#### **The telos of the 1ac’s politics is the strike – that naturalizes capital’s control and is parasitic on political organizing.**

Eidlin 20 Barry Eidlin (assistant professor of sociology at McGill University and the author of Labor and the Class Idea in the United States and Canada), 1-6-2020, “Why Unions Are Good – But Not Good Enough,” Jacobin, https://www.jacobinmag.com/2020/01/marxism-trade-unions-socialism-revolutionary-organizing

*Labor unions have long occupied a paradoxical position within Marxist theory. They are an essential expression of the working class taking shape as a collective actor and an essential vehicle for working-class action. When we speak of “the working class” or “working-class activity,” we are often analyzing the actions of workers either organized into unions or trying to organize themselves into unions. At the same time,* ***unions are an imperfect and incomplete vehicle for*** *the working class to achieve one of Marxist theory’s central goals:* ***overthrowing capitalism****.* ***Unions*** *by their very existence* ***affirm and reinforce capitalist*** *class* ***society. As organizations which*** *primarily* ***negotiate wages, benefits, and working conditions*** *with employers,* ***unions only exist in relation to capitalists****. This makes them* ***almost by definition reformist institutions****, designed to mitigate and manage the employment relationship, not transform it.* Many unions have adapted to this conservative, managerial role. Others have played key roles in challenging capital’s power. Some have even played insurgent roles at one moment and managerial roles at others. When unions have organized workplace insurgencies, this has sometimes translated into political pressure that expanded democracy and led to large-scale policy reforms. In the few revolutionary historical moments that we can identify, worker organization, whether called unions or something else, has been essential. Thus, labor unions and movements have long been a central focus of Marxist debate. At its core, the debate centers around the role of unions in class formation, the creation of the revolutionary working-class agent. The debate focuses on four key questions. First, to what degree do unions simply reflect existing relations of production and class struggle, or actively shape those relations? Second, if unions actively shape class struggle, why and under what conditions do they enhance or inhibit it? Third, how do unions shape class identities, and how does this affect unions’ scope of action? Fourth, what is the relation between unions and politics? This question is comprised of two sub-questions: to what degree do unions help or hinder struggles in the workplace becoming broader political struggles? And how should unions relate to political parties, the more conventional vehicle for advancing political demands? The following is a chapter from [The Oxford Handbook of Karl Marx](https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190695545.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780190695545) (Oxford University Press, 2019). It assesses Marxist debates surrounding trade unions, oriented by the four questions mentioned previously. It proceeds historically, first examining how Marx and Engels conceived of the roles and limitations of trade unions, then tracing how others within Marxism have pursued these debates as class relations and politics have changed over time. While the chapter includes some history of labor unions and movements themselves, the central focus is on how Marxist theorists thought of and related to those movements. Marx and Engels wrote extensively about the unions of their time, although never systematically. The majority of their writings on unions responded to concrete labor struggles of their time. From their earliest works, they grasped unions’ necessity and limitations in creating a working-class agent capable of advancing class struggle against the bourgeoisie. This [departed](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/wusa.12021) from previous variants of socialism, often based in idealized views of rebuilding a rapidly eroding community of artisanal producers, which did not emphasize class organization or class struggle. Writing in The Condition of the Working Class in England about emerging forms of unionism, Engels observed that even though workers’ primary struggles were over material issues such as wages, they pointed to a deeper social and political conflict: What gives these Unions and the strikes arising from them their real importance is this, that they are the first attempt of the workers to abolish competition. They im­ ply the recognition of the fact that the supremacy of the bourgeoisie is based wholly upon the competition of the workers among themselves; i.e., upon their want of cohesion. And precisely because the Unions direct themselves against the vital nerve of the present social order, however one-sidedly, in however narrow a way, are they so dangerous to this social order. *At the same time, Engels saw that, even as union struggles “[kept alive] the opposition of the workers to the … omnipotence of the bourgeoisie,” so too did they “[compel] the admission that* ***something more is needed than*** *Trades Unions and* ***strikes*** *to break the power of the ruling class.”* Here Engels articulates the crux of the problem. First, unions are essential for working-class formation, creating a collective actor both opposed to the bourgeoisie and capable of challenging it for power. *Second,* ***they are*** *an* ***insufficient*** *vehicle* ***for*** *creating and* ***mobilizing that collective actor****.* Marx and Engels understood that unions are essential to working-class formation because, under capitalism, the system of “free labor,” where individual workers sell their labor power to an employer for a wage, fragments relations between workers and makes them compete with each other. As described in the Communist Manifesto, the bourgeoisie “has left no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous ‘cash payment,’” leaving workers “exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.” While workers organized based on other collective identities, such as race, ethnicity, or religion, only unions could unite them as workers against the source of their exploitation — the bourgeoisie. Unions serve “as organized agencies for superseding the very system of wage labor and capital rule.” But just as unions could allow the proletariat to take shape and challenge the bourgeoisie for power, Marx and Engels also saw that they were a partial, imperfect vehicle for doing so for two reasons. *First,* ***unions’ fundamentally defensive role, protecting workers against*** *employers’ efforts to drive* ***a*** *competitive* ***race to the bottom, meant*** *that* ***they limited themselves “to a guerrilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of*** *simultaneously* ***trying to change it****.” Thus, even militant trade unions found themselves struggling for “a fair day’s work for a fair day’s wage” without challenging the bourgeoisie’s fundamental power, particularly the wage labor system*. And some layers of the trade union officialdom were content to fight for privileges for their small segment of the working class, leaving most workers behind. *Second,* ***unions’ focus on wages and workplace issues*** *tended to* ***reinforce a division between economic and political struggles****. This division was explicit with the more conservative “old” unions in Britain, which “bar[red] all political action on principle and in their charters.” But even with more progressive formations, such as the early nineteenth century’s Chartists, or the late nineteenth century’s “new” unions, Marx and Engels saw that the transition from workplace struggles to politics was not automatic.* For one, it varied across national contexts. Engels observed that French workers were much more likely to mobilize politically, while English workers “fight, not against the Government, but directly against the bourgeoisie.” But beyond national variation, they saw a recurring pattern of division, separating economic and political struggles by organization. Reflecting on the early to mid-nineteenth century English working-class movement, Engels noted a threefold divide between “socially-based” Chartists, “politically-based” Socialists, and conservative, craft-based trade unions. While the Chartists were “purely a working-men’s [sic] cause freed from all bourgeois elements,” they remained “theoretically the more backward, the less developed.” Socialists may have been more theoretically sophisticated, but their bourgeois origins made it difficult to “amalgamate completely with the working class.” Although young Engels thought an alliance of Chartism and socialism was underway, the alliance proved elusive. By the 1870s, Marx opined that politically, the English working class was “nothing more than the tail of the great Liberal Party, i.e., henchmen of the capitalists.” Likewise, Engels had soured on the English working class. *Both saw promise in the* ***militant worker protest in the U****nited* ***S****tates at the time, seeing the seeds of a nascent labor party. But that too* ***fell short****. Thus, unions failed in Marx and Engels’s central task: the formation of “a political organization of the working class as a whole.”*

