

Revolutionary Maroons

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Coming to a Class Struggle Theater Near You...

by Fred Ho

Today I will address how all the traditions of supposed mass-organizing and revolutionary strategies heretofore practiced by almost the entirety of who would be self-identified as “the left” must be transcended and replaced with both a different revolutionary vision and method as to ending industrial-patriarchal-capitalist imperialism.

All revolutionaries in the Euro-centric tradition have believed that the struggle for reforms (usually considered mass organizing) are not *ipso facto* reformist, but can be struggled for in what has been conventionally touted as via a “revolutionary way.” Simply, reformism is the reliance upon the system — whether electing different politicians, changing laws or allocations of funds and resources more favorable to the masses.

Our presumption of the importance and reason for why reforms must be fought in an anti-reformist, or revolutionary, way has been for two purposes:

1. educate the masses to the futility to the accumulation of reforms as generating any fundamental change, and thereby become educated towards revolutionary consciousness;
2. to increase real benefits and democratic spaces for organizing, to alleviate oppression in some incremental ways, and to make gains in furthering democratic rights;

The traditional left methodology of struggling for reforms “in a revolutionary way” is to rely upon the masses, to amplify their independence and initiative and not be narrowed and constrained by bourgeois traps of backroom political deals, reliance upon legislative changes and the funding benevolence of the state and corporations.

Here is the problem to this presumed “tried and true” vision and method of “mass struggle for reforms in a revolutionary way”:



No reform struggle in the U.S. has actually enhanced or increased the revolutionary movement; just the opposite. Revolutionary upsurges in the past century in the U.S. have come about as a qualitative and significant BREAK FROM the futility of relying upon the system. These revolutionary upsurges came about because of the recognition of the following problems of not demarcating from the mass reform struggles:

1. If the ruling class can concede it, then it can be co-opted.
2. The benefits gained often defuse, mislead and dupe the masses and foster MORE belief in the system, not its opposite. Consequently, the little gains or the “better-than-none” attitude becomes primary as **concessionary (or pressure) politics**, and as a politics of organizing around issues rather than principles.
3. From history, we see that while certain individuals are un-co-optable, entire organizations and movements have been destroyed or derailed by the TROJAN HORSE of mass reform struggle. Beware of the state and corporate foundations bringing concessions: they not only come with strings-attached, they more dangerously contain the enemy’s ethos and ensure greater captivity by the Matrix.
4. The accumulation of reforms doesn’t lead to self-sufficiency or the capability of revolutionaries or the masses to run society, and run it in a way qualitative better and different than the institutional practices of the system we seek to overthrow, to end and replace with a qualitatively different and better one.

Something Lenin asserted, but most have ignored, is that revolutionary consciousness, doesn’t come from within the working class or mass struggles, but from the outside. Revolutionary consciousness had to be pre-figured on the outside first, and then according to Lenin’s view, and where I take exception with him, FUSED within the working class and popular movements. That FUSION principle, unfortunately, didn’t materialize any mass independence and initiative, but brought the revolutionaries into the quagmire of compromises, concessions and corruption. In this type of political schooling, it is no wonder that after the seizure of state power (which has been the traditional criteria for revolutionary success), that the new ruling class, ostensibly proletarian, assumes and reproduces many of the same features of the old society with hierarchy, bureaucracy, corruption, concentration of power, masculism, massification and alienation.

Getting more city buses and mass transit, increasing recycling, reducing carbon emissions and new clean energy production, more taxes on the rich — all such concessions and alleged improvements — do not, never have and never will, teach the masses how to run a society, to transcend their mental bondage to the industrial capitalist matrix, to be self-organized in perpetually creative non-institutional forms, and with a vision that remakes humanity and society devoid of money, materialistic over-consumption and accumulation, and industrialism.

More of these alleged improvements only further the colonization and dependency of the masses, and its supposedly revolutionary leaders, into the Matrix. Revolutionaries today, and most of you are culpable, rely upon cell phones, computers, making a career,

bourgeois marriage and the nuclear family, and evince tremendous amounts of alienation, which makes you incapable of truly being revolutionary because you actually cannot envision, much less make any sort of personal break from the capitalist ontology. It is only your ideas, not your behavior, that is different from your capitalist counterparts, but not qualitatively, only in simple quantifications: for example, more wages and better jobs for the proletariat, but not the elimination of the monetization of value or the elimination of wage labor and industrial production all together.

All reforms and concessions that are possible under capitalism and bourgeois rule now, more than in the past, require much higher levels and intensified mass struggles because the ruling class, under the rubric of “austerity” is less willing to concede anything because the miniscule or non-existent presence of independent revolutionary forces.

The U.S. Ruling Class conceded to the mainstream reformist Civil Rights leaders because the revolutionary Black Liberation Movement was ascending and thereby transcending and eclipsing and ultimately rejecting the struggle of African American inclusion into U.S. society.

