodity with an ostensibly static use-value. However, in reality, the rose as a “ready-made” thing is an abstraction. In reality, the rose is in constant self-development from growth to decay. The rose will die and decompose, be broken down and the matter that constituted it may eventually constitute another biological organism. Would we say that the new organism is that same rose? No. The world is not made up of a catalogue of abstract ready-made things, ideal platonic forms, but is a dynamic complex of processes, which we can only make sense of through abstractions of the content or form of the process in question.

The same applies here. The student is not just some immobile thing in which the teacher can just deposit knowledge. If so, education would be a very simple affair. Instead, the student is incredibly dynamic and complex in their self-development. The intellectual, physical and cultural development of the student has manifold determinations, from biological determinations, from their teacher, from their parents, from their surroundings, from their peers, and ultimately, the character of the production of material life which subsumes these factors — capitalism.

But the teacher in bourgeois society is unable to grapple with these determinations and sees the student from a metaphysical outlook of some ready-made thing, some rose to buy off a supermarket’s flower display and put in a vase of water. This is particularly the case in secondary, tertiary and university education. Teachers and lecturers have multiple classes of students to teach. A secondary school teacher for example may have six or seven different classes, each of which has thirty students, meaning they teach almost two hundred students. How can the teacher in such conditions even remember each student’s name let alone build a mutual personal relationship with which educa-

tion can meaningfully resonate?

Therefore, in lieu of a mutual relationship and a liberating education that actually resonates with the student, the teacher in the bourgeois “education” system is constrained to the same presentations, the same worksheets and the same booklets for everyone. Students become demotivated with work that is not tailored to them. A teacher in the liberating education system on account of their mutual relationship with the students as well as their much more intimate mastery of their subject will be in the position to deliver lessons that engage students more,* and are modified to suit students’ understanding.**

In sum, the metaphysical outlook of the teacher in bourgeois “education,” the tendency to see the student as a static thing, is an objective result of anti-conscious methods that breed this one-sided authority and are exacerbated by large class sizes and strains in resources. This metaphysical tendency amongst teachers can not just be solved by reducing class sizes or making piecemeal adjustments,** but must be solved by the sweeping and transformative leap of revolution. It is bourgeois class interest that is the root of this tendency and it is the bourgeoisie we shall uproot.

The liberating teacher is a teacher who is able to have complete versatility and can modify their pedagogic content for the specific needs of their students and society. If the liberating teacher fails to adapt their pedagogy, they fail the dynamic needs of the revolution.****

* Krupskaya, N. (1922). *Organisation of Self-Education*, in: *On Education*. The November 8th Publishing House. (pp. 327-328).

** Hoxha, E. (1967). *For the Further Revolutionisation of Our School*, in: *Selected Works Volume IV*. The Institute of Marxist-Leninist Studies. (p. 374).

*** Though the reduction in class sizes has a demonstrable impact. The *Perry Pre-school Project* for example showed how potent building personal relationships with children and accessing their external development were to pedagogy. Regardless, despite how this sociological study clearly illuminated a root cause of educational failure, the bourgeoisie in Britain in characteristic myopic fashion have not taken heed to these conclusions.

**** Sison, J. (1968). *Towards A National Democratic Teacher’s Movement*, in: *On Education and the Youth*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 9).

The plight of the teacher in Britain

The average teacher in Britain suffers hugely under the yoke of capitalism that they are ultimately in service of. As such, they are imbued with fierce revolutionary potential as they are a group that faces the brunt of bourgeois savagery.

This is reflected in the very promising rise in National Education Union (NEU) activity in recent months. Teachers are taking a more militant stand and the callousness of the bourgeois politicians and media has been exposed to them. Of course, this consciousness is still in a very embryonic and immediate form, and the militant will of the teachers is still subject to being curbed by anti-strike legislation and treachery from the labour-aristocratic elements of union leadership.

For many years, teachers have been subject to pay freezes and cuts. Austerity has rendered schools understaffed and financially moribund. The teachers in bourgeois society have no democratic say in their workplace and have decisions imposed upon them by a bureaucracy of leadership teams and governors. Teachers are also expected to mark work and respond to emails outside their work hours. All to receive an extremely meagre pay packet. To further salt the wound, bourgeois myopic social policy has seen the infestation of private companies into education, most notably the usurers who call themselves *Timeplan*, who serve as a monopolising middle-man in supply and support teachers. *Timeplan*, like a tapeworm, fleeces the teacher's wage and subjects them to a zero-hour contract where they have absolutely no control over their work.

It is clear that the life of the teacher in the bourgeois "education" system is one of alienation, uncertainty, frustration and poverty. Their pedagogic impulse was extinguished. Their subject speciality is vulgarised in service of capital. These challenging objective conditions of the teacher yield varying responses; teachers are of varying consciousness and temperament, just like other workers and the youth. Just as in the student movement, we need to ascertain who are the progressives and reactionaries, we must engage in such a task with the teachers.

Conscientious teachers

First, we must analyse the advanced teachers, who we will call *conscientious teachers*. These teachers make up a minority of the teacher base.

The conscientious teacher is differentiated from their col-

leagues by their opposition to the bourgeois “education” system in either content or form. Conscientious teachers may not even be fully aware that they are indeed opposing the “education” system but do so nonetheless.

The conscientious teacher may attempt to utilise liberating pedagogical methods by trying to build a genuine rapport with students and attempting to encourage genuine student criticism and scrutiny of the course. These teachers may attempt to create an anti-dogmatic attitude in their students rather than dryly and one-sidedly recite course material.

The conscientious teacher as a result tends to be the most well-liked of the teachers by the students and is able to create lesson material that resonates with the students, owing to their genuine relationship with the students. The conscientious teacher may also have disposed of the petty-bourgeois aversion to self-criticism, and may often self-criticise in front of their students. The conscientious teacher may also take a resolute and principled stand against anti-student action from their department or leadership team and as such may make enemies with their superiors — they will stand up for the dignity of their marginalised students and defend them from the chauvinist attacks of student bullies or other teachers. The conscientious teacher tends to also have a large involvement in union activity and may be quite vocal about its merits with their students. This is how the conscientious teacher resists the bourgeois “education” system in form.*

The conscientious teacher may also be at odds with the bourgeois “education” system in content. The conscientious teacher may openly criticise the distortions in subject content, rather than worship the content uncritically. A conscientious history teacher for example may — whilst begrudgingly teaching the mandatory red-scare content of various history courses — supplement this content with information about the unmentioned crimes and butcherings of American imperialism during the same period. They may even expose to their students the hypocrisy and malign nature of the “Fundamental British Values” and abstain from indoctrinating their students.

* The teacher who utilises liberating pedagogical methods may, in naivete, not even realise their opposition to the bourgeois “education” system. They may even believe themselves to be “apolitical.” But their steadfastness in building mutual relationships with students and allowing criticism and discussion of the course is opposition enough to the bourgeoisie.

The conscientious teacher is a shining example of a rose growing from the pavement. The conscientious teacher has an impact beyond their wildest comprehension. We all have had that one inspiring teacher who stands out amongst the rest and has not only boosted us academically but has tempered us in our methods of thought and our true passion for learning.*

But of course, the life of the conscientious teacher is a life stepping on eggshells.

The conscientious teacher is constrained by the objective conditions we have mentioned above. They may eventually become over-encumbered with work and stress, and lose their passion for teaching, degenerating into bourgeois formalism. Their alienation from their more reactionary colleagues, rather than emboldening them to organise or double down on their conscientious stand, may isolate them and within this isolation grows petty-bourgeois individualism — they become an estranged petty-bourgeois intellectual who has left only the veneer of progressiveness.

Teachers who go against the grain and refuse to yield to bourgeois rule may be subject to arbitrary suspension or sacking,** or even nationwide harassment from the rabid tabloid press.*** Teachers of this type are certainly unlikely to receive promotions to leadership positions in the school.

We once had a youthful teacher in college who could have been accurately categorised as a conscientious teacher. He had a demonstrable passion for history and built a great rapport with his students. He tailored lesson content appropriately to the cultural and intellectual level of his students and as such, they prospered. He vocally criticised and scrutinised the chauvinist and fallacious rhetoric of the curriculum. I only enjoyed a weekly extended class with him but I knew others who had him full-time and spoke highly of him.

However, by the second year of college, it was clear the bourgeois realities of the “education” system had caught up with him and warped him. Through what I imagine was a combination of external personal issues and the new supervision of a hawkish, unlikeable and reactionary department leader, he became out-

* However, most conscientious teachers are still bound by the old.

** Brown, R. (2022). *A Teacher Was Suspended for Encouraging Students to Question the Monarchy*. Novara Media.

*** <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2798619/a-crazy-korea-teacher-s-bid-make-boys-36-000-year-school-sing-kim-jong-songs.html>>

wardly despondent and burned out. Through the pressures of needing to get through an over-crammed history curriculum in the second year, I was told he became much more formalistic, cold and disciplinarian, losing the rapport he had had with his students.

I also observed that even as early as the first year, he was compelled to cede his teaching of the crimes of American imperialism with a petty-bourgeois relativism, most likely in fear of retribution from reactionary students of the class. His fear of being labelled by the reactionary students or his reactionary teaching colleagues as a “leftie” or tendentious, or anything but “impartial,”* a fear born out of the fact he could be sacked for not being an “impartial” flunkey, meant he was in the ridiculous position of being forced to play devil’s advocate with the crimes of Pinochet.

It is to the position that if history teachers in Britain are resolute in their disdain for fascist criminals like Pinochet, their job security could be at risk.

Thus, in sum, the seldomness of conscientious and rebellious teachers shows the complete stranglehold that bourgeois reactions and dogmatism have over the teachers. It shows how the objective and subjective features of bourgeois “education,” that is, its form and its content, pacify the majority of teachers. The conscientious teacher is forever walking a tightrope, a tightrope from which only a revolutionary student movement can save them from.

Formalist teachers

What we would call the standard *formalist teachers* comprise a large majority of the teacher base.

As we have said, the average formalist teacher often does not enter education in this way. They usually enter education with a noble passion for pedagogy or for shaping the lives of the youth but are quantitatively worn down by the bourgeois class character of education, leading to a qualitative transformation in their outlook.

It is thus that the revolution, the revolutionary students and the liberating education system should aim to rekindle the love and passion of the formalist teacher and imbue them with the vantage point of the working class.

The formalist teacher can be characterised by their almost

* That is, impartial to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

unflinching obedience to their superiors and their rigid formalism. They may participate in union activity, but again, this participation is often passive and formalistic and they do so reluctantly and only for the security of their immediate economic existence rather than broader unionist goals.*

The formalist teacher will follow every decree and instruction to the letter. Essentially, they see their job as apolitical. They see education as an apolitical, purely technical act. They see the content and form of school courses as non-tendentious. Therefore they will teach the “Fundamental British Values” without query, but they have most likely not been afforded much time to critically think about it themselves.

The formalist teacher is also conditioned by the aforementioned excessive workload and resource strains of their profession, and over experience, has understood that it is much easier to fall into formalism and unchanging methods rather than expend time innovating or critically evaluating their pedagogy.

The formalist teacher may over time be given promotions and elevated to leadership or pastoral positions.

Incorrigible reactionary teachers

We now move on to our third category of teachers — the incorrigible, reactionary teachers, who constitute the remaining minority of the teacher base.

What distinguishes the incorrigible reactionary teachers from their average formalist teacher counterparts, is the former’s excessive zeal in the task of bourgeois indoctrination and their own excessive views.

The reactionary teacher does teach the bourgeois mystifications from the course just out of some petrified, unthinking formalism, but teaches them from a place of genuine belief and zeal.

* In the wake of the recent bout of NEU strikes, there has emerged a peculiar reactionary and liquidationist attitude amongst formalist teachers which is to insist on the “individual” participation of teachers within the union. Teachers will say that participation in strikes is a “personal” decision and that scab teachers should be thought of in any ill way for their strike-breaking by the students and other teachers.

We are unsure whether this has been an attitude demanded by the teaching leadership of the teachers when the latter is explaining the strikes to their students or whether this reactionary attitude has developed organically from the formalist teachers’ petty-bourgeois individualism.

The reactionary teacher may go even further than the content of the courses and say “the quiet part out loud,” openly abounding in chauvinist views. This is also enabled by their “teaching” style which tends to be arbitrary, idiosyncratic, self-absorbed and the nadir of one-sidedness. The reactionary teachers are the most fervent anti-communists and take great pleasure in hysterically slandering the Soviet Union, glorifying the crimes of American imperialism and glorifying the crimes of the nazis and their collaborators.

Our social investigation shows that many of these reactionary teachers hold prejudicial or discriminatory views, and this manifests in their infantilisation of these students, uneven discipline or grudges against students, awarding them lower grades, moving them into lower sets in the case of secondary school, deadnaming and even denying students entitled to extra-time in tests their extra-time.

The reactionary teachers are almost universally hated by their students, for their chauvinist views, despotic methods and their complete alienation from the students. Of course, the reactionary teachers may gain the respect of an odious minority subculture of reactionary students like the Andrew-Tatists — or fans of some other philistine internet personality — and other thuggish students.

These reactionary teachers can also do significant damage when they are placed in pastoral or leadership roles. They alienate and harangue other teachers, and intensify the suffering of conscientious teachers. They also impose their hideous chauvinism and misogyny into pastoral issues to disastrous effect. The reactionary teachers may take the side of racist bullies, or victim-blame and alienate young girls who have been affected by unwanted advances or assault by male students.

The incorrigible reactionary teachers may also be perpetrators of, or defenders of, paedophilia and predation, particularly in primary and secondary schools. In almost all secondary schools, students will speak of a handful of “noncey” or inappropriate teachers. Of course, one could easily dismiss such allegations as nothing but spurious rumours by students who like to gossip and make jokes. But it is clearly apparent that the one-sided and anti-conscious nature of the student-teacher relationship that characterises bourgeois “education” enables, normalises and exacerbates the risk of predation. We assume through social investigation that predation in schools is much more ubiquitous than it may seem but it is difficult to ascer-

tain the extent considering it is a sociological dark figure. These predators are very much enabled by the objective structures of the bourgeois “education” system and the subjective backwardness of the reactionary teachers in pastoral positions.

It is clear that this minority of reactionary teachers has a disproportionate effect and are the most stalwart defenders of bourgeois rule, whether they are aware of it or not.

This minority of teachers is incorrigible. It should not be an effort of the revolutionary proletarian movement, the revolutionary student movement or a goal of the liberating education system to attempt to rehabilitate such teachers. These teachers should be removed from their posts as soon as possible and publicly criticised. These reactionary teachers have no business corrupting and abusing the youth.

In our current time, incorrigible reactionary teachers can actually serve to be a good site of struggle. Organic protests can occur from the excesses of reactionary teachers. These protests need to be tempered and revolutionised by the revolutionary students. Protests for instance have arisen at some universities against lecturers prejudiced towards trans people. In college and secondary schools, protests and petitions could be levied against reactionary teachers for their conduct — in our college, such a movement could have begun when a philosophy teacher used slurs in a lesson and refused to apologise. Actions can be made against the reactionary teachers.

The incorrigible reactionary teachers are the epitome of what is dysfunctional about bourgeois rule in education. For now, they seem to be a looming force but we must remember that they are all hot air. They are nothing without the obedience of students. When the students rebel, they are shown to be nothing but small and pathetic flunkys. Their caprice, once a deep fear and anxiety of the students who suffered under their whim, is reduced to nothing but a quiet and pathetic screeching.

Conclusion

We have shown that it is important to not separate the teacher from the class character of the “education” system.

Through a series of objective restraints and enforcement, most teachers are rendered enforcers of the bourgeois regime, often without their awareness. They are rendered servile, one-sided, uninspired and aloof.^{*} The petty-bourgeois class position of

* The actual reality of teachers stands in stark contrast to the ideal

particularly university lecturers and academics is also another objective condition — their class position may make them prone to pseudo-revolutionary distortions that veer them off course.*

Nevertheless, in our revolutionary practice, we must clearly demarcate teachers to see which are progressive, which are intermediate and which are incorrigible.

This categorisation is by no means flawless as a teacher could be more progressive in pedagogical form than they are in their political level and criticism of content or vice versa. Teachers are also not static objects but are in self-development and are affected by manifold objective and subjective conditions. Through the drudgery of teaching in a moribund “education” system, conscientious teachers are rendered formalistic. Conversely, the recent surge in union activity may render previously passive and formalistic teachers more progressive and militant.

The revolutionary movement will win over the majority of teachers, not antagonise them. Only revolution, not reform, can enable teachers to perform their intended duty as great facilitators and shapers of the youth.

Reading group questions

Can you give an example of where a teacher you had was unwilling to self-criticise when they had clearly made a mistake?

Name an experience you have had with a conscientious teacher.

Name an experience you have had with a formalist teacher.

Name an experience you have had with an incorrigible reactionary teacher.

Group activity: Discuss to what character your lecturer’s material and pedagogical form is.

teacher that is broadcast by the media. There is a petty-bourgeois rosy fantasy that every student-teacher relationship is like Musharaf and Mr Burton from *Educating Yorkshire*. The bourgeoisie does not require students to have their lives changed or be inspired. It demands obedience and anti-conscientiousness and that is all.

* Sison, J. (1968). *The Petty Bourgeoisie*, in: *On Education and the Youth*. The November 8th Publishing House.

VII — SOCIAL POLICY, MARKETISATION AND DECAY

Concretising social policy

We now must move on to analysing the origin, function and effect of social policy in the bourgeois “education” system in Britain, which causes certain specificities.

Firstly, the revolutionary students attempt to understand social policy in a proper way, not being abstract from its class and historical context. Social policy is the result of the bourgeois state attempting to strengthen and protect its rule. This is no different in education. Of course, some of the bourgeois social policy, in characteristic bourgeois myopia, actually serves to weaken their rule inadvertently. The bourgeois politicians and educational advisers may be good or bad stewards of the bourgeois regime, but they are stewards nonetheless.

The bourgeois “sociologists of education” attempt to disembed an analysis of social policy from concrete class analysis. As such they render social policy analysis in education completely useless, mystifying it into metaphysics and rendering it some inexplicable guessing game. Social policy will be chalked up to completely random and inexplicable occurrences, “situational factors”^{**} or just the abstract whim of whichever politician.^{**}

We aim to understand the existence of private and religious schools, marketisation policies and austerity in terms of their real relations and functions. We have to do this in order to understand concretely how to overcome these particularities when revolutionising education.

Religious schools

An often overlooked aspect of the British “education” system is the ubiquity of religious schools.

Religious schools, referred to as “faith schools,” constitute 34% of all state-funded schools, with 6,179 primary faith schools and 623 secondary faith schools in total, as of 2019.^{***} The prev-

* Leichter, H. (1979). *A Comparative Approach to Policy Analysis*. Cambridge University Press.

** Social policy is also rendered “pure thought”: something we will look into later.

*** Statistics from <gov.uk>

alence of religious schools is an important particularity to our education system we must understand and overcome.

In France for example, there are no religious schools. The French bourgeoisie had a clearer break with the feudal church and was — and still is — more resolute in its secularism, whereas the victory of the English bourgeoisie was more protracted and co-opted the church through Protestantism.*

When the old is negated by the new, the new may contain birthmarks and vestiges of the old.** Aspects of the old continue but under new guiding laws of operation. This is the same with social formations. Class societies are historically constituted and do not exist as some “pure” theoretical modes of production. Dominant social relations of production may co-exist with other social relations of production, the former subjugating the latter to state power and general laws of operation. In many countries around the world there exist a co-existence of capitalist relations with semi-feudal relations. Even in the most developed capitalist countries like Britain, where feudal relations of production have long been liquidated, there still exists an impurity in the existence of an ever-dwindling petty-bourgeoisie, a transitional class, and importantly, superficial inherited vestiges of the old feudal social formation remain. Religious “education” is one such vestige.*** They have their origin in feudalism but they now have been fully subjugated to the interests of capitalism in their function and their content and form have been qualitatively changed to reflect that.

For instance, students of religious schools in Britain still sit the same GCSE and A-Level examinations as those in secular schools. The Department of Education also tries to limit the worst excesses of religious “education” such as creationism, but often even fails at this. The Department of Education also decrees that the Fundamental British Values must also be taught in these faith schools. This means that, in theory at least, faith schools do not have a radically different curriculum to secular schools except for religious “education” where the former decides its own syllabus. Of course, the extent to which faith schools abide by government regulation differs wildly from

* The French bourgeoisie subsequently had a stronger embrace of the mechanical materialism of La Mettrie et al, whereas the English bourgeoisie had a predisposition to individualist Calvinist doctrines which served their purposes at the time.

** Engels — Negation is not just saying no.

*** And the titular Royal family is another such vestige.

school to school dependent on their size, recency, catchment and personnel among other factors.

So what are the specificities of religious “education” and what unique function do faith schools serve for bourgeois class interest?

Religious “education” by its nature, just like bourgeois “education” on the whole, is fundamentally anti-conscious. It aims to teach and recite scripture dogmatically. It argues that knowledge and “liberation” is found through faith — fideism — rather than interaction with the actual material world and conceptualising those interactions.* As such, just like bourgeois secular “education” as a whole, it is incorrigible in form. It is irreconcilable with liberation and revolution.

And just like the bourgeois “education” system, this form is necessitated by,** and also begets, its profoundly reactionary content. Faith schools in Britain almost universally peddle a more reactionary slew than their secular counterpart.

Religious “education” tends to be profoundly homophobic, transphobic, racist and sexist. As one of our comrades said who had been subjected to religious education: “It was like Section 28 had never been repealed.”*** LGBTQ+ students in religious schools are taught to self-hate and hide themselves for fear of expulsion, bullying or severe punishment. Students of these schools are imbued with this chauvinism as well and grow up to renew the ranks of fascist organisations.

Religious “education” in Britain is also blighted with its own innate reactionary idiosyncrasies. One of our other comrades who attended a religious secondary school only two years ago said how they were dissuaded from writing with their left hand because it was seen as a mark of the “devil” and they were forced to write with their naturally weaker right hand instead. This has permanently affected their ability to write with their natural left hand.

There is predictably a higher proportion of the incorrigible reactionary kind of teachers at these religious schools. Religious schools are unsurprisingly rife with child abuse, physical, emotional and sexual. One comrade recounts how one of their teach-

* Yaroslavsky, E. (1934). *Religion in the USSR*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 73)

** In the sense that if these promulgates were not taught as incontestable, anyone in their rational mind would contest them.

*** Section 28 was a section in an act by Margaret Thatcher that banned the “promotion of homosexuality” in schools.

ers in their primary faith school ardently condoned the use of corporal punishment on the basis of a bible quote “spare the rod and spoil the child.”

Religious schools, as well as being the most fervent implementors of the most backward strands of bourgeois chauvinist ideology under their guise of religious demagoguery, concomitantly serve the role of helping divide and rule the future proletariat.

As well as imbuing the students with a profound fear of all scientific pursuits, including Marxism, religious “education” imbues its students with a deep anti-conscious hatred of those with different faiths. It is a common feature of bourgeois “education,” whether intentional or unintentional. The proletariat is extremely easy to subjugate once it is so disunited that the philistine is prepared to kill one another over semantics in some old holy book.*

In sum, the prevalence of religious “education” in Britain represents a very backward challenge that the revolutionary student must face and defeat. Every day, thousands of children are subjected to this toxic indoctrination. Children as young as four are subjected to boring sermons and holy book recitations that blunt their minds. Many students in religious “education” actually learn to resist and exit it more atheist than they entered. These students show themselves to have a revolutionary, scientific spirit that far overcomes religious anti-consciousness, and these are students who are ripe for the new movement. The revolutionary student ardently opposes and fights bourgeois “education,” both secular and religious, and fights for their abolition.

Private schools

Another particularity of the British “education” system is private “education.” Fee-paying independent schools number about 2,600 schools in the UK, with 7% of children attending these schools.

The children of wealthy bourgeois and aspiring petty-bourgeois families are essentially bought “educational” attainment. Most private schools are completely outside the financial capabilities of the average family, even with the full extent of merit-based scholarships.

Children who attend private schools enjoy vastly smaller class sizes, much better sports facilities and greater cultural op-

* Yaroslavsky, E. (1934). *Religion in the USSR*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 76)

portunities and activities. A Durham University study calculated that private schooling is equivalent to a two-year headstart in education.* Those who attend private schools overwhelmingly dominate admissions to Oxbridge and disproportionately dominate both chambers of the bourgeois parliament.

The form of private bourgeois “education” still remains anti-conscious, but its content, while it remains thoroughly bourgeois and fallacious, is slightly different to the run-of-the-mill public schools. In public schools, servility and obedience are pushed more as values in moral and civic “education.” In our public secondary school, a great effort was made to promote “employability skills” such as punctuality, hard work, obedience, cooperation and so on. This makes sense since the children of the public schools are being groomed as the next generation of workers.

On the other hand, the moral education of those in private schools centres around arrogance and disdain for the working masses. The children in private schools are imbued with entitlement, laziness and selfishness, as they are to inherit their parents’ class situation as members of the leisured classes.** The privately educated are learned in cocaine, sexual predation, corruption and thuggery,** all of these activities being acceptable to the bourgeois.

Owing to the objective factors of privately educated children — that is, their class situation — and the corresponding subjective factors, there is very little revolutionary potential in fee-paying schools. However, on rare occasions, the odd intelligent and studious privately educated student may stumble across Marxism-Leninism. This student, if they should find it in them to repudiate their class situation, should be accepted warmly into the revolutionary student movement.

Private school is generally seen for what it is among even the intermediate students. Even social democrats like Corbyn in recent years have received support for policies like the abolition of private schooling. It is clear that the abolition of private schools is already a popular and tenable demand and should be a clear

* < <https://www.isc.co.uk/research/durham-university-academic-value-added-research-2016/>>

** Krupskaya, N. (1927). *The Young Pioneer Movement as A Pedagogical Problem*, in: *On Education*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 128).

*** Like the Bullingdon club for example: a private club of Oxford thugs who would engage in such activities.

minimum program* demand of the revolutionary students.

No democratic initiative for students or teachers

Just like every other place of work under capitalism, teachers and students have very little to no input or democratic rights in “their” “education.”

Decisions on educational social policy are usually made top-down in the government ministry, and more specific decisions on funding are usually decided by school boards. In both cases, normal teachers, let alone students, have absolutely no say in the governance of the school.

The hallmark of the liberating education system is that it is able to develop and overcome defects through increased initiative and democratic rights of both teachers and students. In the Soviet Union’s Communist University of the Toilers of the East (KUTVA), for example, all students, teachers, and maintenance and cleaning employees, had avenues to express their views and directly work with the University’s leadership to solve problems.**

In socialism, development must occur through thoroughly democratic means of criticism and self-criticism to ensure the steel-like unity between the party and the people, between the leadership and the masses, remains intact.

However, today, the most resembling “democracy” students have in secondary or college “education” is to fill out Google forms or, if they are lucky, get to talk to OFSTED inspectors on their visits. There are no legitimate avenues for student criticism or initiative in education and this reflects the fact that bourgeois “education” is something that must be anti-consciously imposed upon them. If the current “education” system did allow genuine democratisation, there would be an indomitable wave of students criticising the moribund and fallacious bourgeois “education” system for what it is.

* **Minimum program:** Tactical demands that the revolutionary party tasks itself with to win popular support, sharpen the organisation of the subjective factor, and create conditions more requisite for revolution. Therefore are to be realised in the existing social relations. Minimum programs are an important tactic, subsumed by the larger strategy of revolution.

** Haywood, H. (1978). *Black Bolshevik*. Proletarian Information Bureau. (p. 161).

Marketisation and austerity

A key feature of bourgeois “education” in Britain and around the world in these past few decades is its “marketisation.”

The marketisation of British education was first signalled with the 1988 Education Reform Act under the Thatcher regime. This was enacted in line with the wave of neo-liberal privatisation that occurred in the wake of the crippling cyclical capitalist overproduction crises — a process of privatisation that still continues to this day.

Its proponents argued the same old demagoguery that subjecting education to the whim of “market forces” would allow it for more effective management and improvement through competition.

In reality, we have clearly seen that the bourgeois “education” system in Britain is now afflicted with all the defects innate to anarchy in social production and the law of value as a regulator.

Marketisation policies like formula funding, open enrollment and larger private integration have led to manufactured inefficiencies, absurdities and sufferings for students, teachers and parents.

Formula funding

Formula funding and open enrollment mean that “educational” institutions receive funding proportional to the number of students they admit.

Thus, schools will spend money with the sole purpose of trying to cram in as many students as possible with superficial spending. Thousands will be spent on ostentatious computer suites, tablets and scientific laboratories that may hardly ever be used. Meanwhile, teachers’ wages remain meagre, school meals remain low quality and expensive and integral infrastructural aspects of schools like wheelchair accessibility remain completely neglected, for the reason that these important aspects are not as important for formula funding.

As a result of formula funding, the poor-performing schools dwindle even more into special measures, and the best-performing schools become hideously overcrowded and over-encumbered with students. Our college for instance was high-performing, and as a result, flooded with students, rendering infrastructure like the libraries and food canteens clearly too busy.

The best-performing schools are able to “cream-skim” and

“silt-shift,” refusing admission of students who live closest to these schools. Conversely, open enrollment means students make socially unnecessary long commutes to schools when they can simply go to a school that is significantly geographically closer.

Marketisation policies in Britain, as they have with the rest of the world, mean that the most directly profitable and employable subject specialities receive funding:

“Of the £155 million ring-fenced, £55 million will be for pupils studying A-levels in the following subjects: biology, chemistry, computer science, design and technology, electronics, further maths, maths, physics and statistics.”*

Meanwhile, the social sciences — as well as important learning support services and mental health services may we add — are completely financially neglected because they are not directly marketable.** Not to mention how the majority bourgeois attitude is one of deep contempt and suspicion of the social sciences. In our secondary schools and colleges, it is often that the science, maths and computing departments are given modern interactive boards, computers and learning resources, whereas the social sciences subjects have shabby second-hand textbooks that have been drawn all over.

The increasing cost for parents and students

Another indissoluble result of the marketisation of bourgeois “education” has been the increasing need for schools and the various integrated private companies to fleece students, parents and teachers. The usurious operation of private companies in bourgeois “education” has even been decried by bourgeois sociologists.***

University tuition fees are an obvious example. £9,000 a year for university is no more fleecing than it is absurd. That is on top of the crippling accommodation and maintenance costs that a

* <<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/revealed-the-subjects-that-qualify-for-extra-post-16-funding/>>

** Sison, J. (2015). *APEC's Neoliberal Offensive and its Effect on Philippine Education*, in: *On Education and the Youth*. The November 8th Publishing House.

*** Ball, S. (2007). *Education plc*. Routledge.

student will experience, especially in London.

On account of private saturation, school food, particularly branded food, is very expensive and low quality.

School uniforms and stationery supplies have also sharply risen in price and pose great financial worry to the poorest families. Neither can the poorest families afford for their children to attend school trips. The Child Poverty Action Group estimates that primary schools annually cost £864.87 per student; secondary school students, £1,775.

Marketisation has also rendered school textbooks an even bigger sham. A-level textbooks may cost £30 a piece and are practically indispensable to passing courses. These bourgeois textbooks are obviously saturated with the most fallacious and braindead content but they are also littered with a mass of sloppy transcription and clerical errors owing to poor quality control on the part of the greedy and feckless authors and publishers. These textbooks are not revised regularly simply because of anti-consciousness and the fact there is no profit incentive to do so. And these charlatans and thieves have the audacity to expect the hard-working parents to fork out hundreds of pounds of their own money for their own children's indoctrination!

Bureaucracy

A trend that is concomitant to neoliberal plunder of erstwhile public services is a sharp increase in stilted, counter-intuitive bureaucracy due to strained resources. It is made difficult for parents and students to sign up for free school meals, request remarking of exams or register for university. The parent and student have to jump through a series of pointless hoops and are fleeced every step of the way. Signing up for university for instance is an extremely frustrating process. University admissions, particularly for the "competitive universities" are extremely slack, unhelpful and long-winded for the sake of it. UCAS, the middle-man organisation used for university admissions, charges the student £30 for the displeasure of using their interface and even uses the student's personal details to try to sell them mobile data on behalf of other companies.

This sordid bureaucracy and arrogance of university admissions must be liquidated in the liberating education system.

Overburdening

In order for schools to procure favourable OFSTED results, and for the British government to keep up international appearances, there is also a trend for overburdening and cramming of content.

We have already discussed how this manifests in purposely onerous exams and courses that are designed to make a certain amount of students fail.

