

Chapter 1

Immiseration Capitalism

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From the outset we want to be clear that in employing the term ‘Immiseration Capitalism’ we draw on Marx’s concept of immiseration that he develops in Volume 1 of *Capital*. As Marx put it:

Accumulation of wealth at one pole ... is at the same time accumulation of misery, the torment of labour, slavery, ignorance, brutalization and moral degradation at the other pole i.e. on the side of the class that produces its own product as capital. (1976/1867:799)

Importantly, we stress the importance of understanding the ‘accumulation of misery’ in the context of Marx’s broader concept of alienation. For it is from this vantage point (Ollman, 1993) that we can begin to grasp the logic of capitalism and its driving need to alienate humanity from its own creative and revolutionary potential. Across the capitalist world, political parties and governments are employing, what Naomi Klein (2007) refers to as, the ‘Shock Doctrine’ to redistribute wealth and power from Labour to the advantage of Capital. David Harvey (2003, 2005, 2010) refers to as a ‘class war from above’ that is achieved primarily through ‘accumulation by dispossession’. Drawing on and extending Marx’s idea of ‘primitive accumulation’, Harvey notes that with the productive capacity of post-1970 capitalism seriously faltering, the neoliberal project provides Capital with the political and ideological muscle to both construct consent and silence dissent. Accumulation by dispossession includes, for example, the privatisation of public assets, the freeing of financial markets from the burden of regulation and the securing of generous state wealth redistribution policies. In addition to these ‘legal’ means of dispossession, Harvey notes the tolerance of illegal means “such as violence, criminality, fraud and predatory practices of the sort that have been uncovered ... in the subprime mortgage market: (2010:49).

Despite the views of some media pundits that neoliberalism was dealt mortal blows after the Lehman bank demise of September 2008 (e.g. Seamus Milne in *The Guardian* (of London), see Milne, 2008), it is clear that the global Capitalist class has not forsaken neoliberalism as both an ideology and a class strategy of immiseration. In this way, recent financial crises, with the subsequent wholesale rescuing of banking and financial institutions via the massive transference of wealth to Capital is *part of* the neoliberal class project. Indeed, we might well observe, as David Blacker (2011) does, that neoliberalism’s destructive impulse is just getting warmed up. Its nostrums and doctrines are employed with a vengeance to ensure that not only is the Capitalist system saved from itself but also that workers pay for the lifeline. The drive to get back to ‘normal’ Capitalist life through pursuing neoliberal policies has recently been made abundantly clear in the case of the UK through Colin Crouch’s (2011) detailed account regarding the ‘strange non-death’ of neoliberalism in overall economic and

social policy. And, at a journalistic level, Chang (2012) highlights the similarities between the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) enforced on governments in Latin America and Africa in the 1980s and 1990s by the IMF and ` European governments inflicting an old IMF-style programme on their own populations (see also Chang, 2010). We see the `explosion of precariousness and the social deconstruction in the Capitalist metropolises' (International Viewpoint, 2012). Summarizing this most current context Peter McLaren (in press) notes:

Now that Keynesian stimulus measures no longer suffice to resolve the structural crisis of capitalism, and now that the frontiers of cheap resources are closing down, we are witnessing the dynamic increase in asset-stripping capitalism, in which financial channels are used to plunder and pillage, as profit-making is linked to the fastest and largest rates of return inextricably tied to the world of fictitious commodities that dilapidate the sources of past revolutions of productivity. For instance, the agro-food transnationals seek to capture profits through price inflation rather than through advance in productivity. Petty commodity producers saw their profits drop as finance Capital subordinated all commodity logic to the competitive logic of global financial markets. In other words, finance capital is established to make all parts of the world ecology commensurable with one another—it works to commensurate all reality to generic income streams, as surplus value can be extracted in the absence of a revolution in productivity.

While the Earth's eco-systems' are being ravaged by Capital's expansive appetite (Foster, 2000) in the face of, in McLaren's words above, an "absence of a revolution in productivity," the world's working classes are also being devastated by global capitalism. The result is that welfare is slashed, the poor live more precariously, more unhealthily, die earlier, and are increasingly alienated as all vestiges of bourgeois society's democratic institutions, such as public education, are privatized by ongoing neoliberalization. The low paid strata of the working class are duped and failed by the ideological apparatuses of the state, and repressed and kept in line and in prison, and (in some cases) in the ghetto, by the repressive apparatuses of the state. One of the most extreme examples of attacks on the right to organise, and to organise protest is the recent Republican legislation in the US state of Wisconsin to take away public sector workers' rights to collective bargaining (incidentally, occasioning the largest trade union rallying and activism for decades, MacAskill, 2011; Socialist World, 2011). Another example, during 2013 in Greece, has been the military conscription/ placing under military law, striking workers in Greece (Socialist World, 2013).

