

Proletarian Power: DEMARCATING OURSELVES FROM AVAKIANIST OPPORTUNISM WE ARE FORGING UNITY AMONG COMMUNISTS

PROLETARIAN POWER

MLM Party Organisation

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“before we can unite, and in order that we may unite, we must first of all draw firm and definite lines of demarcation”.

Lenin, “What is to be done?” (Col. Works, Vol. 5, p. 367)

INTRODUCTION

In 2017, we carried out a first theoretical exercise from our party organisation, of ideological demarcation with the *New Synthesis*, an exercise that was condensed in a text that we titled “**The “New Synthesis” of the Renegade Avakian**” and that can be found in the electronic address: <https://poderproletario.blackblogs.org>

On that occasion we said: “We have to say that Avakian’s attempt to put *the revolution and communism on more solid scientific foundations* has failed and is a farce; the

foundations of the “*New Synthesis*” are flimsy and regress to philosophical idealism. The supposed “*theoretical framework for a new stage of the proletarian revolution*” ended up being Althusserian structuralism and not Marxism. The strategy proposed by the “*New Synthesis*” for revolution in “the changing conditions of today’s world”, generates more noise and fuss than it really deserves.” (*Proletarian Power, mlm Party Organisation*)

We coined Renegade Avakian in analogy to Renegade Kautsky, the term Lenin used to denounce Kautsky’s change of sides, to repudiate the nefarious leadership and responsibility he bore for the bankruptcy of the Second International. The analogy, as we said years ago, fits well: ***the renegade Avakian, his move to the ranks of postmodernist liberalism and his responsibility for the bankruptcy of RIM.***

Now in 2022, we want to once again place the demarcation from Avakian opportunism at the centre of the international debate, because in doing so we combat bourgeois ideology disguised as proletarian ideology, i.e. revisionism as the principal danger to the world proletarian revolution; and in that sense, we are further forging the unity that is required among communists today.

We bring in the present text, new elements for the demarcation with Avakian opportunism, new reflections and discussions on the philosophical, political and economic basis on which the deceitful *New Synthesis* is based and supported. It goes without saying that we propose this document of criticism of the *New Synthesis* to be signed by all communist organisations and disseminated internationally; equally, we are ready to clarify, change or eliminate some of the sections of this document, of course on the basis of the necessary ideological debate. We look forward to your contributions, criticisms and endorsements of this document.

1. THE PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE DECEITFUL NEW

SYNTHESIS

The driving force of anarchy from a petty-bourgeois worldview

On November 9, 2013 the newspaper *Revolution / revcom.us* published an article by Raymond Lotta entitled **“On the “Driving Force of Anarchy” and the Dynamics of Change, A Sharp Debate and Urgent Polemic: The Struggle for a Radically Different World and the Struggle for a Scientific Approach to Reality”**.

The central thesis of this article is:

*“[...] Bob Avakian. He had identified the ‘driving force of anarchy’ as the **principal form of motion of fundamental contradiction of capitalism**, setting the overall terms for the class struggle.”*

Lotta claims that it is a crucial breakthrough that Avakian identified *the driving force of anarchy “as the **Decisive Dynamic of Capitalism**”*; that is, that the RCP-USA found that **anarchy shapes not only the “stage” on which revolutionary struggle takes place but the **principal dynamic of capitalism****.

Let us explore what this supposed discovery of the New Synthesis means:

The new synthesis. The aspects of contradiction and the principal aspect of contradiction.

In arguing for the role of anarchy as the principal dynamic of capitalism, the New Synthesis seems to start from scientific postulates that no Marxist could deny. Let us see:

Firstly, Marxism from its beginnings had identified the existence of anarchy in production. Engels says in “Socialism: Utopian and Scientific”:

“But every society based upon the production of commodities has this peculiarity: that the producers have lost control

over their own social inter-relations. Each man produces for himself with such means of production as he may happen to have, and for such exchange as he may require to satisfy his remaining wants. No one knows how much of his particular article is coming on the market, nor how much of it will be wanted. No one knows whether his individual product will meet an actual demand, whether he will be able to make good his costs of production or even to sell his commodity at all. *Anarchy reigns in socialized production.*"

Secondly, Marxism identified that one of the manifestations of the fundamental contradiction of capitalism (social production and capitalist appropriation) was the contradiction between the ***anarchy of production within the whole of society and the organisation of production within each factory.*** Engels says in the same text:

"But the chief means by aid of which the capitalist mode of production intensified this anarchy of socialized production was the exact opposite of anarchy. It was the increasing organization of production, upon a social basis, in every individual productive establishment. By this, the old, peaceful, stable condition of things was ended. Wherever this organization of production was introduced into a branch of industry, it brooked no other method of production by its side. ... It is the Darwinian struggle of the individual for existence transferred from Nature to society with intensified violence. The conditions of existence natural to the animal appear as the final term of human development. The contradiction between socialized production and capitalistic appropriation now presents itself as an antagonism between the organization of production in the individual workshop and the anarchy of production in society generally."

Thirdly, Marxism had identified the driving force of anarchy as responsible for the compulsion of capitalism to develop the productive forces: *"We have seen that the ever-increasing perfectibility of modern machinery is, by the **anarchy of***

social production, turned into a compulsory law that forces the individual industrial capitalist always to improve his machinery, always to increase its productive force. The bare possibility of extending the field of production is transformed for him into a similarly compulsory law." (Engels in "**Socialism: Utopian and Scientific**", emphasis added).

Up to this point, Avakian seems to agree with the fundamental tenets of Marxism; however, the New Synthesis sinks into an ocean of metaphysics and moves away from Marxism.

Marxism dialectically recognises the effects of the driving force of social anarchy of production, among others, on: **a)** the perfecting of machines and the creation of new technologies in the development of productive forces (although anarchy is not the only force acting on the perfecting of productive forces); **b)** the consequences for the "health" of the planet; **c)** the intensification of inter-bourgeois contradictions; **d)** the pauperisation of the living conditions of the proletarians; **e)** the creation of a growing mass of unemployed and the widening of the gap between a small number of rich people in the world and a vast majority of poor people; **f)** the effects on the rate of profit.

Although the New Synthesis claims that anarchy determines *the general conditions for the class struggle*, i.e. it **determines the conditions for the contradictions in the class struggle** and, consequently, should be for all contradictions, its proponents only highlight the effects of the driving force of anarchy on the inter-bourgeois contradictions and the catastrophic consequences on the environment, while neglecting the effects on the contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, as well as between the imperialist system and the peoples of the world and between the imperialist forces among themselves, resulting in a one-sided and incorrect analysis.

Similarly, Avakian, in his eagerness to present anarchy as the

principal and only driving force, grossly ignores the dialectic. He forgets that *“But the chief means by aid of which the capitalist mode of production intensified this anarchy of socialized production was the exact opposite of anarchy. It was the increasing organization of production, upon a social basis, in every individual productive establishment.”* (Engels). That is to say, **the organisation of production within each factory** is the aspect which is (initially) opposed to **the anarchy of production within the whole of society**, and as contradictory aspects they cannot escape the laws of dialectics. But since Avakian does not see these aspects in contradiction, he cannot understand how they are transformed into each other.

Let us see how the New Synthesis understands it metaphysically:

*“The fundamental contradiction of capitalism between socialized production and private appropriation develops through these two forms of motion: the contradiction between bourgeoisie and proletariat, and the contradiction between organization in the unit of production-enterprise and anarchy in production in society overall. Each of these forms of motion has its own effects and each interpenetrates the other. **But in an ongoing way, as long as the capitalist mode of production is dominant on a world scale, it is the anarchy of capitalist production that brings about the fundamental changes in the material sphere that set the context for the class struggle.** Movement compelled by anarchy, the anarchic relations among capitalist producers driven by competition, is the principal form of motion of the fundamental contradiction.”* (Lotta. The bold letters are ours).

