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Editorial

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Editorial

Abstract

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Part One of this issue of the *International Gramsci Journal* contains Marziyeh Asgarivash and Karim Pourhamzavi's comparative study of development in Japan and of uneven development in Iran. The authors challenge the predominantly ahistorical "cultural" approach adopted by certain academics to explain both underdevelopment in Iran (as well as so-called "peripheral" Middle Eastern States) and also advanced capitalist development in Japan. They look instead at the role played by the imperial powers in the late nineteenth century and again in the post-WWII period (cf. the 1953 coup engineered by the USA and Britain to topple Mossadegh and their subsequent support for the Shah, Mohammad Reza). In the same periods in Japan, external forces helped foster the country's development, at the same time as aiding USA global policy after WWII. The authors' approach clearly outlines the differential hegemonic strategy applied by USA governments towards States considered peripheral or core. Their analysis of these phenomena represents a further and welcome contribution to the interchange between Gramsci scholars as such and those, making use of his concepts, who work in the fields of International Relations and International Political Economy.

Part Two contains two articles in Italian. The first, by Giovanni Castagno, continues the subject matter of education, present in the first, and again in the recent, numbers of this journal, by including an exploration by Giovanni Castagno of present-day schooling. His contribution calls on the progressive critical pedagogy of educationists working in Italy and elsewhere: the names of Henry Giroux and Paulo Freire stand out. But the major non-Italian who figures for his similarity to Gramsci's approach to pedagogy is the Soviet educationalist Lev Vygotskij, famous as the author of *Myslenie i Reč'*, best rendered as *Thinking and Speech*. The schooling system in this approach should be "disinterested" (i.e. not serve immediate interests). In contrast, in the present period, the neoliberal schooling approach has imposed a market-dictated conformism, in any case not pedagogically well-founded, which has destroyed almost completely the dialectical dimension that the school once had.

The second contribution in Part II, by Saša Hrnjez, deals with the twin notions in Gramsci of translatability and translation (held separately in the analysis in the *Notebooks*), a subject long overlooked

in Italy, but which has come more and more into focus in the last generation or so as Gramsci scholars, first non-Italians and then Italians, have come to grips with Gramsci's comments. Among various aspects of his thoughtfully-argued contribution, Hrnjez develops a comparison with the other major Marxist of that generation who dealt with translation problems, Walter Benjamin, concluding in this part of his article that the approaches of the two thinkers, while apparently very different, are complementary in their insertion of translatability into the "horizon of history". And, in their separate ways, both deal with how translation has its effect on the real movement through a process of (reciprocal) transformation.

In the reviews section Gregorio Sorgonà analyses a recent book by Giuliano Guzzone (*Gramsci e la critica dell'economia politica. Dal dibattito sul liberismo al paradigma della "traducibilità"*), which continues the line of argument present in recent issues of the *IGJ* on economic aspects of Gramsci's thinking. The question of translatability, as indicated in the title of the volume, emerges once again here. As a link therefore between the second article in Part II, this review article and indeed the other review article, we include an English version of the *IGJ* editor's entry in the *Dizionario gramsciano* on "Translatability". The proviso is added here that substantial analytical work has been done since the *Dictionary* came out and certain aspects of the question are now clearer than was the case ten years ago. The second article we carry in the review section is Francesca Antonini's double review of Giuseppe Vacca's *Modernità alternative* (Spanish and English versions forthcoming) and Angelo Rossi's *Gramsci e la crisi europea negli anni Trenta*. Underscoring the importance of the notion of translatability is the fact that, in Vacca's volume, "translatability" is regarded as a "cardinal" Gramscian concept, alongside hegemony and passive revolution, both for the constitution of the subject (through the formation of a collective will) and for the philosophy of praxis itself. From their different standpoints, these two volumes overlap in dealing with what was happening in the "outside world" during Gramsci's imprisonment. And both, from what we can reasonably deduce from Gramsci's at times cryptic comments, deal with his interpretation of these events. As is our custom for reviews written originally in Italian, both contributions, that of Sorgonà and that of Antonini, are offered in Italian and in an English translation.