#### **Recognizing a right to strike reduces revolutionary potential and fractures class organizing – turns the perm**

Crépon 19 Mark Crépon (French philosopher), translated by Micol Bez “The Right to Strike and Legal War in Walter Benjamin’s ‘Toward the Critique of Violence,’” Critical Times, 2:2, August 2019, DOI 10.1215/26410478-7708331

*If we wish to understand how the question of the right to strike arises for Walter Benjamin in the seventh paragraph of his essay “Zur Kritik der Gewalt,” it is impor­ tant to first analyze the previous paragraph, which concerns the state’s monopoly on violence. It is here that Benjamin questions the argument that such a monopoly derives from the impossibility of a system of legal ends to preserve itself as long as the pursuit of natural ends through violent means remains*. Benjamin responds to this dogmatic thesis with the following hypothesis, arguably one of his most impor­ tant reflections: “To counter it, one would perhaps have to consider the surprising possibility that law’s interest in monopolizing violence vis­à­vis the individual is explained by the intention not of preserving legal ends, but rather of preserving law itself. *[This is the possibility] that violence, when it does not lie in the hands of law, poses a danger to law, not by virtue of the ends that it may pursue but by virtue of its mere existence outside of law.”1 In other words,* ***nothing would endanger the law more than*** *the possibility of* ***its authority being contested by a violence over which it has no control. The function of the law would therefore be****, first and foremost,* ***to contain violence within its*** *own* ***boundaries***. It is in this context that, to demonstrate this surprising hypothesis, Benjamin invokes two examples: the right to strike guaranteed by the state and the law of war. *Let us return to the place that the right to strike occupies within* ***class struggle****. To begin with, the very idea of such a struggle* ***implies certain*** *forms of* ***violence. The strike could*** *then* ***be*** *understood as* ***one of the recognizable forms that this violence can take***. *However,* ***this*** *analytical framework* ***is undermined as soon as this*** *form of violence* ***becomes regulated by a “right to strike****,” such as the one recognized by law in France in 1864. What* ***this recognition engages*** *is, in fact,* ***the will of the state to control the possible “violence” of the strike****. Thus,* ***the*** *“right” of the* ***right to strike appears as the best****, if not the only,* ***way for the state to circumscribe within*** *(and via)* ***the law*** *the relative violence of* ***class struggles****.* We might consider this to be the per­ fect illustration of the aforementioned hypothesis. Yet, there are two lines of ques­ tioning that destabilize this hypothesis that we would do well to consider. First, is it legitimate to present the strike as a form of violence? Who has a vested interest in such a representation? In other words, how can we trace a clear and unequivocal demarcation between violence and nonviolence? Are we not always bound to find residues of violence, even in those actions that we would be tempted to consider nonviolent? The second line of questioning is just as important and is rooted in the distinction established by Georges Sorel, in his Reflections on Violence, between the “political strike” and the “proletarian general strike,” to which Benja­ min dedicates a set of complementary analyses in §13 of his essay. Here, again, we are faced with a question of limits. What is at stake is the possibility for a certain type of strike (the proletarian general strike) to exceed the limits of the right to strike— turning, in other words, the right to strike against the law itself. The phenomenon is that of an autoimmune process, in which the right to strike that is meant to protect the law against the possible violence of class strugles is transformed into a means for the destruction of the law. The diference between the two types of strikes is nevertheless introduced with a condition: “The validity of this statement, however, is not unrestricted because it is not unconditional,” notes Benjamin in §7. We would be mistaken in believing that the right to strike is granted and guaranteed uncondi­ tionally. Rather, it is structurally subjected to a conflict of interpretations, those of the workers, on the one hand, and of the state on the other. From the point of view of the state, the partial strike cannot under any circumstance be understood as a right to exercise violence, but rather as the right to extract oneself from a preexisting (and verifiable) violence: that of the employer. In this sense, the partial strike should be considered a nonviolent action, what Benjamin named a “pure means.” The interpretations diverge on two main points. The first clearly depends on the alleged “violence of the employer,” a predicate that begs the question: Who might have the authority to recognize such violence? Evidently it is not the employer. The danger is that the state would similarly lack the incentive to make such a judgment call. It is nearly impossible, in fact, to find a single instance of a strike in which this recognition of violence was not subject to considerable controversy. *The political game is thus the following: the state legislated the right to strike in order to con­ tain class strugles, with the condition that workers must have “good reason” to strike. However,* ***it is unlikely that a state*** *systematically allied with (and accomplice to) employers* ***will ever recognize reasons as good, and****, as a consequence,* ***it will deem any invocation of the right to strike as illegitimate. Workers will therefore be seen as abusing a right*** *granted by the state, and in so doing transforming it into a violent means.* On this point, Benjamin’s analyses remain extremely pertinent and profoundly contemporary. They unveil the enduring strategy of governments confronted with a strike (in education, transportation, or healthcare, for example) who, afer claiming to understand the reasons for the protest and the grievances of the workers, deny that the arguments constitute sufcient reason for a strike that will likely paralyze this or that sector of the economy. ***They deny****, in other words,* ***that the conditions denounced by the workers*** *display an intrinsic violence that* ***jus­ tifies the strike***. Let us note here a point that Benjamin does not mention, but that is part of Sorel’s reflections: this denial inevitably contaminates the (socialist) lef once it gains power. What might previously have seemed a good reason to strike when it was the opposition is deemed an insufcient one once it is the ruling party. In the face of popular protest, it always invokes a lack of sufcient rationale, allow­ ing it to avoid recognizing the intrinsic violence of a given social or economic situ­ ation, or of a new policy. *And* ***it is because it refuses to see this violence*** *and to take responsibility for it* ***that the left*** *regularly* ***loses workers’ support****.*

**Unions fracture movements. Blankenship:**

The bourgeoisie has learned that generally speaking it is not to their advantage to use consistent repression to smash the workers’ movement. The working class, unlike the peasantry (which is predominant in the third world) was born of modern industry. Workers from all around an area are brought together to work under one roof. Here is where the workers’ ties are, here is where their discipline is forged and wherein lays the basis for their consciousness. And here is where they organize and where their rudimentary forms of organization–the trade unions–are. Because of its social being, the working class is the most advanced, most revolutionary class and has the power to sustain its revolutionary energy. For the bourgeoisie to crush it with force (which they have tried to do) only calls forth more resistance. **The power and potential of the working class lies in its capacity to organize**. And **the only way the bourgeoisie can rid the working class of this capacity is to shut down every factory, which** of course **they cannot do**.