In some universities, it has even gotten to the extent that some university lecturers provide cheat sheets for their students

This severe overburdening of students results in mental health disaster and is also a complete Sisyphus labour. Students almost immediately forget content as soon as they have learned it. It is customary for students after GCSEs and A-Levels to celebrate being able to forget and off-load revised “knowledge.”

Conclusion

Contemporary social policy in bourgeois “education” very clearly reflects and accentuates its oppressive character. It is not enough that the bourgeoisie keeps the proletarian students in the bondage of ignorance, abuses them, lies to them and overextends them — they also feel it necessary to profit from this abuse too.

Neo-liberal privatisation has ravaged the sheer finances of the bourgeois “education” system.

But as we have also said, there already exists a plethora of grassroots movements opposed to certain social policies — there exist campaigns against religious schools and private schools, as well as increasing costs for parents. Whilst these campaigns have an essentially reformist character, it’s important that the revolutionary student movement works alongside these campaigns and helps mobilise them to see that these minor reforms will never be enough and that revolutionary rupture is a necessity.

The abolition of religious and private schools is an attainable minimum program demand that can rally large support.

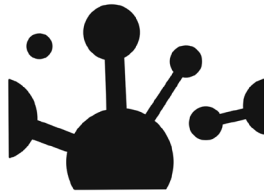
Reading group questions

Do you have any experience with religious schools or their students? Share your experience.

Do you have any experience with private schools or their students? Share your experience.

What are some examples you have seen in your school/college/university of marketisation policies and private saturation that have negatively impacted your experience?

IN CONTENT: THE SOCIAL SCIENCES



VIII — “EDUCATION” IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

The principality of social science education in our analysis

The social sciences in “education” should be our most essential concern in negating the old “educational” content and building the New, liberating education. Social sciences “education” is the most oppressive of all.

This is of course not to say that the other subjects do not have a bourgeois character. On the contrary, *all* content in the bourgeois “education” system is to some degree infected with bourgeois class character and metaphysics and is suffocated in a bourgeois shell.*

Whilst in other subjects like the natural sciences, old learning resources, teaching executives and so on can be temporarily utilised and more smoothly revolutionised, the content and form of the social sciences today are almost entirely unusable.

“Education” in the social sciences today is used to anti-consciously legitimise capitalist relations. In Britain specifically, a large aspect of the social sciences is dedicated to justifying Anglo-American imperialism and the history of the empire. This is important because one of our foundational tasks of the socialist revolution in Britain — which is how we achieve liberation — must be to sever these imperialist relations on which the British economy is so heavily based.

Social sciences today

The social sciences in bourgeois “education” today are in a decadent and moribund state.

From the earliest primary schooling to the degree level, the social sciences are absolutely deplorable, in both content and form. Any student can attest to this. The social sciences “education” consists of an anti-conscious reverence to an eclectic mish-mash of falsified bourgeois theories.

One can see the decay of social sciences “education” by the fact that its degrees are sometimes even classified as a Bachelor of the Arts as opposed to the Sciences. This evidences that

* Pokrovsky, M. (1924). *What Lenin Was For Our Higher School*. Neodemocracy Blogspot.

even the bourgeois admit that their social sciences “education” is completely unscientific, subjectivist and relativist.* In fact, quite a lot of social sciences teachers at all levels of “education” state openly how they feel the social sciences are “not a real science.”

The development of social and natural sciences in class society

Why are the social sciences in so much decay?

Very simply, the bourgeoisie is terrified of the development of the social sciences. Natural sciences can develop *more* smoothly than the social sciences in capitalist society (and other class societies). This is because developments in natural sciences do not *directly* spell doom for the bourgeoisie. Developments in natural sciences and productive forces serve to increase and worsen the non-correspondence that exists between them and bourgeois social relations of production, but those developing natural science or the productive forces are unaware of this. Moreover, there needs to be a subjective factor to take advantage of the increasing non-correspondence. If that is not the case, the increasing weakening of capitalism is left unexploited and only becomes more disastrous. To think that advances in the natural sciences and productive forces will invariably beget revolution on their own is a vulgar over-simplification and objective economism.

Of course, there are certain times when the development of natural sciences clashes with the class interest of the ruling class. The heliocentric model and the Earth’s roundness for instance were considered heretical by the Abbasid caliphate and the Catholic church respectively, so its discovery and transmission were fettered. Similarly, climate and environmental science which reveals the true disastrous extent of capitalist plunder and myopia is shoved aside and minimised by monopolising think-tanks on the payroll of the big bourgeoisie. But for the most part, natural science as a totality is able to develop in the service of the bourgeoisie, as evidenced by the huge funding going into natural sciences “education.”**

But social sciences on the other hand contain within them the direct potential for social upheaval. True and unrestrained social science will ultimately reveal the necessity of the revolu-

* This is not to say that a liberating education in the arts is or should be unscientific, subjective and relativist. Rather, a liberating education in the arts should be objective and scientific.

** See the previous chapter.

tion. That is why it is met with complete resistance from the ruling class for they know social science will illuminate the historic mission of the toilers. This is why the bourgeois social sciences are so ridiculously stagnant as an “educational” and academic field.

Bourgeois rule over “education” in the social sciences”

Bourgeois rule is hegemonic in the social sciences academia and its “education.” This rule is maintained through the direct intention of bourgeois politicians and lobbyists and indirect structural phenomena. For instance, the Department of Education during the Johnson regime in 2020 reaffirmed its position by ordering that schools were not to “use material from anti-Capitalist groups.”*

Also, a lot of the charlatans in bourgeois academia and university leadership have direct connections to secret services. The connections between the secret services and Robert Conquest, George Orwell and other flunkeys are no secret. And it is on their false postulates that the bourgeois history textbooks are built. It has been said that in America during McCarthyism, there was virtually a revolving door between the universities and the CIA.**

This direct, voluntarist attempt to neutralise the content of social sciences “education” is in combination with the objective, structural conditions of bourgeois rule in “education” — such as OFSTED, one-sided pedagogy, marketisation, etc. — which we have previously discussed. The direct and indirect maintenance of bourgeois rule, the voluntarist and the structural, can not be considered isolated from each other but are in a mutually penetrative contradiction. What do we mean by this?

We mean to say that it is not enough to simply say that bourgeois rule is maintained by the sheer and completely deliberate wills of some conspiratorial, omnipotent clique or cabal. This is completely asinine and a voluntarist error. Nor is it enough to vulgarly ignore the subjective initiative and intention of the bourgeois flunkeys that perpetuate the stagnancy of the social sciences “education,” and imagine these are perfectly good people as soon as they are removed from the given objective struc-

* <<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/sep/27/uk-schools-told-not-to-use-anti-capitalist-material-in-teaching>>

** Rodney, W. (2018). *The Russian Revolution: A View from the Third World*. Verso. (ch. 1).

tures. It doesn't work like that. As we have shown in our chapter studying the teachers, each individual is imbibed with bourgeois and petty-bourgeois attitudes and ideas to some extent. To ignore this would be a vulgar structuralist or vulgar materialist error.

It is not even enough to air-headly claim that the way bourgeois class interest is maintained in social sciences "education" — and society in general — is "somewhere in between" or "50/50." This is not dialectical thinking.

We see that the subjective wills of the individual bourgeois and their lackeys *is* objective in the sense that it is the objective result of the structure and form of social sciences education. Similarly, it is these subjective wills, these bad-faith academic charlatans that actively maintain this stagnant structure of the bourgeois social sciences "education." The subjective and the objective in general — and in this particularity of the "education" in the social sciences — are in contradiction. And this contradiction is active and mutually penetrative. It is symbiotic. We can't imagine one without the other.

What does this mean for us?

It means that when we as the student movement are working towards a revolution in social sciences education, we can't fall into reformist deviations. We can't imagine that if we just remove x Minister of Education or y textbook author, and replace them with *better* personnel, no matter how good these personnel seem to be, they will indissolubly be rendered servants of the bourgeois as long as the general structure and form of bourgeois "education" remains. The strength of the bourgeois hegemonic grip over "education" is that the fundamental form and structure of "education" lends itself to bourgeois content and personnel. This is what the preceding chapters demonstrate. A teacher may enter the bourgeois "education" system conscientious and in good faith, but they will soon be rendered formalistic, obsequious and individualist. The same principle applies to bourgeois society on the whole. As we will investigate in so much more depth later, bourgeois "democracy" works in such a way structurally that whatever candidate, party or minister is elected, they can never be in the position to shake the fundamental bourgeois character of the state. This is what Lenin says in *The State and Revolution*:

"A democratic republic is the best possible political shell for capitalism, and, therefore, once capital has

gained possession of this very best shell... it establishes its power so securely, so firmly, that no change of persons, institutions or parties in the bourgeois-democratic republic can shake it.”*

This once again illuminates our necessity for revolution. Of course, this understanding does not stop us from using direct campaigns against individual ministers, teachers and textbooks as a means to an end, as a tactic.**

This understanding also illuminates the need for a direct and active revolutionisation of the students and teachers before, during and after the revolution. The subjective often lags behind the objective and therefore it is not simply enough to imagine that the reactionary attitudes of those currently employed in “education” is immediately abolished with capitalism.*** The aftershocks of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois reaction will hang around like a bad smell. In subsumption, these negative attitudes can be fatal to the effort of communism.**** In the Soviet Union for example, whilst the direct economic basis for bourgeois attitudes was, for the most part, swept away economically, due to lingering generational attitudes, heightened by external factors and the antithesis between intellectual and manual labour, anti-liberating theories in the social sciences emerged such as the Deborin school and Bukharin’s group.

These anti-revolutionary theories infecting education in the social sciences can not be ignored. Just as the Party could not sit

* Lenin, V. (1917). *The State and Revolution*. The Leftist Public Domain Project.

** Strategy and tactics are in contradiction. Our overall strategy is communism and revolution. Our tactics will be on a smaller scale and are more focused on particular conditions. Tactics are temporary and are used to sharpen the subjective factor or change a certain unfavourable objective condition, in line with the key link in any given situation. See *The Foundations of Leninism*.

*** The analogy of a petty-bourgeois shoemaker in *Anarchism or Socialism?* is a good example of this.

**** **Communism:** Communism can mean generally the doctrine of the conditions of the liberation of the working people. However, communism is used throughout this book in more precise as a mode of production. Communism, as higher phase communism, is the pinnacle of human social organisation whereby classes, class struggle, bourgeois and divisions between mental and physical labour, town and countryside, have also been completely eliminated. A society based upon communism can only be established like this on a global scale and we have so far not done so.

on its hands and wait for the objective conditions to eventually liquidate the negative subjective conditions. Direct intervention, re-education and criticism were required so that this defect did not grow any further.

Eclecticism

Bourgeois social sciences “education” is also inevitably eclectic. The bourgeois metaphysical outlook will never be able to make true sense of the world. There are a lot of things that it can’t account for. And the direct class interest in the social sciences “education” and academic field means that developments are censored and resisted, and it can not develop in a harmonious manner.

This means in Britain, “education” in the social sciences is often highly variegated from subject to subject in its content and outlook. The geography courses and textbooks may approach “globalisation” in a much different and mutually exclusive manner to the sociology course. Both conceptions will obviously be bourgeois, but they are still different.

Textbooks in the same subject may even differ due to different exam boards and different textbook authors. This is permitted due to the complete subjectivism of the bourgeois social sciences courses. Textbooks usually postulate multiple different bourgeois viewpoints and will not say which viewpoint is more valid — complete relativism.

Yet the way these eclectic textbooks are taught is still anti-conscious and dogmatic. We once again return to this absurd character of bourgeois “education” being both eclectic and dogmatic — the course content is mix-matched and paradoxical, yet the student is impelled to not follow the textbook blindly.

In liberating social sciences education, there will be a uniformity of course content. This is because dialectical materialism, and historical materialism, are the only outlooks capable of producing definitive theories of the world. Of course, these theories are not absolute and infallible but they can be constantly refined and made more truthful in a harmonious way. No longer will the social sciences be stunted by bourgeois censorship, dogmatism and eclecticism.

Escapism and fatalism

A hallmark of bourgeois “education” in the social sciences

is its vacillation between avoiding problems and essentialising problems.

The liberating education in the social sciences will present real problems, and offer real and tenable solutions.* The bourgeois social sciences can not do the same. It is curtailed by the fact it must necessarily be an apology for the capitalist system, and the capitalist system is the root of all social problems.

As such, bourgeois “education” in the social sciences has two routes out of this conundrum: it can escape, minimise and ignore, or it can essentialise and fatalise.

Take the example of the climate crisis. It is inarguably a result of the anarchy in bourgeois relations in capitalism. The law of surplus-value in capitalism necessitates that the capitalist must prioritise short-term profits at all costs or otherwise they are out-competed. In the case of the environment, the capitalists will unsustainably plunder natural resources, burn through fossil fuels and poison the lakes which they fish in their myopic pursuit of profit. This is having a detrimental and understatedly grave effect on the entire planet, food security and weather patterns.

What is the solution? Revolution, socialism and communism. The working class constituting itself the nation. An economy that develops according to the law of balanced development for the material and cultural enrichment of all people — not an economy that develops anarchically in accordance with the law of surplus-value, enriching a tiny proportion of capitalists and their lackeys.

We know this. But the bourgeois geographer, sociologist and economist *can't*, or *won't*. So instead, “education” resorts to escapism. It tries to make it seem that the climate crisis is not as big as it is purported to be. Billions of dollars are funnelled directly by fracking moguls into odious “think-tanks” like Prager U which deny and minimise the effects and causes of the climate crisis, contrary to evidence from natural science. These blatantly false videos are now being used by schools in America!

Social sciences teachers may try to escape from the actuality of the problem by claiming that it can be solved through more performative climate conferences and accords. We know this has never worked. As long as the people do not have political power or sovereignty, humanity and the planet suffer. All these accords, summits and agreements have shown to do nothing.

* Bains, H. (1990). *Freedom*, in: *Communism 1989- 1991*. Ideological Studies Centre. (p. 244).

The bourgeois governments rarely meet their targets. These targets on their own are still not enough.

Then, on the other hand, the bourgeois social sciences “education” may become fatalistic and essentialist to these problems. They may admit that climate change is real but that it is out of our control and nothing tenable can be done about it. We had a teacher in secondary school geography, a bloated, arrogant and obnoxious teacher, who would nihilistically claim that nothing could be done about climate change and that we were “all going to die.” Such are the attitudes instilled into the social sciences students. Defeatism rather than a pursuit of solutions. There are even some reactionaries who cheer on the impending destruction of the climate crisis and imagine it to be part of some grand Malthusian culling.

These trends apply to all manner of questions in the social sciences. Capitalism and class society are one of them. Classes are either not recognised to exist or are recognised and just taken as some natural law. The same applies to all forms of chauvinism.

The trends of escapism and fatalism are not mutually exclusive either. It is very common for “education” in the social sciences to minimise a problem, but also essentialise a problem. This is true for most things.

A liberating education does not wish to teach students to bury their heads in the sand or reify social relations. Freedom does not belong to those who try to escape reality, but those who change it!

Concretising our analysis

After having gone over this general form of bourgeois social sciences “education,” the following two chapters will cover the content. It will include an investigation of history, sociology and politics A-Levels and some GCSE content. The investigation is inevitably general due to obvious practical constraints and the absolute breadth of the multiple curriculums. It would be a pointlessly onerous task to try to analyse all the content in the bourgeois “education” system. For example, fifteen volumes of work could be written alone on the sheer content of falsifications included in Sally Waller and Chris Rowe’s Russia 1917-1953 textbook. However, there are already good books that discuss the history of the USSR and the people’s democracies, included in *Appendix II*.

It is our hope that this book can inspire a further wave of other students and groups to publish their own critiques of particular courses in the bourgeois “education” system and expand our criticisms.

Reading group questions

Discuss in your reading groups how you see the subjective and objective factors of bourgeois hegemony in social sciences “education” interpenetrating and necessitating each other.

What is an example of eclecticism you have seen in the social sciences curriculum?

What is an example of escapism or fatalism that you have seen in the social sciences curriculum?

IX — BOURGEOIS METAPHYSICS OF HISTORICAL “EDUCATION”

Historical “education”

Historical “education” is an integral reserve for the ruling class. None more than for the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie has used historical “education” to maintain their rule. Capitalism is implied to be the natural form of society, and the capitalist “spirit” is implied to have existed forever.

This reification necessarily rests on flawed philosophical premises. Like all the bourgeois social sciences, historiography rests on dry metaphysics and idealism.

Historical materialism, the liberating and scientific theory of history and society, understands history to be determined in the final sense through class struggle. Class struggle constitutes the principal contradiction of society and history. But it is also through historical materialism’s recognition of all contradictions and contradictory development that it is able to reach a truthful account. We are able to understand the essential contradictory unity between the objective and subjective, necessity and accident, and quantity and quality.

The bourgeois historians do not have dialectical materialism and historical materialism at their disposal. As such, most bourgeois historians are incapable of arriving at any useful knowledge. Metaphysics and idealism are used to wallpaper over the cracks in their miserable necessity — that is, to be professional apologists of capital.

As a result, “educational” history textbooks are bound to a bourgeois metaphysical and mechanical method. And this method is anti-consciously imposed upon the students. The method and content of which the revolutionary students must struggle against.

Metaphysics and great man theory

A bourgeois historian or one of their lackeys may turn their nose up at the assertion that bourgeois historiography and historical “education” all follow an incorrect methodology. Bourgeois historians nominally section themselves off into different schools of thought, and different approaches.

However, they are all united in their subscription to a mutual

unity of metaphysics and idealism.

What do we mean by this?

The bourgeois historians in their position are precluded from using historical materialism and the dialectical method, which is the method of the liberating and proletarian historians.* They do not recognise contradiction — the unity and struggle of opposites. To them, change and self-development is either inexplicable or the result of some external, mechanical chronology.

As class struggle is not seen as the principal contradiction and other concomitant contradictions — like the contradiction between social relations of production and the productive forces — are not recognised to exist, history is instead seen as some linear quantitative increase. X event happens because of y event. This country becomes affluent because of x event which arose out of y event. This battle happened because of that battle. History is just some simple linear continuity. The Kingdom of France could have lasted forever if not afflicted by the bourgeois revolution. Tsarism could have lasted forever if not afflicted by the revolutions.**

Note here how the revolutions that negated these social formations are seen by the bourgeois historians almost as external to the social formation, as something entering from the outside or dropping from the heavens.

This is simply because bourgeois metaphysics can not account for qualitative change. This is not unique to bourgeois historians or bourgeois historical “education.” All the bourgeois have struggled with the concept of the emergence of new qualities in things. The liberating dialectician, on the other hand, is able to properly understand the emergence of new qualities through understanding the contradictions between quality and quantity, and form and content.

So how then do the bourgeois historians account for qualita-

* But as we will see, the brightest bourgeois historians like J. Arch Getty, in their exhaustive study of Soviet history, actually end up naturally developing some features of the dialectical method in their approach, but these features are not fully developed or implemented throughout.

** Of course, it is true that some bourgeois historians admit that the Kingdom of France for example needed change. But they imagine that small reform and quantitative change, see Edmund Burke’s doctrine of “change to conserve.” They do not recognise the irreconcilability of contradictions, and the necessity of the negation of the old to the new. They believe that social upheaval can be staved off indefinitely through minor reforms.

tive leaps such as revolutions, new social relations, golden ages and wars?

The bourgeois historians “account” for qualitative leaps by reverting best to idealism and the theory of great men. Although the bourgeois historian may nominally refute the theory of great men, it is still a crux that they hang on for dear life. And as such, it is a crux that is handed down to bourgeois “education” and features prominently in the content and form of bourgeois history textbooks and curricula.

For instance, one of the key and most referenced historians in the A-Level Tudors textbook is John Guy. In John Guy’s *Tudors: A Very Short Introduction*,* written as part of the *so-esteemed* Oxford University short introduction book series, he physically separates the discussion of monarchs from economic and societal developments. He has a single chapter at the beginning to focus on the economy and then scarcely mentions it again when talking about Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I as separate chapters in isolation. And of course, in the small chapter, he does write on economic changes, he scarcely mentions class, does not identify contradictions and self-development and instead resorts to Malthusianism to bumble an explanation. It is like our dear charlatan Mr Guy here imagines the entire social and economic development of England to be but a lawn-mower buzzing away in the background, left completely motionless until by the arbitrary and inexplicable will of one of these monarchs, they saunter over to it and apply external force to start cutting the grass.

And as we will see in our specific content study into the Soviet Union, the history textbook, just like the slew of falsifying grifters like Randall and Fainsgod from which it is sourced, presents the Soviet Union as being some static ball of play-doh waiting to be shaped by a puppeted omnipotent, inconsistent and malevolent will of Lenin and Stalin.

In a history class I once attended in college, the theory of great men was presented as an historical approach and was *only* repudiated on the basis that it did not include women! We were then tasked with researching famous historical women and how they changed history. Of course, it is deeply important to repudiate the salient misogynistic prejudice that exists in bourgeois historical study and “education.” This repudiation however is achieved through the revolutionary students’ methods, through

* Guy, J. (2013). *The Tudors: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.

historical materialism, not through trying to reconcile bourgeois liberal feminism with Thomas Carlyle!

Thus, the theory of great men is how qualitative leaps in history are explained by bourgeois historians. “Great men” are a reliable fix-all tool for when the bourgeois historian is confused.

The unity of metaphysics and idealism in bourgeois history

This eclectic unity of static metaphysics and idealist great man theory shows the essential unity and co-existence of idealism and mechanical materialism.*

Great man theory is idealist in that it imagines the consciousness of “great men” exist irrespective of their upbringing and material circumstances and that the consciousness of these great men, therefore, is some incorporeal, dualist substance.

Great man theory is mechanical in the sense that it imagines that society as a thing is completely static and has no self-development until some great man inexplicably wanders in from outside it to affect its development.

The bourgeois historians have realised that they must eclectically subscribe to this fetid cocktail of dry mechanistic materialism and subjective idealism. They try to find a sweet spot between the two. A hilarious *History Today* article is a perfect showcase of this.** Herein contains supposedly the brightest brains of bourgeois historiography and their view on the “great man vs event” debate — that phrase in itself, the idea that there can be a debate on which is more important is the fundamental idiocy.

Regardless, we see in this article, all these historians through petty-bourgeois posturing eventually come to the conclusion: they are both important. They all self-admittedly take this position of *compromise*.

The role of the individual in history: a correct understanding

So where does historical materialism stand? Where will liberating historical education stand?

* This is common in every other field too, obviously philosophy. For example, distinguishing between the supposed primary and secondary qualities by mechanical materialists in order to explain relatively quickly led them to empirio-criticism and subjective idealism.

** <<https://www.historytoday.com/archive/head-head/there-still-value-%E2%80%98great-man%E2%80%99-history>>

We do not subscribe to metaphysics and we do not subscribe to idealist great men. Nor do we subscribe to the eclectic bourgeois compromise between the two.

Why not?

Because we understand the *mutual penetration of opposites* in the contradiction between general social development and individuals. That is, individuals are merely aspects of social development, and social development is merely the subsumption and accumulated product of many individuals' wills. What do we mean by this?

We mean to say that individuals and the subjective factor are of prime importance in social development — after all, social relations of production of material life are in the last instance relations between people. Unlike bourgeois historians, we don't imagine people as free-floating souls from the heavens to be some external impetus to push otherwise static history along. As Marx famously said in the 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte:

“Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past.”*

Individuals are products of concrete social conditions. As such, their actions, their subjectivity, are fundamentally determined by the objective conditions around them. And these objective conditions of society are a result of social practice, principally class struggle. Thus the subjective and objective in history, individuals and society, are in unity.

Therefore, to spend one's time pondering about whether the “individual” or “society” determined history is a fallacy and is an example of Cartesian dualism.** The “individual” outside of historical development is an abstraction. It is just like trying to imagine quantity without quality or quality without quantity. We can speak of the numbers one, two, three, four and five but these quantities do not exist on their own and are always in contradiction with a specific quality, e.g., three bananas, four apples. Understanding history in a liberating way requires we dispose of metaphysical abstractions and the ignorance of con-

* Marx, K. (1852). *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Marxists Internet Archive.

** Plekhanov, G. (1898). *On the Role of The Individual in History*, in: *Essays in Historical Materialism*. Foreign Languages Press. (p. 51).

traditions and see things as they are concrete.

Lenin did not fall from the sky as some pre-programmed alien to push along an otherwise static society. The semi-feudal Tsarist social formation of Russia was in a dynamic and non-linear social development, driven by the contradictions in class struggle and the contradiction between social relations and productive forces. Lenin's consciousness was forged in the heat of this class struggle. He happened, through *relative* accidents (e.g., through the books he read, through his personal associations, through the revolutionary action he participated in) to become the most advanced individual of many millions who participated in this class struggle.

Many proponents of the great man theory like to point to the idea that these influential "great men" or leaders have certain biological traits which invariably lend them to the position to "change the course of history." Unfortunately for the Carlysians, no such "hero gene" has been found by biologists. Of course, there are many who argue that humans naturally have higher or lower intelligence or other qualities through inalienable genetics and so on. And it is true that all humans are different biologically, and are therefore endowed with differing physical and cognitive abilities.

But such an argument, that bases history development solely on biology is the most vulgar example of metaphysics. It is an example of the bourgeois metaphysical tendency of "levelling down," reducing the totality of its isolated content, rather than its form. What do we mean by this specifically? This argument ignores the fact that while many individuals may be biologically endowed with talents or intelligence, those talents can only be displayed when they occupy a position in society necessary for this.* For instance, it is clear that Lenin was very cognitively quick and this was displayed when he became leader of the Bolshevik Party and Soviet state. Similarly, it is also well-documented the unique natural intelligence and memory of Enver Hoxha, leader of the Party of Labour of Albania and Socialist Albania — he was seen to be able to remember the names of people he had only met once thirty years ago and to be able to recite conversations in vivid depth that he had had decades prior. So whilst these individuals certainly were intelligent from a purely biological view, so are billions of humans that have also lived at the same time. And these humans, due to the principal

* Plekhanov, G. (1917). *From Idealism to Materialism*, in: *Selected Philosophical Works, Volume 3*. Progress Publishers. (p. 70).

necessity of class struggle or accidents contained within the necessity, never reached that position to be *that* individual leader. Secondly, biology has also illustrated the malleability of talent and intelligence. Environment plays a huge role in intellectual development. Therefore, small relative accidents like parental relationships and educational experience is what can shape these “great men” — and as we have said, these accidents in the second degree do not stand outside necessity, that is, the larger society, but are part of it. Parental relationships are a result of a given class superstructure, and education — as argued with the entire premise of this book — is historically constituted. It is clear that if Lenin, regardless of how biologically bright he was, was never taught to read in his youth, like the many million illiterate peasants of the Tsarist autocracy, he would have never ascended to the leadership of the Bolsheviks.

And again, we stress as we did in the first chapter that to say something is an accident is to say it is an accident relative to larger necessity. Everything is an accident. But as Hegel said in the *Philosophy of Right*:

“Here as elsewhere, the point of view from which things seem pure accidents vanishes if we look at them in the light of the concept and philosophy, because philosophy knows accidents for a show and sees in it its essence, necessity.”*

For example, Lenin’s death in January 1924 was an “accident in the second degree,”** an historical accident relative to the larger development of society in Russia and the world. But his death had a concrete scientific cause, a series of strokes. So what appears accidental or purely random is the result of necessity, and what appears as necessity is a subsumption of accidents.

So we can see that the bourgeois obsession with “great men” or “big beasts” or “random events” is nothing but metaphysical abstraction. It is not concrete. It does not recognise the unity of contradiction between individuals and society.

But does this mean we can in historical materialism, and the liberating historical education system, not study individuals at all? No.

* Hegel, G. (1820). *Philosophy of Right*. Marxists Internet Archive. (§ 324).

** Plekhanov, G. (1917). *From Idealism to Materialism*, in: *Selected Philosophical Works, Volume 3*. Progress Publishers. (p. 71).

Individuals are of deep importance in a liberating and serious historical study. Their actions, ideas and idiosyncrasies help reflect society at that time. We can use the study of individuals and individual events to showcase and concretise general historical laws and attitudes. The bourgeois historians do the opposite. Their study of individuals usually serves to essentialise a “human nature” or to venerate individuals as gods. They use the study of the single individual to “level down” a study of society. This was the method of the social-Darwinists.

We can also see that the action of individuals or leaders can at certain times serve as nodal points in history, where quantitative change is negated into a qualitative leap. Unlike the bourgeois proponents of the theory of great men, we do not see these individuals or single events as having manufactured these qualitative leaps out of thin air. Qualitative leaps are a more visual result of long and protracted quantitative changes.

If we as historical materialists do not recognise the nodal role of individuals or individual events, we too fall into the error of dry metaphysics. We fall into evolutionism, imagining society to be in a nice, convenient smooth development. This was the attitude of the reformist revisionists* who imagined that socialism can develop through a smooth, gradualist transition.** We as revolutionary students of the social sciences realise the contradiction between quantity and quality and recognise that no development occurs smoothly.

The development from capitalism to socialism is one of revolution and interruption, not a smooth non-antagonistic tea party. This is the same with our struggle for a revolutionary student movement under the leadership of the proletarian party. We can not imagine it to be a linear process. It will be a process involving qualitative leaps and negations. It will be a process highlighted by outstanding individuals, whose individual action is not external to the movement but the result of it.

* **Revisionism:** People who masquerade as Marxists or Marxist-Leninists but are in fact opposed to it. For instance, there have been classical revisionists like Bernstein and modern revisionists like Khrushchev. Most revisionists rely on an explicit or implicit rejection of the philosophical basis of Marxism-Leninism, dialectical materialism.

** Shirokov, M. (1936). *A Textbook on Marxist Philosophy*. The November 8th Publishing House. (ch. 17).

Summary of the liberating education on the theory of “great men”

1) Bourgeois historians, and as a result bourgeois historical “education” generally imagines history to be a completely static or linear development, interrupted by “great individuals.”

2) These “great individuals” are seen as external to social development, not products of it.

3) Therefore we see a unity between the subjective idealism of the theory of great men and the mechanistic materialism of evolutionism — the imagining of society to progress in a linear fashion or not at all.

4) Historical materialism, the liberating science of history, does away with this isolating of individuals from society and sees the two in a mutually penetrative contradiction.

5) The objective conditions of society condition the subjectivity of individuals, and the subjectivity of individuals in subsumption is objective and has the power of change.

6) Individuals are products of and are forged in class struggle. But the class struggle itself is the subsumption of individual wills.

7) Individuals can have a colossal impact on history and individual people and events can serve as a nodal point. A single spark starts a prairie fire.

8) A liberating historical education is one based on the science of historical materialism. It does not abstract individuals from the class struggle but analyses both the individual and society in their inseparable contradiction.

“Historicism,” “destiny” and “determinism”

But of course, the bourgeois historians do not understand historical materialism’s dialectical basis. They do not understand this nuance. Either through purposeful misrepresentation or dimness, they distort Marxism into a mechanical, vulgar materialist caricature.*

Historical materialism is presented as some crude theory that postulates a linear development of history through stages. It is seen as fatalistic and is decried by bourgeois sociological “education” as “economically deterministic.” One Soviet Russia history textbook for example makes absolutely no reference to

* Of course, this caricature was seen as “Marxism” by the Mensheviks.

dialectical or historical materialism, instead crudely presenting the Marxist-Leninist theory of history as “economic stage theory.”*

However, we understand that this is not the case. Firstly because we understand that the dialectical, liberating method in history shows that development is not linear and passes through negations, retreats and leaps. These “stages” — primitive, slave, feudal, capitalist, etc. — are actually modes of production, a concept used in Marxism to easily demonstrate general development and what social relations mainly look like. However, modes of production as a concept is an abstraction and generalisation. Nowhere in the history of class society has a “pure” mode of production existed. There have always been heterogeneous social relations of production, but with one dominating and holding state power. There have been intermediary “stages” and transitional classes owing to the particular development of exploitative societies. What this proves is that in the best-case scenario, Sally Waller and Chris Rowe have read only the most introductory and preliminary texts into historical materialism, and have unfortunately forgotten the term historical materialism. Or, in the most likely scenario, their entire knowledge of Marxist theory comes from Wikipedia and YouTube videos.