We are now, in much of the advanced, late capitalist industrialised world, in an era of intensified class struggle, intensified stratification, and intensified resistance. In the words of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' (1848),

Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat' (Marx and Engels, 1960/1848:109)

The corollary of this intensification of class conflict and resistance, with riots and

flames in the streets of Athens, Madrid, London, Lisbon, Istanbul, Ankara, Rio de Janeiro, with millions demonstrating and taking part in general strikes, 'Occupy'/Indignado movements, student protests. Accompanying this is the intensification of repression, together with the rise once again of Nazi and extreme right, racist, anti-trade unionist, anti-Left forces. For example, in Greece, in both the 6 May and the 17 June elections of 2012, the avowedly neo-Nazi Golden Dawn party won approximately 7% of the votes- including the reported support from 50% of Athens police, and is in 2013 polling over 20% in opinion polls (e.g. Smith, 2012). Once again in history, we need to realise that, in Brecht's (1941/2001) words (from the final line of his play *The Irresistible Rise of Arturo Ui*) warning us that, even if Hitler is dead, "the bitch that bore him is in heat again"—and that bitch is the bitch that bore capitalism, which is in crisis and under threat, and birthing a growing number of monsters.

Within this context of growing resistance and rebellion, ideological indoctrination (e.g. through. education) becomes an increasingly important tool for the Capitalist class in their struggle to suppress peoples' movements. In other words, capitalist education plays a major role in maintaining the social universe of Capital by moulding and developing the Labour power required by Capital, without which Capital could not profit and survive. Summarizing the central role of the productivity of labour situated in the context of education. Hill (2006a) summarises briefly, with specific reference to Britain, but applicable generally,

In Britain... both Conservative and New Labour governments have attempted to 'conform' both the *existing* teacher workforce and the *future* teacher workforce (i.e. student teachers) and *their* teachers, the reproducers of teachers - the teacher educators. Why conform the teachers and the teacher educators at all? Like poets, teachers are potentially dangerous. But poets are fewer and reading poetry is voluntary. Schooling is not. Teachers' work is *the production and reproduction of knowledge, attitudes and ideology* (see Althusser, 1971)

Glenn Rikowski's work (e.g. Rikowski, 1990, 2001) develops a Marxist analysis based on an analysis of 'Labour power'- the capacity to Labour. With respect to education, he suggests that teachers are the most dangerous of workers because they have a special role in shaping, developing and forcing *the single commodity on which the whole capitalist system rests: labour-power*. In the capitalist labour process, labour-power is transformed into value-creating *labour*, and, at a certain point, *surplus value* - value over-and-above that represented in the worker's wage - is created. *Surplus value* is the first form of the existence of Capital. It is the *lifeblood of Capital*. Without it, Capital could not be transformed into money, on sale of the commodities that incorporate value, and hence the capitalist could not purchase the necessary raw materials, means of production and labour-power to set the whole cycle in motion once more. But, most importantly for the capitalist, is that part of the surplus-value forms his or her *profit* - and it is this that drives the capitalist on a personal basis. It is this that defines the personal *agency of the capitalist*!

As Marx stresses, it is in the historical development of Capital, and even in the

business cycle itself, that there comes a point when increasing the productivity of Labour becomes “the most powerful lever of accumulation” (Marx, 1967/1867:772. This underscores the significance of education in the historical development of capitalism. (Malott 2012:172-173). Education has historically played a key role in the ideological reproduction of capitalist society. This includes the production of a bourgeois consciousness fascinated with the surface appearance of things (Marx and Engels, 1976/1845-6).

Education also plays the ideological function of normalising death by starvation amidst a sea of plenty, or normalising immiseration and glorifying extreme wealth and exploitation of Labour power, of pretending ‘we are all in this together’. Where the ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) (Althusser, 1971) don’t work effectively enough, the repressive state apparatuses (RSAs) are brought in. State oppression is increased with intensified use of the repressive state apparatuses and their weapons against protesters. Two examples are: firstly that of the Greek General Strike of 15 June 2011, and secondly, the police actions in / near Taksim Square in Istanbul and in Kizilay Square Ankara, Turkey in May/ June 2013. In Greece, the police lobbed tear gas into Syntagma Metro in Athens, clouds of it engulfing Syntagma Square, Athens, and Delta Force police, two per motorbike, were clubbing demonstrators, hospitalising them. In the Turkish example, police violence included using chemically treated water fired from water cannon, firing tear gas grenades at demonstrators’ heads, injuring thousands, blinding and killing some, picking up/ arresting socialist demonstrators from their homes. Both the Greek and the Turkish events, police brutality, were headline news worldwide in, respectively, June 2011 and June 2013. (One of us (Hill) was there, and tear gassed on both occasions). In the USA, in a similar ratcheting up state violence, there was the famous case of a police officer pepper-spraying teargasing seated peaceful protesters at University of California Davis University Occupy encampment, casually strolling along a row of them, and spraying them with pepper spray.