So if the proletariat has such wonderful capabilities to organize, why does **the bourgeoisie** not fear these partial struggles? The answer is that they **ha[s]**ve some **very subtle, sophisticated (and** for this reason, all the more **brutal) means at their disposal to stop the proletariat. Some of the important weapons in their arsenal are the labor aristocracy in** the **trade unions, misleaders other partial movements and the ma[ss] media**–particularly radio and TV.

**By bribing the trade union leaders with super profits and corrupting them both materially and ideologically, the bourgeoisie has developed an elaborate network of agents to sabotage the workers’ movement from within**. Whether it selling out strikes and organizing drives, pushing bourgeois “political action,” stifling militant fights in the grievance procedure or turning burning issues to the legislature and government agencies (like Arnold Miller did with the miners’ struggle against Black Lung) **the labor aristocracy destroy[s] the workers’ basic organizations, keep them tied to the bourgeoisie and stunt their political development and class consciousness**.

Blankenship, Irene. Capitalism Destablized – How Do We Prepare To Overthrow the U.S. Government, Oct. 1980, www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-5/cwp-overthrow.htm.

Capitalism is the root of all oppression **Taylor 11:**

This leads to the question: **If it isn't in the interest of white workers to be racist, then why do they accept racist ideas?** But **the same question could be asked of any group** of workers. **Why do men accept sexist ideas?** Why do Black workers accept racist anti-immigrant ideas? Why do many Black Caribbean and African immigrant workers think that Black Americans are lazy? **Why do American workers** of all races **accept many racist ideas about Arabs and Muslims?** **If** most people agree that **it would be in the interest of any group of workers to be more united than divided, then why do workers accept reactionary ideas?** There are two primary reasons. The first is competition. **Capitalism operates under the laws of false scarcity**, which simply means **that we are all told there isn't enough to go around, so we must compete with each other for housing, education, jobs and anything** else valued in society**. While the scarcity is false, the competition is real, and** **workers fighting over these items to better themselves or their families are** often **willing to believe** **the worst about other workers** to justify why they should have something and others should not.

Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. “Race, Class and Marxism.” SocialistWorker.org, International Socialist Organization, 4 Jan. 2011, [socialistworker.org/2011/01/04/race-class-and-marxism](http://socialistworker.org/2011/01/04/race-class-and-marxism).

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#### **Capitalism’s successes necessitate human extinction and destroy the value to life – it’s try or die for alternative organizing. That controls the internal link to the aff’s impacts**

Duzgun 20 Eren Duzgun (teaches Historical Sociology and International Relations at Leiden University, Netherlands), 4-5-2020, "Capitalism, Coronavirus and the Road to Extinction," Socialist Project, https://socialistproject.ca/2020/04/capitalism-coronavirus-and-road-to-extinction/