But let us remind Lotta and the adherents of the New Synthesis of Avakian’s words in “Phony Communism Is Dead... Long Live Real Communism” about what socialism is:

“To review Mao’s basic analysis: The experience in China and

*in the Soviet Union showed that, even after the old ruling classes had been overthrown and suppressed under the dictatorship of the proletariat; after ownership of the means of production had been taken out of the hands of the big capitalists and made state property, and small-scale capital and individual ownership had been transformed into social ownership by the state or by collective groups of working people, particularly peasants in the countryside; it was still the case not only that there remained significant inequalities and differences among groups of people in society but that these differences and inequalities continued to find expression as class contradiction and class struggle. More particularly and more significantly, these contradictions –between mental and manual labor, between workers and peasants and the city and the countryside, between men and women, between different nationalities, and so on – were accompanied by the persistence of aspects of bourgeois economic relations (such as commodity exchange and differences in wage levels), and all this contained the basis for social antagonisms and resulted in the fact that the bourgeoisie was constantly regenerated within socialist society. **Thus, the contradiction and struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie remained the most decisive contradiction and struggle in socialist society.**”.*

*“Mao developed this analysis further and systematized it into the basic line that socialism constitutes a long historical period of **transition from capitalism to communism, that all throughout this period there are classes and class struggles** ...“(Emphasis added).*

The idea that socialism is capitalism in transition to communism, characterised and driven by the dictatorship of the proletariat, is clear. Lotta is saying that anarchy will lead to fundamental changes in the material sphere up to communism.

Now let us look at what the New Synthesis is affirming in parts:

If anarchy is always the principal aspect of the anarchy vs. organisation contradiction, then society behaves metaphysically:

Lotta says that it is anarchy "*that brings about the fundamental changes in the material sphere*" (in Marxist terms it is the principal aspect) *until the capitalist mode of production is no longer dominant on a global scale*. But what does this statement imply? If capitalism is not the dominant mode of production, another mode of production must be dominant. If the change is from the new to the old, then it must be communism (we have already seen that socialism maintains the fundamental contradictions of capitalism). So, what the New Synthesis asserts is that *anarchy will be the principal feature until communism is the dominant mode of production*. But the last vestiges of capitalism are supposed to be surviving in a kind of mixture of old and new in the socialist system of transition to communism and not in a capitalist or imperialist country as we know them today; that is, the disappearance of classes must take place in the midst of socialism, of a planet under the socialist system of transition, dominated by the proletariat, to communism.

It makes no sense to say that anarchy will be the determining aspect of all changes until the capitalist mode of production is no longer dominant, for there will be a transitional stage where the world will be socialist; then it will not be the fundamental contradiction of the communist mode of production, but the fundamental contradiction of the capitalist mode of production that will be in force; but ruled by the dictatorship of the proletariat, with a planned economy, i.e. without anarchy as a predominant aspect.

A socialist planet with anarchy at the helm is a contradiction in terms; it is in practice a disregard for the dictatorship of the proletariat and a negation of socialism and communism.

In conclusion, to assert that *the anarchy of capitalist*

*production **continuously** brings about the fundamental changes in the material sphere, that it is anarchy that determines the framework for the class struggle (Lotta), is to ensure that, in the contradiction between the organisation of production within each factory and the anarchy of production within the whole of society, anarchy will always be the principal aspect, that everything will remain within the framework of the factories and the construction of the New Power, the power of the proletariat and its hegemony, will not advance in society as a whole.*

This implies, in the first place, to deny that in capitalism itself monopoly arises in opposition to free trade, is to deny the characteristic of monopolies to control, to a certain degree, anarchy, i.e. to deny that monopolies control prices, markets, competition and the compulsion to develop productive forces and, in concrete terms, is to deny the existence of monopoly and imperialism.

Secondly, to affirm that it is anarchy that **continually** brings about fundamental changes is the same as affirming that the aspects of the contradiction between the organisation of production (the possibility of its planning) and anarchy *will never change their position* and will remain, as capitalism imposed them and imperialism develops them, therefore, it would not be possible to build a planned economy in the dictatorship of the proletariat or in the people's democratic dictatorship led by the proletariat, and, that is, to deny the possibility of revolution.

Recall that Mao in "On Contradiction" says that "[...] *the principal and the non-principal aspects of a contradiction transform themselves into each other and the nature of the thing changes accordingly*". Not to recognise the transformation of one aspect into the other is to adhere to metaphysics.

2. PRINCIPAL CONTRADICTION / PRINCIPAL FORM OF MOTION. AVAKIAN

TRYING TO DECEIVE THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

Let's continue our analysis of the "extraordinary" invention on which the deceitful *New Synthesis* builds its entire argumentation. Avakian has pulled out of his magician's hat a brand new concept: "***the principal form of motion***". With this concept he intends to send **the principal contradiction** to the museum of theories in order to build his *New Synthesis* without hindrance from what he calls "*old Marxism*" and "*narratives*". From now on, **the "principal form of motion"** will replace the "**principal contradiction**", which should remain a figurehead without any practical effect, except in cases where Avakian's *New Synthesis* needs a Marxist appearance.

The *New Synthesis* implies that anarchy makes the fundamental contradiction of capitalism (*the contradiction between social production and capitalist appropriation*) never as important as its other manifestation (*the contradiction between the organisation of production within each factory and the anarchy of production within the whole of society*) because, for Avakian, anarchy is the ***principal form of motion of the fundamental contradiction***. This would imply that the most *determining* contradiction in society will be the contradiction *between the organisation of production within each factory and the anarchy of production within society as a whole*; but this would also mean that this contradiction, without necessarily being the principal one, would end up determining the other contradictions. Therefore, with this rhetorical manoeuvre Avakian would be replacing *the principal contradiction* with "*the principal form of motion*".

The *New Synthesis*, by setting up a castling between its misleading thesis on **the principal form of motion** and the **principal contradiction**, leaves the latter as a merely decorative matter. In other words: for Avakian, the essence (the contradiction) is transformed and is valid only as "form", as appearance. Let us look again at what Lotta says:

“But in an ongoing way, as long as the capitalist mode of production is dominant on a world scale, it is the anarchy of capitalist production that brings about the fundamental changes in the material sphere that set the context for the class struggle. Movement compelled by anarchy, the anarchic relations among capitalist producers driven by competition, is the principal form of motion of the fundamental contradiction. This was an important breakthrough in understanding made by Bob Avakian: [...] At any given time, the class struggle may be principal, locally (nationally) or globally. But generally, and in a long-term, overall sense, until the capitalist mode of production is no longer dominant on a world scale, the driving force of anarchy of the world imperialist system is and will be the principal form of motion of the fundamental contradiction. It is the driving force of anarchy—the underlying dynamics and contradictions of capitalist accumulation on a world scale, the various expressions of that, including but not only inter-imperial rivalry, and changes in the material and economic-social and, increasingly, natural-ecological conditions of life—that sets the primary stage and foundation for the transformation of society and the world.”

What the New Synthesis says is that the class struggle may at some point (and for a while) become *the principal form of the movement*, but it will never be the *principal contradiction*. In the logic of the Avakianists, it is “*the driving force of anarchy*” that sets the principal stage and basis for “*the transformation of society and the world*”. Do Avakian and Lotta understand what they are saying? When they say: “*the principal form of motion*”, are they referring precisely to the *principal contradiction*?