Thus, Neoliberalism is not unaccompanied. It is accompanied- and enforced- with laws, guns, tear gas canisters, tactics such as ‘kettling’ (in effect, holding demonstrators hostage for hours, in confined spaces, denying them access to toilet, water/ food). Neoliberalism is accompanied, enforced, by neo-conservatism in its repressive and controlling forms. This control is asserted increasingly strongly over education, educators and students.

If the struggle to transcend the drive to immiseration inherent in the logic of Capital is to succeed, this deep content, most thoroughly explored by Marx (1967/1867), must be brought to the surface of collective attention in the development of a class consciousness. Providing a lead as to how this might be realized, Peter Hudis (2012), in his study of Marx’s alternative to Capital, argues that revolutionary theory and practice must not be limited to the sphere of distribution. It must also, and primarily, be directed to that of production. Here we can begin to grasp the idea that a fascination with the *forms* of exploitation such as poverty and income inequality is understandable. Within the ideological orbit of Capitalist relations what is immediacy

of exchange relations exhaust the reality of the social world. However, such relations are historically specific *forms* of exploitation that are emergent from the *content*, or essence, of that exploitation: the social relations of production. Here it is to Marx's distinction between the surface appearance of things (the forms of immiseration) and the deeper animating logic of capital accumulation (the content of immiseration) that we are drawn. In other words, when critique is limited to the surface forms of capitalist exploitation (e.g. exclusively to the sphere of market exchange) the social relations of production (and the heart, or content, of capitalism) goes unchallenged (Hudis, 2012). We suggest that such partial and one-sided critiques can also be seen in the propensity of bourgeois academia to describe class as just another 'disadvantage' (like gender or 'race' for example) or even proclaim the death of class (Pakulski and Waters, 1996). While advancing 'racial' and gender equality is undoubtedly socially progressive and indispensable to the struggle against capitalism it cannot, on its own, be revolutionary (Kelsh and Hill, 2006). Certainly, failing to delve to the root of capitalist production relations is simply not only debilitating but also, and ultimately, supportive of Capital.

To summarise, exploitation in this volume refers to the dominance of Capital over Labour in the historical process of class struggle: a struggle over the form, content and products of not only social production but also as well as that social reproduction. As Marx put it, "every social process of production is at the same time a process of reproduction (1976/1867:711). In this sense, immiseration should be understood as referring to the general degradation of the 'labour condition'. The Labour-Capital relation is the fulcrum of exploitation. To put it straightforwardly, "the Capitalist produces the worker as a wage labourer [and this] incessant reproduction, this perpetuation of the worker, is the absolutely necessary condition for capitalist reproduction (Marx 1976/1867:716).

We argue in this volume that the social relations of production founding educational processes are one such 'absolutely necessary condition' for the reproduction of capitalist relations. Education plays a vital role in the social production of, what Marx refers to as, that "special" and "peculiar" commodity: labour power (1976/1867:270; 274). It is this potential to labour (and not actual concrete Labour) that the worker sells to the Capitalist. What distinguishes this 'special commodity' from the other "immense collection of commodities" (Marx 1976/1867:125) that comprise the capitalist mode of production is that it is a *human* capacity. Labour power is 'the fuel for the living fire' (Rikowski, 2001) in a double sense. Not only is it fundamental to the powering of capitalist furnaces but, because it contains the possibility of doing otherwise, it also possesses the capacity to burn them down.

However, before exploring issues of education and its revolutionary capacity we will explore Capital's internal logic highlighting those aspects that best explain Capital's tendency toward human suffering (Malott, 2011, 2012, 2013; Malott, Cole, & Elmore, 2013).

Capital's Historical Development

Marx's theory of history is a dynamic one in which societies emerge from the working out of the material conditions confronting previous societies. As Marx put it:

At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production ... of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. This begins an era of social revolution. (Marx 1970/1859:21)