**Covid-19, by contrast, has begun its journey and taken its biggest toll thus far in the most advanced and affluent parts of the world**. This is to say, the contagion is no longer limited to the persistently undernourished, underdeveloped, and war-torn parts of the world; its impact is no longer restricted to a distant wet market or a third world country alone. **Instead, it has emerged and expanded in the very heart of the capitalist world order at a time when capitalism has not only been already firmly established across the globe but has been testing the eco-biological limits of the entire planet. Should things remain the same, Covid-19 and its future cousins are likely to claim the lives of not just ‘some’ people as they did in the past, but of humanity as a whole. In this sense, perhaps for the first time in modern history, the biological blitzkrieg activated by the coronavirus has thrown into sharp relief the immediately existential and undeniably global contradictions and consequences generated by capitalism.** Contradictions on a Global Scale Critical biologists and epidemiologists have put the blame on industrial agriculture as the root cause of the emergence of new pathogens since the 1990s. [According to Rob Wallace](https://climateandcapitalism.com/2020/03/11/capitalist-agriculture-and-covid-19-a-deadly-combination/), giant agribusiness and resource extraction firms have now reached the last virgin forests and smallholder-held farmlands in the world, subordinating them to the logic of capitalist markets. **The loss of the ecological diversity and complexity of these huge tracts of land has increasingly forced wild food operators to hunt in previously untouched parts of the jungle, which, in turn, has increased “the interaction with, and spillover of, previously boxed-in pathogens, including Covid-19.”** Likewise, global warming has forced or allowed pathogens to escape their natural habitat. As a result, new viruses against which we have no immunity “are being sprung free, threatening the whole world.” In short, [as John Vidal writes](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/18/tip-of-the-iceberg-is-our-destruction-of-nature-responsible-for-covid-19-aoe), “we disrupt ecosystems, and we shake viruses loose from their natural hosts. When that happens, they need a new host. Often, we are it.” **That some agribusiness firms have been blatantly risking lives for profit would not come as a surprise to the critical reader**. Even [Bill Gates has been sounding the alarm](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Af6b_wyiwI) about the potentially deadly consequences of irresponsible business practices and new viruses. **Yet, what tends to remain underemphasized in these debates is that the blame belongs neither solely to ‘greedy’ firms that have driven viruses out of their natural habitat, nor to ‘short-sighted’ politicians who have not invested enough in vaccine technology or national health systems. Instead, the problem is rooted in the very structure and rationality of the system as a whole. That is, we may go extinct as a result of the ‘successes’ of the very system ‘we’ created in the first place, i.e., capitalism. How did we end up losing control of an ‘economic’ system of our own making?** This is indeed an anomaly in human history. The conception of the ‘economy’ as an autonomous sphere dictating its own rules over society did not exist in non-capitalist societies. As the economic anthropologist [Karl Polanyi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Polanyi#Works) put it, “neither under tribal, nor feudal, nor mercantile conditions was there… a separate economic system in society.” The economy either “remained nameless” or had “no obvious meaning,” for the economic process and prices were instituted through non-market means, such as kinship, marriage, age-groups, status, political patronage, etc. Even “where markets were most highly developed, as under the mercantile system,” the economic system, as a rule, “[was absorbed in the social system](https://books.google.ca/books?id=SgHuxQEACAAJ)” and showed “no tendency to expand at the expense of the rest.” In this sense, the market with a distinctive logic, autonomy, and dynamic of its own was completely unknown to our ancestors, and indeed, the emergence of the idea of ‘self-regulating’ markets represented a complete reversal of the way in which past economies functioned. **In order for ‘self-regulating’ markets to ‘self-regulate’, a variety of political and institutional arrangements had to be initiated to progressively eliminate the non-market survival strategies that humans previously relied upon.** Most notably, the age-old communal systems of social and moral regulation needed to be eradicated, a process that systematically subordinated the ‘natural and human substance of society’, i.e., land and labour, to market relations for the first time in history. Rise of Capitalism **At the heart of the rise of capitalism, therefore, rested a ‘political’, legal, and violent process that led to the historically unprecedented characterization of land and labour as commodities. Without commodifying land and labour, i.e., without treating the planet’s living substance as commodities, it would have been impossible to view the ‘economy’ as an institutionally and motivationally self-regulating sphere of life, an almost robotic creature functioning at the expense of human lives and livelihoods. Capitalism presupposed from the very beginning a radical transformation in the human use of nature as well as in the provision of life’s essential requirements. In this sense, the danger of global extinction which we have been going through is not a temporary hiccup in an otherwise smoothly operating capitalist ecosystem but has always been a possibility built into the very structure of market society.** On the one hand, by treating land and labour as commodities, by subjecting people’s utilization of land and enjoyment of life to their ability to continuously increase market competitiveness and productivity, capitalism has enabled massive technological advancements in all spheres of life. This, in turn, has generated, above all, an unprecedented potential to feed, clothe, and accommodate an ever-increasing world population. **On the other hand, however, as Ellen Wood argues, by subordinating all other considerations to the imperatives of market competition, capitalism has also created poverty, homelessness, environmental destruction and pandemics**. Billions of people who could be fed and housed are subjected to immense doses of insecurity, living their lives under the constant threat of joblessness, homelessness, loss of status and starvation. **In a similar fashion, the environment that could be protected is systematically destroyed for profit, and killer viruses that could be contained are unleashed.** Undoubtedly, Covid-19 has become the archetypal example that lays bare “the destructive impulses of a system in which the very fundamentals of existence are subjected to the requirements of profit.” **Can the ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ outcomes of capitalism be somewhat reconciled? Indeed, for a brief period in the Global North, it seemed they could be**. During the so-called [Golden Age of Capitalism](https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-golden-age-of-capitalism-9780198287414) (1945-70), massive productivity increases (alongside working-class struggles) allowed for steady increases in wages, job security, expansion of welfare state, improvements in the living conditions of the majority of the labouring masses as well as the expansion of civil and political liberties. **Yet, this brief period of generalized prosperity and stability also facilitated the incorporation of the western working classes into the dominant capitalist ideology, causing them to turn a blind eye to the economically destabilizing, environmentally destructive, and socially degrading impact of global capitalism in the Global South.** The main ‘problem’ with the Global South has been, by and large, a question of ‘timing’. **Once capitalism was established and consolidated in the Global North, it has not only led to the birth of new and more effective forms of imperialist control and neocolonial expansion but has also irrevocably undermined the potentially positive outcomes of capitalist development elsewhere.** For example, the [MIT political economist Alice Amsden](https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-rise-of-the-rest-9780195170597), a large chunk of whose work in the 1970s and 1980s sought to explain the success of the ‘Asian Tigers’, more recently concluded that the massive technological and infrastructural gap between the North and the South has literally made impossible capitalist ‘development’ of any sort in the vast majority of southern economies since the 1990s. The economic situation in the Global North has gotten progressively worse too. Under the conditions of increased global economic competition wages have been stagnating or declining since the 1970s, while decades of fiscal austerity wiping out most of the economic and social gains of the earlier period. The new reality of high unemployment, stagnant wages, long work hours and precarious jobs has been masked for a while by a debt-driven growth, the unsustainability of which has been bitterly testified by millions of people since the 2008 financial crisis. All in all, market imperatives have been regulating social reproduction almost worldwide for a long time but with no prospect of capitalist ‘development’ for an overwhelming majority of the world’s population in the South and the North alike. **Furthermore, the ecologically disastrous and socially inhumane consequences of capitalism have long outweighed the prospects of material gain in the Global South.** In this respect, what is being painfully realized in the current conjuncture is that the North is no longer able to externalize the worst consequences of such an unsustainable mode of life. The North isn’t and won’t be spared the existential threats posed by global capitalism. **The implication is that any meaningful attempt at solving the present, and future crises needs to take the bull by the horn**. There is literally no choice to be made between ‘capitalism’ and ‘capitalism with a human face’. **As long as the underlying dynamics of our lives remain the same, as long as we keep treating nature and human beings as commodities, no cosmetic surgery will do. To the contrary, historical experience suggests that such minimal interventions will sooner or later backfire, re-legitimizing capitalism pure and simple. The only way to ‘re-embed’ our economies and save our lives from ecological collapse is by intervening in the very heart of the beast: land and human beings need to be taken out of the market. The beast is not tameable; it needs to be killed.**

#### **The alternative is dual power organizing – only by refusing the 1ac’s opportunistic politics can we produce actual change.**

Escalante 18 Alyson Escalante (Marxist-Leninist, Materialist Feminist and Anti-Imperialist activist), 8-24-2018, "Against Electoralism, For Dual Power!," Forge News, https://theforgenews.org/2018/08/24/against-electoralism-for-dual-power/