More successful bourgeois academics than Waller and Rowe have levied similar strawmen arguments against Marxism. Popper for instance rejected Marxism as “historicist.” To him, Marxism was utopian and foretold the destiny of humanity. But Popper here does not simply understand that Marxism does not predict or foretell communism out of moral advocacy or through utopianism, but instead illuminates the *necessity* of communism. This is to say that capitalism itself, through its contradictions, is pregnant with socialism, pregnant with revolution, objectively. The victory of the working class is a material necessity, not a utopian destiny.

In contrast to the allegedly “historicist” doctrine of Marxism, Popper argued that historical study should be “characterised by its interest in actual, singular or specific events, rather than in laws or generalisations.”** Here we fundamentally see an empiricist charlatanry. Popper is imagining that there can be no generalisations, predictions or laws of history and we just have

* Rowe. C & Waller, S. (2016). *Revolution and Dictatorship: Russia 1917-1953*. Oxford University Press. (p. xv).

** Popper, K. (1956). *The Poverty of Historicism*. Routledge. (p. 143).

to settle with perceiving it as a random series of inexplicable complete accidents. This is essentially the view of the postmodernists too.

Let us explore this further. Popper propagates this empiricist, idealist view of history. But here we see the common eclectic unity of bourgeois thought between idealism and sheer metaphysics. Karl Popper's entire outlook was this idea of the transformation from a closed society to an open society. Is this not generalisation or destiny? If there is poverty in historicism, Karl Popper is in crippling debt.

This mystical destiny from closed societies to open societies is sheer historicism. It is convenient for Popper that this mystical and winding destiny from the closed to open societies arrives at American bourgeois "democracy" which supposedly allows for the most "personal responsibility" and "decision-making."*

Popper's theory of the open society despite its paradoxical and vague nature still to this day remains in vogue with the most obnoxious bourgeois political science teachers.

In regards to the contradiction between the individual and society in historical materialism, we see the same confusion and vulgarisation. Anthony Giddens, amongst other confused allegations, says that historical materialism tends to see individuals as "dupes" and is economically reductionist.** But we say to "Baron" Giddens and every other charlatan that he is arguing against a strawman and that the only dupes of history are the imbeciles that buy his books. His "theory" of "social structuration" is nothing but a pseudo-intellectual way of attempting to find this supposed "sweet spot" between the imagined isolation of the subjective and objective, necessity and accident, rather than understanding the unity and struggle of its contradiction. One can not but feel a sense of pity for the bourgeois grifting academics who will forever be scratching their heads over all this made-up sociological, metaphysical verbiage rather than engaging with actual reality in its dialectical development. And may we remind ourselves that Baron Giddens is one of the "great" intellectuals venerated by the British bourgeois "education" system and made compulsory uncritical study for sociology and politics A-Level students.

As revolutionary and liberatory students, we must not be

* Popper, K. (1962). *The Open Society and its Enemies, Volume I*. Routledge, Routledge & Kegan Paul. (p. 113, 173).

** Giddens, A. (1981). *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*. University of California Press.

perturbed by the hysterical cries of these anti-Marxist charlatans. The revolutionary students uphold, develop and defend the science of historical materialism in the face of these ridiculous caricatures in the bourgeois “education” system.

Continuity and change in historical “education”

Recently there has been an emphasis on the platitude of “change and continuity” in bourgeois historical “education” at the KS4 and KS5 level.*

In the AQA** exam board for example, an understanding of “change and continuity” is encouraged to be the subject of learning resources.***

To the untrained Marxist, this insistence on “change and continuity” may seem the step towards a dialectical understanding of history.

Unfortunately, it is not. It is merely a re-affirming of bourgeois metaphysics.

The assertion of “continuity” is telling of metaphysics. It is clear that continuity and equilibrium are considered to be the natural state of affairs. Marxists instead understand that equilibrium is always a temporary condition and quality, and is dynamic. As Engels said in *Anti-Dühring*, equilibrium is just another mode of motion.

As for change, just like the Carlylians they are, AQA presents change in an almost occasionalist way. Change is something that arrives externally and is not a result of contradictions. Struggle and contradictions are not even considered in bourgeois historical “education.” Without contradiction, there can be no change.

This has been the error of some. Plekhanov in one of his many later errors asserted that the principal aspect of dialectics and Hegel’s work was the notion of quantitative and qualitative change.**** But this is simply an empty statement. Reducing dialectics to the law of quantity and quality is a vulgarisation. The essential thing to understand is the contradiction between the two.

* “Education” in Britain is organised in “Key stages.” Key stage 4 is the second half of secondary school and Key Stage 5 is college.

** A British exam board company.

*** <<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/history/AQA-8145-SSV-SOC-CHANGE-POSTER.PDF>>

**** Plekhanov, G. (1917). *From Idealism to Materialism*, in: *Selected Philosophical Works, Volume 3*. Progress Publishers.

Nevertheless, it is not even if this mystical schema and metaphysical framework promoted by AQA has even been directly absorbed by the students. History students are too preoccupied trying to cram pointless facts, dates and names on flashcards. Teachers have even given up teaching “continuity and change” as they know that it is not integral enough to their student’s grades. Once again we are reminded of the impracticality of the British bourgeois “education” system.

Liberating historical education

How will the liberating historical education function?

The liberating historical education in Britain must focus first on national history. It must reject a history of Kings and Queens and focus on the history of the Chartists, the communists and the trade union movement.

A liberating historical education must come to terms with the colonialist, imperialist and neo-colonialist past and present of Britain. This is of paramount importance during the early stages of the revolution when Britain’s imperialist relations will be severed.

The history of the Soviet Union and the people’s democracies is also of extreme importance.

Of deep importance is the teaching of the general laws of historical development. That includes the class struggle, the contradiction between the social relations of production and productive forces, as well as laws of political economy. This is integral for students to conceptualise their understanding of the particularities in dialectics. This is obviously something that is not done in bourgeois historical “education.”

However, it is important we avoid the “left” error, propagated by Pokrovsky, one of the three most important figures in the Commissariat of Enlightenment (Narkompros) in the 1920s. Pokrovsky argued that history students should not learn particularities at all and should *only* learn general historical principles and laws.* For instance, the Soviet Union, the Tudors, America, WWII and so on would not be taught as modules, but only general historical principles, and the student is expected to be able to apply these principles to the particularity in their own time. This is an error. We must not as Marxists ever forget the dialectical unity of the general and particular. If only general princi-

* Fitzpatrick, S. (1979). *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union 1921-1934*. Cambridge University Press. (pp. 24-25).

ples are taught then their validity and general nature can not be illustrated and concretised in the particular. General principles cease to become general principles as they no longer derive from the conceptualisation of the particular. They become dogma. This means that the class struggle will be taught anti-consciously. This will not do. Instead, both general laws and particularities should be taught, and the latter will display the validity of the former. Moreover, it is often very difficult to teach general and abstract laws without being able to concretise them anyway.

Historical education has the potential to be one of the most liberating forms of education, but it is one of the most potent forms of oppression when it is in the service of the bourgeoisie.

Reading group questions

What is an example of bourgeois mechanism that you have seen in your history courses?

What is an example of idealism or great man theory you have seen in your history courses?

How has historical materialism been caricatured by history/sociology teachers? Has it also been caricatured as a “historicist,” dogmatic doctrine?

How has “continuity and change” been implemented in your bourgeois history lessons — and has it at all?

X — THE DENIAL OF CLASS AND CLASS STRUGGLE IN POLITICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL “EDUCATION”

Denial of class struggle is the key cornerstone of bourgeois “education” and modern revisionism

What are the tactics in bourgeois social sciences “education” in stifling Marxism-Leninism and liberation? The same tactics as that of the modern revisionists.

First, it is necessary to reject dialectical materialism as a philosophical basis, to reject the universality of contradiction. Bourgeois metaphysics and idealism take their place. This is not usually done consciously. Philosophical errors develop innately as a result of the bourgeois class position. Underlying philosophical errors are bound to arise from abstraction away from the real conditions of the class struggle.

It is from this that bourgeois social science and bourgeois “education” can then go ahead and reject the principal contradiction of society: the class struggle.

Today in bourgeois social sciences “education,” the concept of the class struggle or class itself is not just vociferously rejected, but entirely airbrushed out and ignored.

Just like the Eurocommunists and revisionists of all hues, bourgeois “education” rejoices in imagining class struggle to be a relic of the past. We now live in a society where class and class struggle either does not exist or is unimportant, say the bourgeois intellectuals.

Recognition of class struggle as the primary contradiction and decisive link in social development is the touchstone that separates the liberating social science education from bourgeois obfuscation.

Not only must the liberating social sciences education recognise class struggle but it must recognise its irreconcilability and necessity. Bourgeois textbooks may tacitly admit that there exists a conflict of interest between classes but they preach “reconciliation,” “compromise” or a plurality.* Thus, in a liberating

* Bourgeois political “education” imagines that true *democracy* means a system which allows workers’ voices and the voices of the big

social sciences education, acceptance of the class struggle must also extend to acceptance of its irreconcilability and the historical necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism.*

Triviality

Class as a concept is trivialised, distorted and made arbitrary in bourgeois social sciences “education.”

Marxism-Leninism understands class to correspond to one’s social relations of production. In capitalism, the principal class contradiction is that of the bourgeoisie and proletariat. There exist transitional classes like the petty-bourgeoisie owing to historical development. Class fractions can also be identified and illustrated such as the national and comprador bourgeoisie in imperialised countries for example.

What defines the proletarian, the working class individual in capitalism is some cliché “habitus” or some arbitrary level of income, but the sale and private appropriation of their labour power by the bourgeoisie.

A proletarian could be more or less poor, could have a big house or be homeless, and could speak eloquently or in grunts, but they are fundamentally a proletarian as long as they are selling their labour power.

Bourgeois social science “education” on the other hand can not accept this fact. If it was to accept this fact, students would soon realise the irreconcilability of class antagonisms and their unity with each other. Instead, bourgeois social sciences “education skews class and makes it into an arbitrary, essentialist absurdity.

In bourgeois sociological “education,” “working class” and “middle class” are used as terms, but are never described. The latter term is definitely a tool of obfuscation because it makes it seem that this elusive “middle class” constitutes a large section of British society. But rather, the big bourgeoisie is an absolute numerical minority. The nebulous juxtaposition of these classes has the children of the more affluent workers identifying themselves with financial barons.

In political “education” too, class is considered in demographics by an “A, B, C1, C2, D, E” system. What nonsense is

bourgeoisie to co-exist.

* Lenin, V. (1917). *The State and Revolution*. Lawrence & Wishart. (p. 43).

this? It is completely arbitrary and ridiculous. It reduces class to arbitrary levels of distribution and in doing so, essentialises it. One's fundamental class position is completely forgotten about in lieu of pointlessly counting household income.

Postmodernism: petty-bourgeois escapism from class

We seem to have three stages of bourgeois denial of class struggle.

The first is the denial of the irreconcilability of class struggle. That classes can co-exist together, "regulating" each other. The state is seen as a neutral arbiter. And that reform alone is enough to ameliorate the excesses of this arrangement. All the revisionists that deny the necessity for revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat fall into this bracket.

Second are the ones we have just mentioned. Those bourgeois hide the entire concept of class struggle altogether by removing the fundamental economic nature of class and trivialising the concept of class to some arbitrary levels of income. They may recognise class inequality and "classism," but by doing so, they essentialise class as something that is inevitable, a natural law. Here we see class given a *phantom objectivity* yet again.

But now the third stage is not only the denial of the irreconcilability of class struggle, or the denial of class struggle entirely, but the denial of the concept of class itself. Class is fiction and does not exist. This is the rhetoric of the fascists and the postmodernists, and both are in a unity of opposites.

How is class denied here?

In fascism, as we will later analyse, class and class struggle are simply denied by asserting the absolute primacy of a racial or national spirit as the principal motive for history.

Things are only slightly different in postmodernism.

One term to emanate from postmodernist denial of class is "post-Fordism." The phrase post-Fordism is enough to make the revolutionary student's stomach turn in disgust. This is the idea that industry (epitomised by Fordist factory lines), and with it, the class struggle as we know it, has disappeared! Long gone are the days of the cliché grey Victorian factories with the billowing plumes of smog where workers would toil for shillings a day. *That* was the class struggle. Today in *postmodernity*, we have no antagonistic class but only individuals working for their own benefit in the gig economy, with maximum individual choice and expression, say the bourgeois charlatans.

According to the postmodernists, anyone who asserts class and class struggle is still the motive force of development today is proposing a “totalising narrative.”

Is there weight to this incredibly convenient and happy theory of the postmodernists? No, there is not.

Because as we have said, no matter how well-off the proletariat in the imperialist countries is from a material point of view, they remain the proletariat as long as their social relations are such:

“Although the proletariat in the capitalist states may be dressed in the nylon materials which the ‘consumer society’ produces, in fact, it remains the proletariat.”*

In the countries under the imperialist yoke, traditional labour-intensive industrial and agricultural production prevails, and almost all the population lives in existential poverty aside from a small class of bourgeois compradors. But of course, these sheltered postmodernist bourgeois academics do not even take a glance at this reality, or imagine that somehow, inexplicably, the imperialised countries will catch up materially to the imperialist “postmodern” countries. They imagine that imperialist relations will magically cease and that the American imperialist savages will allow their neo-colonies to develop uninhibited for the sake of “globalisation.”

And even the imperialist countries, like here in Britain, only a minority get to live out this perverse petty-bourgeois postmodernist dream. A dream which again, is a hellish one, and is the absolute epitome and final conclusion of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois individualism. The average person in Britain does not have some magical free diversity of choice. They can’t simply decide to pack up and live wherever they want in the world on a whim. The worker can not just simply choose to be not be a worker. But these sheltered postmodernist bourgeois academics imagine the world has no restraints, material, social or cultural, and that we can all live lives as freelance NFT makers.**

* Hoxha, E. (1980). *Eurocommunism is Anti-Communism*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 99).

** And even with the rapid development of AI technology, which many petty-bourgeois analysts imagine naively to solve scarcity on its own, fail to realise that if such a development occurs under bourgeois social relations of production, it will be disastrous. Millions of jobs will be lost, rendering people destitute, whilst only a tiny sector of the bourgeoisie will reap the profits of AI technology. AI is also a terrify-

In order to hide class struggle and classes altogether, the postmodernists employ a similar trick that Marx had already identified in the 19th century in the second volume of *Capital*. These postmodernists are reverting to modernist sophism. This trick is to dilute the term “capital” into absurdity, and by doing so, undermining the revolutionary and revealing nature of Marxist-Leninist political economy. For instance, the sociological theories of the “Marxist” Bourdieu are taught merrily in bourgeois sociological “education.” There is this idea that everyone possesses, to some degree, different “types” of capital — economic, social, cultural and bodily. But this renegade classification obscures class. It makes it seem that everyone is a capitalist in equal right because everyone has labour-power, and a body (bodily capital) and so forth.

But this is not the case! For one’s labour-power is their property but not their capital. In capitalism, labour-power is a *commodity*. The special type of value-creating commodity that must be continually sold to the capitalist for survival. Labour-power, and all these other bogus types of “capital” owned by the proletariat (e.g., bodily, social, cultural), are in fact commodities. They are only capital (of the variable) in the hands of the buyer, the capitalist.*

To these postmodernists, a serf is a lord and a slave is a master as long as they both possess the capacity for labour.

Hence, it is clear our sociological “education” is thus littered with a comedy of postmodernist leaps and abstraction. All to obscure class and the class struggle. To replace this fundamental and indispensable understanding, with a classless, postmodern conception of the world.

We ask the postmodernists and any of the lackey sociology teachers to step into the real world and see social relations as they are rather than what they dream them to be.

ing prospect for the subjective factor of the revolution; the bourgeois governments will no doubt implement deep-fake technology extensively and completely slander and distort revolutionary movements in a sea of propaganda. AI technology on the other hand in socialism would be a prospect of great and harmonious material and cultural satiation. It is a matter of the working class harnessing the unparalleled human productive powers at this stage of development.

* Marx, K. (1867). *Capital, Vol. II*. International Publishers. (ch. 20, s. 10).

Pure thought in place of class struggle

In every social science subject in bourgeois “education,” we see pure thought.* This is an integral way to obscure the class struggle. It is also very similar to the theory of great men and the mechanism in bourgeois historical “education” we discussed earlier. As Engels states:

“It is above all this appearance of an independent history of state constitutions, of systems of law, of ideological conceptions in every separate domain, which dazzles most people. If Luther and Calvin ‘overcome’ the official Catholic religion, or Hegel ‘overcomes’ Fichte and Kant, or if the constitutional Montesquieu is indirectly “overcome” by Rousseau with his ‘Social Contract,’ each of these events remains within the sphere of theology, philosophy or political science, represents a stage in the history of these particular spheres of thought and never passes outside the sphere of thought..”**

History is not seen as a history of class struggles but a history of ideas — ideas completely abstract from the class struggle. Society is not seen as producing new social ideas but is seen as some grandiose encapsulation or modelling of new ideas. History is seen as occurring purely in the sphere of thought, as some romantic battle of the pen.

For instance, philosophy in bourgeois “education” is seen as some abstract genealogy of thinkers and schools abstract from society. It starts with Socrates and so on and so forth. Each philosopher is considered outside of class struggle. It is pure metaphysics and idealism. Each development of philosophy and society is a happy accident, an ideological victory.

The revolutionary student, on the other hand, sees that philosophy is in the realm of class struggle. Classes are tied to philosophical outlooks.

Bourgeois political “education” is guilty of the same folly. In the Edexcel A-Level course on ideology, not once is there any

* **Pure thought:** The idea that history is thought in the realm of ideas of individuals in abstraction. That societies are merely the encapsulation and modelling of abstract, spontaneously occurring ideas rather than the fact that social ideas arise *from* society. It is flipping history, society and the class struggle on its head.

** Engels, F. (1893). *Letter to Franz Mehring*, in: *M&E Collected Works*, Vol. 50. Lawrence & Wishart.

attempt to put liberalism, socialism or conservatism into a class or historical context.

Thus, pure thought directly functions to obscure class struggle. It obscures Marx's epochal edict that history is a history of class struggle and flips it on its head.

It is also important to note how pure thought is also invariably a feature of the revisionists and the petty-bourgeois utopian socialists and anarchists. Anarchists too see history as a "history of ideas"^{**} and see the state as being incarnated through one's idea solely as opposed to having concrete material causes.^{**}

Pure thought as exceptionalism

This concept of pure thought in bourgeois "education" is shown in the exceptionalism of bourgeois social sciences "education." It is imagined that historical necessity and social relations only exist in certain countries and that other countries are exempt on the merit of their exceptional, incorporeal national character. That certain capitalist countries today — like the U.S. which is extremely exceptionalist in its ideology — are merely the divine embodiment of pure thought like "democracy" and "freedom," and this will not change because these ideas are supposedly self-evident in the sphere of thought, the pinnacle of thought and the "open society."

An example of this pure thought exceptionalism is neo-traditionalism in Sovietology, taught in historical "education." The notion that communism and Bolshevism were something entirely peculiar to Russia due to some incorporeal national spirit of Russians.

Neo-traditionalism in this way has been used to try to denigrate the advance of socialism as just some simple return Tsarism. For instance, this is seen in the imputation of Stalin as a "Red Tsar" — in the title of the well-renowned historical charlatan Montefiore's book *Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar*. Even Getty, one of the better bourgeois historians, has regrettably shown distinct hallmarks of this neo-traditionalist disease, referring laconically to Soviet Politburo members as "courtiers."^{***}

* Goldman, E. (1910). *Anarchism: What it Really Stands For*. Marxists Internet Archive.

** The presence of pure thought in anarchism and utopian socialism is no doubt due to their petty-bourgeois character.

*** Getty, J. (1985). *Origins of the Great Purges*. Cambridge University Press. (p. 199).

The brief half-a-year period of dual authority and the provisional government, led by liberal bourgeois like Prince Lvov and Kerensky, is seen by the neo-traditionalists as a brief pinnacle, as a sacred but short-lived realisation of this higher, noble, exceptionalist idea of Western liberal democracy.

Through this, the class struggle and the necessity for the new are obscured and the liberal “democracy” of the West is reified. The *illiberal* nature of the Tsar, of Putin — and purportedly of the USSR under Lenin and Stalin — is seen not as a result of definite historical conditions, but just as some incorporeal brutish nature of Russians. When Russia intervened in the war in Ukraine, Florence Gaub, an EU representative did just this. She claimed that the war in Ukraine was a result of Russians just not caring about life culturally. That they are brutish and do not value human life like the *civilised* West.* Thus, she obscures the nature of capitalism and imperialism and incorrigibly causes war with overt racist exceptionalism.

And as we will see with bourgeois moral “education,” the British are seen as exceptionally moral due to cultural pure thought. The people under Anglo-American imperialist yoke are seen not just as amoral but *anti-moral*.** And that as a result of their purported brutish nature, they deserve the humiliation and wrecking which the imperialists impose upon them.

The racist hypocrisy of the imperialists knows no bounds.

This is the pure thought and exceptionalism taught anti-consciously in Britain’s schools.

We as the revolutionary students must emphasise that socialism and communism are historical necessities, not historical exceptions, peculiarities or a product of a troglodytic nature of x and y people. Whilst revolutions have their own specific particularities and characters owing to the uneven development of capitalism, Marxism-Leninism is universal. Class struggle is universal. Revolution is universal. It transcends all national borders and resonates just as true in all tongues. Bourgeois “education” may obscure the class struggle by attributing it to neo-Tsarism or some historical oddity of the “undeveloped East,” but the students will soon see through this flimsy racialist pure thought.***

Neo-traditionalism has also been more prevalent in his recent work too.

* <<https://geopoliticeconomy.com/2022/04/15/german-eu-official-russians-dont-value-life/>>

** Fanon, F. (1961). *Wretched of the Earth*. Penguin Books. (p. 32).

*** And conversely, it is important to add that “illiberal” dicta-

Communism knows no cultural borders and revolution will occur in every social formation as long as there exist objective and subjective conditions for its emergence.*

Hitler-Huntington's theory of the "clash of civilisations" and fascist absolutism obscures the class struggle

In bourgeois sociological "education," fascism is in vogue in order to hide the class struggle. The dangerous and fascistic rhetoric of Samuel P. Huntington's "Clash of Civilisations" is taught in the sociology classrooms of today.

This neo-Hitlerite theory argues that the principal contradiction in the world is not class struggle,** but between various absolute cultures. This Huntington then gets his crayons out and arbitrarily draws on a map where he believes "Western," "Islamic," "Sinic" and so on cultures reside.

The success of Huntington's rhetoric is owed to the American imperialists' fervour to retain the anti-social offensive,** the post-cold-war unipolarity and imperialist hegemony, and their concomitant fear of any threat to this hegemony. Huntington's imperialist inflammations are no doubt an ideological basis for the genocidal butchery the U.S., and Blair its obsequious lackey, inflicted in the Middle East and Central Asia.

torship and fascism is something that is not just the result of "Eastern culture" or a historical oddity. Plenty of liberals and social democrats grow complacent in imagining the "West" is too "civilised" to devolve into fascist barbarism. However, as Dimitrov pointed out, the same was said about Weimar Germany. Weimar Germany before the fascists seized power was one of the more progressive bourgeois "democracies" with relatively high cultural development. People had grown complacent, imagining that fascism was to be contained in Italy due to its lower cultural development at the time. Fascist barbarism can afflict any bourgeois state no matter how "Westernised" it is.

* Bains, H. (1994). *Retreat of the Revolution and the Tasks of the Communist and Workers' Movement. Discussion Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1994.

** Or rather, that class struggle does not exist and that we have reached an end of history.

*** **Anti-social offensive:** The period of imperialist capitalism today — that emerged following the crisis of Keynesianism — where Anglo-American imperialism is enhancing their focus towards austerity, deregulation and nation-wrecking. This period was also intensified by the fall of the Soviet Union and Anglo-American unipolarity. These challenging objective conditions have led to an ebb in revolution and the subjective factor all across the world.

It is clear this theory is nothing but a rehash of Hitlerite “racial science.” But in place of race is this transcendental, pure-thought idea of an absolute culture.*

But surely this overtly Hitlerian view can not be held exclusively by the bourgeois “education” system?

That is true. This view is supplemented by postmodernist “criticism.” But as we will see, the contradiction between fascism and postmodernism is mutually penetrative. They exist as a unity of opposites.

When we, the revolutionary students repudiate Huntington and fascist ideology, we point out how it serves the ruling class by obscuring the class struggle. That it elevates some bogus racial or cultural identity as a “pure thought” and as the real motive of history. And how this subsequently justifies imperialist and fascist butchery and allows the capitalists to continue engorging themselves on its spoils.

When the postmodernists “criticise” fascism, they do so from the same class standpoint. They do so from the same bogus philosophical position and from the same bogus pure-thought and reified view of history.

The postmodernist contestation thus *still* obscures class struggle and *still* is incredibly racist! Thus, it is still in service to the bourgeois.

Foucault and Lyotard, like Huntington and the fascists, claimed that science and logic were “West episteme,” but that this is okay because, in the most revolting postmodern relativism, science and logic as “narratives” are seen as equally valid with “customary knowledge” and superstition. Not only does this contestation dispense with science for religious superstition, it assumes that science and logic originated in and are exclusive to the “West” — a notion that is not only racist but categorically false. Scientific discovery and technological innovation did not have one single point of innovation but are widespread. The mathematicians of Egypt and Mesopotamia were engaged in scientific discovery much earlier than Europe.

Other postmodern criticisms of Huntington point out the complete reductiveness and arbitrary nature of his categorisation, but none of these criticisms ever touch on the principal nature of Huntington’s theory, that it obscures class struggle by using a murky idea of culture as a lightning rod.**

* Which is not to say Huntington and his theories do not exhibit an aspect of racialism and eugenics, as they very clearly do.

** Among these critics is the Foucault disciple Edward Said.

This is because fascism and postmodernism are fundamentally mutually reliant and penetrative. They are a unity of opposites. Both are fundamentally built on the Nietzschean difference theory.* Both dispense with class struggle. Both essentialise contradiction and oppression between ethnicities and genders. Both serve the bourgeoisie!

This is shown by the fact that Huntington himself states that “Western universalism” is not attainable and immoral because of the imposition of “Western ideas” like individual liberty, political democracy, the rule of law, human rights and cultural freedom,** will lead to global war as these cultural values will not be natural to the non-Westerners who he sees as brutish cavemen.*** This is a view distinctly redolent of postmodernism. A faint hint of relativism and pluralism (though to Huntington, this pluralism is undesirable but practically necessary).

Re-affirm class!

Thus, we see that the bourgeois “education” system must fundamentally deny class struggle and even class itself. From this denial of the class struggle, social sciences “education” is able to assume capitalism as a natural state of affairs and to justify the most heinous crimes of capital.

It trivialises class and distorts the Marxist theory of the class struggle into a vulgar economic absurdity.

The bourgeois social sciences “education” must instead dwell in the idealist view of pure thought — that abstract ideas create history spontaneously.

And this pure thought conception leads indissolubly to absolutism, fascism and postmodern relativism.

The revolutionary student re-claims class struggle and uses Marxism-Leninism to understand the oppression that bourgeois “education” essentialises and reifies.

Reading group questions

How have you seen the bourgeois curriculum trivialise class?

Whilst Said correctly exposed Huntington as a Hitlerite, he himself is guilty of separating cultural imperialism from its economic basis.

* It was Foucault who said he was fundamentally a “Nietzschean.”

** And this spiel is very reminiscent of the FBVs, is it not?

*** Huntington, S. (1996). *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order*. Simon & Schuster. (p. 311).

How have you seen the bourgeois curriculum today try to escape from the class struggle?

What are some examples of pure thought you have seen in social sciences “education”?

What is some of the overtly reactionary rhetoric you have seen displayed in social sciences “education”?

**IN CONTENT:
BOURGEOIS
MORAL
“EDUCATION”**



XI — BOURGEOIS MORAL “EDUCATION” AND THE FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES

Bourgeois morality

Each class in history has a corresponding class outlook and ideological tendency, which includes a complex (and often contradictory) set of moral values. The bourgeoisie as a class is no different. The bourgeoisie has a very complex morality enshrined in various platitudes. The bourgeoisie nominally supports in their morals “liberty,” “peace,” “justice,” “tolerance,” “democracy,” “order” and so forth. But here we once again see a reification. Because the bourgeois impose this idea that these values, and the way they are defined in theory and application, have *always* been moral values. They have not. They are again just products of a certain class in certain historical development.

Morality, as we know it today in British bourgeois society, is no more eternal than the fragile capitalist system it supports. It is just as transitory, just as flexible.

The feudal landlord class who preceded the bourgeoisie in Europe had a different conception of morality. One needs only to take a glance at feudal morality plays like Hildegard Von Bingen’s *Ordo Virtutum*. Feudal morality, owing to its particular requirements, emphasised moral values like chastity, modesty, patience and veneration of god and royalty. Today, values like chastity, modesty — and certainly patience — are things the bourgeois cares not one iota about.* But of course negation is not a complete rejection. The bourgeoisie in their assumption of political power adopted some of the moral values like “order” and “justice.”

“For whom?”: the superficiality of ruling-class morality

But once again, we must go beyond superficial analysis. When the bourgeois echo rhetoric and buzzwords of feudal morality, is it the same? No.

In a similar way, we as revolutionaries are unflinching advocates for democracy and peace, but the bourgeois may too cry for “democracy” and “peace.” Are these two cries the same? No.

* Outside of a select handful of reactionary, theocratic barm-pots.

We must always ask: “for whom?”

When we the proletarian revolutionaries advocate for democracy, we advocate for genuine democracy, political representation and decision-making by and in the interest of the working class. When the bourgeois moralist advocates for democracy, as we will see later, they claim to advocate it on behalf of the “people,” but really they advocate for bourgeois democracy, the “democracy” of the exploiters. That is a full representation of lobbyists and corporate interests. A political system so stilted and sterilised by finance, bureaucracy, lobbying — and in the final instance, coups — that not even universal franchise is able to pose any threat to its bourgeois character.

Thus we see that this “democracy” is really democracy *for* the bourgeois.

When we proletarian revolutionaries advocate for peace, we advocate for a full liquidation of all forms of directly and indirectly violent oppression, which is constituted by bourgeois relations of social production, which also extend into violent subjugation of the imperialised and neo-colonial countries. Thus, we understand that true peace can not exist outside of the higher phase of communism when the exploiters have been fully liquidated. When the bourgeois liberal calls for “peace,” they really mean preservation of the current enslaving arrangement. The bourgeois liberal values “peace” when people rise up against the brutish, violent police officers but is quiet about “peace” as the pigs go about their day-to-day routine of beating and raping. The bourgeois liberal calls for “peace” when the colonised people rise up against their oppressors. So what is the peace they desire? The bourgeois “peace” is the continuance of subjugation. Peace in “Israel” to the bourgeois colonists, for instance, means that the violent expulsions and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians continue at a smooth rate. It is “peaceful” when the bourgeois is able to keep their foot on the oppressed’s neck unabatedly. The “peace” is broken when ethnic cleansing, when pogroms, when surplus labour-value appropriation, when humiliation, when police violence, is resisted or disrupted.

Thus we see that this “peace” is really peace *for* the bourgeois.

This is the paramount point when viewing the morality of the oppressive classes in history.

And oftentimes, not only is it clear these moral platitudes are in the interest of a certain class, but these moral values are ignored altogether in any possible interpretation of the world.

The exploiters do not practice what they preach. The feudal aristocracy pontificated at length about chivalry as a moral virtue. Yet, the “chivalrous” feudal lords and knights would not hesitate for a second to rape women on their estates or on their military conquests.* Bourgeois moralists claim to value hard “work” and competition yet capital is controlled by an increasingly ossified, tiny number of finance capitalists, who are completely idle — the class that emerged morally enshrining the “protestant work ethic” are now completely idle speculators, parasites, shareholders, oligarchs and nepotistic half-wits. The “democratic” bourgeois does not abide by their “democratic” morals, dropping any pretence of election and resorting to brutish fascism when the class struggle intensifies.

Such is the morality of the bourgeoisie in Britain — hypocritical platitudes which reify the rule of the bourgeois.

Bourgeois moral “education” in Britain

So how does this relate to the bourgeois “education” system and the school?

The school is an extremely important vessel for the bourgeois to impose their motley morality onto the children of the workers, disarming their mental faculty, and extinguishing their revolutionary spark.

The student is imbibed by bourgeois morality in implicit ways through the general function of the school and their interactions, but also explicitly, through the “Fundamental British Values” initiative. The FBVs are the most systematised and pervasive initiative of bourgeois moral “education.”