Contrary to the TINA (There-Is-No-Alternative) advocates and the capitalism-as-the-end-of-history ideologues (see: Fukuyama, 1992), capitalism cannot escape the dynamism of history. Marx's materialist view of history reveals the transitory nature of capitalism. This is not to claim that history is predetermined. Rather, by emphasising history as class struggle, Marx places human agency at the centre of social revolution. Here sits the importance of class consciousness. This poses a revolutionary challenge to workers (and their organisations) across the globe who, in the 'social universe of Capital' (Neary and Rikowski, 2002), may see "nothing else, his whole life, than labour-power" and all of his time dedicated to "the self-expansion of Capital". She may be confronted with the reality of no time for "education, for intellectual development, for the fulfillment of social functions, for social intercourse, for the free play of the vital forces of his body and his mind" (Marx, 1967/1867:375). That revolutionary challenge is framed by the reality that the labour movement (or the semi-autonomous actions of workers), while historically important in slowing down the encroachments of Capital, cannot alter the internal logic of Capital. Capital cannot be reformed, it must be overthrown. This conclusion does not deny the value and worth of social democratic reforms that have been secured by Labour (and other social) movements from the capitalist class over time and in various contexts, such as the forging of welfare states, the development of national health systems and the advancement of public education since, particularly, the long post- (second) world war boom. Rather, it suggests that while capitalists may continuously develop new technologies of production and control as a response to Labour's social movements, in part, the internal logic of Capital and the basic capitalist property relations between Labour and Capital remain consistent. That logic, we stress again, operates in a determining way but still requires the involvement of human agents to ensure its continuance—we can consent to it, ignore it, attempt to resist it, or even overthrow it. Seen in this way it is a logic that compels us. Likewise, the *bad* things capitalists do (i.e. increasingly driving down wages, consuming Labour power) are not necessarily the result of individuals born *evil* or *greedy*, but are the product of social actors (i.e. capitalists and CEOs) fulfilling their institutional roles within competitive capitalism (i.e. accumulators of surplus value by any means necessary). Highlighting the logic of the destructiveness of capitalism Marx observes that capitalist production:

By extending the working day not only produces a deterioration of human labour-power by robbing it of its normal moral and physical, conditions of development and activity, but also. produces the premature exhaustion and death of this labour-power

itself. It extends the worker's production time within a given period by shortening his life. (1867/1976: 376-377)

The capitalist, as Marx demonstrates above, driven by the internal laws of capital accumulation, habitually brings much suffering and harm to those who rely on a wage to survive and therefore remains responsible for his/her crimes against humanity and will therefore continue to be the justified target of working class *revenge* (Hill, 2012).

Explaining the emergence of capitalism historically, we can point to the legalized and thus institutionalized creation of private property (i.e. the Enclosure Acts in England that helped make the transition from feudalism to capitalism), which forced into existence a landless class of former peasants (i.e. having no direct access to the means of production/land to reproduce their own existence) who, due to a lack of alternatives, found themselves in a social context where they had to sell their labour power for a wage to survive. These English and Scottish landless people became the basis for the original industrial, global working class. The unequal relationship between the purchasers of labour power (i.e. capitalists) and the sellers of labour power (i.e. labour ourselves) stemming from capitalist property relations, from this perspective, is the foundation of the capitalist mode of production. The exploitation of the working class by the capitalist class is, to stress again, part of the logical dynamics of the Labour/Capital relation. However, in the social universe of Capital this relation appears unproblematic. For example, when bosses and workers confront each other in the labour market they do, seemingly, as equals. They are simply engaged in what is considered to be an open process of fair exchange: labour power for a wage. In other words, both are after the same thing: a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. The superficiality of this representation of the exchange of the two commodities was not lost on Marx. In a colourful flourish, typical of his sharp tongue and wit, Marx describes such representations as typical emanations from the 'free-trader vulgaris':

When we leave [the] sphere of ... the exchange of commodities, which provides the 'free-trader vulgaris' with his views, his concepts and the standard by which he judges the society of Capital and wage-Labour, a certain change takes place, or so it appears, in the physiognomy of our dramatis personae. He who was previously the money-owner now strides out in front as a capitalist; the possessor of Labour-power follows as his worker. The one smirks self-importantly and is intent on business; the other is timid and holds back, like someone who has brought his own hide to market and now has nothing else to expect but – a tanning. (Marx, 1976/1867:280)

In his consideration of Marx's work, Peter Hudis notes the difficulty of comprehending the actual source of value which sustains capitalist value-production: Labour itself. The reality of things is hidden behind the superficiality of exchange relations:

Since value can only show itself as a social relation between one commodity and another, it all too readily appears that relations of exchange are responsible for value-production. ... That Marx ultimately makes this distinction is of

critical importance, since it suggests that attempting to ameliorate the deleterious aspect of value-production by altering the exchange-relation is fundamentally flawed. Since exchange-value is a manifestation of value, whose substance is abstract Labour, the essential problem of capitalist production can be addressed only by altering the nature of the labour-process itself. (2012: 151)

In other words, an exclusive focus on reforming exchange-relations and attending only to the redistribution wealth leaves not only production relations intact but also the logic of Capital a mystery and the arrogance of the ‘free-trader vulgaris’ unchallenged. Hudis (2012) argues that it is not Capital’s issues of distribution (i.e. poverty and inequality) that so offended Marx, but the dehumanizing (i.e. alienating) and immiserating nature of capitalist value production. In short, capitalism denies the realization of a fully human social being. Even if private property were abolished and wages equalized, with the transcendence of capitalist social relations of production alienation and dehumanization would continue. Working toward a post-Capitalist society that is humanized must include a critical socialist education that imagines a world beyond Capital. In fleshing out what form this imaginary might take we draw on the work of Hudis who notes that in Marx’s “late writings” the most explicit vision of a post-capitalist society can be found. Hudis (2012) summarizes:

According to Marx, the amount of time engaged in material production would be drastically reduced in the new society, thanks to technological innovation and the development of the forces of production. At the same time, Labour, like all forms of human activity, would be *freely* associated and not subject to the autonomous power of Capital that operates behind the backs of individuals.