It seems that the “scientists” of the RCP-USA have forgotten that **MOVEMENT** is determined by **CONTRADICTION**. We ask: what, then, would be the difference between the principal form of movement and the principal contradiction? In reality, when

they say “*principal form of motion*” they are evading the need to establish its causes, i.e. the *principal contradiction that determines it*.

Let’s compare what Mao and Avakian says. What does the New Synthesis say about *the principal form of motion*? Well, it simply says that:

“*Central to this theoretical work was an insight brought forward by Bob Avakian. He had identified the “driving force of anarchy” as the principal form of motion of fundamental contradiction of capitalism, setting the overall terms for the class struggle. ... It is the driving force of anarchy ... that sets the primary stage and foundation for the transformation of society and the world.*”

What Mao says about the principal contradiction:

“*There are many contradictions in the process of development of a complex thing, and one of them is necessarily the principal contradiction whose existence and development **determine** or influence the existence and development of the other contradictions. ...*

But whatever happens, there is no doubt at all that at every stage in the development of a process, there is only one principal contradiction which plays the leading role.

*Hence, if in any process there are **a number of contradictions, one of them must be the principal contradiction** playing the **leading and decisive** role, while the rest occupy a secondary and subordinate position.” (Emphasis added).*

Let us observe how these two concepts are posited: *the contradiction whose existence and development **determines or influences the existence and development of the other contradictions*** (Mao); and the movement which sets the principal stage and basis for the transformation of society and the world *and which **determines the general conditions for***

the class struggle (Avakian).

Determining the existence and development of the other contradictions is exactly the same as determining the general conditions for the class struggle.

How, then, can the principal contradiction in its development determine *or influence the existence and development of the other contradictions*, without this in turn ***leading to fundamental changes in the material sphere, and these changes determining the framework for the class struggle?***

In short, for Avakian there are two principal contradictions, but the one that really plays the role of the determining the other contradictions, the one that most influences the rest of the other contradictions is the one he invented, the "form": the ***principal form of (l) movement***; and, moreover, lest anyone should doubt that ***the principal form of movement is more determining than the principal contradiction of Marxism***, he has endowed it with an absolute character, for, according to the New Synthesis, this contradiction ***is continuously determining***. What the New Synthesis asserts is that the ***principal form of movement*** is always the determining contradiction and ***anarchy in production is always the principal aspect of the contradiction***. What a way to fight against "narratives"... This is not scientific, this is pure metaphysics. This is religious dogma.

Moreover: Mao says in "On Contradiction": *"very form of motion contains within itself its own particular contradiction. This particular contradiction constitutes the particular essence which distinguishes one thing from another."* That is to say, contradictions have a principal aspect that determines the dynamics of contradiction, but it is not the principal form of movement of contradiction that determines contradictions. *Contradiction determines the forms of movement, and it is not the forms of movement that determine the contradictions*, as the New Synthesis would have us believe.

Have you discussed in the RCP-USA whether this very new concept of the *principal form of movement* occurs in all the contradictions of reality, of nature, or is it a phenomenon exclusive to the contradictions of society? And if so, then why is it exclusive to society? Or is it a rhetorical ploy to turn Marxism upside down in the service of the “*desires*” of the **gringo middle class**?

3. THE NEW SYNTHESIS IGNORES LENIN: CONTRARY TO THE MARXIST THEORY OF IMPERIALISM AND THE STATE.

Development of Avakian metaphysics

In the discourse of the supposed principal form of movement of the fundamental contradiction, Avakian has left out monopoly and its effects on free trade and, of course, its effects on anarchy. Predictably, the petty-bourgeois viewpoint of the American middle class only manages to highlight the effects of “free” competition on social contradictions, completely omitting all the catastrophic effects of monopoly, which have meant a thousand-fold exploitation and capitalist oppression for the vast majority of the masses and the countries of the world. This lamentable omission, concealment of reality and embellishment of imperialism can only be understood as an effort of the petty bourgeoisie to impose the petty-bourgeois point of view on the whole communist movement and revolutionaries in general.

Lenin says:

“Half a century ago, when Marx was writing Capital, free competition appeared to the overwhelming majority of economists to be a “natural law”. Official science tried, by a conspiracy of silence, to kill the works of Marx, who by a theoretical and historical analysis of capitalism had proved that free competition gives rise to the concentration of production, which, in turn, at a certain stage of development, leads to monopoly. Today, monopoly has become a fact.

Economists are writing mountains of books in which they describe the diverse manifestations of monopoly, and continue to declare in chorus that "Marxism is refuted". But facts are stubborn things, as the English proverb says, and they have to be reckoned with, whether we like it or not. The facts show that differences between capitalist countries, e.g., in the matter of protection or free trade, only give rise to insignificant variations in the form of monopolies or in the moment of their appearance; and that the rise of monopolies, as the result of the concentration of production, is a general and fundamental law of the present stage of development of capitalism.". (Lenin, **Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism**).

The New Synthesis in its eagerness to show the "*driving force of anarchy*' as the principal form of motion of fundamental contradiction of capitalism", has distorted reality by trying to adjust it to its one-sided idea that *the general conditions for the class struggle are **always** determined by anarchy*, going against Marxism, the Marxist theory of the state and – more specifically – against Lenin's developments on imperialism.

Avakian in his one-sided analysis of the contradictions of capitalism, has omitted to consider *the organisation of production within each factory* (or the organisation of capital at the structure or level where it behaves as a **collective capitalist**, be it trust, monopoly, state, regime, state system, or alliance of states) as the opposite aspect of the *anarchy of production within society as a whole*. To paraphrase the same avakianists, we will say that *nothing of what is happening (and what is not happening) with imperialism, monopoly, competition, centralisation and concentration of capital can be understood* if we leave aside one aspect of the contradiction, which is *organisation*. The analysis of the contradictions of today's society would be an abstraction if we leave aside, for example, monopoly, the state, imperialism.

If monopoly is ignored in the analysis of the present

contradictions, everything that is said is anchored to the initial period of capitalism, to the free trade phase and not to the imperialist phase of capitalism, where finance and monopoly capital is dominant.

Lenin already made it quite clear in *“Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism”* how monopoly arises from free competition and how monopoly replaces it, so that it exists above it and alongside it. Let us read:

*“Imperialism emerged as the development and direct continuation of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism in general. But capitalism only became capitalist imperialism at a definite and very high stage of its development, when certain of its fundamental characteristics **began to change into their opposites**, when the features of the epoch of transition from capitalism to a higher social and economic system had taken shape and revealed themselves in all spheres. Economically, the main thing in this process is **the displacement of capitalist free competition by capitalist monopoly**. Free competition is the basic feature of capitalism, and of commodity production generally; **monopoly is the exact opposite of free competition**, but we have seen the latter being transformed into monopoly before our eyes, creating large-scale industry and forcing out small industry, replacing large-scale by still larger-scale industry, and carrying concentration of production and capital to the point where out of it has grown and is growing monopoly: cartels, syndicates and trusts, and merging with them, the capital of a dozen or so banks, which manipulate thousands of millions. **At the same time the monopolies, which have grown out of free competition, do not eliminate the latter, but exist above it and alongside it, and thereby give rise to a number of very acute, intense antagonisms, frictions and conflicts. Monopoly is the transition from capitalism to a higher system.**”*. (Our emphasis).