FBVs were first implemented by Department of Education guidance in 2014 though this came after years of phrasemongering from the bourgeois politicians over protecting “Western Values” from the boogeyman of “Islamism.”**

The FBVs consist in four moral platitudes that are typical of bourgeois moral “education”: individual liberty, democracy, the rule of law, and mutual respect and tolerance.

* Kollontai, A. (1921). *Make Way for Winged Eros: A Letter to Working Youth*, in: *The Plight, Struggle and Liberation of Women*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 290).

** Lockley-Scott, A. (2019). *Towards a Critique of Fundamental British Values: The Case of the Classroom*. Journal of Beliefs & Values. (p. 4).

Enforcement

Anti-conscious obedience to bourgeois moral “education” is ensured by the “counter-terrorism” agency *Prevent*. This draconian organisation has even been scrutinised by bourgeois liberal human rights groups like Amnesty International for its impact on protest rights, “free speech” and its prejudicial enforcement (as Muslim students are attacked without pretence).*

Those that *Prevent* deem as “extremists” are victim to harassment and surveillance. *Prevent* even has the authority to take information from children’s counselling and therapy sessions!

So what is *Prevent*’s definition of an “extremist”:

“Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces.”**

Thus, we see completely mask-off that who *Prevent* classifies as “extremists” — as anyone that opposes the anti-consciously taught bourgeois moral “education.” *Prevent* does not even classify one as an “extremist” in relation to their propensity for terrorist violence against civilians. Why?

Because if that was the measure, the first *Prevent* referrals would be for MPs and the police thugs.

This purposefully nebulous and blatantly anti-conscious definition of “extremism” means that many progressive young people, children in fact, can be persecuted whilst the dangerous reactionary students, those with the largest propensity for acts of terror, run free.

We know of many children as young as ten being harassed by *Prevent* for voicing support for Palestinian rights, for bringing up even mild progressive discussion points in social science classes, for criticising the UK’s occupation of the six northern counties of Ireland. Meanwhile, the fascist thugs — those who openly express their hatred of the workers generally, LGBTQ+ people and national minorities, who opine for eugenics the mass murder of disabled people — run free. *Prevent* is silent. Why? Because these

* <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/blogs/campaigns-blog/prevent-program-racist>

** <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2015/978011133309/pdfs/ukdsiod_978011133309_en.pdf> (p. 7).

fascist thugs are flunkeys in the bourgeois “education.” These fascists are working in the realm of bourgeois morality (or immorality shall we say). It is desirable for the bourgeois that as many students in “education” grow up to be these fascist philistines, who know nothing but obedience and thuggery. These Andrew-Tatists, these EDL* types are dangerous extremists to the people, but they are not dangerous to the rule of capital, to the bourgeois relations of production. Rather, they are explicit agents of the bourgeois states or are under their direct protection.**

Another interesting characteristic of the FBVs enforcement is its lack of standardisation. This is owing to the purposely vague guidelines around the FBVs and *Prevent*, as well as the bourgeois schools’ lack of standardisation due to marketisation. In our social investigation, we found that some people’s schools had taken FBVs up religiously — many schools have FBV posters in every classroom, have assemblies centred around FBVs on a weekly basis and so on. Some schools on the other hand almost completely neglect FBVs and will perhaps do a sparing lesson or two on them in case OFSTED arrives.

The chauvinist framing of FBVs

The framing of FBVs is also redolent of an innate sense of national chauvinism.

By framing these platitudes as “Fundamental *British* Values” it implies that these are moral values unique to Britain. This is an example of the extreme exceptionalism that is so common in bourgeois culture today.

After all, Gove, an architect of the FBVs initiative, stated expressly that this was in defence of “Western values.”

Here we see the pompous bourgeois flaunt their stripes of explicit national chauvinism. The bourgeois presents “individual liberty,” “democracy,” the “rule of law” and “mutual respect and tolerance” as distinctly British things. These are civilised moral values, say the bourgeois, something that one would not

* English Defence League — one of the many fascist organisations in Britain.

** Fox, R. (1933). *The Colonial Policy of British Imperialism*. Foreign Languages Press. (p. 55).

For instance, the British government demonstrably manufactured pogroms in India by directly employing and protecting reactionary vagabonds to commit racist attacks.

find in the so-called *East* or *Global South* or whatever other euphemism they use for the imperialised and neo-colonial countries.

As such the imagined and illusionary moral merits of bourgeois liberal “democracy” in Britain are seen not as a product of determined historical development or the class struggle, but as a result of some transcendental national or racial characteristic of the British alone.

This national chauvinist character of the FBVs has even been picked up by the tepid liberal critics.*

What separates our analysis is that we are able to see that the national chauvinist character of the FBVs and bourgeois moral “education” in Britain is not something accidental. It is not an inadvertent product of semantics, something contained within the realm of “labelling theory” as these “socialists” seem to believe.

The content and form of bourgeois moral “education” *is* necessarily bourgeois. And in the era of imperialist capitalism, the bourgeoisie in Britain must inculcate these imperialist attitudes in “education.”

These tepid liberal critics of the FBVs, from human rights organisations to sociologists, don’t see the wood from the trees. They criticise aspects of the FBV’s semantics and enforcement, but they never ask *why* it is thus, and what interests it serves. They also take these moral platitudes as a given and do not criticise the content of FBVs, because they too are imbibed with bourgeois morality. It has never occurred to them that the entire conception of moral “education” and its content may also be askew. And that this has a definite origin.

The holistic nature of moral “education”

Once again, it is necessary here to state how bourgeois moral “education,” which is transmitted explicitly through the curriculum, is a product of larger society. But of course, moral “education” in schools reinforces this. It is a mutually penetrating contradiction.

This is precisely why it is so difficult for people to unlearn bourgeois moral conceptions because it is so deeply engrained and reified.

So much so that even those who consider themselves to be

* Lockley-Scott, A. (2019). *Towards a critique of fundamental British values: The Case of the Classroom*. Journal of Beliefs & Values.

revolutionary may sink into this quagmire. They may espouse slogans that find their foundation in bourgeois moral values, not just for tactical purposes but because they genuinely believe in the strategical validity of bourgeois moral conceptions.*

Bourgeois morality is transmitted through one's parents and their attitudes, the family more largely, through films, books, leisure activities and so on. The school is merely where bourgeois moral platitudes receive full and clear exposition and legitimation.

Bourgeois morality can also be supported by the nature of the economic base directly. The Marxist philosopher Caudwell notes how the nature of commodity fetishism, a result of capitalism where commodity production is at its pinnacle, legitimates the bourgeois moral conception of love, commodifying love, rendering it a transaction and removing its tenderness. Love, just like social production, appears to cease to be made up of relations between people, and rather, becomes relations between things.

Towards a liberating moral education

So how do we move from a bourgeois moral "education" to a liberating one? A moral education based on proletarian morality.

What is proletarian morality?

We have expounded that class morality has been a series of illusions. A cacophony of lofty phrases, as descended from the gods. These lofty moral values are reified, they are assumed indubitable by the ruling classes. So much so that moral values are often a form of the pure thought inversion we discussed earlier — "eternal" moral values like "individual liberty" or "justice" are seen as giving birth to new historical forces and changes, rather than the other way around.

How then does the proletariat, a class that relies on the science of historical materialism, a class that relies on seeing things as they exist without illusionary aspects that hide class, reckon with morality and ethics, which today are used to hide class?

* There are opportunists today who tail behind bourgeois moral attitudes, who try to manipulate the historical interpretation of the erstwhile socialist countries to make it seem in accordance with clearly bourgeois moral attitudes today, e.g, the acceptance of prostitution, the acceptance of political pluralism, individualism. In essence, they accept bourgeois culture and ideology.

How can morality and ethics be liberating?

It is for this reason that some imagine that there are no communist ethics or morality. This is a mistake.

Communist ethics and morality are deeply important from the fact that they derive from what is real. Communist ethics and morality are abstractions but not false abstractions, not inversions of the world in order to justify oppression. Communist morality is not a set of arbitrary platitudes “above” class and the world but is rather derived from the necessities in furthering the class struggle. As Lenin said in *The Tasks of the Youth Leagues*:

“Our morality is entirely subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. Our morality is derived from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.”*

Communist ethics and morality lie within our historic mission in the overthrow of the exploiters. It lies within the proletarian revolution and communism.

This is important because many bourgeois moralists may also say their moral ideas centre around what is best for *humanity*. “For the greater good.” The so-called moral theory of utilitarianism for example.

But these theories are once again another obfuscation. Their hazy proclamation for the good of “humanity” usually means for the good of capitalism, which they have reified to mean humanity or society. The utilitarian conception of what the “greater good” is for humanity, the pinnacle of enjoyment, is most likely some individualist, petty-bourgeois utopia. “Freedom” for the property owners.

Bourgeois moral theories expose their most blatant individualism and egoism in the brazenly anti-people theory of objectivism, espoused by Ayn Rand and other similar charlatans. Such a theory is essentially an apologia for the most myopic excesses of the capitalist. But these moralists will claim that moral objectivism is based on the “greater good” of humanity and the individual.

Another aspect of the bourgeois moralists that claim to represent the “greater good” of all of humanity and society is their skewed view of the relationship of man and nature. This derives from their reified individualism and myopia. The arro-

* Lenin, V. (1920). *The Tasks of the Youth Leagues*. Marxists Internet Archive.

gant bourgeois sees himself as being abstract both of society and nature. And that nature and the environment is just a passive background to the grandiose ambitions and appetite of bourgeois social production. Such a view is called anthropocentrism. Communist morality is not afflicted with such anthropocentrism because it understands that society and humans are not above nature but interpenetrated with it. This is seen by Marx's insight into nature-human metabolism in capitalism.* Just as true self-consciousness is knowledge of one's individuality as socially determined, true knowledge of the moral "greater good" of humanity is knowledge of humanity's interpenetration with nature.

This is why it's of paramount importance as revolutionary students that we re-affirm explicitly that our morality is subordinate to the historic mission of the proletariat and communism as opposed to a vague notion of humankind or the "greater good" which can very easily be hijacked by bourgeois moralists. This scientific view of morality by the proletariat ensures the *actual* fulfillment of humanity's greater good.

What does this mean in the actual content of moral education?

It means that a liberating moral education's aim is to change the moral complexion of children from bourgeois morality to proletarian morality through espousing moral virtues that are conducive to this historic mission.

Such proletarian moral values include (but are not limited to):

1. Social love, gregariousness and genuine mass work (as opposed to condescension, disdain, solipsism or paternalism)
2. Principled criticality, self-criticality and humility (as opposed to sycophantism, unreflectiveness or arrogance)
3. Curiosity and theoretical tirelessness (as opposed to practicalism, eclecticism or philistinism)
4. Organisational and political discipline to democratic centralism (as opposed to adventurism or sectarianism)
5. Bravery and resoluteness (as opposed to cowardice and hesitation)
6. Diligence and hard work (as opposed to idleness or carelessness)
7. Tactfulness and sensitivity (as opposed to brazenness or phrasemongering)

* Murali, K. (2020). *For A Materialist Ethics*, in: *Of Concepts & Methods*. Foreign Languages Press. (p. 83).

What is also unique about the liberating, socialist moral education is that these moral values will not be taught as dogmatic principles — as handed down from the gods. Teachers will model them in practice, discuss why these morals are beneficial for humanity’s historical development and concretise them. It is perhaps deliberate that often during FBV lessons, these four flimsy moral values of bourgeois society are rarely concretised into actual examples. Because if they were, the flimsy, hypocritical and class-based nature of these values would be exposed to the student. It is better that the FBVs remain as mystical and abstract as possible.

The importance of mass moral education can not be overemphasised. Socialism is built by everyone brick by brick. Everyone must be a modern, progressive democratic individual. Everyone must exhibit these virtuous qualities. M.I. Kalinin* emphasised this in regard to education, emphasising that socialist morality needs to be built with “mass human material”** rather than the utopian, Blanquist vision that a handful of special virtuous individuals at the top will deliver socialist construction.*** We have to transform the moral complexion of the masses, and in our case the students, *as they are*, not what we imagine or want them to be.

And as a result, another important aspect of liberating moral education is that we are dialectical in our approach. We do not consider anyone to be above criticism. We expect no one to be morally infallible. The revolution does not produce popes and messiahs, it produces revolutionaries. These revolutionaries exhibit outstanding proletarian moral vigour but always are fallible, they can always improve. Socialist realist art and revolutionary moral education should not depict completely infallible heroes but instead, people in their real life, even with inevitable mistakes. What is important is in their development and struggle, they overcome these mistakes through self-criticism and improve themselves in service of the people.

Individuals go through constant political, ideological, social

* Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet from 1919 until 1946.

** Kalinin, M. (1945;2023). *The Moral Complexion of Our People*, in: *On Communist Education*. Foreign Languages Press.

*** This is something the bourgeois believe. That the undesirable workers are morally imperfect as opposed their morally “superior” masters and leaders. This is seen in the conservative Burke’s theory of the natural aristocracy and the “good chap” theory of government, a cornerstone of bourgeois political “thinking” in Britain.

and moral development according to their unique position in the class struggle. People can go from backward to revolutionary or, regrettably, vice versa. People are not born reactionaries or revolutionaries. The job of liberating moral education is to ensure that students' moral development is progressive. It does not see people in simple, unchanging categories of good and bad, unlike bourgeois morality. As A.A. Zhdanov said:

“If there are some who think that remoulding the minds of men does not apply to Party members, that communists are born free of all prejudices and absolutely require no re-education, this is nothing but an idealistic and schematic view of people. This way of judging people abstractly, in accordance with a ready-made standard, instead of studying them in all their connections and manifestations, condemns one to passivity, to a pessimistic view of people. This pessimistic view looks back on the past. This way of judging people has nothing in common with Bolshevism. Its method is profoundly hostile to Bolshevism.”*

And once again, these mechanical and metaphysical attitudes of morality all stem from bourgeois mechanisms and religious idealism. The bourgeois and the religious imagine that individuals are somehow abstract from society. They imagine themselves as an incorporeal soul. And society as comprised of these individual incorporeal souls, ranging from morally good to bad. But, as Caudwell states, the highest level of self-consciousness brought forth by socialist morality understands that we are not individuals *in* society but individuals *because* of society.** Social being determines consciousness. This is the most important point. Until the individual discards a pseudo-religious conception of themselves as some incorporeal soul and sees themselves in the dialectical materialist view as merely a contingent aspect of a huge historical force that subsumes them, the liberating moral education will fall on deaf ears. Why? Because these students will be imbibed by this allegiance to this false platonic absolute idea of themselves as an individual-in-itself. This objective idealist view of the individual begets subjective

* Zhdanov, A. (2023). *Selected Works of Andrei Zhdanov*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 130).

** Caudwell, C. (1938). *Studies in A Dying Culture*. The November 8th Publishing House.

idealism and solipsism. The student who conceives themselves as immaterial is completely prone to arrogance, disdain, cravenness and bourgeois-religious morality. These students will not respond well to principled criticism as they imagine it to be an assault on some fundamental, indissoluble nature of their “soul.” On the other hand, social love, humility and bravery, as well as all the other proletarian moral virtues we outlined, come naturally to the socialist individual who is unbefogged by this religious obscurantism, as they really see life in its motion and interconnection, clearly defining what is necessary in the interest of advancing class struggle.

Summary

In sum, we have affirmed the fact that morality is not fixed and varies historically. Morality is class morality. Class morality is propagated in all facets of social life, but none more so than education.

The FBVs initiative in Britain is merely a ham-fisted attempt at bourgeois moral “education” — its aim is to anti-consciously enforce bourgeois moral ideas, threatening disobedience with the sinister hand of *Prevent*.

These bourgeois moral values are demagogic. They are vague and claim to be in the interests of everyone. Yet these moral values are bourgeois. They legitimise bourgeois relations of production — they legitimate the moribund capitalist system. The moral values in our “education” today are of the Old. They correspond to the old capitalist system and must be negated alongside it by the progressive forces of history.

Socialism requires a revolution in consciousness, the creation of the socialist individual. Communist/liberating morality derives not from imagined gods or reified nature, but from the objective needs of historical development. The liberating education system must enshrine and model this new morality. The individual also needs to drop this whole idea of their incorporeal soul if revolutionary moral education is to resonate.

But before we can talk in any more depth about the specifics of the liberating education system, it is necessary for us to go through the four FBVs one by one, and analyse them. This is an important task because our readers most likely, due to their exposure to these platitudes, have adopted bourgeois morality. It is important that this bourgeois morality is subject to ruthless criticism to make way for liberating moral education. Exposing

the fallacious character of the FBVs should spur an upsurge in the student's revolutionisation.

Reading group questions

What are some general moral values that were emphasised to you in "education" or in your youth generally?

In what way do you think these moral values — or a distorted, anachronistic definition of these values — serve the bourgeoisie?

How have you seen bourgeois moral "education" enforced?

What other sources apart from the bourgeois school is bourgeois morality transmitted?

What are the most important values that need to be emphasised in the new liberating socialist moral education?

What would it look like for teachers to model the new, liberating proletarian moral values in practice?

XII — INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY

The bourgeois conception of “individual liberty”

We begin our analysis of the FBVs in bourgeois moral “education” with *individual liberty*.

We already greatly explained the concept of freedom and liberty in the correct sense and the bourgeois sense. This chapter therefore will be relatively short and we shall only deal with the historical constitution of bourgeois “individual liberty” and how it is used today.

In summary, liberty, the ability to work towards definite ends, is achieved through maximum knowledge of material reality/necessity. The bourgeois conception of “liberty” is different and impossible — “liberty” for the bourgeois means the ability to not be constrained by necessity. To somehow be able to escape reality and have an incorporeal “free will” outside reality. And as we have explained, such a conception misses the point entirely.

But why did this dualist, subjectivist definition of “liberty” arise in the first place?

The bourgeoisie developed this murky definition of “liberty” at the beginning of its struggle against feudalism. At this stage of historical development, the emerging bourgeoisie played a progressive role in struggling against feudalism. “Liberty” for the bourgeoisie is the ability for it to develop as a class historically and work towards its definite ends of developing capitalism. And this bourgeois “liberty” consists in the knowledge that the feudal system, with its obligations and despotism, must be liquidated. The feudal social constraints that cripple the bourgeois economy must be absent.

Thus, this conception of “individual liberty” has not existed intuitively since the dawn of time. The FBV guidance may try to present it this way but this is categorically not the case. Manifold ruling classes throughout history in different social formations from the slave societies, to the primitive societies, to the caliphates, the medievalist empires and so on all had different economic interests, different moralities, different ideological views on predestination and social relations (real or fictitious), and therefore all had different definitions for “liberty.”

The bourgeoisie is therefore “free” to own their property according to their “natural right” to do so. But what the bourgeoisie can not see — as the nature of the class position and

commodity fetishism prevents them from doing so — is that the ownership of property and capital is just as much a “social constraint” as feudal social constraints for those who do not own property and capital. That is, the majority of people — those dispossessed of private, bourgeois property are markedly not “free” in this conception.

But of course, the bourgeois can not possibly realise how these social relations exist. To them, their property ownership does not infringe on anyone else’s right to do so. This is because commodity fetishism has made capitalist relations of production seem like a pure relation between people and things rather than people and people. For example, the parasitic bourgeois landlords of today imagine their “passive income” from their landlordship to be merely a relation between themselves and their property investments, rather than their usurious social relation between themselves and their impoverished tenants. This they do not consider.

This is why, as we identified in social sciences “education,” so many bourgeois intellectuals can not even wrap their head around the idea of class and class struggle. They do not understand that just because no one has to be legislatively a slave or a serf, social relations of production still exist. “Social constraint” still exists.*

Thus, bourgeois “liberty” is really liberty *for* the owner of property or capital i.e., the bourgeois. It is not the “liberty” of us, the proletariat, those dispossessed of capital.

Such is the importance in dealing with these lofty bourgeois moral statements posed in “education” to ask “for whom.”

The “balance” of “individual liberty”

Through their incorrect conception of “liberty” the bourgeois get themselves into a muddle over the state.

For if they see all “social relations” as infringements on “freedom” — despite, as we said, ownership of capital being a clear social relation — then how does the bourgeois reconcile

* In a word, in their crusade against “social relations” the bourgeoisie envisions a utopia “free” from social relations. This utopia conveniently, however, conveniently forgets that the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is a social relation. And furthermore, as long as humans continue to live socially, and engage in social production, it is not possible for humans to escape social relations. It is simply that in communism, social relations will be non-antagonistic.

with the state?

Locke saw the state as being part of a social contract: people give up some “individual liberty” to ensure that liberty is protected. This social contract view is generally accepted among bourgeois scholars, with the quarrel being as to how big the state should be. Some social democrats propagate a larger state whilst the larger tendency among the bourgeois politicians is neo-liberal privatisation of services. This also brings about the muddle of “negative” and “positive” freedom too, with these bourgeois intellectuals arguing that a balance must be struck in the needs of “individual liberty.”

Further, Hobbes in his Covenant Thesis saw individuals and collectives entering into covenants, giving up their “individual liberty,” to vest sovereignty in the fictional person of state, for example, Kings, Queens, Presidents and Prime Ministers. Putting this person of state above the society itself and granting him the privilege of presiding over matters of crime and punishment, war and peace, Hobbes alleged, was necessary to protect the stability of the nation and stave off civil war. Today, as the state increasingly infringes on the individual, the trend is towards massive accumulation of powers in the hands of the executive, and in specific this fictional person of state, which we call police powers. This Covenant Thesis is the very foundation of Anglo-American ruling philosophy.

Thus, by framing the state’s sole function as a “protector” of the immortal concept of “individual liberty,” the state is seen as completely apolitical. The state stands above classes and answers only to this lofty ideal of “individual liberty.”

But yet again, we must ask, “For whom?”

Because the revolutionary students agree that the state is protectionist... insofar as it protects the rule of the bourgeoisie. It is a state of the bourgeois. It does defend “individual liberty.” But as we said, this is not actual liberty or freedom, but a fallacious buzzword for capital accumulation and property ownership. The bourgeois state protects the “individual liberty” and rights of the landlord to fleece their tenants. The bourgeois state protects the “individual liberty” and rights of the imperialist bourgeoisie to expand their exploitation and saturate foreign markets. The bourgeois state on the other hand does not protect the “individual liberty” or rights of the masses for employment, or electricity, or food, or water, or heating, or shelter.

This doldrum of debate among the imbecile bourgeois intellectuals over “big government” or “small government” is based

on the reification that the state's eternal, natural function is to protect a supra-class "individual liberty" and rights. The real question should not be on the quantity of the state, but the quality of the state: what gave rise to it, what classes does it represent — whose "individual liberty" does it do the bidding of?

Emphasis on the "individual"

The "individual" nature of the illusory "liberty" is notable too. This whole fetishisation of the abstract individual links back to the fact that bourgeois morality has not reached the highest stage of self-consciousness. They do not see that one is not an individual in society but an individual *because* of society. Therefore, one's "individual liberty" is in mutually interpenetrative contradiction with collective liberty. You can not imagine one without the other.

The revolutionary student on the other hand understands that liberty shall serve the working people, not the bourgeoisie. And this liberty must be of an individual *and* social character. Humans live socially and are engaged in social life and social production. If a single individual is deprived of their liberty, and their ability to work towards definite ends through knowledge of necessity, this is because of the nature of social production and social relations. As Engels stated:

"It goes without saying that society cannot free itself unless every individual is freed. The old mode of production must therefore be revolutionised from top to bottom, and in particular the former division of labour must disappear. Its place must be taken by an organisation of production in which, on the one hand, no individual can throw on the shoulders of others his share in productive labour, this natural condition of human existence; and in which, on the other hand, productive labour, instead of being a means of subjugating men, will become a means of their emancipation, by offering each individual the opportunity to develop all his faculties, physical and mental, in all directions and exercise them to the full — in which, therefore, productive labour will become a pleasure instead of being a burden."

The bourgeois of course imagines it absolutely fine, or at the

* Engels, F. (1877). *Anti-Dühring*. International Publishers.

most sheds a few crocodile tears, that billions of people clearly have no freedom. The bourgeois never ponders the fact that their relative freedom is in any way socially related to the slavery of the worker.

“Individual liberty” in regards to the “freedom of speech”

One of the key aspects of “individual liberty” is that of “freedom of speech.” If “individual liberty” is seen to be one’s “right” to express oneself “freely” (which is, to the bourgeois, to act without hindrance from objective reality), “freedom of speech” must then be an integral part of this. The FBV curriculum makes it a great point to exalt the UK for this unique “freedom of speech.”

We must determine two things. What is freedom of speech actually? And who is this freedom for?

Freedom of speech in actuality should mean that one has the ability and efficacy to express their perception of events in a productive way. This comes from having knowledge of a) what one is speaking about and b) how to articulate this speech cogently. Freedom of speech is of integral importance to the revolution. This is the actual definition of freedom of speech based on the correct Marxist-Leninist understanding of freedom.

Freedom of speech, which includes freedom of criticism and self-criticism is absolutely integral to the revolutionary movement. It is how democratic centralism functions. This integral freedom of speech allows for party members to have the freedom to express the knowledge that they have come to from social investigation. There may be discrepancies in people’s accounts and viewpoints which therefore allows for the particular accounts to be sublated into a more representative, general and theoretically robust line, through democratic centralism. This ensures that the party line and the subjective factor keeps up with the pace of the changing objective conditions. Such is the nature of freedom of speech and its importance

There is no actual freedom of speech in the capitalist countries. And “education” has a large role in that. Children are not taught how to express their perceptions effectively. Articulation, effective communication and discussion are not valued or taught in the British bourgeois “education” system where methods of learning and assessment are entirely individual. Nor are people taught how to criticise or self-criticise effectively. Many people infected with bourgeois and petty-bourgeois morality are

unable to receive principled criticism. They see it as a personal attack because they are imbibed by this idea that they must be perfect individuals in themselves. Therefore, speech is unfree in a bourgeois culture where criticism and self-criticism are alien concepts, and where no one is taught how to effectively express their perception. What freedom of speech can there be if all workers are forced to be sycophants and flunkeys, scared that correcting their superiors or offering their own perception of events could get them the sack?

But foremostly, even if the bourgeoisie somehow had the knowledge to speak effectively and in a principled nature — which would be unlikely given their historically constituted cannibalistic nature and philistinism as a class — they necessarily do not have freedom of speech because they do not know what they are speaking about. They are speaking nonsense! And they have to. The bourgeoisie is a class whose ideology and morality are built on philosophical metaphysics and idealism. They do not have the progressive and revolutionary method of dialectical materialism to be able to procure knowledge. If they did, it would be self-defeating because they would eventually become aware of the necessity of their own negation. Instead, the bourgeoisie encourages that everyone speaks nonsense and does not find out and investigate knowledge. The bourgeoisie likes to imagine that the ability to speak eclectic, uninvestigated nonsense is tantamount to freedom of speech — after all, this is because as a class, the bourgeois ultimately denies the objectivity of reality and instead, in the last instance, is nakedly relativist and pluralist. However, we would argue that the ability to spew eclectic, falsified nonsense does not show that there is freedom of speech but shows that there is no freedom of speech! You must investigate and not speak nonsense, as is commonly said. But of course, the bourgeoisie and its flunkey “intellectuals” are historically and culturally precluded from not talking nonsense. They will never fully know what they are talking about. Therefore, even for the bourgeois expert, let alone the bourgeois philistine or brainless reactionary, freedom of speech in capitalism is very limited.

So we have determined what freedom of speech actually consists of. What does the bourgeois definition of freedom of speech entail?

Freedom of speech to the bourgeois, just like their wider conception of “individual liberty,” boils down to this notion of individuals being able to do what they want without restraint.

The bourgeois imagines that for speech to be free, it can not and is not tethered to social relations, objective laws or even the truth. Thus in practice, bourgeois “freedom of speech” is, as we have said, essentially dressing up ugly bourgeois ignorance in a lofty liberal coat of relativism. But who does this “freedom of speech” extend to in British capitalist society? It is evident that people obviously can not speak without constraints — and rather their ability to speak is guaranteed by constraints. But just on a superficial level let us entertain this delusion briefly. Does everyone in Britain have the equal ability to speak superficially — inconsiderate of whether they know what they are saying or are able to say it effectively?

The resounding answer to this is no. Like all of these bourgeois platitudes in the FBV moral “education,” the demagoguery crumbles when you ask “for whom?” The bourgeois idea of “freedom of speech” is really a privilege afforded to the bourgeoisie alone.

The “free press” is really a few franchises concentrated in a tiny number of massive bourgeois conglomerates. Any grass-roots press is largely ineffectual and gets out-competed. Even on social media, which ostensibly levelled the playing field, algorithms deliberately favour the big media outlets that are in league with the U.S. monopolists. This media, contrary to what the naive liberal utopian would believe, does not “play fair.” They do not hear out all sides in search of the truth. And even if they did, it would not bring them further to the truth. Finding out — through social practice — is what brings us further to the truth, not relativism. The press answers to the narrative of the shareholders, the advertisers and the owners. Whilst the press may take playful jibes at politicians or scandals, in Britain, it is ultimately the bourgeois government narrative the media tails. The salivating bourgeoisie of Britain and America used the “free press” to misinform the people about the genocidal Iraq war through fallacious claims of WMDs, and they continue to opine for an escalation with Russia. Such is the nature of “freedom of speech” and “freedom of the press” — the single will of the bourgeoisie masquerading as a plurality of outlets and opinions.

There was a time in history when the bourgeois call for “freedom of speech” and “free press” was a progressive one, just as the general call for “individual liberty” was also progressive. In Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries, bourgeois utilisation of the printing press helped win the ideological battle over feudal-

ism. The free press back then was not monopolised by stagnant media moguls and bourgeois but was used by progressive ideologists, reformers and scientists.

But just like all these other slogans of bourgeois morality in the FBVs, it has been rendered moribund and anachronistic just like the political economy of imperialist capitalism.

Any insistence that these fallacious bourgeois propaganda machines should be allowed to operate during socialism is absurd. It is tantamount to “suicide” of the revolution.* The revolutionaries outstrip the bourgeoisie in regards to mass support, ideological validity, organisational discipline and will. The one area the bourgeoisie has the advantage is their financial wealth, which is exemplified by their huge and sophisticated propaganda infrastructure. Allowing the bourgeoisie to continue to maliciously use this weapon against socialism on the basis of *their* hypocritical morality is the height of stupidity and petty-bourgeois sentimentalism.

And how ironic too that the FBV curriculum worships this imaginary “freedom of speech” and “free press,” whilst at the same time using *Prevent* to harass students who dissent and banning any “anti-capitalist”*** material from schools.*** This censorship continues into adult life. In Britain, where contradictions are perhaps not as sharp yet, it is less obvious. But in countries of intense class struggle, “red-tagging” becomes fatal. What “freedom of speech” exists in these countries, where the speech of the people is met by the bullets of the police and army? The bourgeois has nothing but a sheepish answer.

It can only be communism that permits freedom of speech; it allows people to know what they are talking about in content, through the dialectical method, and then be able to articulate their knowledge in a constructive way. No other mode of production in history has allowed such a high level of freedom of speech.

* Lenin, V. (1921). *A Letter To G. Myasnikov*. Marxists Internet Archive.

** <<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/sep/27/uk-schools-told-not-to-use-anti-capitalist-material-in-teaching>>

*** We will talk more later about how the bourgeois justify this blatant hypocrisy when we go over tolerance and the “open society.”

Summary

We can see clearly that the “individual liberty” that the Fundamental British Values venerate is neither liberty in its actual definition, nor is it a measure afforded to the toiling masses.

The bourgeois conception of “individual liberty” was progressive in its inception but now lies old and feeble. Anti-conscious adherence to these flimsy platitudes can only be ensured through force.

Why is it that “individual liberty” remains so focal in bourgeois moral “education”?

It is seen as a value “above class” and therefore obscures class. In “education,” “individual liberty” as an idea keeps alive this mirage of *meritocracy* which is so essential for the shred of ontological security schools dangle above one’s head. If everyone in Britain is assumed to have “individual liberty,” to have complete ability to work towards individual ends, then it implies their suffering, their lack of liberty, their poverty, and their alienation, is their individual fault, not the fault of capitalism.

Reading group questions

How else has this mistaken bourgeois dualism in regard to “freedom” shown itself in their ideology?

Why do you think the bourgeois has such an emphasis on “individual” liberty rather than seeing the individual as a concept that is socially formed?

Where have you seen the bourgeois nature of “freedom of speech” most overtly exposed?