Here is the most important determinant in Marx’s concept of the new society: social relations must cease to operate independently of the self-activity of the associated individuals. Marx will oppose any power—be it the state, a social plan, or the market itself—that takes on a life of its own and utilizes human powers as a mere means to its fruition and development. Marx’s opposition to the inversion of subject and predicate constitutes the reason for his opposition to all forms of value-production. It is also what grounds his conception of socialism. Human power, he insists, must become a self-sufficient end—it must cease to serve as a means to some other end. He will project this concept even more explicitly in his last writings, which contain his most detailed discussion of the content of a post capitalist society. (2012:182)

Hudis (2012) points to the Paris Commune of 1871 (see Marx, 1969/1871) as the single most important event in pushing Marx to revise and deepen his concept of a post-capitalist society. Making this point, he argues that “the Paris Commune led Marx to conclude, more explicitly than ever before, that the state is not a neutral instrument that could be *used* to ‘wrest’ power from the oppressors. This is because “*its very form is despotic*” (2012:185). Envisioning the new society consisting of freely-associated producers democratically allocating social wealth, the means of achieving this was to be non-coercive. For Marx after 1871, this means was no longer seen to reside in the state but, rather, in the commune. However, the commune here is

not socialism, but it could lead to it if it were allowed to survive and develop. We know that this was not the case with respect to the Paris Commune of 1871, and we know that it has never been since. That is, workers' self-directed programs (i.e. revolutionary movements) have always been the primary targets of the capitalist class' military, ideological and political aggression. A post-capitalist society is therefore something that will almost certainly have to be bitterly fought for in the streets, workplaces, and educational institutions across the world.

For Marx, a new society can only be born from the womb of a preexisting one where the traces of the old social relations are challenged, disrupted and ultimately transcended. In this respect, the transcendence of capitalism will require challenging and disrupting what we take as the central defining feature of Capitalist production: the subsumption of concrete Labour to abstract Labour. By 'concrete labour' Marx means 'useful Labour' engaged to produce something of definite use (i.e. it has 'use-value'). It is the "usefulness of a thing that makes it a use-value" (Marx 1976/1867:126). Furthermore, concrete Labour is trans-historical in that it is "a condition of human existence which is independent of all forms of society; it is an eternal natural necessity which mediates the metabolism between man and nature, and therefore human life itself (Marx 1976/1867:133). In contrast, 'abstract labour' refers to commodity producing Labour of specific historical social formations (i.e. societies). It is also Labour that is distinct (or abstracted) from any particular use (and use-value) and, as such, refers to the "expenditure of Labour in general" (Marx 1976/1867:135). In this way, abstract Labour acts as a general measure of exchange (and the founding of 'exchange-value'): essential to facilitating a commodity market. This is what Marx called 'the dual character of Labour' (1976/1867:131-137) and what he considered was absolutely 'crucial to an understanding of political economy [i.e. capitalism] (1976/1867:132).

By identifying the 'dual character of labour', Marx was able to characterize the defining feature of capitalism resting in the historical deepening and radical expansion of abstract Labour. This served to facilitate the dominance of exchange (value) over use (value): the elevation of market relations and profit over human relations and human need. In the social universe of Capital, the worker - drained of their flesh, blood and humanity – appears only as a commodity to be consumed as part of surplus value (profit) production. On the historical emergence and social dominance of capitalism, Moishe Postone notes:

The system constituted by abstract Labour embodies a new form of social domination. It exerts a form of social compulsion whose impersonal, abstract, and objective character is historically new. The initial determination of such abstract social compulsion is that individuals are compelled to produce and exchange commodities in order to survive. This compulsion exerted is not a function of direct social domination, as is the case, for example, with slave and serf Labour; it is, rather, a function of "abstract" and "objective" social structures, and represents a form of abstract, impersonal domination. ... Capitalist social relations and alienated structures are identical. (1996:158–159)

Essential to the securing and maintenance of structures of alienation is the separation of direct producers from not only the means of production (which includes their Labour power) but also the products of their Labour. Both the means and the ends of production are owned by the capitalist. To grasp the fundamental logic of class domination and immiseration that characterises capitalism Marx offers the concept of abstract labour. Indeed, as John Holloway has succinctly put it, abstract Labour is “the force that weaves the web of [capitalist] domination (2010:171)¹. Socially necessary labour time, or a generalizable average dictated by technology and consumer markets, is therefore distinct from actual labour time, and comes to dominate concrete labour by serving as the universal standard allowing different products of labour to be mutually exchangeable.

