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Editorial

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Editorial

Abstract

This is an abstract of the Editorial of IGJ 14

Keywords

Editorial

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The summer 2021 number of the *International Gramsci Journal* has among its main subjects ideology, in various old and new forms, the subaltern groups, and the intertwined question of common sense.

We open with a highly original contribution from Roberto Finelli that starts off from Gramsci's notes on *Americanism and Fordism*, and the ideology that, at the time, sprang from the factory system of the "New World". In his analysis the author deals with a nexus of questions taking in the notions of *Technologie* and *Technik* in German cameralism, the use and extension of their meaning made by Marx in his analysis of the role of machines, big industry and abstract labour, thence on to present-day digital technologies and the digital economy. Here the author analyses the ideological sleight of hand that confuses the transmission and processing of information (in the form of 0s and 1s) with knowledge, treated as a mathematical science, independent of interpretation. In this approach the author makes wide use of Spinoza, this latter's "vertical" mind-body axis and the linkages through a "horizontal" axis with the outside world, thence into feeling. Finelli speaks of the "unity of a biological-emotional organism" and, while not explicitly calling Gramsci into play here, the link up with what the letter has to say on knowledge and feeling is apparent, as also is the question of an ideology that springs from labour un-mediated by intellectual intervention.

Panagiotis Sotiris wrote a well-received article for the *IGJ* in 2017, dealing with the national-popular in Gramsci. Here Salvatore Cingari follows on this line, investigating the roots of the concept in France and nineteenth-century Russia, in his analytical study of the use of the term "populism" in these sources and in Gramsci's contemporary reading matter and their critical use in the *Notebooks*.

Articles in the *IGJ* have frequently centred on education and its relation to hegemony. This line continues with Peter Mayo's contribution on Gramsci's influence in *Critical Studies in Education*. Mayo's main reference points include, most of all, Paulo Freire, and then the work of the North American school, with stand-out names such as Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren and Michael W. Apple.

The article in Italian by Marco Casalino deals with the subalterns as discussed by Gramsci especially in *Notebook 25*, linking up the paragraphs there with the pre-prison writings, in particular the essay

published as *Alcuni temi della questione meridionale* (*Some Aspects of the Southern Question*), but also with Marx's *18 Brumaire*, with Gramsci's own writings on the "moderates" of the Risorgimento and with the themes derived from Leonida Rèpaci's 1933 novel, *I fratelli Rupe*.

We then have a set of three interlinked articles dealing explicitly with "common sense". The British philosopher and novelist Tony McKenna contributes a thoughtful – and sometimes critical – piece on this notion, and the way in which Gramsci's interpretation fits into a line stemming from Aristotle, going through Roman stoicism, on to the Renaissance and early modern era, and then its use in the Britain of today. As a follow-up to this article we publish an English-language translation of Guido Liguori's entry in the *Dizionario gramsciano* on "common sense". Then, passing into the book review section, Rob Jackson reviews Kate Crehan's *Gramsci's Common Sense* in which the author discusses movements in contemporary North American society and, in dealing with various notions of "common sense" – and also knowledge – provides a counterpoint to the article by McKenna's and, in a more indirect way, to that by Finelli.

Caesarism and Bonapartism in Gramsci, an important new book by Francesca Antonini, is here discussed by Roberto Dainotto. Both terms, often overlooked by Gramsci scholars, unfold from a situation of "catastrophic balance", and though similar are generally not interchangeable: Antonini rights the balance by describing Caesarism as a form of "charismatic leadership" while Bonapartism is "a generic form of authoritarianism". Next come reviews by Gianni Fresu (in Italian and English), of Giacomo Tarascio's *Nazione e Mezzogiorno* in which the author tellingly links Gramsci's writings on the South with today's post-colonial studies. Last, a major publishing event in Gramscian studies is Francesco Giasi's extended and fully annotated new edition of the *Lettere dal carcere*, reviewed by the editor of this journal. After describing the initial reception of the *Lettere* in 1947, and the reasons why that volume is incomplete, the reviewer singles out for treatment just a few themes present in the letters. These include Gramsci's relations – sometimes strained – with his family, the attempts to obtain his freedom or a reduction in his sentence, his disagreements with the Comintern line of the early 1930s, a number of his coded political messages (and the reviewer's attempt – right or wrong – to interpret some of them) and, finally, the last letters written from the clinic in Rome to his wife and sons.