Aside from the main individual rights like the right to employment, what other individual rights does the bourgeoisie consistently violate despite this “individual liberty” spiel?

XIII — DEMOCRACY

Democracy for whom?

The second “Fundamental British Value” is that of democracy. We are told in our moral “education” that we live in a “democracy.” Yet every definition we are given of “democracy” is purposely ambiguous.

The general hazy bourgeois definition of democracy is that the “people” get to elect representatives to “represent” them and “legislate on their behalf” in the political sphere. This is done by casting a vote on a ballot every few years.

In Britain, the House of Commons, the lower chamber of parliament, is electable in this manner with roughly 650 MPs representing various constituencies. The upper chamber of parliament, the House of Lords, is not even electable by the ballot, and its members are appointed by the parliamentary parties from a shortlist of the clergy, the aristocratic hereditary peers, and life peers who are usually retired old MPs being rewarded for their sycophantry. So here we see even on a completely technical and surface-level analysis, Britain’s “democracy” does not even meet the requirements that the bourgeois have set themselves. This is also coupled with the fact that, technically, every parliamentary bill needs royal ascent so, if he decided so, “King Charles” could essentially dismiss any legislation.*

But nevertheless, it is important we look beyond a superficial or judicial analysis and look at who this “democracy” is for.

Historical constitution of democracy

The FBV curriculum would have the student believe that there has been one uniform definition of “democracy” for all of human history. And that it has just happened that today in Britain, out of the goodness of the monarch, or some meritorious quality of Britains as a race — which is after all what the FBV curriculum is trying to imply — that we have elusive democracy now at long last. Either that or, as is commonly imagined by

* Though there is obviously no precedent for this because the monarchy, despite having feudal birthmarks and origin, is now completely in control of the bourgeoisie. It is used today as a weapon. The bourgeoisie does not desire the complete fulfilment of the democratic revolution.

the bourgeois “political scientists,” thinkers in the 16th and 17th centuries like Montesquieu, Locke or the American founding fathers happened to think up the concept of democracy and good-faith political leaders in Britain decided to mould society to fit these spontaneous ideas. Truly fortuitous!

Both notions are symbolic of the bourgeoisie’s historical metaphysics and idealism. It is this notion of pure thought we have talked so much about. This idea that our social relations, social production, systems of governance and so on are just merely the products of the isolated minds of “great men,” rather than the simple fact that they have come into being through long protracted class struggle.*

Instead, we see throughout historical development, “democracy” has taken on different meanings. Even today, owing to the uneven development of capitalism, there is not one homogenous meaning. This is why bourgeois states get into spats with each other over which is more or less democratic — which is more “liberal” and “illiberal.”**

Ancient Greece was a “democracy” as a form of governance in the sense of the term that there were elected representatives. But it was a “democracy” of the slave-owners. The representatives were of and for the slave-owners. And today, in capitalism, we have a “democracy” for the bourgeoisie — with representatives, ostensibly “for the people” being flunkeys for the bourgeoisie. And yet, the bourgeoisie of today would not recognise Ancient Greece as a “democracy” and nor would the Greeks recognise Britain as a “democracy.”

It is clear therefore that democracy, rather than being an eternal quality or notion, is historically constituted. It is a form of governance where decision-making in the spheres of politics

* Which does not preclude the fact that systems of governance have not been consciously thought of by people. But these people are after all accidents of the second degree and have only devised such concepts because they are products of required historical development. For instance, a caveman, no matter how smart he may be, could not devise the concept of parliamentary democracy or the separation of the branches. But if you extracted that caveman as a baby and placed him in a family of the aspiring bourgeois in the midst of the decay of the feudal system — decay caused by the contradiction between the new relations of production and the old productive forces — perhaps he would conceive of such a system.

** And in the same way slave-holder class societies and medieval societies have different forms of governance, with differing levels of despotism or “democracy.”

and social production and elsewhere occur through a definite, though ostensible system of consent. Capitalism can exist in other forms of governance, like fascism, constitutional monarchy or military juntas. The form that the state takes is determined by numerous particular factors like the development of the class struggle in that given social formation. The most important aspect, however, is the class character of the state, which determines who this “democracy” — or any other form of governance — represents. It is obviously common for those still imbued by the given class ideology of the time to displace a criticism of the class character of the state onto the given form of that state.

Many bourgeois historians and political theorists have tied themselves up in knots without this knowledge. Without knowledge of the class character of the state, they have tried to put the form of the state as primary and work backwards. They have flipped the nature of the state on its head and tried to impose “democracy” and “dictatorship” as concepts universal and above class. Karl Popper does such a thing in his nebulous differentiation of “open” and “closed” societies. He can only give a hazy definition of closed and open societies — essentially resorting to the phrasemongering of general platitudes and truisms like the FBV curriculum does so well — and is completely unable to delineate historically where these closed and open societies arose. So much so he finds himself in an awful muddle and essentially equates primitive society with fascism and fascism with communism.*

Any voter can pick any candidate, so long as they are a flunkey of the bourgeoisie

A famous quip from the American bourgeois industrialist Henry Ford goes:

“Any customer can have a car painted any colour that he wants, so long as it is black.”

Such is also the nature of bourgeois “democracy.” At the ballot box every five years, the voter is presented with a lovely plurality of candidates! Each candidate sporting a different party with a different colour and different slogan. The voter can have any candidate... as long as they are a flunkey for the bourgeois.

* Popper, K. (1962). *The Open Society and its Enemies, Volume I*. Routledge, Routledge & Kegan Paul.

The argument of the bourgeoisie is that bourgeois democracy *is* representative of the people and has a popular mandate because of universal suffrage. Everyone of eligible age has one vote so there can be no complaining. The classical revisionists like Bernstein and the Fabians were enamoured with this rhetoric and believed universal suffrage to be the key historical development to allow socialism to be established through the ballot box. No more need for revolution, said the revisionists! All that the workers required was 51% of the vote and the bourgeoisie would honour the representatives of the people, and allow themselves as a class to be entirely liquidated. This dream was also revived by the modern revisionists and constitutionalists like Togliatti.*

In summary, the bourgeoisie and their revisionist lackeys argue that universal suffrage is proof that the state is above class and that representatives do truly represent and are accountable to the people. That universal suffrage in the bourgeois states today is the apogee of the eternal concept of “democracy.” Hurrah to the Fundamental British Values!

But we know this is not the case. Why is it that the universal franchise has been unable to elect genuine working-class or progressive representatives to negate capitalism and establish socialism?

This is because, while there is ostensibly universal suffrage, a universal and equal right to cast votes in a ballot box for representatives, there is no universal and equal right to *be* representatives.

To be elected as an MP in Britain, one has to raise thousands of pounds for campaigning. This is something that can not be done effectively if one runs on a platform independent of the major parties: the Tories, Labour, SNP, Liberal Democrats and so on. Independents do not win elections and nor do the small parties, and this is primarily because they do not have the finances required. Running with these big bourgeois parties also means that one must have campaign donors; campaign donors are often lobbyists on behalf of companies or, in the case of some Labour MPs, the labour aristocratic leaders of some unions. The representative, no matter how noble their initial intentions, is essentially bought by the bourgeoisie. Even contemporary political scientists freely and nonchalantly admit this, calling backbench MPs nothing more than “lobby fodder.”

What this means is that the only viable and publicised candidates available to the voter on the ballot are necessarily flunkeys

* And the Eurocommunists like Carrillo and Berlinguer.

of the bourgeoisie.

The means of ensuring the bourgeois nature of “democracy”

“However,” counterposes the flustered electoralist, “what is stopping good-willed socialists from building a popular electoral platform? Sure, they may not have the funding from bourgeois donors, but if their programme truly resonates with the masses of people, they could accumulate enough grassroots funding to gain significant electoral success. Thus, whilst it may be difficult to reform our way to communism, it’s not impossible. Ergo, the universal franchise has removed the absolute necessity for revolution.”

This is not the case. It is impossible to use the universal franchise to “reform” our way to socialism and communism. This has been illustrated countless times in practice and in our theoretical knowledge. The current state in Britain is a bourgeois one. It requires a qualitative leap, a rupture, a complete dismantling and rebuilding to become a socialist one, a proletarian state.

In most conditions, it is prudent for the revolutionary party to run in bourgeois elections. But this constitutes tactics. A truly revolutionary party has no illusions that it will ever be permitted by the bourgeois state to succeed. The revolutionary parties are slandered by the bourgeois media, undermined by its bureaucratic and constitutional apparatus, infiltrated, overthrown in bourgeois coup d’etat or just banned from running in the first place. Such is the absolute hypocrisy of bourgeois “democracy” — it is not a fair game as these naive reformists believe.

This fate is not even just limited to the revolutionary parties but even the mildest of social democrats are often disenfranchised by bourgeois “democracy” for proposing a programme of nationalisation in contrast to myopic neo-liberal privatisation. This is especially the case in the great revolutionary ebb we find ourselves in, during the anti-social offensive.

Many of us as students in Britain know this all too well from the experience of Jeremy Corbyn. From his leadership victory in 2015, Corbyn, a mild social democrat, was completely slandered and hounded by all the press. This came from both the “left” and “right” of the British papers and tabloids — though of course, we know such a spectrum is superficial, as all the mass papers by structural and financial prerequisite are bourgeois. This complete unbridled bias against Corbyn is some-

thing that had been quantitatively analysed, even as early as 2016.* Even amidst complete slander and rumblings amongst the many opportunists in the Labour Party, Corbyn was able to draw favourable grassroots electoral support and managed to achieve 40% of the vote. Whilst this may be a minority of the vote — which did not win him the election — it must be noted that given the nature of the first past the post electoral system in Britain, previous electorally successful prime ministers like Blair and Thatcher achieved huge parliamentary majorities with only around 43%. This small electoral achievement of the mild social democrat greatly disturbed the British bourgeoisie who had become spoiled with the neo-liberal cronyism of the conservatives, and saw mild nationalisation and regulation as an existential threat. From 2017-2019, the vitriolic slander of Corbyn in the press reached absurd levels. This press included the “impartial” BBC. Corbyn was made an essential pariah of the media, hysterically branded an anti-semitic for his pro-Palestine position. He was said to be an agent of Russia, China, Hamas, Hezbollah, the IRA and everything in between. Combined with the assault from the media, a huge number of opportunist Labour MPs heralding from the Blair era, where the so-called “Labour” party finally dropped all pretence of their pro-worker facade, openly turned on Corbyn, planning various coups d’etat. At the same time, the bourgeoisie and their reactionary flunkies rallied behind Alexander “Boris” Johnson, a standard Eton thug and compulsive liar and adulterer. This predictably resulted in a huge electoral defeat for Corbyn. Such are the hallmarks of great British “democracy.” If this is the resistance put up by the bourgeoisie against a mild social democrat, how does the reformist imagine the communists are supposed to triumph through elections? It is completely ridiculous.

Corbyn, who was so clearly imbibed by the platitudes of bourgeois “democracy,” whose mind as a social democrat had not stepped out of the realm of capitalism and bourgeois morality, has now realised through his own bitter experience how naive he was. He imagined electoral fair play from the oligarchs, the hedge-fund managers and the war criminals. Following Corbyn was a conniving careerist, “Sir” Keir Starmer, a titled lackey of the monarchy and the bourgeoisie. This uncharismatic flunkie has predictably succeeded in purging the Corbynites through

* <<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/jeremy-corbyn-media-bias-labour-mainstream-press-lse-study-misrepresentation-we-can-t-ignore-bias-a7144381.html>>

despotic force. Some of Corbyn's former allies have exposed their careerism and jumped ship.* Such is the nature of the bourgeois politician — cannibalistic, unprincipled, brazen and megalomaniacal. And yet the “radical” wing of the Labour Party, such as *Momentum*, continues to scream into the void about electoral progressions, like Sisyphus rolling a boulder up the mountain.

How has Britain spread their benevolent fundamental value of “democracy” around the world? Such is the rhetoric. The insatiable Anglo-American imperialists justify their crimes by saying they are bringing “democracy.” The “democratic” Anglo-American imperialists overthrew Allende in 1973, installing the butcherer Pinochet. They overthrew Bosch in 1963. They overthrew and murdered Lumumba. They overthrew Gaddafi in 2011. And at this present moment the Anglo-American imperialists extend their suffocating tentacles onto every country that is not doing “democracy” right. And it must be repeated that most of these leaders overthrown were only for national liberation, not communism. Such is the nature of bourgeois “democracy” — it oftentimes does not even afford “democracy” to certain sections of the bourgeoisie.

In summary, we see that the FBV of “democracy” has no meaningful substance even by its own definition. The “free” and “fair” elections of British liberal “democracy” see that every few years voters are reduced to voting cattle to apathetically sign off for complete flunkeys, lobbied by a myriad of bourgeois businessmen. Any candidates that are seen as posing a remote hindrance to even just a few select big capitalists are subject to complete defamation, obstruction or their popular governments are liquidated by the Anglo-American imperialists. This is the “democracy” that the FBV curriculum encourages us to die for.

Uphold revolution — oppose revisionist capitulation to bourgeois “democracy”

The state in capitalism is an incorrigibly bourgeois state, and “democracy” is incorrigibly bourgeois in character. The reformist revisionists do not understand this and continue in vain to try

* Nadia Whittombe for instance, once an avowed Corbyn supporter, is now a lackey for Starmer, obviously understanding her chance of career advancement relies on him. This absolutely revolting flunkey behaviour was shown in May when she went before parliament to actively pressure that the UK adopt the nazi conspiracy theory of the Holodomor genocide as official policy.

to make social transformation through gradual electoral means.

The revisionists are a huge asset to the bourgeoisie. In times of bubbling class struggle, the bourgeoisie can effectively disarm the revolutionary movement by tempting an opportunist character out of the “communist” party. The bourgeoisie can offer them a seat at the table of decision-making. This placates the revolutionary movement and makes it look like the proletariat has its foot in the door of the political state. That state power can be won over gradually.

But this is not the case. It is true that historically, previous ruling classes have been able to assume state power over more gradual means, although a large rupture or revolution usually occurs. In Britain for example, even before the bourgeois revolution in the 17th century, the emergent bourgeois mercantile class and gentry had begun to saturate themselves in personnel and interests in the House of Commons. They were already posing a slight nuisance for Elizabeth at the end of the 16th century, coercing her to retreat from feudal, cronyist monopolies.*

But this can not be the case for the revolutionary development from capitalism to socialism, from a state for the minority of exploiters to a state of the majority. Why? Because the new socialist relations of production are not able to emerge within the old bourgeois relations of production in any meaningful way. The reason why the mercantile bourgeoisie was able to procure some meaningful political power in the state before their usurpation was that they had established themselves economically as an ascendant class. One class of exploiters had overtaken another. This is something that the proletarian revolutionaries can not do. Nationalisation of the means of production in capitalism is the nationalisation of the bourgeoisie, not the proletariat. It is only proletarian nationalisation if the proletariat have state power.

Yet many of the revisionist parties were and are under this illusion. They must have taken in all the cheery rhetoric of their bourgeois moral “education” to heart. Italy in the 20th century saw the ascendancy of the revisionist theory of constitutionalism, promoted by Togliatti and the Eurocommunists. They imagined that because they were part of the government at the time of the drafting of the constitution, the constitution was therefore somehow socialist in character.** They imagined that this great

* Morton, A. (1938). *A People's History of England*. Lawrence & Wishart. (p. 178).

** Hoxha, E. (1980). *Eurocommunism is Anti-Communism*. The No-

“democratic” constitution could be used for a peaceful “transformation” in socialism. However, this is a bourgeois mistake. Because here the revisionists, just like the FBVs, imagine a “democracy” existing above classes. They fail to ask which class this constitution really represented. This new constitution did have a smattering of “democratic” principles, through the pressure of the ICP, but these are after all just words and rhetoric. As Enver Hoxha noted:

“The Constitution envisages the right to work, but this stops neither the capitalist employers, nor their state from throwing about 2 million people out of work. The Constitution guarantees a series of democratic rights but this has not stopped the Italian state, the carabinieri or the police, basing themselves on the rights which the Constitution provides, from acting almost openly to set up that mechanism which is ready for the establishment of a fascist regime. The various fascist commandos, from those of the extreme right to those who call themselves the Red Brigades and the terrorists of the Fontana Square, also find their justification in the Italian Constitution. To think, as the followers of Togliatti do, that the Italian bourgeoisie drafted its well-known Constitution to lead the society towards socialism, is simply absurd. The Italian Constitution, like the other fundamental laws of bourgeois countries, sanctions the undivided political, legislative and executive rule of the bourgeoisie in the country, sanctions the protection of its property and its power to exploit the working masses.”*

In many other countries too, many hitherto revolutionary communist parties have turned into sham “communist” parties, capitulating to the bourgeoisie over an imagined “democratic” road to socialism. This has happened from Thorez to Prachanda. Many so-called communist parties can become drunk with ostensible electoral success and lose sight of revolution through the beer goggles of electoralism.

“But why then,” may ask the naive electoralist yet again, “if representatives are bourgeois in character, do they sometimes *legislate on behalf of the worker?*”

vember 8th Publishing House.

* Hoxha, E. (1980). *Eurocommunism is Anti-Communism*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 169).

We have already covered this in Chapter III. Essentially, it is common sense that the bourgeois representatives must *talk the talk* and act like popular candidates. And this might include them introducing ostensibly beneficial legislation for the workers. But in the last analysis, this legislation such as pay-rises or safety regulations is merely the bare minimum to placate the workers' movement. Superficially popular or progressive legislation does not mean that the bourgeoisie has lost their complete monopoly of political power over the politicians, the bureaucracy, the army, the police and the media.

The detest of the masses

One such piece of legislation that was adopted reluctantly at first by the bourgeoisie was the universal franchise.

The bourgeois moral "education" curriculum today likes to tacitly entertain the notion that the universal franchise was handed down benevolently and paternally by the powers that be because they just suddenly realised that people should be able to vote. The same way that bourgeois history courses in secondary "education" teach that the British Empire abolished slavery just out of the goodness of their hearts.

This is not the case. The universal franchise, just like every small quantitative concession and improvement in the workers' conditions, was fought for against the bourgeois state heroically and sanguinely. The universal franchise was won by the Chartists and the Suffragettes, not the bourgeoisie and aristocrats.

Even though — as we have already pointed out — universal suffrage does not fundamentally threaten the bourgeois character of the state, the representatives of the bourgeoisie still feel uneasy about it and most would jump at any chance to curtail it in some form or another.

The main liberal theorists spoke at great length about their distaste for universal suffrage and what they feared as a "tyranny of the majority." Ruling classes throughout history have always claimed the will of the masses leads to chaos and disorder.*

This is why many bourgeois "democratic" electoral systems today are structured in such a way to try to prevent a popular vote from being able to make large, sweeping changes.

In Britain, we obviously have the unelected House of Lords

* Bains, H. (1994). *Retreat of the Revolution and the Tasks of the Communist and Workers' Movement. Discussion Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1994.

which has the power to scrutinise and temporarily obstruct legislation. What is ironic is that today, this heinous and corrupt Conservative government has lurched so far right wing that the House of Lords has actually become a welcome moderating force, raising albeit tepid objections to the Tories' draconian police bills.*

Today in Britain we see serpentine attempts for the undermining of the universal franchise. The loathsome aristocrat Jacob Rees-Mogg admitted at the National Conservative conference this year that the recent Voter ID act — which requires voters to bring photo identification — was intended to “gerrymander,” that is to suppress, the votes of young people. This has also unintentionally led to the suppression of elderly people's votes too.

The great “democratic” spectacle

The average person in Britain has become thoroughly disillusioned with British “democracy” even if they are not yet able to conceptualise why it is the way it is. Similar trends occur within all the liberal “democratic” countries. Turnout for general elections in Britain is usually only 60% to 70%, and local elections may be as low as 30%. In other bourgeois “democratic” countries it's even worse — Canada receives about 40% turnout with the ruling government ruling on 20% of the popular vote. Of those who vote, many vote out of formalism or essentially donkey vote — they have always voted for x party and will continue to do so, even if they could not name a concrete policy. This apathy is reflected in the dwindling membership of the main bourgeois political parties.

Yet, the bourgeois media continues to try, with increasing failure, to draw people into the big “democratic” spectacle. This is also what the petty-bourgeois politics lecturers in higher “education” obsess about.

Politics is obviously not seen as a struggle and hegemony of class — which it is — but is increasingly seen as a soap opera. These petty-bourgeois “politics” fetishists obsess for hours over

* In America for example, often heralded as the apogee of liberal “democracy,” there exists a system called the electoral college which essentially mediates between the popular vote and the presidency. States have a certain voting weight which corresponds to the number of representatives in the House and Senate they have. This means that the popular vote does not always beget the presidency.

this and that scandal and all the careerist manoeuvres of politicians. They spend hours pouring over incredibly dull polling data and constituency maps. This is the “democratic” nature of bourgeois politics — it is seen more as a fun hobby or pastime for talk show hosts to pontificate about rather than a sincere means of representation of public service. The mask falls entirely.

There is perhaps no one in the capitalist system more than the bourgeois politician who encapsulates the bourgeois self-consciousness of self-preservation in contrast to the socialist self-consciousness of serving the people.

Whilst people suffer under intense inflation, robbed blind by vicious landlords and brazen bourgeois employers, the bourgeois politician and his petty-bourgeois superfans see it all as some fun game of domination. They may bring up the *cost of living crisis* on TV debates and in the House of Commons but this to them is not an existential threat to people, but political bargaining chips and soundbites. The bourgeois politician does not know poverty from his illustrious Westminster apartment nor do they care about it.

Instead of making any attempt to serve the people, or even govern competently on behalf of anyone, all the bourgeois politicians and parties dedicate their time to working with groups of unscrupulous spin doctors, strategists and propagandists. They spend more time on refining the image of themselves doing their job than doing their job.

As such, all Westminster debates are not debates in the interest of finding out or refining new knowledge but are puerile pantomimes and soundbites. There is no will to investigate, only to cannibalise each other for self-preservation.

In this “democratic” spectacle, the bourgeois does fix the narrow “political problems” of the day. In fact, the bourgeois politician is incentivised *not* to fix these problems. It is much more beneficial for the bourgeois politician to use problems as leverage, to deflect blame, to set traps for their successors and to coerce votes. In Britain for instance, it is customary that prime ministers initiate policies like trade deals which only come into effect within a five-year period, so they are out of office by the time the negative effect of such policies comes into being at which point it is associated with their successor. The unscrupulous bourgeois political parties are in a perpetual game of hot potato, with this hot potato being policy ramifications and the “game” being the very existence of millions of people.

The cannibalistic nature of the “democratic” spectacle also

precludes long-term planning. This is a contributing factor to why bourgeois governments lurch from crisis to crisis. This is also why bourgeois governments can barely stick to long-term agreements on climate change and other issues because there may not be cross-party consent. The only policy where there seems to be complete cross-party consent is that of NATO imperialist warmongering and ravaging.

The people are tired of having to put a mark on a ballot paper which they know does nothing. They are tired of voting for the “lesser evil.” Lots of people today describe themselves as “apolitical” now because they are so fed up with the shoal of crooks that we call politicians. As revolutionary students and led by the working class, we must show them that they are right to feel this way, but that there is an alternative. The call for Marxism-Leninism and liberation is one that is above the bourgeois pantomime called “politics.”

The narrowness of the “democratic” spectacle

An important thing to note is how narrow the “democratic” spectacle of bourgeois society is expected and tolerated to be. The FBV curriculum talks only about “democracy” in the realm of “politics.” But as we point out, the bourgeois candidates we vote for on the ballot paper once every five years are not really anything but witless figureheads and lobby fodder. A lot of government activity is controlled by hundreds of political advisers, aides, diplomats and bureaucrats who are not up for election.

But what about democracy in labour? There is no such thing. The proletariat spends more than a third of their life toiling for the bourgeois but has no “democratic” initiative in this area — actual or superficial. Managers and bosses are appointed from the top down and not the bottom up. The full extent of workplace democracy may be choosing the topping on a pizza party but that is about it.

And where is this absurd FBV of “democracy” being anti-consciously propagated? The school. Where teachers do not have democratic rights let alone the student. In primary and secondary “education” there may be a student council but this is merely for roleplay purposes. The full extent of “democracy” in the “education” system may be some superfluous Google form for a student to fill out.

The narrow and entirely performative nature of bourgeois “democracy” is one that has grown historically moribund. It is

time for the revolutionary workers and students to supplant it.

True proletarian democracy is one that permeates all aspects of social life, from labour, to administration, to culture, to the liberating education system.

Destroy bourgeois dictatorship with socialist democracy

Bourgeois “democracy” is fallacious. It is “democracy” for the minority — the exploiting bourgeoisie. It is they who dictate us toiling masses.

But what is socialist and communist democracy, what will it look like and why is it integral to the success of the proletarian state?

The proletarian state is the first state in the historical development of a majority character. Therefore, it is the first democracy of the majority.

The decision-making is of a different character. Decision-making in bourgeois “democracies” is reserved for a few select bourgeois politicians. They do not have the ability to solve the problems of today nor do they have any interest in doing so — their interests lie with their lobbyists, their second jobs, self-preservation and their loyalty to bourgeois idealism and metaphysics.

Decision-making in the proletarian, socialist democracy is not confined to the chambers of parliament or meeting rooms in Downing Street: it happens on the shop floor, the factory floor, the school, the village hall, the community centre. The epochal socialist constitution of the Soviet Union in 1936 involved drawing the entire population into the decision-making process, through some 527,000 meetings.* This is why the Constitution was able to properly represent the people of the USSR.

Such massive democratic initiatives were not just demagogic attempts of populism as is common with the bourgeois states. The bourgeois states may infrequently run referendums for the people to vote indirectly. But these referendums are only for the benefit of the bourgeois politicians who use them to get over snags and factionalism in their parties. The voter is not given frequent direct choices in issues that are actually affecting their lives. Moreover, the worker is encouraged to not worry about politics and only engage to cast their vote every few years. In socialist democracy on the other hand, for the revolution to be

* Strong, A. (1956). *The Stalin Era*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 69-70)

successful and the class struggle to be carried forward, everyone must have active participation and concern. A popular Soviet slogan advanced during the revolution was “every kitchen maid must learn the rule of the state.”*

Of course, there must be a practical delegation of the tasks of administration, for which representatives must be elected. These representatives will not however be privy to all the crony perks of bourgeois democracy but will be kept in service of the people through the steadfast commitment to Marxism-Leninism. As Marx said about the Paris Commune:

“Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to misrepresent the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people...”**

Representatives of the people and party members will adhere to democratic centralism. They will reject bourgeois political urges like factionalism, eclecticism and pluralism.

The proletarian state does not tail behind the people, unlike the bourgeois state. Bourgeois parties, for the sake of electoral expediency, do not try to enlighten the people — not that they would know how to anyway — and instead, tail behind the most philistine and reactionary views of the population, exacerbating them for the sake of scaremongering people to vote. The proletarian democracy on the other hand constantly moves the subjective factor forward in cultural enlightenment. But at the same time, its democratic character ensures that the party does not become detached from the people, and become commandist and paternalist. Lots of these petty bourgeois utopian socialists and liberals of today imagine that a “democratic” government can impose “enlightenment” on the people anti-consciously, as if they are sheep in a herd. This is not the case. Both tailism*** and commandism**** are wrong. As Stalin stated in *Dizzy with*

* Strong, A. (1934). *Dictatorship and Democracy in the Soviet Union*, in: *Dictatorship and Democracy in the Soviet Union & Soviet Farmers*. The November 8th Publishing House.

** Marx, K. (1871). *Civil War in France*. Foreign Languages Press.

*** **Tailism:** The tendency to tail behind the masses’s incorrect or fragmented ideas without correcting them. It tends to lose sight of communist strategy and settle for reformism.

**** **Commandism:** The tendency to jump too far ahead of the masses’ political consciousness, being aloof from them and treating

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Success:

“The art of leadership is a serious matter. One must not lag behind the movement, because to do so is to lose contact with the masses. But neither must one run too far ahead, because to run too far ahead is to lose the masses and to isolate oneself. He who wants to lead a movement and at the same time keep in touch with the vast masses must wage a fight on two fronts — against those who lag behind and against those who run too far ahead.”*

This is the democracy that the revolutionary student should be fighting for. It is our job to point out how the bourgeois “democracy” today is nothing but a sham. The Fundamental British Values once again show their decay and anachronistic nature.

Reading group questions

How is the bourgeois character of “democracy” evident?

Why is it so important to understand the contradiction between tactics and strategy when it comes to elections?

How does the bourgeois detest of the masses show in their political theory and structure of governments?

What aspects of the “democratic” spectacle disgust you the most?

Why is it so important that we centre a discussion of democracy amongst the students in the liberating education?

them as a static force.

* Stalin, J. (1930). *Dizzy With Success*, in: *Selected Works of J.V. Stalin*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 407).

XIV — RULE OF LAW

Bourgeois law

The third “Fundamental British Value” is that of the *rule of law*.

The FBV curriculum tells students that it must be that the rule of law is sacred in this country. That we must not infringe on the rule of law and must obey the benevolent and upstanding enforcers of the law, that being the criminal justice system and police. The law we are told is in *all* our interests.

But of course, the revolutionary students know this is not the case.

We once again ask the question — for whom? Who is the rule of law for? Who do the administrators of the law — the police, the judges, the prison officers — protect?

It is most demonstrably the bourgeoisie. The police force in this country as we know them today, the *Peelers*, was established to protect property rights and order. They were not established for “protecting the public” or “community outreach” despite how the police today market themselves.

The bourgeois rule of law that serves to uphold bourgeois political power and relations of production has not always existed. There have been previous forms of law. The FBV curriculum obviously does not find it pertinent to mention that — otherwise, it would be to admit there was a time before (and will be a time after) capitalism. In the feudal and mercantile period of England there existed Justices of the Peace (JPs). Did they enforce the rule of the law for the “good of everyone”? No. Their job was to procure taxes and ensure adherence to the feudal social order. This is the same rule of law which the bourgeoisie later rebelled against. And when the socialist countries established their qualitatively new socialist rule of law which would enshrine the rights and protection of all the progressive people, the bitter remnants of the expropriated bourgeoisie and their lackeys infringed on it, disobeyed it and undermined it.

Thus, “respect for the rule of law” is a moral value that the bourgeoisie only propagates when it is the *bourgeois rule of law*.

“Law” not “justice”

It is very interesting that the bourgeoisie in today’s moral “education” propose the “rule of law” as a value instead of a

moral value like “justice.”*

Law and justice are things that are usually used synonymously in normal speaking. When someone heinous faces punishment for their crimes, it is said that they have been “brought to justice.” After all, the entire system of law enforcement is called the “criminal justice system.”

Why is this?

In their ascendancy as a progressive class, “justice” was something the bourgeoisie cared about deeply. This bourgeois “justice” was markedly progressive in contrast to feudal injustices and despotism. Justice was one of the main tenets of the great bourgeois French Revolution. Early petty-bourgeois philosophers like Proudhon also appealed heavily to an idea of eternal justice that could be above class.**

Bourgeois justice and law in its current form was abstracted, made into pure thought — the doctrine of natural law. This occurred alongside the classical works of the bourgeois political economy which also reified capitalism as a natural law. Bourgeois society was seen as the natural state of affairs — the best fulfilment of this eternal justice.

However, the honeymoon period of capitalism subsided rather quickly by the second half of the 19th century. It was increasingly fraught with more crises. Capitalism began to show increasing moribundity. This has been completely exacerbated since imperialist capitalism emerged as the final qualitative characteristic of capitalism in the early 20th century.

No longer is it possible for the bourgeoisie to appeal to an imagined sense of natural “justice.” Strict, unquestioned anti-conscious adherence to the bourgeois state is now required.

That is why now the bourgeois moral “education” in Britain compels us students to adhere to the “rule of law” rather than justice. It is a result of this lurch towards legal positivism and anti-consciousness.

Even the most silver-tongued flunkeys of the bourgeoisie could not feasibly declare the imperialist atrocities of the Anglo-Americans as “just” — not in the correct socialist sense, not in the bourgeois sense, not in the international law established after the Second World War, perhaps not even the wildest

* Though you could argue that “mutual respect and tolerance” encompasses the idea of “social justice” — an absurd notion in the capitalist regime.