Hudis (2012) therefore summarizes Marx’s concept of a new society as being based upon “the *replacement of the dictatorship of abstract time with time as the space for human development...*” (p. 191). In a new society a market where products of Labour are equally exchangeable ceases to exist because “there is no substance that renders different magnitudes qualitatively equal” (Hudis, 2012:192). However, the reference “ceases to exist” could be interpreted as implying a somehow instantaneous process of transformation and leaves out the most important question that of transition: how do we arrive there, how do we move from socialism as the contradictory co-existence of elements of the capitalist and the emerging communist modes of production, of planning and of market etc., how do we experiment with new social configurations. Also, we want to avoid any dogmatism in the suggestion that the market will simply cease to exist because of the introduction of communist (namely cooperative, democratic and egalitarian) relations of production.

The Market has been a powerful form of socialization, it is a way of socializing individual Labours and practices as socially necessary (in capitalist terms in the sense of commodities finding buyers), it also a knowledge process and a mode of social reasoning. It is the result of the capitalist relations of production but at the same time it is one of the mechanisms that induced the extended reproduction of capitalist relations of production (only capitalistically produced commodities in the end can survive the antagonisms of a fully developed market). It will not simply “cease to exist” (this would have been a metaphysical conception) it will be replaced by the experimentation of new forms of ‘social and economic reasoning’ and coordination of individual production processes, in the sense of democratic, decentralized planning and allocation of goods and resources.

In the highest stage of socialism, for Marx, individuals no longer learn to produce for production, but that the development of the human species is an end in itself. From here we can return to the question regarding the potential role of education in capitalist societies in transcending Capital’s social relations themselves.

Education and Capitalist Society

Competitive capitalism, once set in motion, operates by internal laws of competitive

accumulation. This perspective is based on the conclusion that the internal logic of Capital leads to perpetual, cyclical crisis and thus growing immiseration, creating the revolutionary conditions for its own demise. It is within the context of an emerging militant labour movement, facing rapid industrialization, economic growth, and immiseration that led the great American crusader for common schooling, Horrace Mann, in pleas to mill owners, citing Bartlett, a mill owner himself, that capitalists with great fortunes would be wise to invest in education as a form of “insurance on their property...thereby educating the whole mass of mind and constituting a police more effective than peace officers or prisons” and controllable whereas an uneducated worker is potentially rebellious and quite dangerous. In other words, education has played a significant role in maintaining the social universe of Capital because it has been designed to create within workers a worldview and interpretative framework centered around a belief in the inevitability and ultimate goodness and rightness of Capital grounded in a dependence for an authoritarian leader and social structure. Marx (1857-1858/1973) was intimately aware of the historical role of ideology in perpetuating systems of economic oppression. Consider at length:

In the money relation, in the developed system of exchange, the ties of personal dependence, of distinctions of blood, education, etc. are in fact exploded, ripped up (at least, personal ties appear as *personal* relations; and individuals *seem* independent (this is an independence which is at bottom merely an illusion, and is more correctly called indifference), free to collide with one another and to engage in exchange within this freedom; but they appear thus only for someone who abstracts from the *conditions*, the *conditions of existence* within which these individuals enter into contact (and these conditions, in turn, are independent of the individuals and, although created by society, appear as if they were *natural conditions*, not controllable by individuals)...The abstraction, or idea, however, is nothing more than the theoretical expression of those material relations which are their lord and master. Relations can be expressed, of course, only in ideas, and thus philosophers have determined the reign of ideas to be the peculiarity of the new age, and have identified the creation of free individuality with the overthrow of this reign. This error was all the more easily committed, from the ideological stand-point, as this reign exercised by the relations (this objective dependency, which, incidentally, turns into certain definite relations of personal dependency, but stripped of all illusions) appears within the consciousness of individuals as the reign of ideas, and because the belief in the permanence of these ideas, i.e. of these objective relations of dependency, is of course consolidated, nourished and inculcated by the ruling classes by all means available. (pp. 163-165)

Contrary to bourgeois society’s paternalistic claim to have brought freedom and independence to an ideologically-controlled, pre-determined, inferior peasant class, free education and critical, scientific analysis (i.e. the ideological realm) can serve a disruption function by revealing the hidden processes of value production and the *actual* relations that exist between producers, non-producers consumers-non-owners, and non-producer owners or capitalists. For the *actual* interests of Capital then,

Teachers are dangerous because *they are intimately connected with the social production of labour-power*, equipping students with skills, competences, abilities, knowledge and the attitudes and personal qualities that *can be expressed and expended in the Capitalist Labour process*. Teachers are guardians of the quality of Labour-power! This potential, latent power of teachers explains why representatives of the State might have sleepless nights worrying about their role in ensuring that the labourers of the future are delivered to workplaces throughout the national Capital *of the highest possible quality*.