This is happening, and has come “before our eyes” (i.e.

covered by evidence), and cannot be ignored. It has implied that, for much of the world, when the impositions of imperialism (monopolies) displace free competition, anarchy is not the driving force of the development of the productive forces, nor of the other contradictions. When in certain places and under certain conditions monopoly suppresses free competition, it also suppresses in due course anarchy in competition, and one of the important features which it "temporarily" neutralises is the **compulsion** of the capitalists to improve and develop the productive forces; however, it must be clear that the **compulsion** of the capitalists to develop the productive forces is temporarily and under certain circumstances neutralised; But the tendency to develop the productive forces is not completely eliminated, since there is – in general – a tendency of all modes of production (whether or not they are aware of anarchy in production) to develop the productive forces, linked in capitalism to the need to accumulate and accumulate without any moral, even legal reasons or reasoning, or any affectation of territories or communities, playing a role in this.

In the highest phase of capitalism, the imperialist phase, there is, in Lenin's words, *a kind of mixture of free competition and monopoly*, where the greater part of the world's population is subject to monopoly, to parasitic finance capital. Consequently, large key sectors of the economy are regulated, not by free competition, but by the impositions of the monopolies. It is for this reason that capitalism in many oppressed countries (which enjoy only formal independence, but in practice are subjected to and determined by the metropolis) makes only a marginal contribution to the development of the productive forces. The **compulsion** to sweep away the remnants of pre-capitalist relations in the social formations of the so-called "dependent" countries is practically non-existent and, on the contrary, the dominant mode of production reproduces these "features" and puts them at its service.

In general, monopoly, when it subjects the market to its conditions, **neutralises the compulsion** to develop new inventions and techniques, and to improve existing ones; however, even if the monopoly has subjected a given market to its interests, it continues (on a smaller scale, without the haste to innovate or perish) to generate development of the productive forces, for example, in the construction and development of major railways, national highways, airports that would otherwise have been impossible to realise in the time it did.

On the other hand, monopolies do not always succeed in subduing the market, for in many parts of the world they end up at loggerheads with each other, preventing any of them from imposing their conditions. In these cases, they must compete for markets in "free competition", in a more intense clash, with a greater compulsion to develop productive forces or perish, generating more dramatic consequences for the masses and the planet.

Whoever does not understand this dialectic, cannot understand why in oppressed countries, peoples or nations like in Colombia, for example, capitalism does not have the same urge to develop the productive forces as it did, for example, in England; or why capitalism generates supposed developments of the productive forces which, in reality, does not sweep away, as it did in a large part of Europe, all pre-capitalist relations. In fact, it reproduces them when they are necessary for the pursuit of extraordinary rents.

Let us look at a quote from Lenin where he shows dialectically how capitalism functions in the presence of imperialist monopolies:

"As we have seen, the deepest economic foundation of imperialism is monopoly. This is capitalist monopoly, i.e., monopoly which has grown out of capitalism and which exists in the general environment of capitalism, commodity production

and competition, in permanent and insoluble contradiction to this general environment. **Nevertheless, like all monopoly, it inevitably engenders a tendency of stagnation and decay.** Since monopoly prices are established, even temporarily, the motive cause of technical and, consequently, of all other progress disappears to a certain extent and, further, the economic possibility arises of deliberately retarding technical progress. For instance, in America, a certain Owens invented a machine which revolutionised the manufacture of bottles. The German bottle-manufacturing cartel purchased Owens's patent, but pigeon-holed it, refrained from utilising it. **Certainly, monopoly under capitalism can never completely, and for a very long period of time, eliminate competition in the world market (and this, by the by, is one of the reasons why the theory of ultra-imperialism is so absurd).** Certainly, the possibility of reducing the cost of production and increasing profits by introducing technical improvements operates in the direction of change. **But the tendency to stagnation and decay, which is characteristic of monopoly, continues to operate, and in some branches of industry, in some countries, for certain periods of time, it gains the upper hand."** Lenin. *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (Our emphasis).

Let us now see how the one-sided worldview of the New Synthesis is realised with an example of the effects of anarchy on the ecological crisis and forced migration in the world:

"At the same time, it is crucial to understand that the ecological crisis is impacting, and will impact, the class struggle in manifold ways. To begin with, environmental destruction is a fault-line of the global class struggle and a focal point of important mass resistance, especially in the oppressed nations, often connected with peasant and indigenous peoples' struggles, but also in the imperialist citadels.

Further, the kinds of instabilities and **"environmental security crises"** (as the imperialists call them) that might be

set off by environmental degradation could very likely trigger massive social crisis, and could be an accelerant of revolutionary crisis.

Millions could be flooded out of densely settled delta regions like Bangladesh, prompting vast migrations.” (Lotta. Boldface emphasis added).

The New Synthesis deliberately ignores that today millions of people are in a food crisis and are leaving the oppressed nations, not as a consequence of environmental damage, but – principally – as a consequence of the impoverishing impositions of imperialism on the oppressed masses of the planet and, principally, on the majority of the population of the oppressed countries, with the aggravating factor that in “the usual” cases, the measures of imperialism are accompanied by great repression (state terrorism) that guarantee their implementation. What is more, the migration crises caused by the impoverishing measures of imperialism precede by many years the migrations that have come to occur due to the deterioration of the environment. Why does Lotta resort to a “hypothetical” example of migrations due to environmental damage, when migrations due to the impositions of imperialism (the monopolies) abound and dominate?

In the analysis of the enormous growth of the cities in the oppressed countries, we can say that in Colombia the mass exodus of peasants to the cities is not a consequence of the forces of the land market, not because of anarchy in the production of goods, but – on the contrary – because of the forces of the land monopoly. It is the landowners, owners of thousands of fertile and unproductive hectares of land, who, by means of torture and state crimes, have dispossessed the peasants of their land, concentrating it, day by day, in more and more hands, and, in most cases, not to convert it into capitalist enterprises, but, as a factor of power, linked to pre-capitalist relations of production. Moreover, these landlords survive, not because of market forces, not because

of anarchy in production, but precisely because of an imposition of imperialism (read monopoly) on the market, contradicting the tendencies of freely changing market forces, which should develop the productive forces and sweep away the pre-capitalist remnants of production.

Already in **“Phony Communism Is Dead... Long Live Real Communism”**, Avakian, refuting Bush, had admitted that monopoly represented centralised planning and this means a subjugation, to some degree, of anarchy. Let us see:

“Secondly, the practice of present-day capitalism, that is, monopoly capitalism, with regard to planning should also be looked at. Here we see a gross example of hypocrisy—of saying one thing while doing another, to put it simply. The plain fact is that in any capitalist society today, particularly in the so-called “advanced” (highly technologically developed) capitalist countries, there is a tremendous amount of centralized planning.”

Here, it would have been important to go deeper into what *“a lot of planning of monopoly capitalism”* means, especially considering that the capital that dominates the world is finance capital. For a better understanding of how decisive finance capital is in our epoch, let us look at what Lenin said in **Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism**:

“Finance capital is such a great, such a decisive, you might say, force in all economic and in all international relations, that it is capable of subjecting, and actually does subject, to itself even states enjoying the fullest political independence; we shall shortly see examples of this. Of course, finance capital finds most “convenient”, and derives the greatest profit from, a form of subjection which involves the loss of the political independence of the subjected countries and peoples. In this respect, the semi-colonial countries provide a typical example of the “middle stage” ...

If it were necessary to give the briefest possible definition of imperialism we should have to say that imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism. Such a definition would include what is most important, for, on the one hand, finance capital is the bank capital of a few very big monopolist banks, merged with the capital of the monopolist associations of industrialists; and, on the other hand, the division of the world is the transition from a colonial policy which has extended without hindrance to territories unseized by any capitalist power, to a colonial policy of monopolist possession of the territory of the world, which has been completely divided up."

Thus, the planning carried out by finance capital (and monopoly in general) cannot be overlooked, since it covers vast areas of the economy and the world, modifying the conditions that free market capitalism provided for the vast majority of the planet's inhabitants. But the New Synthesis (Lotta) ends the explanation of anarchy (when it was getting interesting) with the analysis of the dialectical relationship between monopoly, planning and anarchy.