** Marx, K. (1846). *The Poverty of Philosophy*. Foreign Languages Press.

most perverted despotic definitions of “justice.” There no longer needs to be the pretence of justice, just obedience. In the aftermath of the terrorist invasion of 2003, 96,000 Iraqis were jailed without warrants by the UK and U.S. Many hundreds were interred in Ireland by the British occupation thugs during the “troubles.” The bourgeois rule of law does not need a charge, it does not need evidence, it does not need justice of any form. All the bourgeois state needs is their veneer of legitimacy to continue to carry out their constant violence and terrorism.*

The rule of law and violence

The rule of law is said to protect our “individual liberty” and safety from violence. This is not the case? We have already established that “individual liberty” is a bourgeois illusion and the tenets of this elusive “liberty” are something afforded only to the bourgeoisie. But what about violence? Could the rule of law help keep the *peace* and prevent violence? After all, what prosperity could be enjoyed in a world fraught with violence and conflict on an individual and global scale?

But this is not the case. Violence on a global scale is inherent in this current stage of imperialist capitalism. Many liberal cosmopolitan types would like to imagine this does not have to be the case and that the bourgeois states can exist harmoniously together. This view was shared by Kautsky’s theory of ultra-imperialism — a theory in service of the social-chauvinists.** However, the objective political economy of imperialist capitalism, through its unequal development, precludes this “peace” on a global scale. “Peace” and alliances are merely temporary and fragile equilibria interposing massive wars and proxy wars on behalf of the insatiable capitalists. The UN’s rule of law has shown itself to be completely weak — it is a thinly veiled proxy of the U.S. under the veneer of “internationalism.” The organisation only decides to enforce its rule of law on countries in contention with the U.S. but looks the other way when it is the U.S. and its proxy states committing atrocities.

But let us imagine all bourgeois states *did* manage to sub-

* Which, in the case of Britain, the rule of law is declared legitimate through the fraudulent bourgeois “democratic” mandate. A mandate that is procured through such a sham of a “democracy” is about as valid as a mandate from heaven.

** Lenin, V. (1916). *Imperialism: The Final Stage of Capitalism*. Penguin Books. (p. 148-9).

jugate themselves to a single international rule of law. There would be no global wars between states. Does this mean peace has been achieved?

To the bourgeois, yes. To the people, no. Peace has not been meaningfully achieved. The contradiction of the class struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie,* and the contradiction between the imperialist powers and the dominated neo-colonies has not been resolved but still exists. These are violent, antagonistic contradictions! What kind of meaningful peace can exist when the bourgeoisie expropriate the workers' labour power into an inch of poverty? What kind of peace exists in countries with open-air slave markets? What kind of peace exists in countries where the natural resources, skilled labourers and culture are violently stolen from the people and siphoned off to the bloated foreign imperialists and their comprador lackeys?

To the average bourgeois, such an arrangement is peace. To us it is not, it is sanctioned and steady murder. This is the bourgeois "peace" the bourgeois rule of law protects. *The rule of law does not protect us from violence, it perpetuates and legitimises violence.* There can be no permanent peace without the new.

The enforcers of the rule of law

Those who enforce the violent bourgeois rule of law are also predictably violent. The police are nothing but a shoal of thugs, forever glorified as upstanding members of the community. There are most likely people who join the police with good intentions, under the belief that the police are nothing but brave, principled public servants. Those with good intentions most likely are weeded out within orientation and the first few months of service, with the remaining ones being altered and conforming.

It is because of the bourgeois oppressive function of the police, the complete callous lack of oversight on the part of bourgeois administration (which does not care about their conduct so long as they continue to defend private property) and how people are taught to anti-consciously obey them (through initiatives like FBV in bourgeois moral "education") that the individual police officers are rendered this way.

This is something the average person knows all too well about. The public has been made aware of multiple cases of officers caught raping, kidnapping and murdering civilians —

* Alongside the contradiction that exists among other classes that still remain in certain countries like the peasantry.

Wayne Couzens, “Bastard Dave” and their ilk. A former police watchdog head, Michael Rookwood, the one tasked with overseeing police conduct, was also charged with rape!

Lots of reactionary bootlickers will minimise the crimes of these heinous thugs or will maintain that they are just a few “bad apples” who took advantage of the job. But it is clear from the investigations surrounding these cases that these were not isolated individuals. For every rapist police officer — and there are many, most of whom will never face justice — there are another ten who know about them, and either keep silent, condone the behaviour and joke about it. This was the case with Couzens who was in a group chat which jokingly nicknamed him the “rapist.” This is not an issue of just a handful of police officers.

In the U.S. for example, a study in Tucson, Arizona found that 40% of police officers were domestic abusers. And domestic abuse is obviously a sociological dark figure. How many more abusers are there in the police forces in the bourgeois states?

Many who scrutinise the police will admit that this is a “systemic issue” but they do not look to the real problem, that being the bourgeois rule of law. A rule of law that permits murder, racial lynching, theft, rape and corruption for the bourgeoisie and their lackeys. They are under the belief that the systemic nature of the police can be gradually ameliorated through diversity hires! This initiative of affirmative action has been attempted by the Met in recent years. The idea is that the more women and people of national minorities in the police, the police’s thuggery will be reduced. This essentially stems from this mistaken liberal idea that an organ of society functions for the people if there is descriptive representation. The fact of the matter is that the metropolitan police are even finding it difficult to reach their diversity targets because so many women and ethnic minorities do not want to participate in the brutishness that they have been on the receiving end of.

Regardless of the demographics of the police, as long as they remain bourgeois police, upholding the bourgeois rule of law for the bourgeois class, the truncheons they hit protestors with will hurt just as much, the prisons they put us in will be just as punitive, their tactics of protest kettling will be just as dishonourable and their disdain for the people will be just as severe.

And as long as the bourgeois rule predominates, the bourgeois remain exempt from their own rule of law. The richest bourgeois have been exposed as fraudsters, tax evaders and are mired in personal scandals. Yet they will never face ramifica-

tions because they have enough money to afford the best lawyers and to pay their way out of conviction through out-of-court settlements. This discrepancy in the enforcement of the rule of law on the vile politicians, the billionaires, the royal family and their ilk is something the FBV curriculum conveniently omits.

The new law

What is the solution? We need a new law. A rule of law of the proletarian state which serves the working people.

No longer will thuggish police — servile to the bourgeois property owners — parade our streets. No longer will we have a bourgeois court system that defends the bourgeoisie and bourgeois vices like rape.*

The bourgeois charlatan historian throws a lot of slanders at the socialist rule of law. The bourgeois decries the socialist rule of law as totalitarian and evokes fantastic dystopian “facts” about the Soviet Gulag system as evidence. These allegations are blatantly fallacious, made by a lying anti-Semite Solzhenitsyn and the U.S. propaganda department.**

We need law that does not create criminals but serve as educational institutes to rehabilitate people into socialist society — to imbue them with social love, theoretical knowledge and productive skills just like the liberating education system does. In the current bourgeois society, prisons are rife with gangs, rape

* In Britain, only a tiny fraction of rapes, domestic abuse cases and other forms of sexual violence lead to conviction. The bourgeois rule of law and court is structured in such a way that victims of these crimes face secondary victimisation.

** The Soviet constitution, rule of law and penal codes were established on a mass basis, in the proletarian interest. Whilst the Soviet penal system utilised labour of prisoners, as did every prison system in the capitalist countries at that time — and the U.S. still does. Work in the gulag was 10 hours a day, less than some of the “free workers” in capitalism during that time and today. Mortality rate in the gulags was also significantly lower than during the Tsarist regime, with the exception of the period during the second world war due to economic privation. Only 0.9% of convicts served more than ten years. Incarceration rate during the political turmoil in 1939 only ever reached 0.98% which is compared to America’s incarceration rate of 0.7%. For more information:

<<https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP-80T00246A032000400001-1.pdf>>, Getty, A. Ritterspom, G. & Zemskov, V. (1983). *Victims of the Soviet Penal System in the Pre-War Years: A First Approach on Archival Evidence*. American Historical Review.

and drugs.* Prisoners are subjected to mental and physical torture and alienation by brutish guards. People enter the prison system as petty thieves and leave as hardened thugs.** Re-offending rates are high. Those few who are “rehabilitated” are not rehabilitated in a true sense — “rehabilitation” in capitalism merely means that these former prisoners have succumbed to proletarianisation, and are now under the yoke of capitalist exploitation like everyone else.

The liberating and revolutionary student must point out the facts of the bourgeois rule of law loudly and clearly. They must show the students in bourgeois moral “education” that this rule of law is not in their interests.

Reading group questions

How does the bourgeois law uphold their class rule?

What are some examples you can think of where individual bourgeois have been able to escape the law scot-free?

Why is it telling that the FBVs emphasise the “rule of law” rather than “justice”?

What crimes against the people does the rule of law uphold?

What needs to be different about socialist law?

* And in the U.S. — a country that projects all these various slanders about the Soviet prison system — actively uses their prisons as a means of slave labour under a caveat in the 13th amendment. American private companies essentially use the prison system as a means to continue the lucrative slave trade through the mass incarceration of black people for petty crimes.

** Notorious convict Charles Bronson after all only entered prison as a petty thief.

XV — MUTUAL RESPECT AND TOLERANCE

Mutual respect and tolerance

Now we move on to the final “Fundamental British Value” in bourgeois moral “education” — mutual respect and tolerance. These values are sometimes displayed separately but have recently been lumped together as just one combined value on much of the official FBV iconography.

What does this value mean according to the FBV curriculum?

“Paradox of tolerance” — the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie

“Mutual respect” supposedly means that we are all entitled to our views and understandings of the world. Then why is it that the revolutionary and progressive students are harassed by *Prevent*? Why is it that the bourgeois school curriculum teaches only the bourgeois view of the world in an anti-conscious way?

The bourgeois has a demagogic answer for this. They call it the “paradox of intolerance.” The bourgeois argues that those intolerant to the idea of tolerance must be suppressed — or at least, society must reserve the right to suppress them — in order to best protect “tolerance.”

But tolerance for whom?

Tolerance for bourgeois rule.

Officially, the bourgeois lists communists as *intolerant* alongside fascists and religious fundamentalists. But in practice, it tends only to be the communists that are suppressed in the last instance.

The fascists, even in times of relative stability of liberal “democracy,” remain darlings of the bourgeois media, uninhibited in their speech as long as they are careful with their language. Purely fascist ideological positions like war expansionism, Malthusianism, anti-Semitic “Holodomor” theory and Banderatism, ethnonationalism, anti-immigrant sentiment and colonial historical revisionism are completely normalised. The intolerant fascists are not only tolerated but deified. The fascists may be intolerant to ideological pluralism but they are not intolerant to capitalism — but rather are its most obsequious and ravenous defenders — so, therefore, they are made exempt. All the fascists

receive from the liberal bourgeois state is a slap on the wrist when the fascists organise and terrorise. According to official statistics, there were only 1,229 referrals (25%) made about “extreme right-wing radicalisation,” from March to March 2020-21.* If the liberal bourgeois truly were equally intolerant for the intolerant, we would expect much higher figures given the absolute brazen and unrepentant nature of these reactionaries that plague our schools and other institutions.

Whilst it is true that alleged Islamic religious fundamentalism has been at the primary brunt of the *Prevent* scheme, its high referral figure can be more owed to a sense of national chauvinism. Teachers, particularly in the inception of the FBV scheme, were very anxious about Islamic students, especially in 2016 when there were a series of terror attacks carried out by fundamentalists in London and Manchester. Thus, these referrals are more indicative of typification and chauvinism as opposed to actual intolerance of intolerance. This is seen by the fact that referrals of this kind have also dropped significantly from 5,000 in 2015-16 to just over 1,000 in 2020-21. Meanwhile, the dozens of intolerant fundamentalists from other religious hues remain uninhibited. In fact, these fundamentalists who propagate complete retrogression to an overtly intolerant theocracy are in a comfortable lobbying position to the bourgeois government, far from being not tolerated for being intolerant. The liberal bourgeois media cries crocodile tears over Afghanistan, a country that the Anglo-American imperialists had bombed and pillaged for opium for decades, now fallen into the hands of an uncooperative Islamist Taliban regime. They only cry these tears because it is no longer compliant with U.S. imperialism — U.S. imperialism has supported a panoply of regimes with regressive views. Thus, it is clear that in regards to these violently intolerant religious fundamentalists — who advocate for the slavery of the working people — the bourgeoisie is very tolerant, their secular ideals being very negotiable as long as the rule of capital is protected.**

Now we turn to the revolutionaries. Are we intolerant? No.

* <<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/individuals-referred-to-and-supported-through-the-prevent-programme-april-2020-to-march-2021/individuals-referred-to-and-supported-through-the-prevent-programme-england-and-wales-april-2020-to-march-2021>>

** We have already seen this illustrated in social policy in “education” where religious schools, which have very intolerant teachings, are allowed to operate.

The revolutionary people are only intolerant to the rule of the bourgeoisie and this intolerance is unwavering.

Popper argues that communists are “enemies” of the “open society” because they allegedly regard human institutions as other than man-made.* And this means that they are intolerant to those who hold positions other than their own because their non-man-made view of society is “unfalsifiable” and a “reinforced dogmatism.” The fascists and religious doctrines see society as decreed by god or a national spirit, whilst the communists, according to Popper, see it as decreed by “inexorable necessity.” But this is the most blatant projection! It is the average bourgeois who sees capitalism, capital accumulation and capitalist commodity as a natural law, decreed by “inexorable necessity.” It is the bourgeois charlatans like Popper who reify capitalism. It is bourgeois morality and the Fundamental British Values that are unfalsifiable abstractions, not derived from any “empirical test.” And therefore, the bourgeois become intolerant of all those who opine against this moribund mode of production. On the other hand, it is only the communists who see capitalism as a relation between people, a struggle between classes. So by Popper’s own decree, it is we who are the tolerant ones, and communism the only means of achieving an “open society.”

In conclusion, we see that the bourgeoisie fail to note who this “tolerance” in the FBVs is for: tolerance for the bourgeoisie and their ideology. Under the pretext of “protecting tolerance,” they silence revolutionary voices but only tepidly, if at all, combat the overtly intolerant fascists and fundamentalists. In the name of “tolerance,” the bourgeois abounds in naked relativism, elevating the most barbaric chauvinists whilst stifling the voice of revolution and liberation.

Bourgeois tailism of tolerance and liberalisation

The Fundamental British Value of “mutual respect and tolerance” does not just purportedly cover “tolerance” of political views and religious beliefs but also extends to the tolerance and equal respect of people with particular characteristics.

Bourgeois moral “education” today makes a big point of broadcasting an “inclusive” and “tolerant” image. Schools claim that they are, in accordance with the FBVs, the apogee

* Cornforth, M. (1968). *The Open Philosophy and the Open Society*. The November 8th Publishing House. (p. 443).

of tolerance of people with protected characteristics.* But we as the revolutionary students understand that capitalism thrives upon and seeks expansion in the subjugation of people based on their gender, ethnicity and other attributes. So this “image” of tolerance is thus — a simple image. Superficial, shallow, tailist and revocable.

Schools for instance may host Black History Month sessions to appear “tolerant.” But as James Boggs noted about Black history classes in the U.S.:

“Most black history classes consisted of little more than the listing of black personalities. No real attempt was made to distinguish between reactionary and progressive black figures or to provide black students (or any other students for that matter) with an understanding of the historical development of and the organic relationship between racism and capitalism in the United States.”**

These classes will venerate Barack Obama, Oprah Winfrey or some other bourgeois lackeys. The actual role of these figures in historical development is not mentioned, just that these figures are black and “famous.” What does this inane exercise in liberalisation have anything in common with tolerance? These lessons of “tolerance” are taught alongside a curriculum that whitewashes the crimes of British colonialism and continues to whitewash the crimes of British imperialism today.

As much as the bourgeois moralists in “education” like to imagine themselves as leading champions of tolerance, they are its most obstinate opposition.*** The bourgeois tail behind the progress of tolerance, and drag it back as soon as they see the opportunity. Every single right the oppressed workers have won has been through the struggle, not through it being handed down for “tolerance’s” sake. The bourgeois and their postmodernist lackeys like to imagine that the liberation of these groups can be

* Characteristics that are protected under the 2010 Equality Act: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

** The Advocators. (1971). *Education to Govern*. Foreign Languages Press.

*** And obviously, there are groups that the British bourgeois does not even give a pretence of tolerance to like transgender people, romanichal and refugees.

handed down by capitalists, or can be won in a fragmented and individualist way only in discourse.

The revolutionary student rejects these faux ideas of “tolerance.” The revolutionary students understand that the liberation of these groups can only come through a united revolution against capitalism.

Misogyny in bourgeois “education”

The bourgeoisie despite their great show of tolerance continue to perpetuate open misogyny in bourgeois “education.”

Is the misogyny of the bourgeois entirely contingent on their development as a class? No. The bourgeoisie has an objective economic interest in the subjugation of women, and this is reflected through various means in “education.”

The origin of women’s subjugation is found in the emergence of class society, where there arose the need for definite inheritance of private property. Women’s subjugation is also a huge renewing force of capitalism — women’s burdensome domestic role, which is culturally enforced by the bourgeois, renews the commodity of the labour-power of herself and her family.* This allows for the capitalist to extract even more surplus-value from their labour-power as they are essentially indirectly extracting value from the toil of the subjugated woman, in the home and in social production. This is what sociologists have called a “dual burden.”**

Thus, the subjugation of women is something that is in the class interest of the bourgeoisie, so it is something that is inculcated in “education,” even if it is done so under the thin veneer of “tolerance” or “empowerment.”

Take sex education courses in the bourgeois school for example. We agree that fundamental education on personal boundaries and sexual health is of deep importance for the youth. But bourgeois sex education is deeply misogynistic and redolent of bourgeois individualism. The bourgeois sexual education courses are very cheery on the subject of porn and only warn against its negative effects on the individual consumer, e.g., erectile dysfunction, addiction and so on. The bourgeois sex education rare-

* Ghandy, A. (2016). *Philosophical Trends in the Feminist Movement*. Foreign Languages Press. (p. 78).

** Though of course, most of the bourgeois sociologists attempt to detach this phenomenon from capitalism’s objective economic development.

ly, if ever, talks about the sex industry's character in general,* and that the enrichment of these big pornography companies and pimps is inextricably built off exploitation and trafficking. This is because, in bourgeois society, one's capacity for sex and love itself has been fetishised as a commodity.** The solicitor of the trafficked prostitute interacts only with the commodity of sexual intercourse, abstract from her as a human being. In Britain today, girls are groomed from a young age on false promises of extreme wealth to join "activities" such as OnlyFans. This is all done under the name of "tolerance" and "empowerment" — the only thing the sordid institution of the sex industry tolerates and empowers is the wealth of the capitalist.

"Tolerance" as bourgeois cosmopolitanism and fetishism

Another way in which the bourgeoisie through the "Fundamental British Values" claims to uphold tolerance is in regards to culture.

We are told that Britain is a proudly multicultural society tolerant of all ethnic groups and their customs.

But we understand this to patently not be the case. How can Britain, a country that has participated in and continues to participate in global imperialist atrocities be considered tolerant of other ethnic groups and cultures? The Anglo-American imperialists impose themselves through financial usury onto the imperialised countries, plundering their resources and their labour.*** In doing so, they also plunder their culture and impose the imperialists' culture and customs as the dominant or correct.

Thus, the "tolerance" of bourgeois multiculturalism is only shallow and fetishistic. It reduces other cultures to a commodifiable trope of food, music or fashion,**** and also conflates other vastly different cultures into homogenous blocs (e.g., the "Mid-

* And this also to some extent applies to the big film industry in America where actors are coerced into naked scenes with no artistic value in order to augment box office revenue.

** Caudwell, C. (1938). *Studies in A Dying Culture*. The November 8th Publishing House.

*** It is important to mention that cultural imperialism is a *result* of the concrete political economy of imperialism. The Foucault disciple Edward Said's analysis in *Orientalism* is limited insofar that he often detaches the cultural aspect from the economic aspect and dwells into the realm of postmodernist discourse theory nonsense.

**** Smith, S. (1995). *Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity*. The New Magazine Publishing Company.

dle East,” “Africa,” “Asia,” “Latin America”).* We see this clearly in the content of bourgeois “education” elsewhere where the British identity is seen as the apogee and the norm, whilst other cultures are met with a condescending paternalism which implies they are inferior.

Under the banner of multiculturalism and tolerance, refugee boats are sunk, people drown and people are enslaved. The Anglo-American imperialists and the EU, the same people clamouring about “mutual respect and tolerance,” are the ones funding the Tunisian dictator Saied’s pogroms against Sub-Saharan migrants.

Defence of the rights of all — the call of the revolutionary student for proletarian internationalism

The bourgeois call for “mutual respect and tolerance” is a sham. The bourgeoisie very reluctantly tails the tolerance of various groups and is hungry to drum up reaction and national chauvinism wherever it sees possible. The bourgeois’ alleged “tolerance” for dissident political beliefs is also a sham — it is sheer bourgeois relativism and is an excuse to defend the ability of fascists, monarchists and religious fundamentalists to propagandise uninhibited whilst the revolutionaries are slandered and suppressed.

So what is the revolutionary party and students’ response?

The revolutionaries must oppose all conscious and subconscious bourgeois attitudes of chauvinism and bigotry. It is the duty of every revolutionary to have intricate knowledge of the particularities in which the proletariat is oppressed in capitalism by their national background and gender amongst other things. We must come out in defence of the rights of all workers against capitalism that is so violently intolerant of them.

The workers of the world must not fall to bourgeois nationalism. They must be united in a common spirit of proletarian internationalism and solidarity.

Proletarian internationalism does not *only* mean solidarity messages, turning up to international summits, solidarity protests and learning extensively about the struggles of all the other social formations. These are good things to do but the most

* And in a unity of its opposite lies bourgeois assimilationism and national chauvinism. The dropping of this fragile fake tolerance of bourgeois multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism. This is becoming the dominant trend within British politics.

sincere act of proletarian revolution is to build revolution in one's own nation. Proletarian internationalism is certainly not ultra-left phrasemongering about a fantastic "world revolution" in one swoop. Imperialist capitalism is characterised by uneven objective and subjective development. As we have through previous revolutionary practice, revolution bubbles up where the chain of imperialism is the weakest, but it can not be imposed externally onto countries where the conditions are not yet ripe. Working towards the revolution in one's own country weakens the imperialist order.

To be a true proletarian internationalist is to be actively working towards revolution in your own country and to have great knowledge and social love for the progressive people of your own nation. This is the unity of opposites that comprise genuine proletarian internationalism. Similarly, one can not be a "patriot" of their country if they support their own bourgeoisie and the imperialist order. The fascists and social-chauvinists claim to be "patriotic" but their nationalism is bourgeois in character. They do not love the people of their country or the world but relish in the subjugation of the people of the world to their specific capitalists. A true "patriot" who wants the best for their nation of people understands that this is found in socialism and proletarian internationalism, not imperialist wars and jingoism.

The revolutionary view of individuality

The hysterical reactionaries absurdly claim that communism is intolerant of personality and personal preferences. This is genuinely a belief that some of the jibbering opponents of liberation claim. They say that communism forces everyone to have the same hobbies, same favourite sport, same favourite song, same favourite food and so on. This is ridiculous.

The revolutionary student on the other hand — a materialist dialectician — recognises the salient fact that people are different biologically and also develop differently. It is impossible for people to all have the same tastes, same interests, same pre-occupations, same predilections of leisure. Nor is it expedient to. People's predilections are also not static but develop with experience and age. Some people may have a favourite song and favourite film, not necessarily because the art in itself is of maximum pleasure to them, but because this piece of art is tied to a sense of nostalgia and reminds them of fond memories

of childhood. Similarly, people's palettes for food develop with age. Only dialectical materialism is able to understand the dialectical development of the individual's personal preferences as something that is rooted in the material, interconnected to outside stimuli and something that is in constant development as a result of internal contradiction. And only communism is able to enable the individual the freedom — that is the knowledge of material reality in order to work towards these definite ends — to pursue their personal preferences.

On the other hand, class society, and especially capitalism, precludes the tolerance of people's individual preferences and predilections. The working people are deprived of the knowledge and ability to pursue lots of different types of leisure and preferences. The nature of class society is not tolerant to the people's need for material and cultural enrichment in accordance with their personal tastes. Many leisure activities like golf, skiing, opera and so on are reserved for the wealthy bourgeois. Capitalism is clearly old and moribund — it is fettering the masses' access to their personal satisfaction.

The revolutionary opposition to bourgeois pluralism

What about tolerance of different ideological views? Should the proletarian society tolerate bourgeois views for the sake of pluralism and tolerance?

No, it should not. The capitalists do not tolerate us and neither do we tolerate the dregs of bourgeois reaction. This especially applies within the party in regard to democratic centralism.

Once the revolutionary party decides democratically on its political line, the party must remain monolithic in this line, and when conditions change, so should the line in accordance with principles. It should not flirt with an opposing bourgeois line for the sake of pluralism and tolerance. Unlike the bourgeois today, we are not neo-Kantians, phenomenologists or postmodernists — we understand that objective reality does exist and ideological pluralism is an escape from this objective reality into relativism. We understand of course that no ideological-political line is infallible because no knowledge is absolute, but it is through the progressive development of social practice and theory that the party and socialist society can march ever further in knowledge, towards the truth.

But what about the people? People today, including you and

I, can hold incorrect ideas without even our knowledge that these ideas are wrong. Should we all be thrown away under lock and key as no anti-people ideas should be tolerated?

The revolutionary needs to acknowledge the fact that some people, party and non-party, may hold mistaken ideas. Today in Britain, political consciousness and the subjective factor are not very strong yet. We raise the political consciousness of the intermediate people not by isolating them or shaming them, but by working *with* them — just as how a teacher in the liberating education should work with a student to correct their errors. For instance, in many study groups I have participated in, we have encountered people with wrong ideas. There may be people for instance who mistakenly deny the objective and universal character of dialectics, or misunderstand a point of historical materialism and engage in idealism, or misunderstand the importance of current tasks. This is all right. Instead of antagonistically destroying the person through ad hoc attacks, you must destroy the wrong ideas. You tolerate the person as a person, and engage with them on a human level. We must self-criticise and criticise in a constructive way. You do not reject dissident ideas anti-consciously but instead, try to determine why these ideas have arisen. Much can be learned from this.

Culture in the socialist countries is a shining example of this. Bourgeois countries decree what culture is “good” and “bad” anti-consciously. Through the objective structure of funding and political repression, they completely censor revolutionary culture and works that are dissident to their hegemony. Art is subjugated to the bourgeois minority. No justification is given for their censorship because they realise they can not convincingly repudiate the great revolutionary works that abound in so much validity and resonance with the people. On the other hand, the cultural movement in the Soviet Union — despite being pejoratively named the “Zhdanovschina” — was the complete opposite of this. Bourgeois manifestations in culture weren’t just curtly dismissed or stuffed under the rug, but they were repudiated openly and systematically in a mass movement. It did not settle for pluralism with bourgeois methods but criticised them openly and monolithically. The revolutionary has no fear of bourgeois dissidence because this dissidence is always built of sophism and anti-people rhetoric. The “Zhdanovschina” constructively exposed the flaws of these counter-revolutionary manifestations in a tolerant way, by explaining to the people and party *why* these works of culture were hostile.

Without this, education and societal ideas become anti-consciously enforced because their validity is not proved through finding out and conveyed through dialogue. The subjective factor becomes detached from the changing objective conditions. This is the death knell of socialism.

To summarise the key difference: bourgeois “tolerance” is superficial, tailist and relativist whereas the revolutionary is genuine, patient, progressive and monolithic.

That makes it all four of the great pillars of the “Fundamental British Values” that have crumbled under the weight of revolutionary investigation.

Reading group questions

Why is it so important that the liberal bourgeoisie uphold this superficial image of “tolerance”?

What examples of clear intolerance to the working people can you identify in bourgeois “education”?

How have you seen bourgeois “education” attempt to liberalise progressive or revolutionary figures?

What other examples of misogyny can you identify in bourgeois “education”?

Why is it important as revolutionaries that we oppose pluralism and relativism?

THE LIBERATING EDUCATION



XVI — WITHIN AND OVERCOMING THE OLD, CONSTRUCTING THE NEW

Move from the old to the new

We have investigated in great detail the content and form of bourgeois “education” in Britain as it exists today in the previous chapters.

We have shown that education has a historical and class character, with bourgeois “education” today existing thusly in relation to its class function.

We have investigated the anti-conscious form of bourgeois “education,” its teachers, its examinations and its social policy.

We have also exposed the decadent and philistine content of bourgeois “education” in the realm of social sciences and its moral “education,” both of which are patently reactionary and anachronistic.

Our extensive social investigation into bourgeois “education” has exposed both its non-liberating, oppressive character, and importantly, why this oppressive character is necessitated. We have exposed that bourgeois “education” is an old system, and that the old way can not exist forever.

But once again we return to Marx’s epochal edict:

“The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it.”*

It is a petty-bourgeois and liberal attitude to imagine we can just investigate things as they are, see their undesirable nature but then sulk in response. Investigation is a call to action. Theory is a call to social practice.

We must know how we can destroy the bourgeois “education” system. We must know how the liberating “education” will be built in its stead.

The two stages of liberating education

There are fundamentally two stages of liberating education:

* Marx, K. (1845). *Theses on Feuerbach*, in: *Marx and Engels Selected Works One Volume*. Lawrence & Wishart.

pre-revolution education and revolutionary, socialist education.

This is integral to our understanding of the various content and forms the liberating education should include at the different stages of objective and subjective conditions.

Hence, the purpose of the following chapters in this book is not to fantasise about the future ideal socialist or communist education. We as revolutionary students under the leadership of the working class have the historic duty of building a truly liberating education system both *before* the revolution too.

In fact, pre-revolutionary education is a prerequisite to the revolution. Wide political and theoretical education of the workers and youth, led by the party, is essential.

Socialist education is essential for the construction, consolidation and defence of the revolution and socialism from enemies external and internal, from enemies ideological and corporal.

This book is an example of the first stage of education: the construction of the new in the shell of the old.

The pre-revolutionary liberating education system is necessarily less systematised and a more ad hoc affair. We do not have state power pre-revolution. The construction of the liberating education system, therefore, is seriously impeded by a lack of resources due to the fact it is the subordinate opposite to the bourgeois oppressive education. The former's development is hampered by the latter as the revolutionary students' time is taken up by the latter, and their brains are stultified by it. As such, the liberating education pre-revolution is a counter-trend in opposition to the "legitimate" "education" of the bourgeois — an *exopedagogy*.*

But of course, the liberating proletarian education can not reach a place of dominance until the revolution, when the proletariat wins state power. Here it can be consolidated and systematised holistically as a part of a socialist society.

Essentially, our task as revolutionary students is to build the first stage of the liberating education system against bourgeois "education."

Pre-revolution education

So what is the general form and content of pre-revolution education? What is it specifically the students and workers need to build?

* **Exopedagogy:** Pedagogy or education existing outside of state power and the ideology of the ruling class.

The content of the pre-revolution liberating education system has to be a lot more focused and immediate.

In the socialist education system when we have state power, content is obviously going to be a lot wider, covering every facet that the bourgeois “education” system currently does but in infinitely more enriching depth and validity. We will touch on the specifics in great detail later but the post-revolution education will be holistic and will teach students everything from English language and literature, mathematics, natural and social sciences, physical education and the arts.

The task of pre-revolutionary education is to grant as many students and workers as possible, in the quickest time possible, a base-level political and ideological consciousness. That is why the pre-revolutionary liberating education in content is necessarily far more narrow.

What binds pre-revolutionary education and socialist education is the fact that both their content and form must be subjugated to the specific needs of the proletariat and the revolution. Both pre-revolutionary education and socialist education have the same class character, it is who is in control of state power that creates a quantitative difference between the two.

The content of pre-revolutionary education should encompass an intimate study of the character of capitalism and socialism, the bourgeois character of the state* — the key link — basic political economy, the study of the revolutionary attitude and outlook, the defence of the rights of all, and should contain rich Marxist-Leninist philosophical content throughout.