The State needs to control the process for two reasons. First to try to ensure that this occurs. Secondly, to try to ensure that modes of pedagogy that are antithetical to labour-power production do not and cannot exist. In particular, it becomes clear, on this analysis that the Capitalist State will seek to destroy any forms of pedagogy that attempt to educate students regarding their real predicament - to create an awareness of themselves as future Labour-powers and to underpin this awareness with critical insight that seeks to undermine the smooth running of the social production of labour-power. This fear entails strict control of teacher education, of the curriculum, of educational research. (Hill, 2006a)

Again, a socialist, anti-capitalist education, as argued below, becomes an important part of the process of fostering the class-consciousness needed for the revolutionary overthrow of the basic structures of global capitalist power—the Labour-Capital relation that provides the basis of value expansion unique to Capital.

Anti-Capitalist Education

Critical pedagogy, at its finer and more relevant moments, represents an educational sub-tradition designed to create learning experiences and understandings to transcend capitalism. That is, Freire's critical education for humanization was informed by the Marxist understanding that the alienation of abstract labour disconnects thinking from doing. Freire therefore stressed the importance of students and educators being engaged in a life-long practice of reflecting on their consciousness and perpetually changing their practice as their understanding develops and their commitments deepen. Critical education (within which Freirean inspired critical pedagogy is one strand, Templer in Chapter 13 of this volume sets out an East European/ Soviet strand, and the contributors to Hill, 2014, survey critical education and Marxist education more globally) here is not merely designed to help workers advocate for a higher wage, but to be engaged in the process of *becoming* (in the Hegelian sense), leading workers, collectively, toward the transcendence of Capital. This critical pedagogy is therefore purposeful and directed by the educator while simultaneously designed to engage students as active learners and transformers of history. This is a revolutionary pedagogy; it is prescriptive because it is directed (toward revolution), but it is democratic in that it is based on a deep commitment to humanization. Offering an insightful connection between Freire and Marx, the late British revolutionary educator, Paula Allman (1999), in *Revolutionary Social Transformation: Democratic Hopes, Political Possibilities and Critical Education*, elaborates:

At the level of prescription, which suggests what educators “ought” to do, [Freire] is unequivocal. This, in turn, links back to the essential prescription that he shared with—and probably came to through his readings of—Marx. Both of them think that it is our human vocation to become more fully human. In Marx’s terms, this would mean being at one with our “species being” or that which makes our species distinct from others. According to this analysis of human ontology, human beings are alienated from their human potential. Marx and Freire urge human beings to engage in a revolutionary process that would deliver human history into “human hands,”—that is, making it the critical and creative product of all human beings. (p. 92)

From the perspective that the most desirable way to abolish poverty and inequality is by transcending Capitalist production completely, including socially necessary labour time, as Allman (1999) and Hudis (2012) allude, a directed, purposeful critical education could not be more important. While supporting our unions and advocating for more equally distributive policies are important and necessary struggles, failing to come to understand the substance of value, abstract or indirect labour, diminishes our vision and movement against human suffering and its root causes or structures.

Immiseration Capitalism, Revenge and Resistance

The human suffering is, for many, immense, with many in the USA, Greece, Britain, Ireland, etc. falling into absolute immiseration, not simply the relative immiseration of much of the post (second) world war period.

In recent decades there has been across the Capitalist world, the progression of ‘*relative* immiseration’, with the wealth of the working class growing far more slowly than that of the Capitalist class. But what we are seeing now, most spectacularly of all in Greece, but also in countries such as Britain, Ireland and the USA, is the progression of ‘*absolute* immiseration’, with an absolute deterioration of income, wealth and living conditions- and mass impoverishment (Hill, 2012. See also Hill 2006b; Greaves, Hill and Maisuria, 2007)

And such immiseration has led to qualitative changes, in some cultures/ states, in class consciousness, and willingness to take part in solidaristic direct action. And in some cases, for example in Britain and Greece and France (see the chapters on resistance in this book) also in radical left electoral/ Parliamentarist action.

The desire for revenge against those imposing and benefitting from austerity capitalism and immiseration is justified. The political and economic leaders- bankers, financiers, those driving down living conditions, the rich, the capitalist class billionaires and multi-millionaires- get off free in the current crisis- in fact they get richer, they profit from the crisis- as the empirical data evidenced earlier shows. They need to be brought to account. And where found guilty of crimes, punished. And class justice means the introduction of new laws, laws which redefine social irresponsibility and criminality in terms of knowingly causing deterioration to the lives and wellbeing of the community. ASBOs (anti-social behaviour orders) should be handed out not

just to delinquent working class youth as they have been, but need to be redefined so as to target the real, mega-anti-social behaviour.

And where not found guilty of crimes, then, as part of class economic justice and socialisation of the economy, the capitalist class should be subject to nationalisation, and to expropriation with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need. We are not talking of hanging billionaire tax avoiders from lamp posts, or bringing in the guillotine, neither are we targeting the small and medium businesses. It's the leading members of the capitalist class who need investigating.