If we, as socialists, truly fight for a classless world, we must smash the mechanisms which ensure class domination. **We must smash the bourgeois state. This realization led the Bolsheviks to reject the opportunism of the Socialist Revolutionaries and Menshiviks in the Soviets and they chose to overthrow the provisional government themselves. Shockingly, their revolution was successful**. After months of compromise, the workers had grown tired of the opportunist bourgeois socialists. They had seen that the dual power of the soviets and the provisional government was not tenable. One side had to take unitary power. Most importantly, the workers saw that the bourgeois government had done nothing for them: it had smashed their printing presses, it had crushed their demonstrations, it had broken their strikes. Of course, it could do nothing else, the bourgeois state is designed to do precisely this. The events of October, 1917 ought to have concretely proven that the strategy of infiltrating the bourgeois government is untenable. **Lenin and the Bolsheviks proved that the workers are willing to throw the bourgeois state away in favor of a dictatorship of the proletariat. And yet, here we are 111 years later and large factions of the largest socialist organization in the United States echo the cowardly and worthless drivelings of the Menshiviks and Socialist Revolutionaries.** Dual Power Today **I am sure that at this point, the opportunists reading this have already begun to type out their typical objection: the world is different than it was in 1917, and the conditions of the United States in no way echo the conditions which enabled the Bolsheviks to achieve revolutionary success. To this tried and true objection, there is one simple answer: you are entirely correct, and that is why we need to abandon electoralism and working within the bourgeois state. What were the conditions which allowed the Bolsheviks to successfully revolt? The conditions were that of Dual Power. Alongside the capitalist state, there existed a whole set of institutions and councils which met the needs of the workers.** The soviets, a parallel socialist government made up of individual councils, successfully took over many governmental responsibilities in some parts of Petrograd. In the radical Viborg district, the Bolshevik controlled soviets provided government services like mail, alongside programs that could meet the needs of workers. **When a far right coup was attempted against the provisional government, it was troops loyal to the Bolshevik factions within the soviet who repelled the coup plotters, proving concretely to the workers of Petrograd that the socialists could not only provide for their needs, but also for their defense. In short: the Bolsheviks recognized that instead of integrating into the bourgeois state, they could operate outside of it to build dual power. They could establish programs of elected representatives who would serve the workers**. They would not bolster the capitalist state in the name of socialism, they would offer an alternative to it. **And so, when the time came for revolt, the masses were already to loyal to the Bolsheviks. The only party who had never compromised, who had denounced the unpopular imperialist wars, who had rejected the provisional government entirely, was the party who successfully gained the support of the workers.** And so, many of us on the more radical fringes of the socialist movement wonder why it is the the DSA and other socialist opportunists seem to think that we can win by bolstering the capitalist state? **We wonder, given this powerful historical precedent, why they devote their energy to getting more Ocasios elected; what good does one more left democrat who will abandon the workers do for us?** The answer we receive in return is always the same: we want to win small changes that will make life for the workers easier; we want to protect food stamps and healthcare. And do this, we reply: what makes you think reformism is the only way to do this. **When the bourgeois state in California was happy to let black children go to school unfed, the Black Panthers didn’t rally around democratic candidates, they became militant and fed the children themselves. In the 40s and 50s, socialists in New York saw people going without healthcare and instead of rallying behind democratic candidates, they built the IWO to provide healthcare directly. Both these groups took up our pressing revolutionary task: building dual power.** Imagine if all those hours the DSA poured into electing Ocasio were instead used to feed the people of New York, to provide them with medical care, to ensure their needs were met. **Imagine the masses seeing socialism not as a pipe dream we might achieve through electing more imperialists, but as a concrete movement which is currently meeting their needs?** The fact is, we are not nearly ready for revolution. Socialists in the United States have failed to meet the needs of the people, and as long as their only concrete interaction with the masses is handing them a voter registration form, they will continue to fail the people. **Our task now is not to elect representatives to advocate for the people; it is much more gruelingly laborious than that. Our task is to serve the people. Our task is to build dual power.** **The movement to do this is underway**. **Members of the DSA refoundation caucus have begun to move the left of the DSA in this direct, socialist groups like Philly Socialists have begun to build dual power through GED programs and tenants unions, many branches of the Party For Socialism and Liberation have begun to feed the people and provide for their concrete needs, and Red Guard collectives in Los Angeles have built serve the people programs and taken on a stance of militant resistance to gentrification**. The movement is growing, its time is coming, and dual power is achievable within our life time. The opportunists are, in a sense, correct. We are not where we were in 1917, but we can begin to move in that direction and dual power can take us there. **In order to achieve dual power we have to recognize that Lenin was right: there will be no socialist gains by working within state institutions designed to crush socialism. Furthermore, we must recognize that the strategies of the electoral opportunists trade off with dual power. Electing candidates drains resources, time, and energy away from actually serving the people.** **And so, we should commit to undertake the difficult and dangerous task of building dual power**. We must reject opportunism, we must name the democratic party as our enemy, we must rally around power directly in the hands of the socialist movement. **We do not have a parallel system of soviets in the United States. We can change that**. Someday the cry “all power to the soviets” will be heard again. Lets make it happen.

Revolution is closer than ever – but the masses require a principle of organization.

**Basanta ‘20**

[Comrade Basanta, polit-bureau member of the CPN-Maoist. 06/14/2020. “On American Crisis — 2,” https://www.bannedthought.net/Nepal/CPN-Maoist/2020/OnAmericanCrisis-2-Basanta-Eng.pdf] pat // WDM Valley JS

Nowadays, **the U**nited **S**tates of America **is undergoing** a serious **crisis**. As a consequence of the health crisis brought in by the mishandling of the **Covid-19**, the **unemployment** and the economic crisis caused by lockdown, the Black Lives Matter movement created by the **white** racist **supremacy** on the part of ruling class, the US now has been trapped in a vicious circle of crisis after crisis. The former defence secretary Collin Powel and the former state secretary of the US James Mattis, who were strong pillars and confidants of Donald Trump, have turned sharp critics due to his mishandling of the on-going movement. President Trump has stopped talking with Dr. Anthony Fauci, the health advisor of the President as their row in the handling of pandemic sharpened. President Donald Trump has now been isolated almost from all quarters. Moreover, the political tussle in the upcoming presidential election is going to divide and polarise the US society further and he seems to get trapped in an awful crisis and further isolation causing insanity. No one can deny that the obstinate president can deploy military to cleanse racial opposition in the name of containing the 'anarchists' and 'terrorists'. The present crisis in the US seems like a wakeup call for a bigger crisis in the days ahead.

I feel to offer a red salute to the declaration of the autonomous region made recently in the Capitol Hill of Seattle, America. However, **emotion is not decisive**. The autonomous region established within the framework of the reactionary state power provokes the enemy more than it safeguards the liberation of the oppressed people in CHAZ. This kind of tactical move can be supportive if it is made a part of the overall strategy of revolution. The on-going movement seems to be spontaneous, and it does not have any stated destination. Reform in police does not solve the problem the proletariat and the oppressed black people have been confronting in the US. The solution to the on-going crisis in America is scientific socialism guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and led by a party of the proletariat. Worth noting is that, the **spontaneous movement cannot bring about** any revolutionary **change** in society **but it creates** a situation from the womb of which **a correct** ideological and political **line** and the leadership gestate. The present situation in the US shows that **the objective condition is** getting **favourable for** the success of the **socialist revolution**. But as Che Guevara has said the revolution is not like a mango which automatically falls from the mango tree when it is ripe. What is necessary to develop for the American proletariat at present is the armoury of weapons that help make the revolution a success when they act upon the favourably developing situation.

The first **weapon for** the success of the **socialist revolution** in the US **is** the formation of **a genuine Communist Party** guided by MLM. And the second weapon is a united front led by the party. In the particular situation of America the strong ideological and political **unity** mainly **between** the **proletariats** of white and black colours **along with other oppressed people is a must**. The reactionary cultural makeup of the US society based on white racist supremacy has made this task more challenging. The third weapon is the fighting force. All of these weapons are unlikely to get realised in a single attempt now in America. Nevertheless, the sharpening of contradictions in the US society and the objective necessity of revolution to solve them is creating an objective condition to realise it.