In conclusion:

Lenin says in *Imperialism, The Highest Stage Of Capitalism*:

"Kautsky's theoretical critique of imperialism has nothing in common with Marxism and serves only as a preamble to propaganda for peace and unity with the opportunists and the social-chauvinists, precisely for the reason that it evades and obscures the very profound and fundamental contradictions of imperialism: the contradictions between monopoly and free competition which exists side by side with it, between the gigantic "operations" (and gigantic profits) of finance capital and "honest" trade in the free market, the contradiction between cartels and trusts, on the one hand, and non-cartelised industry, on the other, etc."

It is precisely the contradictions between the monopolies and free competition and all those of imperialism that the New Synthesis ends up hiding behind its discovery of “‘*driving force of anarchy*’ as the principal form of motion of fundamental contradiction of capitalism” and, by this means, the contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between imperialism and the oppressed nations, are hidden. There is, therefore, a very good reason to call the creator of the New Synthesis, Avakian, a renegade.

4. AVAKIAN AND LOTTA TWISTING REALITY TRYING TO FIT IT WITH THE NEW SYNTHESIS

Lotta says:

“Capitalism is not a system based on greed, or the “will to exploit.” It is not a system based on the profit motive as “first principle”—squeeze what you can from the workers. It is a mode of production based on the exploitation of wage-labor and driven by the inner necessity to expand. Not to grasp this is to objectively deny the need for revolution—if this system is not governed by necessity, by underlying laws and imperatives of accumulation, then perhaps... perhaps it can be reformed.”

Were it not the case that these capitalist commodity producers are separated from each other and yet linked by the operation of the law of value they would not face the same compulsion to exploit the proletariat—the class contradiction between bourgeoisie and proletariat could be mitigated.” (Our emphasis).

First of all, the laws governing the modes of production allow them to be explained (studied) by abstracting from the desires of individuals, from human wills; however, this cannot be understood as if these desires or wills did not exist. There is no contradiction between the fact that capitalism has *profit* as its primary principle and the fact that it is a mode

of production based on the exploitation of wage labour. All modes of production based on the exploitation of man by man have laws that govern them, but, in turn, the men who relate to these modes of production have dreams, desires, wills and, in fact, have influenced and influence history (that is why Marx defined and located the general law of the fall of the rate of profit as a tendency, and the action of human beings as counter tendencies). In capitalism, the relationship between the laws that govern it and *profit* is not one of exclusion, but rather they are in harmony, they complement each other, they need each other, as the brain needs the heart and the other organs, and the process of the valorisation of capital is linked to the desire of the flesh-and-blood capitalist for profit, the desire of some (human) bourgeois to accumulate. Here there is a dialectical relation between the objective laws of the mode of production and the subjective desires of individuals and collectives (in both senses), between matter and consciousness, where consciousness does not play an absolutely passive role. The fact that capitalism can be explained by the laws that govern it, by abstracting from the greed of the bourgeoisie, does not mean that this greed does not function at the basis of the accumulation of capital. Similarly with value, it is not because value is determined by abstract labour, then, that one can conclude that concrete or useful labour is not at the basis of the determination of value.

Marx says in Capital Volume I:

*“Only as personified capital is the capitalist respectable. As such, **he shares with the miser the passion for wealth as wealth.** But that which in the miser is a mere idiosyncrasy, is, **in the capitalist, the effect of the social mechanism,** of which he is but one of the wheels. Moreover, the development of capitalist production makes it constantly necessary to keep increasing the amount of the capital laid out in a given **industrial undertaking,** and **competition** makes the immanent*

laws of capitalist production to be felt by each individual capitalist, as external coercive laws. It

compels him to keep constantly extending his capital, in order to preserve it, but extend it he cannot, except by means of progressive accumulation.” (Our emphasis).

Marx unveils the relation between the absolute instinct to get rich and the law that obliges the capitalist to reinvest part of the surplus value (*of **the social mechanism, of which he is only a spring***). He admits, then, a contradiction in the bourgeoisie between how much of the surplus value will be destined for personal consumption, luxuries and hoarding and how much will be destined for productive consumption (reinvested as productive capital). If, as Lotta says, only the coercive laws of reinvestment in productive capital were at work, and not the subjective desire to possess, to get rich, of luxury, the bourgeois would spend for themselves exactly the minimum that would allow them to survive, to return day after day to their labours and to reproduce themselves, no more and no less, than as they subject their own workers. But the desire to possess, to get rich, works as a counter-tendency which regulates that only a part of the surplus value is reinvested and the rest is used for their sybaritic life of hoarding, luxury and ostentation.

Lotta asserts that profit is not a *primary principle*; however, he later argues by unintentionally contradicting himself. Let us see:

*“This is the law of value, and social labor time is the regulator of prices and profits. The quest for **profit dominates privately organized labor processes. Profit determines what gets produced—and how.**”*

To say that profit ***dominates privately organised labour processes, that profit determines what gets produced and how,*** is to admit that profit is at the basis of the reproduction

and expansion of capital, is at the basis of capital's compulsion to reinvest itself.

What is more: no other mode of production, before capitalism, had the urge to expand as the capitalist mode of production has; no other mode of production had anarchy as a propelling force as free exchange capitalism; however, it was not possible to *mitigate*, forever, the contradictions between exploited and exploiters. In other words, the antagonism between exploited and exploiters makes reforms forever impossible, and – then – revolution develops as a solution to the contradictions between the antagonistic classes. The pre-capitalist modes of production that still survive do so not on condition of mitigating the contradictions between exploited and exploiters, but on condition of enabling imperialist exploitation and the exploitation that the monopolies exercise over the masses of working people of the world (of the masses of the oppressed countries) and reproduce them.

Lotta says that *the capitalists would not feel the same compulsion to exploit the proletariat* if the capitalists did not exist independently of each other and at the same time were intertwined by the operation of the law of value.

In the first place, what Marxism says is that capitalists facing each other in free competition are under compulsion to reinvest part of the surplus value in productive capital; in the second place, Lotta should explain why, when capitalists grouped in monopolies temporarily subject the market to their interests, placating the imperative need to reinvest capital or perish, the compulsion to exploit the proletariat is not also diminished.

Can Lotta be sure that the slaveholder's compulsion to exploit the slaves was less than the capitalist's compulsion to exploit the workers, because the slaveholders were not bound by the law of value?

Thirdly, if it were true that, as capitalists face each other in free competition, the pressure to exploit the proletariat increases, the corollary must also be true: if the monopoly controls the market and there is a temporary agreement that mitigates competition between the bourgeoisie, then the need to exploit the proletariat must decrease. Eureka! The new Synthesis has found the argument that revives the theory of *ultra-imperialism*, according to which, supposedly, the contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are “attenuated”.

But what the development of the contradictions in our epoch really shows is that imperialism, the monopolies, instead of alleviating the exploitation of the workers and the masses, intensify and increase it.

In **Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism**, Lenin says:

“Kautsky’s utterly meaningless talk about ultra-imperialism encourages, among other things, that profoundly mistaken idea which only brings grist to the mill of the apologists of imperialism, i.e., that the rule of finance capital lessens the unevenness and contradictions inherent in the world economy, whereas in reality it increases them.”

The New Synthesis resorts to this imbroglia of an enormous argumentative poverty to try to convince us that *anarchy – is always – the principal form of movement: that it is this form which defines and determines the fundamental contradiction*. Furthermore: that, if we do not accept this absolute role of anarchy, then we must assume that the contradictions between bourgeoisie and proletariat can be mitigated and, consequently, this system can be “improved”. If we do not accept the metaphysical role they pretend to give to the contradiction “anarchy vs. organisation”, then they scare us with reformism, claiming that “this system can be reformed”.