As for the poor, and the not so poor, suicides are increasing, as are early deaths and chronic ill-health, homelessness, hopelessness. Neoliberal capitalist policies deliberately causing economic immiseration, making the poor die young, with children in Greece and in Britain now fainting at school through lack of food, with hundreds of millions of workers forced into poorer and meaner and less happy and more anxiety-ridden lives.

Such social devastation is not just in Greece. It is seen across cities and ghettos and suburbs and small towns and villages of all the countries suffering under the post-2008 financial crisis austerity capitalism, immiseration capitalism. Social devastation is in the schools we and our communities send our children to. This is not just a form of class exploitation, class oppressions, class suppression; it is, at its extremes which we are seeing in Greece already, a form of class genocide.

And it is not an accident. It is the result of deliberate policy. This needs repeating. This is no accident; it is the result of deliberate policy. Policy whose initiators and chief beneficiaries and promoters must be held accountable.

The only too evident changes in the material conditions of hundreds of millions of workers- workers from middle as well as lower strata, together with social / cultural degradation- degrading of the social and welfare state- are, however, leading to widespread changes in class and political consciousness, and to resistance. The concept of 'immiseration' itself (Marx & Engels 1848; Marx, 1976/1867) was very much derided and dismissed during years of capitalist growth (Greaves, Hill and Maisuria, 2007). Other concepts such as 'proletarianisation' (Braverman, 1974) 'capitalism' and 'anti-Capitalism' are far more widely understood and used, in particular 'capitalism' and 'anti-capitalism', terms rarely used outside the Left prior to the 2008 onset of the current crisis of Fiscal Capitalism.

The concept of 'the ruling class', that group of mega-rich, socially, politically interconnected, is perfectly encapsulated in the phrase and chant and banners on a thousand demonstrations in different countries, 'We are the 99%'. Banners on the student demonstrations in Britain, 'Strike. Occupy. Shut Down the 1%' , and 'Education for the masses, not just the ruling classes (on the various anti-cuts demonstrations in London, of 12 November, 2010, and of 30 November 2011, and the 30 October 2010 demonstration in Brighton, a medium size city of a quarter of a million people). (For Hill blogspot and photos from these three demonstrations, see, for example, Hill, 2010b, 2010c, 2011b).

The neo-liberal, pro-austerity orthodoxy among political parties, all agreeing, in effect, that it is the workers who must pay for the crisis, has delegitimised parliamentary, electoral politics. In Britain, the Labour Party, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Conservative party are all agree that massive cuts- in services, in the real value of wages/ salaries, in pension entitlements, have to be made. In Greece, where the conservative New Democracy party and the traditional social democratic socialist party, PASOK, together with a right split from the (left reformist) Syriza, the Democratic Left, have (until July 2013 anyhow, when DIMAR left the governing coalition) are all united in accepting the 'need' for massive privatisations of public services and massive and unprecedented austerity cuts. And this analysis remains valid in Summer 2013, months after the elections. The various chapters in this book make similar analyses, highlighting the overall unity of neoliberal purpose between the different Capitalist parties, such as the Democrats and Republicans in the USA.

So there is much more the question, indeed, widescale questioning, of exactly who does Parliament represent. There is much more understanding that Parliament is 'the executive arm of the ruling class'.

And more interest in 'revolution', in major change in the way society is structured., and in concepts, once deemed highly theoretical, but now deemed more realistic, about the creation of 'dual power', the creation of alternative/ oppositional structures of government and administration, from forms of democratic workers' control, to local assemblies, to occupations. And there is resistance on the streets. The spotlight of revolution and of people's assemblies and occupations turned for some years- the first five years of austerity capitalism in Europe, 2008-2013, from Latin America, in particular Bolivia, Argentina and Venezuela, to Europe on terms of anti-austerity capitalism, as well as to North Africa/ the Middle East. Now, with similar struggles and mass protests in Brazil in summer 2013, the focus is again more global. The common focus is revulsion at immiseration capitalism, at impoverishment, at growing and stark inequalities between 'haves' and 'have-nots', between the Capitalist economic and political class and the 99%. And there is a gradually spreading understanding that the logic of Capital demands that it, capitalism, cannot be adequately reformed, but that it must be replaced. The point is that a revolutionary perspective insists on the primacy of changing relations of production. And this 'revolutionary doing' is to expose - in the act of transcending - the dictatorship of abstract labour (and abstract time) as the root of class exploitation and human immiseration.

Notes

ⁱ To be more precise, it is labour-time that constitutes the measure of exchange and requires revolutionary attention. According to Marx, exchange value is not determined by the actual time taken to produce a commodity but a 'social average': "the labour-time which is necessary on average, or in other words is socially necessary" (1976/1867: 129). Value for Marx is 'socially necessary labour time'. As such, Hudis is correct when he summarizes Marx's concept of a new society as being based upon "the replacement of the dictatorship of abstract time with time as the space for human development..." (2012:191).

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