In the given situation, the communist **revolutionaries** in the US **have to** make a conscious effort to **build up a**n ideologically and politically **strong communist party and unite** in it several groups and individuals scattered all across the US. Once the political party and its ideological and political line are built up, then the others will come on its way. The revolutionaries have to take up this task sooner than later for the emancipation of the entire oppressed people in America, including the blacks.

**The role of the ballot is to vote for the debater who best endorses a pedagogy which further class struggle**

**Zavarzadeh, 2003**

**(Ma’sud, professor at Syracuse, “The Pedagogy of Totality,” *Red Critique*, Fall/Winter,** [**http://www.redcritique.org/FallWinter2003/thepedagogyoftotality.htm**](http://www.redcritique.org/FallWinter2003/thepedagogyoftotality.htm)**)**

**To put "class" back into teaching of the "event" is to move beyond dissipating history through "trauma" and anecdotes of affect and thus put an end to the teaching of savviness, which masquerades as a curing of ignorance. The task of the pedagogy of totality is to teach the abstract relations that structure the concrete material reality and not be distracted by the details of appearance because "abstractions reflect nature more deeply, truly and completely" and bring the student closer to grasping social totality: "the relations of production in their totality" (Marx, Wage-Labour and Capital, 29), which is constituted by class antagonism, and therefore its unity is a "unity of opposites" (Lenin, "On the Question of Dialectics", 358). The hostility to conceptual analysis and particularly to class critique in contemporary pedagogy goes well beyond the teach-ins on the "event". It is the fundamental dogma of "radical" bourgeois pedagogy. Henry Giroux, for example, wipes out class from pedagogy on the grounds that "class" is part of what he calls "totalizing" politics (Impure Acts 25-26). To be so totally opposed to totalizing is, of course, itself a totalization. But totalizing in opposing totalization does not seem to bother Giroux and other anti-totalizing pedagogues because the issue, ultimately, is really not epistemological ("totalizing") but economic (class). In contemporary pedagogy "totalizing" is an epistemological cover for the class cleansing of pedagogy. […] Pedagogy is most effective when its lessons are situated in the conceptual analysis of objective social totality and grounded in historical materialist critique. Totalization is essential to transformative pedagogy because it is through totalization that the student—the future worker—is enabled to "see society from the center, as a coherent whole" and therefore "act in such a way as to change reality" (Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, 69). Changing reality in a sustained way, requires knowing it historically and objectively, that is, conceptually as a totality in structure and not simply reacting to it as a galaxy of signifiers (as textualists have done); as the working of power in networks of discourses (Foucault), or as a spontaneous reality that is available to us in its full immediacy (as activists have done with eclecticism and sentimentality). Pedagogy, in other words, is always partisan and the only question is whose side (in the great class struggles) it takes and why: "Who does not know that talk about this or that institution being non-partisan is generally nothing but the humbug of the ruling classes, who want to gloss over the fact that existing institutions are already imbued, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, with a very definite political spirit?" (Lenin, "The Tasks of the Revolutionary Youth"). Criticism of totality as a closural space that excludes "difference" and thus leads to "totalitarianism" is based on an anti-materialist reading of difference as "contingency" (Richard Rorty, Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity, 3-69); as "hybridity" (Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture); as "differance"—the play of "traces" in the differing and deferral of the sign (Derrida, "Differance"); or the performativity of identity (Judith Butler, Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"). These and other versions of difference (Anthony Giddens, Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our Lives) in contemporary pedagogy, are based on cultural heterogeneities that deflect the difference that makes all the differences: the social division of labor under capitalism. The pedagogy of totality writes the foundational difference of class, which explains all these differences, back into teaching and foregrounds it not as aleatory signs (which is the epistemology of all these differences) but as a historical necessity for capital, which divides people with rigid clarity in the regime of wage labor (Marx and Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, 40-60). Social totality, as I have suggested, is a totality with a materialist (class) difference. It is a resistance against the ferocity of "contingency", "performativity", "hybridity", and "differance" which, with the spiritual aroma of religion, have re-written the world in cynicism, in pathos, and ironically but always in the interest of the transnational bourgeoisie. […] A pedagogy that understand class—as an objectivity—will be able to contribute to its transformation. Without teaching for ending class, which is possible only through understanding it as objective, all acts of pedagogy become acts of cultural adjustment to the dominant social conditions—acts of learning "how power works" (Giroux, Impure Acts, 139) in order to manipulate it and make it work for them. Giroux calls the arts and crafts of manipulating power, "critical pedagogy" and call its manipulators "critical citizens". This is a citizenry, however, that is always concerned with how power works on "them", through "them" and for "them" (not the collective). It is obsessed with "power" and never concerned with "exploitation". It is, in the language of bourgeois stratification, an "upper middle class" citizenry for whom the question of poverty (exploitation) is non-existent, and the only question is the question of personal liberty (power), as Giroux makes even more clear in his stories in Breaking into the Movies: Film and the Culture of Politics; Public Spaces, Private Lives.**

#### **The judge voting neg as an educator rejects capitalism’s attempt to discursively dominate the debate space and creates a non-capitalist space that allows us to theorize alternatives**

**Hesketh 2016** (Chris – Senior Lecturer in International Relations (International Political Economy). He received his BA, MA and PhD all from the University of Nottingha, The survival of non-capitalism,<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0263775816639313>)