But it turns out that class struggle and violence are not

exclusive characteristics of societies dominated by the law of value. Violence, as Marx says, plays *the role of the midwife of any old society that is pregnant with a new one*: it is the instrument with which the social movement imposes itself and breaks up rigid and dead political forms.

5. POPPER'S IDEAS NURTURE AVAKIAN: FALSIFIABILITY

In the material "Marxism as a Science—Refuting Karl Popper", Avakian succeeds in unmasking the crux of Popper's proposal. In this text Avakian quotes Popper: "*In the realm of facts, we do not merely criticize our theories, we criticize them by an appeal to experimental and observational **experience***".

And Avakian writes: "*he (Popper) does not place practice in the central and determining role in regard to the development of human knowledge. Rather, he assigns this role to criticism. That is the meaning of his statement*"

Then Avakian quotes Popper: "*we cannot establish or justify anything as certain, **or even as probable**, but have to content ourselves with theories **which withstand criticism***".

It is clear enough that for Popper there are no truths, only **conjectures** that have failed to be falsified, *theories that **stand up to criticism***, and, therefore, since we "supposedly" cannot establish ... that anything is true, he claims that the road we must always take (even to determine whether a theory is scientific) is **falsifiability**.

Avakian, after revealing that *falsifiability* is contrary to the concept of **practice** (as the criterion of truth and the point of origin of knowledge) and, therefore, contrary to Marxism, raises the banners of *falsifiability*, supposedly to certify that "*Marxism is a scientific theory*". Now, the Avakianists go out hand in hand with Popper in an endless search for the *black swan* of Marxism and, for this, to implement this brand new task of the revolutionaries, who – at last – will demonstrate that Marxism is indeed scientific,

they use a thousand tricks aimed at accommodating **reality** to Popper's nonsense and, by this means, end up falsifying reality itself.

In fact, one of the tricks of deception is to play with words; for example, Baran in the text against Ajith, and Avakian in the text Refuting Karl Popper, call Marxism a "scientific theory", when it is correct that MLM is a science that is composed of hundreds of scientific truths, therefore, one cannot be sure that Marxism is only a "scientific theory", which is supposed to be falsifiable. In a similar way, Avakian performs his sleight of hand, arguing that *"[...] the point is that evolution, as a scientific theory, is falsifiable. And so, in a fundamental and essential sense, is Marxism-scientific communist theory."* To "prove" it, he gives a supremely puerile example, from Ardea Skybreak.

In Avakian's text on Popper, he says:

"In short, the "falsifiability" criterion means that if something is really scientific, then it can be put to the test of reality. If things emerge in reality which the theory not only doesn't anticipate, but which the theory would predict cannot happen, then obviously there is something wrong, incorrect, about the theory. If, to take an example cited by Skybreak, it could actually be shown—and not pretended in creationist museums—that dinosaurs and human beings existed at the same time, that would be one means of falsifying the theory of evolution, of showing that it is wrong."

Avakian's example is remarkably naive. It is not possible that with this absurd example, *falsifiability* can be passed off as a reliable tool that can select *which theory is scientific* or, more precisely, *which is not scientific*; in fact, if evidence such as that suggested by Skybreak were found, it would be very difficult to refute the thousands of evidences that the theory of evolution has in its favour; rather, what would happen is that the theory of evolution would have a new field

of investigation to explain why or how the simultaneous existence of two species that were supposed to be separated by a long space of time came about. This supposed *black swan* of the theory of evolution would never be a proof that this theory is not scientific, it would not *prove that it is false*, the only thing it would really prove is that the field of scientific investigation of the evolution of species can be much wider.

And the same could happen with Marxism. Let us say, for example, that one finds in the work *Capital* an idea that does not correspond to reality, this would not deny the scientific character of the theory of surplus value, the only thing that could happen is that it would require a reworking of the controversial subject, since the scientific character of Marx's work is linked to the rigorous dialectical materialism with which it was elaborated, and not, as Avakian believes, that its scientific character depends on it being falsifiable. As if the process were not scientific, only the derivation, the result. In this way, any pseudo-science that manages to make an accurate prognosis, or at least one that *withstands criticism*, could easily claim the title of scientific.

Although Avakian admits that *"To determine whether a theory as a whole has been falsified—has been shown, through investigation and analysis, utilizing scientific methods, not to be true—or whether, on the other hand, only certain secondary aspects have been falsified in this way, it is necessary to examine whether those things that have been shown not to be true actually bear on and undermine the main and essential elements of that theory or only secondary aspects which do not go to the essence of the theory as a whole."*

It makes no difference, however, whether falsifiability is to be applied to a secondary or an essential aspect. The fundamental problem here is that *"practice is the criterion of truth and... must be the first and fundamental point of view of the theory of knowledge"*; and this is precisely what

falsifiability ignores, which seems more like a return to *critical experience: empiriocriticism*, then, conceives of experience in an idealistic way, divorced from practice, from the transformation of the world.

Let us imagine for a moment that, as of today, we are going to subject the sciences to the recommendations of Avakian and Popper. Then, a finding like Skybreak's example would remove the theory of evolution from the privileged place of science, and this in spite of thousands of evidences in its favour, only for a proposition to be falsified; this would be its end as a scientific theory. This would cause a setback of centuries, since it would be at a considerable disadvantage with respect to the jewel in the crown of reaction, creationism; in addition to the budget cuts that research linked to the theory of evolution would suffer as a consequence of not being considered as science, with its effects on school education and university training. What would happen to a theory that is just starting out? A proposition that is falsified would not reorient the research, but would immediately consider it unscientific and condemn it to St. Alexius's room.

Does Avakian not know that in science (and theories) there are several contradictions, many interconnections, multiple determinations, that a theory can have several untrue propositions and yet remain fundamentally scientific? By failing to understand this dialectic, Avakian has gone over to the ranks of metaphysics.

In general, many (if not all) scientific theories had to deal in their early days with propositions that, in Popper's words, had been *falsified*, and fortunately for science, they were not rejected; the correct thing to do was to allow the theories to continue to struggle to find the truth. A classic example is Newton's astronomy, where the orbit of the Moon did not fit his model, as it has some apparent *inconsistencies* that did not allow to accurately predict its location; something

similar happened with the orbit of Mercury, however, later science managed to solve the problem; in the case of Mercury, as it is known, Einstein proposed a different theory to Newton's.

What is paradoxical is that Avakian constantly speaks of science, and now claims to be merely or essentially "scientific"; what is more: the word *revolutionary* has been changed to "scientific" and he has dared to deny the dictatorship of the proletariat, the role of the working class and the proletariat in the revolution, in order – supposedly – to allow greater *dissent in* socialism and for that, he says, *intellectual effervescence* is necessary. But for this opening up of the sciences and the arts, he is not inspired by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution but denies it, for he makes an abstraction of the class struggle, showing intellectuals and science as neutral, and this is absolutely contrary to what was put forward by the Revolution in China and by Marxism.

This is a quote from Avakian:

"You need intellectual effervescence to know the world. Intellectual effervescence, debate and experimentation offer a glimpse of all the turmoil beneath the surface of society at any given moment."

However, *falsifiability* promises in socialism to handle science in black and white, in absolutes. It is totally true, or it is not true at all! This metaphysical way of looking at science not only affects the interests of the proletariat, but will also affect scientific research in general, for *falsifiability* ends up being supremely emasculating for science, and is therefore – even – in contradiction with the supposed *intellectual effervescence*.