Some people in pre-revolutionary education may turn their noses up at the emphasis on applying the Marxist method to a study of the position of ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ and disabled people in capitalism currently. They may argue that these people only comprise a minority of the population so the specificities of their position in capitalism are not needed to be known by the entire study group when time is of the essence. This is a grave mistake. It is absolutely integral that the pre-revolutionary education system covers these issues thoroughly. Thoroughly studying these areas acts as a safeguard against both chauvinism or liberal “identity politics” emerging within these revolutionary study cells — it can make sure that we do not settle for a bourgeois postmodernist definition of “liberation” of these groups, and understand their oppression and liberation is tied to the pro-

* Studying Lenin’s *The State and Revolution* is of prime importance here

letarian revolution. If the pre-revolutionary liberating education becomes chauvinist or liberal, if it attempts to detach struggle from a struggle against capitalism, or joins in on the chauvinist clamours of the bourgeois, it ceases to be revolutionary.*

Similarly, people in pre-revolutionary study groups I have been in have often shrugged their heads at the relevance of the latter and claimed that Marxist philosophy is something of subsidiary importance, something that can be learned at a later date in people's own time. This is a grave mistake. The study of the basics of Marxist philosophy, that is, dialectical materialism, contradiction, and a critique of idealism and metaphysics are of paramount importance for people's immediate education in these pre-revolutionary systems of liberating education. If the study of dialectical materialism is neglected, often the study of other integral and immediate areas like the bourgeois state, political economy and historical materialism fall on deaf ears. Students can easily become eclectic, mechanistic, dogmatic or adventurist.

That being said, it is easy to see why some misguided individuals may raise tepid opposition to the centrality of philosophy in the content of pre-revolutionary education. Philosophy in the bourgeois "education" system is taught in an understandably dogmatic, bookish and abstract manner. This should not be the case with the pre-revolutionary liberating education system which makes sure to concretise the study of Marxist philosophy in current events important to the students, to evidence its validity and necessity.

This concretisation should be a feature of all the content of pre-revolutionary liberating education. It should focus on the purely immediate events, the political conjuncture of the given moment. We should use books and resources of the classics but not focus time on memorising events and people of the last century, rather applying what is relevant in methodology and content today.

This could mean focusing on news events, exposing what is really at play in terms of the class struggle, or engaging in an exposition of the bourgeois character of a given bourgeois intellectual.

* Outward promotion and displaying that a liberating study group is focusing on these issues also helps show its progressive and inclusive character. It can help create a diverse membership of these study groups which enriches their correspondence with the facts on the ground and the validity of their social investigation.

What form should the pre-revolutionary liberating education take?

The forms of pre-revolutionary education should be as varied as possible to augment its accessibility. Reading groups and study groups of progressive students are an excellent form as it allows for group discussion and concretisation of educational content in people's group experiences. It can transform the perceptual into conceptual. It also ensures that people keep up with reading and ask questions whenever necessary so that they do not lag behind in their understanding of content. Study groups can also create valuable contacts which can be used as a basis for organising.

Dissemination of educational materials through social media is also a propitious form but should not be relied on entirely. The world exists beyond the screen. One should prioritise education in geographically local cells as national, and international, study groups have limited practical ability.

Edict for the construction of socialist education: “break down less”

After the initial victory of the revolution, the task begins to build a new liberating education system. The content and form of the new liberating education system will be unapologetically proletarian. Every single subject, every single facet of the school in its organisation and function will be ruthlessly critiqued to make sure that the bourgeois, oppressive character of “education” is vanquished.

But the liberating, socialist education system, just like the socialist economy, state and culture, can not be built in a day. Its construction may be a long, certainly intricate, process.

Pokrovsky talks about Lenin's edict to “break down less” in regard to the school.* What does this mean? It is important that we analyse contradictions in a practical way, we find out who is the people and who is the enemy. There can be the “left” deviationist impulse of sectarianism and mindless avant-gardist destruction. But we must remember that negation is not just saying no and that aspects of the old are retained in the new, albeit with a different character.

Infantile “left” deviationists might imagine it to be expedient to sack all current teachers for being complicit in the bourgeois

* Pokrovsky, M. (1924). *What Lenin Was For Our Higher School*. Neodemocracy Blogspot.

“education” system. Such a notion is wholly inexpedient and infantile. It is sowing antagonism between the people. Where also would the working class source 600,000 new teachers from?

It is clear that the retention of personnel in the revolutionary change in education is essential and necessary. This is how we “break down less.” If we arbitrarily sacked all teachers who displayed any petty-bourgeois attitudes, we would cause cataclysmic disruption to the education system.

Of course, we have mentioned that there are some teachers who are incorrigibly reactionary. There are teachers who go above and beyond the fallaciousness of the bourgeois “education” system. It is necessary *these* teachers, who may only account for about a twentieth of the total teaching population we would say, be removed from their post, put under watch, or be made to conduct severe self-criticism.

But for a vast majority of teachers, such measures are impractical and unnecessary. Instead, the petty-bourgeois character of the teacher can be unlearned through non-antagonistic criticism and self-criticism, through their participation and integration into the party and revolutionary movement.

In the early stages, as Lenin noted, it is expedient to curb potential reactionary attitudes from teachers, principally in the social sciences, by making sure advocacy for the bourgeois regime becomes untenable. We can make sure social sciences curriculums include a study on the most appalling crimes of British colonialism and imperialism so that the teacher is forced to condemn the crimes of the Old rather than shy away from them.*

This edict of “break down less” not only applies to the revolutionisation of personnel but also the basic infrastructure of schools. As we have outlined prior, we understand that the infrastructure of bourgeois schools is unsatisfactory and redolent of its myopic marketisation policies. Schools do not have enough facilities for physical education and leisure. Resources are often unevenly spread over departments. But what does this mean? This does not mean that we in an infantile impracticable manner, destroy all existing buildings and infrastructure and build it again from scratch. No. Especially in the early years of the revolution, when the socialist economy is only starting to get settled, when we would most likely be subject to a blockade, it is absolutely integral that we do not be frivolous with existing resources and infrastructure. Instead, it will be that schools built

* Fitzpatrick, S. (1979). *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union 1921-1934*. Cambridge University Press. (ch. 4).

from then on will be furnished and constructed in the appropriate proletarian manner, and existing schools can undergo renovation when it is practicable to do so.

This is the importance of the edict of “break down less.” Whilst these ideas may seem entirely intuitive and sensible, it is important they are stated in certain terms as there is the tendency for petty “left” avant-gardism and adventurism which could be detrimental to the long-term strategy of socialist educational construction.*

The need for an intensification of education to continue the revolution

In socialist education, it is of the utmost importance that we do not become complacent and formalistic. We must not lose vigilance and care in the construction of the liberating education.

Why?

Because even after the construction of socialism in Britain, and the full elimination and expropriation of the bourgeoisie, which signals the elimination of antagonistic classes on the economic level in Britain, class struggle will still continue for a long time. It continues from external enemies and imperialists, who may try to shake the unity of the party and people and incur savage blockades and plots on the socialist countries. But it also occurs internally with the remnants of the bourgeoisie or through the emergence of a new bourgeoisie in the form of a bureaucracy or technocracy that has arisen through the mishandling of the contradiction between mental and manual labour.**

As such, liberating education must constantly renew itself and intensify itself in the face of the desperate attempts of the bourgeois for capitalist restoration.

It was noted by Stalin how the second and third generations lacked education because they got carried away when they were embroiled in the revolution and fell into revolutionary practicalism. Some of this new generation had poor theoretical knowl-

* There also seems to be a petty-bourgeois disdain amongst the academics of “critical pedagogy” against productive and practical education. They see that capitalism has productive education and therefore imagine that socialism has to negate capitalist “education” in every conceivable means and do away with productive education. This is an error and something we will discuss later.

** Hoxha, N. (1977). *Some Fundamental Questions of the Class Struggle*. The November 8th Publishing House.

edge, only sourcing their knowledge of the classics from fragmented quotes.

It is not enough to merely be immersed in the “pedagogy of the environment” as the left-deviationist V. Shulgin argued, as he even posited the liquidation of the school as an institution altogether.* It is no doubt that the lack of education among some of the party cadre and the youth was an important asset to the Khrushchevite revisionism’s seizure of power.

The final victory of communism can only be guaranteed by unrelenting education. Socialism must be consciously and defended by everyone.

Reading group questions

What are the current problems of the workers and youth today that should be the main focus of pre-revolutionary education?

Why do we see that we need to “break down less” in socialist education?

Why is it important that we intensify education after the initial victory of the revolution?

* Fitzpatrick, S. (1979). *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union 1921-1934*. Cambridge University Press. (p. 142).

XVII — REVOLUTIONISING THE STUDENTS

Tailor content and form to the subjective conditions of the students

Now it comes to the task of discussing how it is we should revolutionise and mobilise the students, both in pre-revolutionary education and post-revolutionary education.

Students are a potentially fierce revolutionary force. But they need to be taught correctly.

What is important is that the party, in leading the educational effort, is able to adapt the content and form of pre-revolutionary education in whatever way is most appropriate to the subjective and objective conditions. For example, if there are many students who are already quite progressive and advanced, the content and form of education sessions can be more advanced. If it is approaching exam season, students may have less time available to study, so sessions may have to be shorter in time, more flexible or lose the entire label of “study” altogether so students do not see it as additional education on top of their overburdening of bourgeois “education.”

It is also important to elaborate theory for oneself rather than reciting it letter by letter like a holy script. There are often going to be people of different literacy levels, some may have not ever read an entire book all the way through and will become quickly disengaged and confused if educational material is not simplified into common words.

This is not to say that students should be patronised and that the classics have to be translated into baby talk. What is important above all is making sure that everyone has a solid understanding of key technical terms and having these modern definitions for the construction of the new.

This has been an issue in my own experience. For background, I used to produce educational Marxist infographics on Instagram. These infographics covered a curriculum of dialectical and historical materialism in quite significant depth. However, in retrospect, it was clear I had made some errors in the form of education.

Firstly, the text of the infographics was too reliant on technical terms. This was in order to be as precise as possible in terms, so as to be as accurate as possible. It was also because I

was trying to build a linear curriculum, expecting that people would read the infographics in order. Terms like “social division of labour” or “means of labour” would be defined and explained in one infographic but not in the next.

But this form of the curriculum was not conducive to Instagram as a platform because often, people would not read the infographics in order, and non-followers who stumbled across them would be put off by the technicality of the language and would not follow.

Each infographic should have been accessible in content and form to a first-time reader and some of the most basic political consciousness. I should have also been willing to use more simplified language and put terms into normal words, rather than focusing on being precise with language. What is important is not people’s retention and memorisation of certain terms, but that they understand the general point of the education session. What is not important is that one can recall what Spinoza, Hegel, Kant and La Mettrie said about such and such, or for one to be able to recall the titles and year Marx and Engels published their most important philosophical works, but rather, what the important differences are between metaphysics and dialectics, or between idealism, dualism and materialism.

I recall that many infographic questions at the end to test understanding did not test general understanding or application but rather were semantics tests. This was another error.

One more error with the form of this liberating education was that, in an obsession to be as precise and orderly as possible, I would title the infographics very prosaically. Infographics would be called “What is the Labour Process?” or “What are Social Relations of Production?” Whilst these titles were a correct and clear demarcation of the content of the infographic, it demonstrated a lack of adjustment of content to the necessary form.

The titles of infographics should have been a) less technically worded and b) more provocative, immediate and engaging for the average person. The latter means that people are actually going to engage in the content. If the form makes the content appear scholastic, heavy or irrelevant to the people, they are simply not going to participate in it. The importance of the form should be to illustrate the importance of the content, the importance of Marxism-Leninism and liberating education.

I learned this lesson mid-way through the production of these infographics. The first few infographics, written with these

prosaic titles, often averaged about 1000-1500 likes, whereas the latter, with less technical, more provocative and simple titles, averaged 2000-2500 likes and received positive feedback.

In conclusion, when making liberating educational material, it is of vital importance to consider content and form and consider the subjective level of those who you are making it for. Educational material should not be made to stroke the ego of those making it, but should be made with a specific audience in mind, the progressive students. It is only when we discard commandist methods and attitudes we are able to revolutionise the students.

Isolate the backward and reactionary students

In organising the liberating education, at school, college or university, you are likely to encounter repression or hassle.

This hassle may come from the administration of these “educational” institutions which may try to ban these revolutionary educational clubs and societies or may even feign interest or tolerance in order to *Prevent*-bait members. We reiterate that it is important not to yield to pathetic attempts of the “educational” administration. There is no need to seek legitimacy or yield to them.

But hassle may also come from contingent sources like reactionary students who are scared and frightened by the liberating education and the revolutionary students.

In Britain, there is a deep underbelly of thuggish and reactionary students in every school, college and university who may try to suppress the liberating education.

These reactionaries tend to take many forms. The most prevalent form of reaction among students at the moment is male chauvinism, which pervades among a disturbing number of boys. These reactionary students will hassle girls and LGBTQ+ students, have a general disdain for education and will generally be an obnoxious presence on campus. Of course, there will also be your fair share of fascists of all hues.

It is important that the revolutionary students do not get too hung up on trying to placate or reason with these reactionary minorities. It is important to focus on the advanced and intermediates. Those who actively oppose liberating education are unlikely to be won over to its side. If these reactionaries turn up to an education session with the attempt to de-rail it with asinine rhetoric, they should be swiftly removed. In this instance, it would be important to reiterate to members that whilst genuine

critical discussion and questions are encouraged in liberating education sessions, bad-faith, unbridled reactionary or liberal rhetoric is not to be tolerated for the sake of “pluralism” or “free speech.”

Instead, these reactionary groups must be actively isolated and opposed. Make sure the intermediate students are aware of the most loathsome views and actions of the reactionary students. Socially cauterise the reactionary students and their line. This is how you isolate them.

We declare as the workers and students that fascists should have no right to organise. This is how we win over the intermediate. We must ourselves take the initiative in opposing reactionary students or teachers. Pleading with the “educational” administration for them to fulfil their expressed responsibility in ensuring the safety of us students is a blind alley. Why? Because in doing so we legitimise the rule of the bourgeois state apparatus. And moreover, the bourgeois school as we have seen is most likely not going to take action. If they do they take action, that just sets up the precedent for the bourgeois school to suppress the progressive students.

A holistic approach to the school and society in revolutionising the students

Of course, it is important to not essentialise the existence of reactionary students, those opposed to liberating education. In socialism, all students will be revolutionised in education. The doctrine of liberation and Marxism-Leninism is one of universal validity and is not content to be a niche ideological predilection in a plurality of bourgeois ideological trends.

The problem however is that pre-revolutionary education has a limited character insofar as the capitalist economic base and larger cultural structure do not correspond to it.

What does this mean specifically?

It means that as long as bourgeois “education” is predominant as a system, and the capitalist economy continues, pre-revolutionary liberating education will only have a certain scope. There are many factors external to the bourgeois school and the realm of the pre-revolutionary liberating education that prevent some students from engaging in the pre-revolutionary liberating education, and perhaps even bourgeois “education” as well.

Firstly, as long as capitalism presides, there will always be a minority of children from bourgeois families with whom the

doctrine of liberation can not resonate. These students will mostly be found in private and boarding schools. What interest do these students have in socialism when they are guaranteed all the desires of their narrow and bourgeois hedonistic hearts by their parents' trust funds? Some of these students could perhaps stumble across Marxism in reading and become intrigued. But this is a rare occurrence. This is one way in which the scope of pre-revolutionary education is limited.

Secondly, any student misbehaviour, philistinism and reactionary attitudes are the result of the completely decadent home life in capitalism which many of the poorest students have to endure.

In Britain, 4.2 million children live in UN-defined poverty — almost 40% of all children. Many have insufficient food, housing or do not have access to a home computer.* They are materially deprived. How can a child pay attention at school on an empty stomach, beleaguered and malnourished? The bourgeois family structure and the ubiquity of poverty in Britain also mean many students endure cultural deprivation and family strife. Children may be subject to abuse in their families, a result of bourgeois patriarchal norms and of family strain over financial trouble. These children who are abused in the bourgeois family may project their hurt in the form of misbehaviour, and reactionary rhetoric or may recluse or resign from any form of the bourgeois “education” or liberating education altogether.

The child who is neglected by their parents may seek to find attention through misbehaviour in school, through being the class clown and disdaining discipline and study. This leads them down a philistine route. The child who is beaten or sexually abused by their parents may reciprocate this behaviour onto their classmates, leading to this student becoming an odious reactionary and abuser. The child of reactionary parents will most likely inherit their retrogressive views.

Thus, it is naive to imagine that all students can be mobilised in pre-revolutionary education, where the proletariat does not have holistic control over society as a whole. Some of the youth will shun or be more difficult to revolutionise in the pre-revolutionary liberating education because of this material and cultural decay — not because, as the obscurantist bourgeois pedagogue imagines, some children are just somehow “naturally” averse to learning and integration.

* <<https://www.bigissue.com/news/social-justice/child-poverty-uk-definitions-details-causes-consequences/>>

It is only with the historic advent of socialism and the post-revolutionary liberating education can a holistic approach to school and society be built. The proletarian party takes the reigns of society and is able to vanquish all economic, cultural and political remnants of capitalism over a long class struggle.

In short, the full revolutionisation of the students requires a full revolutionisation of the economy, the family, healthcare, art, work, culture, science and so on — every possible facet of social life must be revolutionised.

The new proletarian youth — released from the wretched bind of the economic and cultural deprivation, released from the dysfunctional bourgeois family and its philistine attitudes, released from ill-health and physical neglect, released from the anti-conscious, oppressive content and form of bourgeois “education” — will flourish in the most progressive learning, and will move mountains with their revolutionary spark and socialist industriousness.

The problem of social criteria

An important aspect to consider in revolutionising the students in the post-revolution education system is that of social criteria.

Children herald from different class origins and it is no secret that the children of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois, due to a plethora of material and cultural factors, do better in education than the children of the workers.

Thus, in the first years of socialism, children of workers must be favoured in composition in higher education, they must be given a push.* Otherwise, it will become dominated by children of the former bourgeois and petty-bourgeois, as Cambridge and Oxford are now, which will mean the new intelligentsia and specialists will have a higher propensity for a bourgeois outlook owing to their inherited attitudes and their bitterness against socialism.

This does not mean to exclude the children of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois entirely, nor will this measure need to be enacted for long. Soon, the revolutionisation of the class character of education, in both content and form, will necessarily mean that the children of the former workers will excel.

Of vital importance in social criteria is to make sure to dedicate full care and attention to the children of the semi-lumpen in

* This problem is, of course, not as severe as it was in Russia.

post-revolutionary education. In Britain, there is a sizeable section of children who, as a result of the decadence and deprivation of the family in capitalism, are in and out of foster care and social services, and have often been subject to terrible abuse. These children are entirely neglected by the bourgeoisie, seen pejoratively as an “underclass,” and as a result, usually do not fare well in “education.” And as a result of being filtered early out of bourgeois “education” a life of low-level crime and peril awaits the youth. There are children as young as ten in the UK being recruited into gangs and as county lines drug mules, or stabbing and mugging each other.

This is a profound problem and one that is indicative of the absolute decay of capitalism.

It is essential that these children are given the most care possible, and are integrated effectively into the liberating education. Not only will it help re-awaken life and meaning in these desperate youth, but it will also stop the reproduction and continuation of petty crime in socialism.

And again, it must be reiterated, as with all work to revolutionise the youth in both pre-revolutionary and socialist education, that this should take the form of principled mass work rather than bourgeois paternalistic charity work. Revolutionising the youth does not mean giving them the bare essentials for survival in the hope they will become loyal to you, like taming an animal. The youth are revolutionised through mass work, listening to their problems, revolutionary integration and political study.

Oppose petty-bourgeois disdain for the workers — accept working-class leadership

And in the revolutionisation of the students, it is of vital importance we avoid petty-bourgeois sectarian trends, which aim to sever the unity of the students with the workers.

Students can have the tendency to bend the stick too far and develop a knee-jerk incredulity of authority and experience. This is understandable given the extremely oppressive and stupefying nature of the bourgeois “education” system, to the extent that any structure or system may be met with deep suspicion.

And it is correct that students must act in the liberating education with the same level of activity and initiative. The students in the liberating education must not hesitate to raise their voices, to point out inefficiencies and problems, to criticise and to self-criticise.

A problem arises when the students then develop an incredulity to proletarian leadership itself and develop anti-worker sentiment.

In the Soviet Union, this petty-bourgeois trend in the youth movement manifested under “Enchmenism” in the 1920s. This petty-bourgeois trend posited that the CPSU leadership was too old and out of touch with the interests of the youth and that they therefore needed to be deposed.*

This petty-bourgeois trend is not something that can manifest only post-revolution but is something that can be ubiquitous pre-revolution too.

There are many so-called “Marxist” youths in university study groups who hold anti-worker sentiments — they complain about the workers holding certain regressive views, or voting in a certain way. They believe the workers to be stupid. But instead of engaging in mass work and trying to ameliorate what they see as stupidity, they petulantly sit on their high chairs and only engage in hidebound debate.

Corresponding to this petulant anti-worker attitude is a wider petty-bourgeois attitude that some sections of the “revolutionary” youth can embody. This attitude was exemplified in “The Movement” of the 1970s — petty-bourgeois, neo-fascist egoism masquerading as revolutionary impetus.**

Proponents of “The Movement” advocated for the youth being unruly for the sake of being unruly. The counter-culture of “The Movement” was not one based on liberation or proletarian education, but one of pure self-gratification, hedonism and petty-bourgeois voluntarism.

This is such a retrogressive trend because it rebukes class struggle and the social character of the revolution, imagining “revolution” to be comprised of the “atomistic individual’s” own individual cultural insurrection. And this cultural “insurrection,” is not really an insurrection in any sense of the word — this “counter-culture” of “The Movement” was really just the consumption of American bourgeois cultural products with the veneer of revolution.

It is no wonder that these gurus of “The Movement” enjoyed such wide promotion and popularity in the bourgeois mass-me-

* And to this end, it is important to point out how anti-party actors like Trotsky and Preobrazhensky tried to rally the youth against the party too, although they were ultimately unsuccessful.

** Barotti, A. (1970). *Fascist Ideology of the Self: Mailer, Rubin and Hoffman*. Literature & Ideology, No. 6.

dia, due to the fact that their epithets were completely harmless to the rule of capital.

Thus, in revolutionising the youth, we need to combat any manifestation of parallel anti-people, anti-study, anti-Marxist trends. Such trends are incorrigibly petty-bourgeois and lead to complete adventurism and disarmament of the revolutionary student movement.

Instead, we need to assert that the youth should follow the party of the proletariat, for the proletariat is the most progressive and powerful class in history, with the steel-like unity and relentless weapon of Marxism-Leninism and the ability to withhold their labour-power.

The revolutionary students are a great asset to the revolution, an important revolutionary force, but the party and workers should take the helm of the revolution.* The students must follow the workers, learn from them, and teach them, but never disdain them or try to break off from them. The revolutionary students of today are after all the leaders of tomorrow.

These are the important lessons in revolutionising the students in the liberating education system, pre and post-revolution.

Reading group questions

What particularities of the students in your school/college/university do you need to consider in revolutionising them?

What backward ideas are common in the student body in your school/college/university? How do you plan on isolating and combating them?

Why do you think it is so vital that we reject anti-worker, anti-party tendencies? What anti-worker tendencies have you seen in the youth today?

Why is the revolutionary party so important in tempering the youth?

* As well as the workers having the historical capability for being more ideologically steadfast and less vacillatory than the youth, there are also a plethora of practical reasons why a youth-led party is doomed to fail.

XVIII — THE SOCIALIST SCHOOL

Importance of this question

It is now important to delve into what specifically will be different with the content and form of post-revolutionary liberating socialist education, as opposed to the oppressive bourgeois “education” system of today.

Though revolution, especially in Britain, may seem far away, it is important we are prepared and are not caught flat-footed.

Certain particular conditions of the revolution or the construction of socialism may require slight alteration of the content and form of the socialist school. For example, different educational institutes and fields may be prioritised in accordance with the specific needs of economic plans. The nature of training and qualification of teachers may change in accordance with the development of the subjective factor, going from looser to more extensive.

Nevertheless, it is important we sketch out what the liberating education system will generally look like, and how we are to apply the experience of construction of the erstwhile socialist countries to today.

Time allocation

The hours a week students spend in school should remain near the same. The average school child in Britain spends about six hours in school, five days a week. The academic year is split into three terms, six half terms, each interposed by a week or two holiday, with there being a six-week holiday for the summer.

Through the abolition of open enrollment and the improvement of transportation under socialism, the time students have to spend travelling to school should be greatly reduced. This expands their amount of leisure time.

Students currently spend a lot of time on homework which usually consists of very onerous tasks from which the student does not learn much and it often means more pointless marking for teachers. It has mainly just become a formality. The socialist education system’s use of homework will be a lot more tactful and directly related to educational progress.

The student will also be able to have more leisure time and study time as they will no longer require frivolous and time-consuming jobs outside of school. In Britain today, it is normal for

college-age (16-18-year-old students) to have part-time jobs in the service industry that pay terribly and preclude their studies, negatively affecting their grades. Colleges try to levy a certain “recommended” limit for part-time work at 10 hours a week although it is not enforced, with many students exceeding this, even working their entire weekends away, because of the need for students to “earn their keep” in the dire manufactured recession.

Even though 10-20 hours of extra time for some college students per week may seem insignificant, freeing the student from the burden of service industry employment will have a profound cumulative effect. This 10 and 20 hours extra a week will greatly improve their ability to study and excel in the liberating education, greatly improve their mood, reduce stress and unhappiness, and allow them to develop more amicable relations with other students.

This further goes to show that education is to be approached holistically. The socialist education system requires huge revolutionisation in the economic base and other areas of the superstructure.

Abolition of the reactionary hallmarks of bourgeois “education”

Though it is very intuitive, it is worth stating what specific forms of educational institutions will be abolished in socialism:

- All-boys and all-girls schools
- Religious schools and “education”
- Private and boarding schools
- Open enrollment and all marketisation policies

The reallocation of funds away from these nonsense myopic creations of capitalism will allow for more funding to be directed to schools’ sports facilities, special educational needs facilities, science laboratories and school transport.

General socialist curriculum

What should the standard curriculum look like?

From ages 4-7, today’s Key Stage 1, emphasis should be on:

- English: Including reading, writing, phonics, comprehension, children’s literature and stories.
- Mathematics: Including basic mathematical arithmetic and basic logic.
- Natural sciences: Including basic practical experi-

ments (i.e., experiments about friction and forces) and gardening for biology.

- **Social sciences:** Including basic British history, geography, understanding of the nature of socialism, and socialist moral education.
- **Foreign languages:** Including basic education in foreign languages useful at that specific time (as it is shown empirically that young children pick up languages much more naturally than their youngest years)
- **Physical education:** Including sport, fitness, hygiene and dietary education.
- **Social time:** Learning socially, through play and sensory interaction with other children.

From ages **7-10**, emphasis should be broadened to:

- **English:** Still including basic reading, writing, poetry and comprehension but introducing wider literature, including children's books and socialist realist literature.
- **Maths:** Including arithmetic, basic geometry, graphs, algebra, statistics and practical problem solving, as well as a basic primer on the history of mathematics.
- **Natural sciences:** Including foundational biology, chemistry and physics.
- **Marxism-Leninism:** An explicit introduction to its principles through concrete and practical examples.
- **History:** Covering Britain, but also modules on Russia and the people's democracies, periods of extreme importance.
- **Geography:** Covering physical and political geography, interspersing these lessons with a history of colonialism and imperialism as well as the impact of capitalist myopia on environmental phenomena.
- **Foreign languages:** Continuation of foreign languages learning.
- **Art:** Lessons on the history of art and socialist realist art in a multiplicity of forms such as paintings, music, sculptures and films. This will also include practical lessons where students can replicate and innovate on artistic forms that they have learned.
- **Physical education:** Including sports, fitness, lessons on physical, mental and social health, dietary education, sexual health education.

- Social education: Learning about communication, mass work, relationships, the family, cooking, cleaning and other domestic chores.

From ages **10-14**, education should continue in these compulsory subjects but should become more advanced in content, and more practical and productive in form. For instance, students should learn more advanced natural sciences. They should also begin to read classics in literature like Shakespeare, Steinbeck, Ostrovsky, Stevenson, Austen, Dumas, Gorky, Bronte, Cervantes, etc. but should do so not in abstraction — as how these works are taught today — but the class and historical context in which the authors were writing in should be taught, and how the class conditions of the novels manifest in its artistic forms and content. Only then will the students grasp why these books are written, how they are written and why they propagate the messages and themes they do.

From ages **14-18**, students should be able to choose to specialise in subject fields but some foundational subjects should remain compulsory.

And beyond **18**, is a university education where one completes a degree in a specific field.

Combining theoretical content with practical and productive form

Bourgeois “education” fails to combine its theoretical “knowledge” — which is often illusory anyway — with practical application (which is exploitative as it occurs in bourgeois social relations). You will have full courses where one reads out of a textbook and is tested 100% with closed-book exams at the end of the course. You will also have narrowly practical apprenticeships which are essentially seen as a quick route for those filtered out of academic “education” to procure specialised skills for manual labour.

The socialist education system on the other hand combines its expansive and proletarian theoretical *content* with a practical and productive *form*. This is only possible through its harmonious relationship with social production.*

It is through the practical and productive form of education that a student’s theoretical knowledge can be validated in real-

* Kim Jong Il (1966). *Let Us Improve Educational Work In Order to Produce Able Cadres of The Nation*, in: *Kim Jong Il Selected Works Volume I*. Foreign Languages Publishing House, Pyongyang. (p. 154).

ity in a useful manner. Without this, students develop anti-conscious mindsets. They begin to think that the be and end-all is an immutable textbook. This does not encourage social practice

In bourgeois “education,” students in primary, secondary, college and even in the first two years of university, sit standardised tests and questions. Everyone sits the same tests and examinations are usually closed books. This is an incredible waste of time as nothing new and productive is occurring.

Forms of assessment and learning should be practical and productive. In social sciences education, for example, students should take the general and particular theoretical knowledge they have learned from their teacher and be assessed through their practical, productive, novel and creative application of that knowledge. This could include group projects, presentations, reports, dissertations and mass work. In natural sciences education, older students could shadow or aid in laboratories, farms, dentistries or hospitals in order to ensure that they are able to practically and productively concretise their theoretical knowledge.

Practical and productive educational forms also internalise the relation in students’ minds between cause and effect, effort and result, quantity and quality, content and form.* These are things absent in the rigidly formalist bourgeois “education” where anti-conscious methods preside and students, aside from simple and contingent quantitative exam results, are detached from the consequences and practical implications of their learning. They rarely see processes through to their completion outside a simple knowledge quiz.

Curiosity, specialisation, heuristic learning and extra-curricular activities

For socialist education to shake off the stultifying anti-conscious methods that dominate class society “education,” it must encourage heuristic learning on part of the student. The student must take an active curiosity in their education.

What is the role of curiosity in education?

Curiosity or unique interest is something that is not utilised by the inflexible bourgeois education which only heeds to its standardised tests and marketised interests.

Curiosity and individual academic predilections can be a

* The Advocators (1971). *Education to Govern*. Foreign Languages Press. (p. 78)

hindrance to required education if education is inflexible, unelaborative and unproductive. This is because these external and tangential curiosities consume time that is supposed to be used for the base curriculum. For instance, Enver Hoxha recounts in his youth memoirs how when he was studying in Montpellier, his grades in his chemistry and physics courses — courses he had originally not intended to take — had suffered as a result of his truancy in order to observe law and history lessons which stimulated his intellectual curiosity.*

This is of course an extreme example but it is true that today in the bourgeois “education” system, students have a deep interest in very specialist or peripheral areas in the certain subjects they learn. But the density and anti-conscious nature of the bourgeois curriculum *prevents* them from engaging curiously and heuristically with these interests or means they do so in a way that is in a mutually antagonistic contradiction with the base curriculum.**

Socialist education should aim to reconcile students’ intellectual curiosity with the required curriculum content in a non-antagonistic way, and in fact, should mobilise the youth’s innate intellectual curiosity to speed up their learning. How will we do this?

The socialist education system should allocate a few hours every week for students to go to the library in order to pursue their peripheral or specialist educational interests on top of the base compulsory curriculum. Some young students may just use this time to read children’s fiction books which is a productive use of time as it serves leisure time and improves their literacy.

Older students however will use this time to stimulate their educational curiosity in certain specialised areas of their courses. This is of great individual, social and productive use. This is because the students can take what they have learned from their specialised and peripheral learning and use it to enrich classroom discussions and dialogue with teachers. Perhaps the student can even teach the teacher something that they are not aware of. For instance, perhaps a student in studying a general

* Hoxha, E. (2023). *Years of My Youth*. The November 8th Publishing House. (ch. 3).

** There will be some sceptical of believing that all students have academic curiosity. Some believe that most of the youth are sloth-like hooligans. This is of course not the case. All students have a passionate curiosity and intellectual rigour — it is when this rigour is stamped out by the anti-consciousness of bourgeois “education” that they become lethargic, demotivated and unruly.