However, an opposing view argues that in constructing an alternative theoretical framework, it is vital to loosen the grip of unilinear trajectories of development that can result in a highly capitalocentric viewpoint. Capitalocentrism is defined as a ‘dominant economic discourse that attributes positive value to those activities associated with capitalist economic activity however defined, and assigns lesser value to all other processes of producing and distributing goods and services by identifying them in relation to capitalism’ (Gibson-Graham, 2006b: 41**). Such a view allows for capital to become totalising in its power as it does not account sufficiently for the wider social forces at play.** If theory is to play a part in emancipatory activity it should, in the words of Gibson-Graham (2006b: 126), ‘**proliferate possibility, not foreclose it’.** Despite the radical intentions of all of the above scholars, the primary intellectual focus in nearly all of these cases is on capital itself (how capitalism can be defined, how capitalism exploits, how capitalism survives and grows, how capital interacts and solidifies feudal modes of exploitation). The argument here is that this overwhelming focus on capitalism can lead quickly to a problem: the assumption of subsumption. In other words, all forms of political economy, all other forms of cultural life, and all sites of socio-political activity are portrayed as being overwhelmed by, subsumed into, the dynamics of capitalism.2 This is evident in all three forms of analysis to a greater or lesser degree. As Gibson-Graham et al. (2001: 15) have noted, ‘Representations of the relation of capitalism to non-capitalist forms of economy are usually structured by a binary hierarchy of valuation that operates to demote and devalue the latter’. Non-capitalism – defined in terms of social relations that are not mediated by an impersonal market and where collective forms of production, appropriation and distribution exist – are thus rendered unlikely or impossible. This type of theorising can naturally translate into a problematic social function. As Gibson-Graham (2006a: 57) argue: ‘because transformative efforts are seen as directed at systemic or hegemonic objects (e.g. capitalist societies in their entirety), class transformation is often portrayed as a difficult, indeed, nearly impossible task’. Escobar (2001) has forcefully argued against a global-centric approach, claiming that it erases the identity and agency of place, and contributes to a wider sense of eurocentrism in the study of political economy. How then, can we reconcile these two distinct projects? It will be argued we can productively build on the suggestion by David Ruccio (2009) to construct a complementary approach between the project of Rethinking Marxism (RM) and that of Antonio Gramsci. Whereas Gramsci draws our attention to the manner in which capital rules and is able to be reproduced (which is taken to be a broader synthesis of the above three approaches), the RM project informs us about specific class structures within a society and allows us to understand people as subjects rather than objects of economic development. This is an approach that is particularly apposite for understanding a region like Oaxaca, as despite wider structural influences, important localised cultural practices (with origins in prehispanic land tenure) remain. These include community assemblies, tequios (collective work) and communal obligations in the form of cargos (political posts) that are vital to the functioning of the political economy and social reproduction (Escobar, 2001; Mutersbaugh, 2002). Furthermore, **these are often antithetical to capitalism** An alternative theoretical framework The framework that is drawn upon here, places an emphasis on the need to understand noncapitalist practices in the present, notably as such spaces come into tension with the universal tendency of capitalism to expand, creating a clash of opposing spatial projects (Hesketh, 2013). It is an approach that explicitly rejects the above mentioned assumption of subsumption. The hypothesis advanced here is that non-capitalist spaces can be expanded and learned from (as opposed to remaining static and facing extinction). They are therefore both figurative and pre-figurative spaces. Definitions of social relations that become allencompassing historical stages and that encapsulate all phenomena are thus rejected, as it is submitted that the dividing line between pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production is more complex (Harrod, 1987: 11). Key to this framework is to re-read economic landscapes/spatial topographies of social relations to see economically diverse activities (Gibson-Graham, 2006a, 2006b). This is a vital starting point as, The co-existence of diverse forms of class processes intimates the possibility of creating nonexploitative class relations on the complex terrain of the present economy. To view the economic landscape less as dominated by capitalism than as **discursively colonized** by the rhetoric of capitalist dominance is to open up ‘realistic’ present possibilities for class transition and transformation (Gibson-Graham et al., 2001: 15). Although waged as part of a discursive struggle, this is not a discourse that is free- floating/ idealistic, but rather is **grounded** in the **material reality** of economic pluralism. Based on this, an alternative strategy for thinking about resistance and transformation is to engage with what Gibson-Graham (2008) have termed ‘place-based globalism’. Such a view starts from the premise that not all places are yoked into a system of meaning, and not entirely subsumed to a global order (as implied often by analyses such as Gunder Frank’s and Banaji’s). As Escobar (2001: 158) puts it, in spite of capitalism operating at all levels of scale, ‘places and non-capitalisms are not completely defined by their relation to capitalism and space’. Such **places thus have the potential to be something other**. **They offer sites of opening for different forms of politics and economics.** Peoples’ experience of non-capitalism in other words can provide a basis for resistance to capitalist encroachment as well as alternative development, and can themselves be expansive. Further to this point, Otero (1999: 22) has claimed that subaltern actors ‘in different parts of the world or in different regions within a country... may have diverse structural capacities depending on their distinctive histories and cultures, or the villages or regions where they develop’. Such geographical sensitivity is often lost by the rush to engage in grand social theory at the macro-historical level. However, this is not to say that the theoretical framework advanced by these scholars is itself totally unproblematic. Such ideas will now be critically engaged with via Antonio Gramsci. Whilst the call to recognise a plurality of economic forms of production and ways of social being is an important one, we also need to be attentive to the wider field of force in which these forms operate (without of course assigning such force a deterministic essence). Therefore, although multiple social relations of production may well exist within a given social formation, this by no means implies that all have equal status and power. As Glassman (2003) reminds us, **we need to be aware of the existence of structural power.** Thus, even where access to land may be retained by a certain group, the wider environment in which resources or infrastructure are provided and the control over the institutions of repressive force remain intact. Autonomous forms of organisation therefore remain mediated by the capitalist state and the wider web of social relations (Dinerstein, 2015: 20). This is where the Gramscian concepts of hegemony and subalternity can be of service tounderstanding space. With regards to subalternity, Modonesi (2010: 45) has pointed out the very term ‘subaltern’ implies a relational character. In other words**, it exists in tension with hegemonic power**. This is not to claim that the hegemonic power determines everything but rather the resources of subaltern groups acquire meaning in struggle against power. As Laclau (1977: 157–158) has argued, this means we cannot essentialise traditional paradigms of social groups, but rather examine how such views become utilised and expressed as new forms of antagonism. In this way, ideas and local practices are transformed into resources for self-determination. Subaltern groups are neither fully autonomous nor fully subsumed to capitalism. However, as Gramsci (1971: 55) cautions, ‘Subaltern groups are always subject to the activity of ruling groups, even when they rebel and rise up: only ‘‘permanent’’ victory breaks their subordination’. Whilst questions may be raised with regards to what would constitute a ‘permanent victory’, this does remind us of the necessity to be cognisant of the wider concentrations of power that may seek to challenge these differential spaces (not devoted to capitalist production). It is also necessary to consider the question of scale. Despite his optimism regarding the possibilities of revolutionary action beginning from non-capitalist sites, Marx was also profoundly aware of the problems of isolation in front of state power (Anderson, 2010: 230). This notion of scaling up activism is not fully addressed in the work of the RM scholars. Instead what we frequently find is a focus on resistance at specific sites of economic activity, whether it is the firm or a particular location (see Gibson-Graham, 2006b, Resnick and Wolff, 2006). What this does not do adequately therefore is to consider the spatial inter-linkages of subaltern struggles, or the wider institutional form that these struggles must take. This is vital if we are to avoid a collapse into what Murray Bookchin (1995) derided as ‘lifestyle anarchism’, characterised by individual, unique expressions of resistance as opposed to a commitment to wider societal change. Again, drawing from Gramsci, **this suggests the need to build an alternative historical bloc**. For Gramsci (1971: 366, 377) **this is not simply a mere alliance of forces but rather involves the interplay of structure and superstructure, whereby shared ideological convictions allow for the material transformation of social life**. To conclude this section, it is argued that the project of Rethinking Marxism is vital to exploring the empirical constitution of alternate forms of economy and class projects, and helps to avoid engaging in capitalocentric theorising. It thus **provides a basis for thinking about alternatives.** The work of Gramsci meanwhile, allows us to understand the political problems of transforming such alternative sites of non-capitalist activity into a political project.