The assumption of using science to guarantee better *dissent in* socialism will in reality be severely limited by

falsifiability, and, with science entangled in Popper (right-wing ideologue), there remains – then – only what the *bourgeois intelligentsia* likes and abuses most: *the supposed freedom of expression in which anything goes, and “the same thing” goes*. This will be a breath of fresh air for the defeated bourgeois ideology, which will not hesitate to use what it presents as “new views” as a spearhead.

In conclusion, the proposal of *intellectual effervescence* and *falsifiability* are two Siamese Frankensteins which do not place *practice as the central and determining role with regard to the development of human knowledge; rather, they attribute that role to theoretical critique*. They will therefore be a real obstacle to the vigorous development of science and to the proletariat’s building and maintaining its power.

Not content with the eyesore of *falsifiability*, Avakian, reproduces in the ranks of the proletariat Popper’s discourse on the *religious character of Marxism*. In its Popper-inspired crusade, the New Synthesis carries in one hand *falsifiability* and in the other the supposed *dogmas of faith of Marxism: reification, class truth, concrete practice and inevitability* (only a few will be mentioned here).

Avakian raises Popper’s flag, not as one who raises a war trophy as a sign that he has defeated the enemy after a hard-fought battle, but as one who has changed sides.

6. ON CLASS TRUTH

Although Avakian acknowledges in the material he writes against Popper that:

“It has, unfortunately, been demonstrated repeatedly that when something touches on the essential interests of the ruling class in such a society, those considerations (of interest) will often overrule matters of objective truth, in various disciplines and even in academia overall.”

Then he seems to backtrack, and to argue against class truth he starts from a completely fallacious argument, i.e., in Baran's words, class truth is: *"one aspect of this is the idea that whether or not something is true depends, or is, deeply conditioned by the class, social origin or political position of the person it defends"*.

This is absolutely false, Marxism has never held that truth depends on whether things are said by the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. Whoever wants to discover the truth must deal with the contradiction between the appearances and the essence of phenomena, discover their interconnections, internal contradictions, the particularity of the contradiction, the principal aspect of the contradiction, the universality of the contradiction. Discovering the truth is not an intrinsic gift of the working class, it is not like a kind of sweat where the working class emanates truths like one who sweats.

What Marxism has said is that there are social classes with particular interests and that these interests can facilitate or hinder knowledge of reality; that, in particular, for the classes in power in the bourgeois state or benefiting from class dictatorship, their interests in maintaining their status are objective obstacles to knowing and accepting phenomena, or truths, that reveal the lies on which they have built their privileges as a class, or that can give rise to transformations that endanger the order of things that keeps them in power. That is why it is necessary to advance in the fight against bourgeois ideology, understanding also its historical forms (for example: its positions were one thing when it advanced in the fight against feudalism and pre-capitalist social relations, leading democratic revolutions, and another when it consolidated itself as a reactionary class, the enemy of the proletariat).

Now that the bourgeoisie has exhausted all its revolutionary potential and is striving to perpetuate itself in power, and capitalism has reached its final stage, imperialism, the

enormous development of the productive forces and their contradiction with the relations of production are no longer expressed by the bourgeoisie, but by the proletariat. Let us see how Engels describes this process in the Anti-Duhring:

“[...] ultimate causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men’s brains, not in their growing insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the philosophy, but in the economics of each particular epoch.”

“The growing recognition that existing social institutions are irrational and unjust, that reason has become unreason, and kindness a scourge, is only a sign that changes in the modes of production and exchange have silently been taking place with which the social order adapted to earlier economic conditions is no longer in keeping.”

“The new productive forces have already outgrown the bourgeois form of using them; and this conflict between productive forces and mode of production is not a conflict engendered in men’s heads, like that between original sin and divine justice, but it exists in the facts, objectively, outside us, independently of the will and even actions of the men who have brought it on.”

“Modern socialism is nothing but the reflex in thought of this actual conflict, its ideal reflection in the minds of above all the class directly suffering under it, the working class.”
(Our emphasis).

Then, the clash between the productive forces and the relations of production push the proletariat to understand reality in accordance with the new productive forces. For example, to understand the irrationality of having a highly socialised production, but, with *individual* appropriation in accordance with a stage of commodity production by artisans.

The only way to resolve this contradiction is the complete socialisation of the means of production and the replacement of capitalist appropriation by socialist appropriation.

Moreover, it cannot be overlooked that *materialism explains consciousness by being, and not the other way round*; that is to say, the capacity of the human being to know reality and to recognise himself in it depends – fundamentally – on his being, and, in the case of the human being in society, *social consciousness is explained by social being*.

So, everyone without exception must deal with the difficulties of knowledge, distinguishing essence from appearance, discovering the contradictory aspects of the phenomenon, etc., but in the case of the classes in state power or with privileges in society, *the social being, the objective privileges of the exploiting classes, the class interests, are the inputs for their social consciousness. The social being of the bourgeoisie in power is an additional difficulty in knowing certain aspects of reality, principally when those aspects of reality or truth can be a danger to its class dictatorship*.

It cannot be forgotten that *“there can be no “impartial” social science in a society*

based on class struggle.”, Lenin said. That is to say, science, especially social science, takes sides in the class struggle.

For example, this bias of the classes in power leads them to disregard dialectical materialism, and – consequently – the dialectic of class societies, dismissing (concealing) the fact that all modes of production have an end. And that in the contradiction bourgeoisie vs. proletariat, the proletariat will be the gravedigger of the capitalist mode of production. In general, the social being of today’s bourgeoisie and landlords allows them to appropriate the knowledge and know-

how that humanity has accumulated about the functioning of society (in its economic, political and social dimensions) and, therefore, to devise *conscious* measures aimed at resolving the successive crises of capitalism in their favour and against the masses, by means of the exacerbated application of the capture and appropriation of extraordinary rents. Faced with this, the proletariat has made the most solid advances in dialectical materialism, scientific socialism and Marxist political economy. The working class has no interest in maintaining the status quo, therefore, it does not have to overcome the barriers of prejudices that the privileged classes generate and articulate from the dominant ideology. That is why it takes up its decisive fight.

On the other hand, it is also false that Marxism has formulated that class truth is any idea which serves the proletariat, and therefore becomes, as if by magic, a *class truth for the proletariat*, no matter how much that idea coincides with objective reality. Whenever class truth is spoken of it must strictly fulfil two conditions: in the first place, it must be an objective truth. It must correspond to reality; secondly, it must serve the proletariat's class interests. If only the second condition were admitted, then of course such a class truth could not exist.

7. THE ALLEGED REIFICATION OF THE PROLETARIAT

With the argument that the proletariat in the Bolshevik revolution and later in the Chinese revolution led by Mao *attached great importance to the class origin of people in the process of assessing their opinions and appointing them to positions of leadership or responsibility*, Avakian continues his crusade against Marxism.

Despite the fact that the *New Synthesis* had pointed out that this was "a very minor error", they launch an aggressive campaign to "try to deny" **the role of the vanguard of the revolution to the working class**. The solution they propose

transforms the foundations of Marxism, takes away the indispensably proletarian character of the new democratic, socialist and communist revolutions, stripping the working class of the role of the vanguard of the revolution.

If the error which the Avakianists call "*reifying*" lies in the fact that in the revolution, workers were given posts without having demonstrated sufficient ideological and political (proletarian) qualities and without sufficient knowledge in the area where they were to work, the solution is to intensify the schools for the training of cadres, to increase the quality of publications for political debate, and education for the basic masses in general and the proletariat in particular, accompanying the process of education with a rigorous verification in practice. The solution, then, would lie in raising the consciousness of the working class and a strict verification in practice of the qualities of the cadres.