British history module finds they have a particular fixation on the feudal economy. They could use this time to go into the library and read books and articles, or watch documentaries and videos, on specific details of the feudal economy in terms of its class relations, its political economy, its material products, its setbacks, its particularities in Britain and the labour processes involved. The student can then contribute their knowledge in a lesson in a socially productive way. In the context of bourgeois “education,” such an elegant example of heuristic education is precluded. Students are told only to focus strictly on the very shallow curriculum. They are not given library time for this and are encouraged as soon as they get home, or from holidays, to “veg out” and essentially purge their mind of all knowledge.

Motivating students’ curiosity in this way can also be socially productive as the student may use this spare time to produce a coherent dissertation, presentation or essay on their specialised interest. This peripheral educational work can then be credited by their teacher.

Another area that the socialist education will be heavily oriented to is extracurricular clubs, leagues and activities. These clubs allow students to be able to pursue their interests in sports, social and natural sciences, or production. There exist extra-curricular clubs in bourgeois schools but often they are not well funded and do not cater to a wide enough range of interests. Moreover, there is a range of financial and temporal obstacles that prevent a lot of students from attending these clubs.

Youth organisations and extra-curricular clubs were of great emphasis in the education systems of erstwhile socialist countries. As well as being a rich area for additional educational content, leisure and social time for students, youth leagues also help educate the students in organisational methods.*

The nature of these extracurricular clubs, what they offer, and how structured or regular they are, are dependent on the current conditions in the future.

And once again we must reiterate that socialist education must harness student’s curiosity in a way that enriches their education and supports the central, important curriculum. The liberating education does not entail someone walking aimlessly through a library without any guidance, priority or generalised revolutionary methods.

* Kim Il Sung (1977). *The Theses on Socialist Education*, in: *Socialist Education in Korea*. Iskra Books. (p. 87).

Assessment forms

How will students' performance in education be assessed in the socialist education system?

Students should be assessed through:

- Teacher assessment
- Dissertations
- Coursework
- Group projects
- Public speaking/presentation
- Practical, productive and creative application (particular to the subject)
- Timed examinations (as an aspect of maths and natural sciences modules)
- Attendance to lessons and extra-curricular clubs

Methods of assessment must be used in plurality to ensure all-round education of the student in different modes of the application of knowledge.

Another important thing is that teachers should make sure to give qualitative feedback and assessments of their students throughout their studies. Often in bourgeois "education" are told of their progress only through quantitative marking. "Educational" success becomes more of a guessing game. Some of the better-performing bourgeois schools do engage in qualitative assessment but it is limited because a) large class sizes due to austerity and teacher shortage preclude regular personalised qualitative feedback, which means that most qualitative feedback is "whole-class" feedback and therefore very generalised, and b) the qualitative feedback given is in specific relation to students procuring the highest quantitative marks in the final exam.

Socialist education will ensure that teachers are able to provide the most helpful qualitative feedback to their students.

This is not to say that there will be no grading system. There should be. The specificities of this grading system will be brought out by practice. The essential point is that the grading system in socialism is to make sure graduating students have the prerequisite ability to enter into social production in that field, not to "filter" students out of education like a Malthusian. If fewer students receive adequate grades in a subject, that helps identify that there is a defect in the way that subject is being taught or that the curriculum is too heavy.

The socialist teacher

We have talked at great length about the teacher in bourgeois “education” but we must now talk briefly about the general characteristics of the socialist teacher.

In socialism, it is important that teachers are properly vetted to ensure that they a) have sufficient knowledge of their subject, b) are imbued with the correct style in work (and that they don’t enter in with a bourgeois pedagogic attitude) and c) do not hold any conscious or unconscious stereotypes and typifications that may harmfully affect the class that they teach. Vetting teachers can most effectively be done through a commission method.* There must also be a constant check-up on the work of the educators, tasked with the crucial education of the coming generations.

Teachers must treat their students with respect and must expect respect from their students. The teacher must engage in dialogue with the students and teach the content of the curriculum in a way that requires students to think practically and creatively. Theoretical, general and abstract concepts should never be taught isolated from practical demonstration or concretisation.

The teacher, whilst not being abstracted from the students as they are in bourgeois “education,” must nevertheless have authority over them. This authority is not enforced through arbitrary discipline and fear, but genuine respect and admiration. Authority, as we have said, is not mutually exclusive to the freedom of the student, but in fact, is a prerequisite for it.

Teachers should be able to explain concepts to the student in the student’s own language.** They should not utilise unnecessary words or terminology out of formality

The teacher must model socialist morality at all times. This can not be understated. The teacher, second to only the parents/guardian, is the most important figure in the early moral, intellectual and social development of children. The teacher must make sure to embody proletarian morality at all times, and this positive morality will imprint on the students.

For instance, the teacher must be eloquent, diligent, calm and gregarious at all times. The teacher must also show the students their fallibility and not hesitate to self-criticise if they

* Temo, S. (1985). *Education in the People’s Socialist Republic of Albania*. The 8 Nentori Publishing Houe. (p. 73).

** Kalinin, M. (1938). *Speech at a Conference of Best Urban and Rural Schoolteachers*, in: *On Communist Education*. Foreign Languages Press. (p. 52).

make an error to set an example for the students. As we have said, teachers in bourgeois “education” today do not often do this because if they admit their fallibility, their anti-conscious authority is questioned. Similarly, if a teacher for whatever reason is unsure of the answer or is not as fresh in a particular specialised area, they should admit this to the students and work to improve that area of their knowledge. This can be a good opportunity for dialogue and heuristic learning. Better this than the teacher improvises an incorrect answer to save face.

The socialist teacher must also be patient with their students and aim to work *with* the students to correct their mistakes calmly. The teachers should not tail the ignorance or unruliness of the students to fit in, nor should they sit on an ivory tower and punish students for wrong answers. This helps no one and only serves to render the contradiction between the teacher and student an unnecessarily antagonistic one.

Socialist emulation in the socialist education system

The spirit of socialist emulation should be used in the socialist education system to encourage optimal educational effort on the part of the students and educational staff.

This is a completely different form to the current marketisation policies of bourgeois “education” today. These marketisation policies only serve to stress teachers out and lead to the victory of one school at the expense of the others in funding.

Instead, socialist emulation in the education system means that educators work their hardest to try to optimise the school’s educational performance and the well-being of the students and the teachers.

Pedagogical journals should be set up by teachers to share their experiences and advice in socialist pedagogy. Teachers can take pride in working together to innovate educational content and methods, strengthening socialist construction.

And in regards to the students themselves, socialist emulation is a great way to catalyse educational interest and curiosity, particularly with young students. Centring education around a points-based competition has been extremely successful in motivating children to read and do maths, even in their spare time. From my days as a young student in primary school, I remember the success of *Sumdog** and how it compelled most students to do maths in their spare time in order to linearly progress in the

* A popular maths game in primary schools.

game. Socialist emulation is something that must be embraced by education.

Physical education

Physical education is something of deep importance in the socialist education system.

Biologists of today have expressed the intimate connection of mental and physical health. After all, they are a unity of opposites in contradiction.

For students to excel in their intellectual and moral development, they must also thrive in physical education.

Current bourgeois physical “education” is extremely limited. This is because a lot of schools, especially primary schools, do not have the financial resources or space for adequate sports and fitness facilities. Austerity has been detrimental. Many children can’t even swim because swimming lessons in schools are seldom and parents can not afford swimming lessons outside of school. A common cause of death among children is drowning.

Childhood obesity and ill-health are also widespread because there is insufficient education in schools on diet and fitness, but mainly because of the poor standard of food in capitalism.

In regards to sports in bourgeois “education,” it is very individualistic and its faux attempt at inclusivity is superficial and forced. Sports in bourgeois society, due to the saturation of capital, have become extremely individualistic. This is seen through the brutal system of football academies in Britain. Professional football clubs scout the best football players from an extremely young age. About 1% of players are chosen for these academies. Children in these academies are given an inflated ego, and whilst by law these academies have to provide basic “education” as a back-up for these children, many predictably do not take it seriously because they are imbibed by the prospect of a future of £100,000 a week salaries in the Premier League. However, out of this 1%, only 1% actually go on to play at a high professional level. Children who have essentially been taken out of traditional “education” their entire lives and filled with bourgeois patriarchal individualism are suddenly released. Their entire ontological security is snatched from them. It is no wonder why many players released from academies end up committing suicide or going down a path of drug-dealing and crime because they were ill-adjusted to society as it is. These academies too are brutal in their treatment of the youth. Some academies even release

young players immediately if they get injured, so that they do not have to spend money on these players' mental and physical recoveries.

Such is the nature of the bourgeois physical "education" of the youth in Britain today — it resembles a factory farm more than it does leisure and cultural opportunities.

Sport in bourgeois "education" also inculcates chauvinist, thuggish mentalities.* There are often interschool fights and petty thuggish rivalries for the sake of it.

Socialist physical education should discard of all these hallmarks of capitalism and develop an education that pushes every student to the pinnacle of their physical health and well-being. It should be an education that teaches the students determination, decision-making, teamwork and humility.

Physical education must also be holistic. It is an effort that requires an entire revolutionisation of society.

It also can not just be narrowly termed as sports and fitness. Physical education must include dietary education, education on sexual health, education on the identification of diseases, first aid training, and effective sleep and hygiene.

The total initiative of education in rectification and cultural satiation

And finally, we must note that education in the socialist society is something that can and should encompass the whole of the people, not just the youth — though obviously, the youth are central.

Prison rather than being punitive, brutish or a means of forcing people to "rehabilitate" themselves into obedient proletarians for the capitalist, will be educative in socialism. Its principal goal is taking corrigible deviants and getting to the root of their behaviour and educating them in the socialist society.

It is also important that we allow educational courses to be available to adults and the older generations who would have grown up in today's capitalist society and who have been deprived of an all-round education that socialism provides.

Education for these adults can help revolutionise them as well as culturally enrich them. Adults can study as they work, developing new skills for their current placement in social pro-

* Williams, D. (1983). *Report to the First Congress of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)*. Workers' Publishing House. (p. 35)

duction.*

Reading group questions

Link together: What is the fundamental purpose of socialist education?

What do you think will be the best assessment forms for socialist education?

How will the socialist teacher act differently to the teacher of today?

What intellectual curiosity have you had that has been fettered by bourgeois “education”?

Why is physical education so important in socialism?

* Kim Il Sung (1977). *The Theses on Socialist Education*, in: *Socialist Education in Korea*. Iskra Books. (p. 99).

XIX — CONCLUSION

Our revolutionary investigation has conclusively shown bourgeois “education” in Britain today to be not liberating. The important point to make is not only that it is *not* liberating, but that it *can not* be liberating so long as it exists as a weapon of the arsenal of the bourgeoisie.

Thus, education is a question that belongs in the revolution. It is a question that belongs to the New. The counter-revolutionaries imagine that education can be made liberating in the Old. They imagine through their reactionary philosophy of pragmatist meliorism that bourgeois “education” can be gradually made more liberating, into the New. This is not the case.

To detach the struggle for a liberating education from the historic class struggle of the proletariat and the progressive forces for the new socialist relations — against the moribund bourgeoisie — is the gravest mistake to make. *This has been the key link this book has aimed to emphasise.*

Bourgeois “education” will never be liberating, in content or in form. It must exist to do the exact opposite. To discourage the student from revolutionary investigation in place of anti-consciousness obedience. To block any knowledge of social laws with anti-conscious bourgeois reification, in order that the student is not able to use knowledge of these social laws towards the definite end of revolution. To fill the student’s mind with the most putrid apologia for the crimes of imperialist capitalism. To tie up the student’s entire perceived ontological security to the moribund capitalist relations that exploit them so viciously whilst at the same time making the New seem inconceivable or defeated.

This counter-revolutionary trend of detaching the struggle for a liberating education from the wider struggle for socialist revolution and the New can take many forms, many we have discussed.

It can take the form of the essentialisation and reification of “education,” imagining the oppressive “education” today in its current form and content as something above class and the class struggle.

It can take the form of reactionary anti-worker thugs who, under a thin veneer of “revolution” and “insurrection,” preach egoism, relativism and lethargy to the youth.

It can take the form of those who imagine that the Old relations can be overcome purely on the basis of semantics and their warped understanding of a “liberating” “education”; that we

can do away with the social ills of capitalism like misogyny and racism through “discourse.” But these postmodern buffoons do not ask themselves *why* such social ills exist in the first instance. Why are these social ills reproduced and to whom do they serve? If they engaged in actual revolutionary analysis they would see these social ills are an indissoluble feature of the political economy of capitalism and the rule of the Old relations. Hence, no meaningful pre-revolutionary education attempts to “liberate” through postmodernist sectarian semantics.

A true pre-revolutionary education that grasps this key link — that liberation in education* can not be realised in the old capitalist relations and the bourgeois state — is therefore a guide to revolutionary action! And in this way, as long as revolutionary education is guided by Marxism-Leninism, it is liberating.

It is the task of the revolutionary youth today to apply the lessons of our revolutionary investigation to their own particular “educational” institutions and localities: establish reading groups, conduct mass work, mobilise the teachers and students against the “education” system, mercilessly refute the bourgeois curriculum, draw in the progressive forces under the banner of the new society and Marxism-Leninism, unite with the revolutionary workers.

The youth will certainly overcome the sordid bind of bourgeois “education.” For too long has the student been beaten down by the bourgeois “education” system, been rendered anti-conscious and obsequious, been rendered disinterested and defeatist.

The unity of the revolutionary youth and the proletariat is invincible!

Towards the New, liberating education system!

* Or in any sphere of economic, social, cultural and political life.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: THE REVOLUTIONARY STUDENTS' ATTITUDE AND WELLBEING

The path to a revolutionary attitude is not a linear and scenic one. Steel is tempered in the heat of flames. So is the revolutionary and liberating outlook. Especially for the youth.

Alongside learning Marxism-Leninism and the necessity for revolution, the revolutionary student may also encounter negative feelings. This is because the befogging comfort of liberalism has been demystified and the fleeting ontological security it provided uprooted. This is a difficult transition. No longer can the revolutionary student take comfort in the liberal idea that capitalist society can continue forever in harmony without revolutionary rupture. Nor can they take comfort in the ontological security superficially granted by bourgeois "education." We come to realise that both are lies. But this realisation leaves one to feel out of place. That life up to this point and beyond this point in capitalism, has been wasteful. Feelings of anomie and anxiety set in.

Our revolutionisation also affects our personal relationships. Once the revolutionary student is aware of the revolutionary necessity, they may become frustrated with and alienated from their fellow students who do not share this understanding. They may feel like a preacher and start to feel like they are losing common ground with their friends. They may even be ridiculed by friends, teachers or parents. This has been especially heightened in the era of retreat of revolution, in the anti-social offensive.

How should the revolutionary student overcome this turmoil?

First, they should seek contact with other revolutionary and progressive students and people. There are thousands, millions even. The revolutionary student should begin practical activity and work in the party. They should attend protests and conduct mass work. This is how to overcome this feeling of anomic isolation and form a proper understanding of Marxism-Leninism. An understanding that sublates the pages of books and is proven in practical activity and interaction with the world. Working inside a proper revolutionary party, led by the working class, is essential in ideological development

Does this mean that the revolutionary student should cut off

contact with their friends and live an isolated life, only speaking to other Marxists? No, this is a grave error. The revolutionary student should not imagine erstwhile personal friendships to somehow be mutually exclusive with liberation. It is a grave error to withdraw from others. If the revolutionary student withdraws from family and friends, and the people in general, they start to feel even more isolated.

The revolutionary student does not need to live a monastic existence. The revolutionary student can (and should) live life as normal in the sense of enjoying social occasions, enjoying culture, romance and all niceties on offer, but whilst many other youths may approach these things in an aimless or hedonistic way, the revolutionary student is not just content with the “American Dream” and always asks themselves how they can pursue revolution through these ends.*

If a revolutionary student lives an isolated or monastic existence, they will also become detached from the actual condition of the subjective factor. This is the origin of revisionism and severe errors. Certain “communist” parties get stuck in a delusional echo chamber and become completely detached from the subjective and objective conditions; they then propagate programs that do not resonate at all with normal people.

This being said, this is not an excuse for tailism or laxity. The revolutionary student should abstain from drug use and undisciplined behaviour.

So how should the revolutionary student approach people? The revolutionary student should not try to conceal their views on the supposition that this way they can better maintain social relationships. This is an error I exhibited in the early stages of my ideological-political development which I self-criticise. Understanding the unpalatability of Marxism-Leninism, I imagined that I could slowly enlighten those around me without “buzzwords.” That I could propagate Marxism-Leninism without the words Marxism-Leninism. This does not work for long. It leads to caginess and standoffishness in political conversation and means that relationships with other students are built on dishonesty and misdirection. Revolutionary students should not act like clandestine seminary priests.**

* Kalinin, M. (1941;2023). *Speech at the Meeting of Pupils of 8th, 9th and 10th Grades of Secondary Schools*, in: *On Communist Education*. Foreign Languages Press. (p. 98).

** Of course, there are some social formations today where the persecution of communists and revolutionary students in the form of

Instead, the revolutionary students should disdain to conceal their views. This of course does not mean that you must shout from the rooftops Marxism-Leninism or introduce yourself this way. But when you are asked a question on direct political or ideological questions, the revolutionary student must answer them honestly as a Marxist and not try to compromise for the sake of palatability.

The revolutionary student should not hide in books or a close-knit circle but should exhibit the pinnacle of gregariousness. Talk to people, make plans with them, and criticise them when they display liberalism, which may be very often. Do not, as many do initially, outwardly, or even subconsciously, imagine yourself above other students or workers. This leads to arrogance, condescension and paternalism which alienates the revolutionary student from others. The revolutionary student is indeed more ideologically advanced than the ordinary student. But this advancement does not mean that the revolutionary student can consider themselves superior on an intellectual or social basis. The “ordinary” student may have profound knowledge of certain particularities but has not yet been able to concretise or formulate them into a revolutionary framework. It is only through mutual and equal relationships that the latter can develop. The revolutionary student should not imagine they can persuade students to follow them like ducklings following a duck.*

It is true that an open propagation and display of Marxism-Leninism may earn the revolutionary student some animosity at first. Some reactionary students may try to ridicule or aggress against the revolutionary student. The revolutionary student may also be subject to attempts by teachers to bait them into *Prevent* referrals. But as long as the revolutionary student is tactful with their words, shows themselves to be gregarious,

“red-tagging” is so severe and violent that nearly complete secrecy in public life is necessary.

* It should also be said that if students learning Marxism from revolutionary students exhibit dogmatic and uncritical behaviours that is a bad sign. This means that the student is prone to vacillation and eclecticism. One who stands for nothing falls for anything. It is actually a good sign if those learning from the revolutionary student express criticality and apprehension about Marxism as it shows they are not understanding it in an anti-conscious manner. Marxism-Leninism and the revolutionary student does not fear criticism but on the other hand, craves it. It is only criticism that can dispel the old ideas from the new and can make sure Marxism-Leninism remains valid and applicable.

humble, helpful and hard-working, people will soon open up to the revolutionary student from which they can begin to revolutionise other students and teachers.

This is of course a difficult task. Mistakes and friction will most likely occur and it is the revolutionary student's task to overcome these.

The revolutionary student is also, as we have mentioned throughout this book, severely intellectually burdened by bourgeois "education." They have to balance the study of bourgeois subjects with the study of Marxist-Leninist theory. This can at times be very difficult. It is not the quality of bourgeois "education" that makes it difficult, i.e. its methodology, style or concepts, because its concepts are childish compared to the complexity of actual scientific analysis that Marxism-Leninism provides. Rather, it is often anti-conscious fact "learning" that grinds the student down, particularly at the secondary and college levels.

The revolutionary student must again persevere and wade through the sewer of the bourgeois "education" system, making sure not to lose their revolutionary understanding in the murky effluence. A good way to alleviate feelings of intellectual overwhelmedness is through a critical analysis of bourgeois "educational" content like we have done in this book, to make heads and tails of its eclectic content. It also deeply encouraged for the revolutionary student to engage in physical activity and sports. A healthy mind requires a healthy body.

In sum, the road of the revolutionary student is not the easy one, but the just one. It may be a road strewn with difficulty, anxiety and hard work but no obstacle is insurmountable for the iron will of the communists.

APPENDIX II: RECOMMENDED READING LISTS

It is important that the revolutionary students acquaint themselves with core theoretical texts in order to expand their knowledge of the revolutionary necessity. Below are some reading lists that would be optimal for individual reading and reading groups.

Introductory:

Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels —
The Communist Manifesto

Mao Tse-tung —
On Practice & On Contradiction (Available at NEPH)

V.I. Lenin —
The State and Revolution

Karl Marx —
Critique of the Gotha Program

V.I. Lenin —
The Teachings of Karl Marx (Available at NEPH)

Nexhmije Hoxha —
Some Fundamental Questions of the Class Struggle (Available at NEPH)

Anuradha Ghandy —
Philosophical Trends in the Feminist Movement

Hardial Bains —
Necessity for Change!

J.V. Stalin —
The Foundations of Leninism (Available at NEPH)

USSR:

Anna Louise Strong —
The Stalin Era (Available at NEPH)

Ludo Martens —
Another View of Stalin

Enver Hoxha —
The Khrushchevites (Available at NEPH)

Anna Louise Strong —
Democracy and Dictatorship in the Soviet Union & Soviet
Farmers (Available at NEPH)

Mikhail Kammari —
Lenin and Stalin on the Development of the National Question
(Available at NEPH)

Paul Robeson —
On the Soviet Union (Available at NEPH)

Douglas Tottle —
Fraud, Famine and Fascism

J Arch Getty —
Origins of the Great Purges

Philosophy:

Mao Tse Tung —
On Practice & On Contradiction (Available at NEPH)

J.V. Stalin —
Dialectical and Historical Materialism (Available at NEPH)

Maurice Cornfoth —
Dialectical Materialism: An Introduction
(Includes “Materialism and the Dialectical Method” and “The
Theory of Knowledge”) (Available at NEPH)

Lenin Institute of Philosophy —
A Textbook on Marxist Philosophy (Available at NEPH)

Maurice Cornforth —
The Open Philosophy and the Open Society (Available at
NEPH)

V.I. Lenin —
Materialism and Empirio-Criticism

Historical Materialism:

V.I. Lenin —
The State and Revolution

Maurice Cornfoth —
Dialectical Materialism: An Introduction
(Includes: Historical Materialism) (Available at NEPH)

J.V. Stalin —
Dialectical and Historical Materialism (Available at NEPH)

Friedrich Engels —
Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State

Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels —
The German Ideology (Volume I)

Georgi Plekhanov —
On the Role of the Individual in History

Political economy:

A. Leontiev —
Political Economy: A Beginner's Course

Karl Marx —
Wage Labour and Capital

J.V. Stalin —
Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR (Available at
NEPH)

APPENDIX III: DEFINITIONS

Definitions are included in the footnotes where the word or term first appears in the book but they are also included here as an appendix for ease of access.

Anti-consciousness: The tendency for social ideas to be accepted as immutably and self-evidently true, and the act of finding out or scrutinising these ideas to be discouraged. The oppressive bourgeois “education” system tries to instil anti-consciousness within students.

Anti-social offensive: The period of imperialist capitalism today — that emerged following the crisis of Keynesianism — where Anglo-American imperialism is enhancing their focus towards austerity, deregulation and nation-wrecking. This period was also intensified by the fall of the Soviet Union and Anglo-American unipolarity. These challenging objective conditions have led to an ebb in revolution and the subjective factor all across the world.

Bourgeoisie: The ruling class in capitalism. As a term can be used interchangeably with capitalist. The bourgeoisie owns the means of production in society and buys the proletariat’s labour-power. They own capital. **Bourgeois** is the adjective form, e.g., bourgeois “education” system. **Bourgeois** can also mean an individual member of the bourgeoisie.

Class society: A society where there exist antagonistic classes on the economic level. For example, capitalism is a class society.

Class struggle: The contradiction/struggle that exists between classes in history: for example, between capitalist and proletarian, lord and serf, etc.

Commandism: The tendency to jump too far ahead of the masses’ political consciousness, being aloof from them and treating them as a static force.

Communism: Communism can mean generally the doctrine of the conditions of the liberation of the working people. However, communism is used throughout this book more precisely as a mode of production. communism, as higher phase communism, is the pinnacle of human social organisation whereby classes, class struggle, bourgeois and divisions between mental and physical labour, town and countryside, have also been completely eliminated. A society based upon communism can only be established like this on a global scale and we have so far not done so.

Comprador: The bourgeoisie in imperialised countries that have an objective interest in perpetuating these imperialist relations. This is opposed to the national bourgeoisie who have an objective interest in some level of independence or autonomy.

Contradiction: A term in dialectics to mean the essential two opposites within a thing or process. These two aspects are in constant struggle but also unity. Contradictions can be between two clearly opposing forces, like the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Or contradictions can be between two opposites essential in a thing, like content and form. What is important is to understand their mutually penetrative nature. Their struggle necessitates the opposite's existence. There can be no bourgeoisie without the proletariat and vice versa. You can not have something with only content or only form.

Dialectical materialism: The philosophical basis of Marxism-Leninism, the revolutionary students and the proletariat as a whole. It combines a materialist conception of phenomena with a dialectical conception of development.

Dialectics: The principles of development of all things universally. First developed by Hegel and removed from its idealist shell by Marx and Engels. The main principle of dialectics is the unity and struggle of opposites in contradiction, and therein follow the laws of quantity into quality and negation of negation.

Economism: A revisionist, anti-Marxist trend where one considers the economic base of a society in a very mechanical, vulgar way, and in doing so, also reduces the role of the subjective factor and class struggle and the superstructure. Economism can occur in essentially two distinct but mutually penetrative trends: 1) subjective economism, which focuses only on the economic struggle at the expense of the political and cultural aspects of class struggle, and 2) objective economism, a mechanical view of the law of correspondence between the relations of production and productive forces, leading to accelerationist or reformist ideas. Marx and Engels refuted the economist interpretations of their work, and Lenin played an instrumental role in repudiating the economism of the Mensheviks.

Empiricism: The vulgar bourgeois philosophical idea that sensation is the only basis for knowledge. This means that all knowledge to empiricists is merely perceptual and fragmented, and is unable to qualitatively develop to conceptual knowledge.

Exopedagogy: Pedagogy or education existing outside of state power and the ideology of the ruling class.

Fideism: The idea that knowledge comes from faith or reve-

lation.

Heuristic: Pedagogical methods which are not anti-conscious but encourage conscious and creative application in learning.

Historical materialism: The Marxist-Leninist science of history. It applies dialectical materialism to an investigation of history. It understands history's principal contradiction to be that of class struggle.

Idealism: The philosophical idea that the external world is merely a fiction or a result of human subjectivity, ideas and thoughts. That the world does not exist objectively. There are different forms of idealism, notably subjective idealism, which posits the world as nothing but existing in one's head, and objective idealism which asserts that reality is constituted by objective ideas.

Malthusianism: Bourgeois theory that economic crises are caused by indissoluble overpopulation. Leads to social-Darwinist and genocidal ideology.

Marxism-Leninism: The ideology of the proletariat in the era of imperialist capitalism.

Mechanical materialism: Mechanical materialism or mechanism was the philosophical tendency of the emerging bourgeoisie. It was progressive initially for the fact that it rejected idealist mysticism. It posited that the universe was constituted by unchanging, indivisible particles interacting mechanically. However, it lapses into idealism and metaphysics insofar as it 1) necessitates the understanding of a supreme being/god/creator to start up this random process of matter, 2) reduces development to externality rather than seeing internal contradictions and struggle within things and 3) can not account for new qualities and new forms, often assuming emergence of new qualities as completely random and development as completely unpredictable.

Metaphysics: The philosophical tendency to consider objects as completely fixed abstractions. This gives these objects a faux isolation and staticness. For instance, a rose is considered a static rose, despite being in a dynamic process of growth or decay. An individual is seen as an abstract, distinct thing even though they are the product of civil society and are in constant development. Hence, philosophical metaphysics means that one loses sight of the internal contradictions inherent in development as well as its connections. Metaphysics is a staple of bourgeois philosophy. However, it is important to note that metaphysics has been given a host of definitions in philosophy, either just as

a general pejorative or to mean something “more than physics.” The first definition, the one laid out by Engels in *Anti-Dühring* and Cornforth in *The Open Philosophy and The Open Society* is the one we are using.

Minimum program: Tactical demands that the revolutionary party tasks itself with to win popular support, sharpen the organisation of the subjective factor, and create conditions more requisite for revolution. Therefore are to be realised in the existing social relations. Minimum programs are an important tactic, subsumed by the larger strategy of revolution.

Mode of production: The general form social production takes under the rule of a specific class (e.g., capitalist mode of production, feudal mode of production).

Petty-bourgeoisie: An ever-diminishing transitional class in capitalism. Comprised of self-employed, small business owners, intellectuals and others. Owing to their limbo, they can vacillate between the support of the proletariat and the support of the bourgeoisie. We should aim to win them over.

Pluralism: The faux idea that multiple ideologies, points of view, class interests and so on can and should co-exist. Closely linked to relativism.

Postmodernism: A trend in bourgeois sociology that rejects the validity of science and proposes relativism. It sees “liberation” as being something purely cultural, “discursive” and fragmented to certain intersectional groups.

Prevent: The so-called counter-terrorism initiative of the British bourgeois state, founded in 2003, which operates in schools.

Private property: Property owned by the bourgeoisie that is a means of production for capital accumulation. Does not typically refer to personal property, i.e. people’s possessions they use for personal consumption.

Productive forces: Refers to the aggregate development of the instruments of production and productive techniques in use in a given society. There exists a law of correspondence between the relations of production and the productive forces. The former can accelerate or fetter the development of the latter.

Proletariat: The working, oppressed class of capitalism. They live entirely off the sale of their labour-power. **Proletarian** is either an adjective to describe something that is comprised of the proletariat or is proletarian in nature, e.g., the proletarian party. Proletarian can also be used as a noun to mean a single member of the proletariat.

Pure thought: The idea that history is thought in the realm of ideas of individuals in abstraction. That societies are merely the encapsulation and modelling of abstract, spontaneously occurring ideas rather than the fact that social ideas arise *from* society. It is flipping history, society and the class struggle on its head.

Relativism: Denial of objective reality by saying there are “multiple truths,” all equally valid or invalid. Relativism is a trend of the idealists like pragmatists, neo-Kantians and post-modernists.

Reification: When social relations between people are given a false eternal or natural status. Ruling classes for instance tend to **reify** their rule as natural or god-given.

Revisionism: People who masquerade as Marxists or Marxist-Leninists but are in fact opposed to it. For instance, there have been classical revisionists like Bernstein and modern revisionists like Khrushchev. Most revisionists rely on an explicit or implicit rejection of the philosophical basis of Marxism-Leninism, dialectical materialism.

Social formation: Term for a historically concrete society. It is similar to the mode of production but the mode of production refers to a more general model of society with a single homogeneous class struggle, whereas social formations refer to these historically concrete societies where there may be multiple class struggles, with some old classes disappearing and new classes emerging.

Socialism: Socialism is lower-phase communism. It is constructed — and must continually be developed — once the proletariat, which has political power, has managed to remove antagonistic classes from the economic level of society. The class struggle still occurs in socialism against any external capitalist enemies and internal bureaucratic errors or capitalist remnants.

Social-Revolutionaries: Agrarian populist party and heirs of Narodism in pre-revolutionary Russia during the early 20th century. They had large political importance during 1917 but their bourgeois stands were exposed by Lenin.

Solipism: The inevitable result of idealist philosophy. The ultra-individualist, unfalsifiable idea that the only thing that is real is oneself and everything else is just a product of one’s imagination.

Subjective factor: Refers to the political and organisational consciousness of the revolutionary forces. A strong subjective factor is needed to turn favourable objective conditions (a revolutionary situation) into a revolution.

Superstructure: The superstructure is the totality of social ideas, laws, customs and culture that corresponds to a particular epoch of class rule. The economic base and the superstructure are in a mutually penetrative contradiction. It is often hard to draw a sharp line between what is considered the base and what is the superstructure. The superstructure's development is often very dynamic and has an extreme amount of relatively contingent particularities which means it can not simply be mechanically understood from the economic base of society. For instance, no two capitalist social formations are the same superstructurally, even if they are at an almost identical economic development.

Tailism: The tendency to tail behind the masses's incorrect or fragmented ideas without correcting them. It tends to lose sight of communist strategy and settle for reformism.

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