#### **Framing – neoliberalism infects policy education – you should prioritize epistemologically challenging it**

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**Within Ramya Venkataraman’s writing and presentations, there is the deployment and reiteration of a particular discursive ensemble, a set of tightly interrelated and interdependent concepts, ideas, and arguments addressed to educational reform (see Table 3). The ensemble joins up a set of arguments, assertions, and assumptions, in relation to the state and its alternative, that serve as a rationale for the processes of reform of education.** The elements of this ensemble are both local and specific as well as generic and global. **They are reiterated at almost all of the nodes in the global policy network—almost every website or network event rehearses and deploys them**. Although they are articulated and recombined in different ways and given different degrees of emphasis, they have a coherence which underpins network membership. As Marsh and Smith (2000, p. 6) put it, “networks involve the institutionalization of beliefs, values, cultures and particular forms of behaviour.” **These are made up not simply of pragmatic relations, but also constitute moral and epistemic communities.** The ensemble takes as its starting point the failures of the state, and a state of crisis in education (A)—the assertion that the government schools are ineffective and unfair. This starting point is the basis for a set of linked arguments: the replacement of bureaucracy by enterprise, through PPPs (I) and/or forms of private provision (H/G); and the need for assessment (as a way of measuring and managing the system) (B); the deployment of IT, that is, assessment software and big databases (C); at the institutional level the strategic role of leadership skills and sensibilities in driving change and raising quality (D) and to leverage for change from outside agencies, in particular from strategic philanthropy (E). The private sector is given a privileged role in all of this as agents of change and of innovation (F) through direct forms of private provision (H). Leadership, partnerships and assessment are offered as practices that “work”—for which there is evidence or stories of success in other places (J). **The state then reappears in a different form (K) as a competition state (Jessop, 2002), which facilitates, contracts, sets targets, and monitors—that makes and regulates markets. Embedded and represented in these arguments is a version of neoliberal rationality and its “state phobia” as Foucault (2010) calls it, in relation to the “old” state.** Over and against this, the competition state is imagined as lean and frugal. **Bureaucracy is displaced, innovation and creativity are “released” through the participation of business and civil society actors, and interrelated opportunities are created for reform and for profit and for “worldmaking.” The elements of a new policy ecosystem are outlined here—practices, organizations, infrastructure, and incentives that enable a market in state work. All of this is a reworking, or perhaps even an erasure, of the boundaries of state, economy, and civil society**. This rationality and its mobilization and advocacy are also realized and demonstrated in socio-material practices, which are enacted in and through network relationships. Public–private partnerships are excellent examples because they are a kind of assemblage of actors, organizations, and techniques that create and activate relationships. Ramya Venkataraman and McKinsey (India) have been active participants and partners in a variety of PPP initiatives. For example, they have participated in both the Mumbai School Excellence Programme (with Akanksha, MSDF, UNICEF, and the Mumbai Corporation) and in the South Delhi School Excellence Programme (with ARK, Bharti, Centre for Civil Society, Central Square Foundation, The Tech Mahindra Foundation, South Delhi Municipal Corporation). Both of these PPPs involve nonstate actors who take over state schools, loosely modeled on and directly informed by the U.S. charter school and English Academies programs. The work that ARK is doing in the UK is very similar to what we want to do down the road…. We now have 18 academies, with 24 en route; it’ll be 50 by 2015. And the concept of privately running— education that is publicly funded is something that ARK believes it can deliver [inaudible] it’s looking to India, we’re also seeking a similar model in South Africa and Uganda. (Amitav Virmani, Head of ARK [India] now CEO, The Education Alliance) In Mumbai we’ve been involved from end to end in the implementation. There are also other cities and states, which we are currently in discussion with for similar programs …. the state government has taken our help to craft the program …. (Ramya Venkataraman) Although these practices and the forms, stories, and ideas that underpin them are instantiated in a particular way in India in these examples, it is also possible to trace their movement through the global education policy community beyond India. One can follow them through a set of relations clustered around other reform efforts, using the same ingredients in the United States and in England. DISCUSSION This paper focuses on some of the network and discursive labor of one “traveling technocat.” Ramya Venkataraman travels across and beyond India as well as across the business, state, and third sectors, and between local, national, and international institutions. She carries with her a story made up of ideas, practices, and sensibilities that address the reform of Indian education and the Indian state, and articulates new opportunities for business and philanthropy as agents and beneficiaries of reform. **She is embedded in an apparatus of relations, finance, practices, and discourse (plots and stories), “comprising variously entangled scaled agents (of different geographical reaches)” (Cook & Ward, 2012, p. 7), which moves, changes, and develops but which coheres around a neoliberal project of reform and of creative destruction.** We are able to glimpse through these relations some of the work of assembling political rationalities, spatial imaginaries, calculative practices, and subjectivities that are “both the cause and the effect of wider transformative processes” (Cook & Ward, 2012, p. 140). Artifacts, schemes, propositions, and “programmatic” ideas move through these network relations, gaining credibility, support, and funding as they do so. These global forms are phenomena that are distinguished by their “capacity for decontextualization and recontextualization, abstractability and movement, across diverse social and cultural situations and spheres of life” (Ong & Collier, 2005, p. 7). Ramya Venkataraman’s engagements in the reform movement are diffuse, tangled, and contingent, she is a speaker at many sites and events that contribute to a reform assemblage that brings together various “things” and bodies, utterances, modes of expression, and regimes of signs. Such assemblages “stand in a dependent but contingent relationship to the grander problematizations …. They are a distinctive type of experimental matrix of heterogeneous elements, techniques and concepts” (Rabinow, 2003, p. 17). **Here the grand problematization is neoliberalism**. What is evident in Ramya’s activities is the labor involved in animating the assemblage, the efforts of articulation, persuasion, exemplification, legitimation, and problematization. Concomitantly, there is the emergence of an infrastructure of organizations, a sort of shadow state (Wolch, 1990), that can incubate, disseminate, and exchange ideas—teacher certification and training, school leadership, assessment, managing and running schools—over and against the language of more traditional forms of government and support, facilitate and legitimate the activities of non-state actors. **The mix of state, business, and third-sector actors and organizations within policy and governance is changed, not once and for all, but as part of a slow and steady movement from government to governance**. At the same time, new kinds of careers, identities, and mobilities are forged within the processes of reform and the work of networks.

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extemped