But, if the alleged error of *reification* has its origin in the fact that the workers do not, or should not, occupy, in the **contradictions of capitalism**, one of the **aspects of the contradiction** (proletariat vs. bourgeoisie), the task of the followers of the New Synthesis is to prove with arguments this new condition which, with absolute certainty, must (should) have its *causes in* production.

That is to say, in the dialectic of bourgeois society, the owners of the means of production and the producers (bourgeois and workers) clash; nevertheless, the New Synthesis tries to make us believe that we should not strive to make the working class the principal aspect of this contradiction, since this is pure *reification* of the working class... that the principal aspect of this contradiction with the bourgeoisie is "personified" by a third sector, constituted by the scientists and intellectuals, above the classes, so that – in this way – the "sanctification" which Marxism had made of the working class and the masses is finally ended, and thus rightly making

peace with Popper. A splendid advance for Marxism!

It seems that for the renegade Avakian, Marx and Engels *whimsically* determined that the contradictions in capitalism were between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and, consequently, the study of the commodity, the theory of value, the origin of surplus value (or rather of "Capital") can be ignored; for that is simply a famous arbitrariness. And with the same *arbitrariness* that the masters of the proletariat reified the working class, Avakian proposes today to reify the intellectuals. There is no need for arguments, no need for a new study to replace Marx's work, it is enough for Avakian to say that *he has identified the driving force of anarchy as the decisive dynamic of capitalism* and, consequently, it is not the class struggle that matters; it is not the suffering of the masses that matters, but the damage that competition between capital has caused to the environment. Therefore, the slogan raised by the New Synthesis is the defence of nature and, in that order of ideas, intellectuals are the environmentalist vanguard that will save the planet and build socialism; whoever tries to reify the working class, to call it or assume it as the gravedigger of capitalism, is anchored in the past, carrying the remnants of the old narratives of Marxism, the product of a *reassuring belief system without scientific roots*.

This cannot be called the New Synthesis of Marxism, it is in fact opportunism; it is pure revisionism.

To complete the change of sides, the Avakianists have already renounced their revolutionary militancy:

"That's why I like the image, or the metaphor, that we are a team of scientists – scientists bent on transforming the world in the most profound way. Our essence is nothing different from that". (Marxism as a Science–Refuting Karl Popper. Avakian).

The new synthesis wants to completely ignore the role of the working class in the capitalist mode of production, and also to ignore that the working class is an **aspect of the contradiction** between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and therefore to *ignore that the workers are the social force capable of creating the new society.*

The role that Marxism gives to the working class is the product of a well-supported and scientific work in the three constituent parts of MLM, from political economy, Marxist philosophy and scientific socialism. Whoever seeks to refute these arguments should do so with the same rigorousness, and not with just any old witticism. In conclusion, the RCP-USA does not seem to be in a position to argue scientifically why the working class should be replaced in its role as gravedigger of the capitalist system; however, this does not exempt the follower organisations of the New Synthesis from this necessary argumentation. We look forward to it.

8. UNPRINCIPLED SYNTHESIS, A SHIP ADRIFT

A few years ago, in the ranks of RIM, any political discussion involving new elements, whether new militants or new theoretical elements, would have demanded, without the slightest hesitation, to start with principles. In the past, the PCP and the RCP-USA each produced a primer on ideological and political principles, which gave both organisations the confidence that they were firmly anchored in the ranks of the proletariat, and that this confidence allowed them to deploy sufficient flexibility and rigour for the indispensable line struggle. Flexibility and rigour that allow the line of an organisation to be refined (improved, made more Marxist) in struggle, without going outside the ranks of the proletariat. Moreover, their contributions, principally those of the PCP, were not limited to influencing the revolutionaries of Peru, but went much further and, like a lighthouse, illuminated (inspired) the proletariat throughout the world.

Now, with Avakian's New Synthesis, this has changed. Already the RCP-USA and many of its followers do not speak of ideological principles; they regard them as outside science, as dogmas of faith, as hindrances to their alleged theoretical developments. They only manage to make a reference to organisational principles, although they admit that:

"In every sphere of science there is an established body of work that has been shown to correspond to objective reality and serve as a basis for further advancement" (Baran, *AJITH. A Portrait of the Residue of a Past*, page 51).

However, the New Synthesis refuses to clearly specify which part of Marxism Leninism Maoism it considers to serve as the basis for further advances. This indeterminacy **does not serve** to increase our ideological preparation, to prevent opportunism from disorganising us and diverting us from our goal: communism. In synthesis, with the absence of political-ideological principles, the ideological firmness necessary to confront revisionism and to maintain the organisation in the ranks of the proletariat is dispensed with.

It is impossible to force the RCP-USA to define, from the New Synthesis, the new ideological principles. Nevertheless, we have to point out clearly that any organisation which has adhered to the New Synthesis and maintains a serious and responsible attitude must establish precisely why yesterday they spoke of, for example, the working class as the vanguard of the revolution, the worker-peasant alliance, the protracted people's war, the launching of the war and – today – they shut up, without analysis, without criticism, without self-criticism, they have simply thrown away the line which, supposedly, became old, and have copied, without the slightest debate, the theses of the New Synthesis. This is not serious, it is not scientific, it is not revolutionary.

The RCP-USA is an excellent living example of how aspects of a contradiction can be and often are identical and, in that

identity, the aspects can become each other. Today, the RCP-USA has become its opposite, and the reactionary, metaphysical aspect is the main one. Avakian for his part, leading the opportunist line within the Party, has not only denied the ideological and political principles of the proletariat, but has left practically all his followers without the slogans of action, and subjected them to the most unbearable stillness. This is the way to build the worst organisation in which a good communist can serve. Perhaps, if in revolutionary work the followers of the New Synthesis want to start from the concrete conditions of the masses, they will be called to order by shouting at them, "*Economists! They cannot solve the contradictions of the nation, for they would be chauvinists, they must bear in mind that the principal thing is (only) "the international"*". If any militant pays too much attention to the workers or peasants, he will be forced to criticise himself for persisting in *reifying* the working class, for theirs are the "scientific" and intellectual circles. And the worst thing: if he proposes to advance plans for the PPW, he will be told that they suffer from *narrow nationalism*. Perhaps, with all this, they no longer call each other comrades but doctors; they no longer have cells but "scientific" discussion circles or literary and scientific discussion clubs.

Sadly, the absence of the line struggle, the lack of a real party of the proletariat, is noticeable in the RCP-USA. Such dramatic changes in line and such huge theoretical errors should have provoked great debates; such unanimity in the midst of such an important shift can only be the reflection of an organisation, not of communist cadres but of simple reproducers of slogans without substance. Finally: the New Synthesis is the quickest way to tame rebels, to extinguish the flame of revolution.

It is urgent to take up again serious actions in the sense of seeking the unity of M.L.M. around principles, this on a national and international level; and to demand from the

follower organisations of the New Synthesis their own (not Avakian) pronouncements on matters that yesterday were of principle and today, without any self-criticism, they have thrown them into the dustbin. It is urgent to raise the banners of the proletariat, to unmask the opportunists and revisionists, and to expel from our ranks those who have made themselves irremediable enemies of the proletariat and the masses, so that they do not continue to deceive the masses with a few Marxist phrases, posing as “scientists” and opposing the revolution and, in particular, the People’s Wars.

Long live Marxism Leninism Maoism, down with Avakianist revisionism!

Build Parties of the Proletariat and the New Communist International, around the principles and significance of People’s War, through the two-line struggle and in close connection with the masses!

For the construction of the New Communist International, long live the Unified Maoist International Conference!

Signature:

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