Here are the things that the U.S. ruling class cannot concede and for which require a revolutionary struggle of intense ferocity and threat:

1. The sanctity of its 50 states. I Wor Kuen in its early 1970s 12 point program, in points 11 and 12 respectively, called for “an end to the geographic boundaries of Amerika” and for “a socialist society.” Note: it didn’t say a “socialist U.S.A.”!
2. The end of capital starting with the end of money (or more precisely, the monetization of value). What? No money? How can the world turn without money?
3. The replacement of money as the principal “means of exchange and circulation” by the primacy of intrinsic, not exchange- or even use-value: intrinsic value being expressed as eco-socialism (rather than the production of use or exchange values, it is the production of flourishing eco-systems for their own sake). In other words, the production of values that can never be quantified, such as love, creativity, wisdom, freedom, blue whales, honeybees, and most everything in nature that is not seen either as a commodity or disposable.
4. The elimination of industrialism, the elimination of plastics and petroleum. Without the latter, industrial society would end. Without the former, there is no need for money, no need for jobs, no need for classes, and everything we understand about modern existence would cease.

5. Finally, the most difficult concept for everyone to understand because our consciousness and cellular existence has been programmed to reject this: the elimination of gender, the re-commoning of human existence without any divisions, borders or hierarchy. A fundamental precursor and precondition for the elimination of gender as a social differential, otherwise known as patriarchy, is the restoration of the commons, or in other words, local production for local needs. Patriarchy, I contend, was the majority of human existence, before there even existed History, it was overthrown by the power of surplus and classes, which established world patriarchy; and it will be restored when classes and the production of surplus ends. Not the redistribution of surplus that would be fairer and more equitable as Manifest Destiny Marxists asserts, but the actual elimination of all surplus that has its own imperatives to engender bureaucracy, consumerism, acquisitiveness, and social hierarchy.

Manifest these Impossibles Now (ie., impossibles to the capitalist system and Matrix)! THAT is the essence of pre-figuration: at the cellular level, which means in each one of us personally and individually, making these revolutionary visions our primary focus and producing them in our theory and practice, even minimally in their beginning embryonic development.

Pre-figuration sets the pre-conditions for the masses, the mass struggles and movements, to be truly transcendent, in which the principles for our struggles, rather than the issues, are principal! Principles are principal! Tomorrow is Now!

It was Dr. Joel Kovel, the great eco-socialist and SSS member, who taught me that in essence, the capitalist mode of production is really a mode of existence. I prefer now to use the term The Matrix: a complete ontological, epistemological and teleological colonization. Meaning, a matrix of our existence, our consciousness and mentality, and our method of struggle that is captured within this colonization of manifest destiny *a priori* assumptions about the inevitability of whiteness and the USA, industrialism, gender and western scientific modernism.

Here is where I break from the matrix of Manifest Destiny Marxism, or the obsolete and toxic Left that has plagued everything we've been a part of for more than a century, and to which the greatest opponents have been the indigenous peoples who refused to be conquered and made into Americans, who refused to have the allegedly advanced Western Science and Industrial Technology supplant their mode of existence, which was the original communism in North America, and who have continually rejected the identities of gender and individualism that the whites imposed:

(1) Revolutionary organizing must be decentralized, creative, self-sufficient, perpetually guerrilla and experimental; and we must reject Democratic Centralism as the same militarized, hierarchical, White Boy Euro-centric false democracy of decision-making. The American working class has never shown a consistent and unremitting resistance to capital, not in the same tenacity as the Native peoples centuries-long wars against the U.S.A., from its expansionist land theft to the very theft of their spirituality and soul.

Centralism is the feature of massified, hierarchical, industrial society. It is toxic.

Democracy is the bullshit of bullshitting: that intellectual discourse, and access and inclusion to that, is the prerequisite for freedom, and not to understand what Malcolm X so incisively stated, that Democracy is Disguised Hypocrisy. The Euro-centric ideal of democracy is the perfect forum that allows the adept deception of bullshitters and so-called theorists, such as pedantic intellectuals, politicians, lawyers and technocrats, to reign supreme; and not the primacy of the soul, of practice and productive labor to be decisive. Everyone under D.C. becomes an operative, an order-following automaton incapable of epiphany, imagination and creative initiative.

In a decentralized mode, a movement can much more likely have the possibility of being ECO-CENTRIC and not EGO-centric. There are no gurus, heavy theorists, people who are so supremely egotistical that they will be in power for decades and entire lifetimes, and thereby can only promote themselves as their main pedagogy, instead of liberating the creative leadership potential of uniqueness and the unusual.

(2) Life is cultural and biological diversity. The lack of cultural and biological diversity, in other words homogeneity and uniformity, is Death. Only the so-called civilized human mind and labor can produce perfect spheres, straight lines, right angles and squares, all of which do not exist in nature. Perfection, as a modernist assertion and goal, IS the problem. It produces all the toxic features of our movement, such as an authoritarian vanguard, of the penultimate and perfect political party, or the quintessential political line as the sole truth.

The bourgeois, Euro-centric Scientific Absolutism and Authority is a fixation with Edict (aka as “official truths”). Rather, what should be our guiding principle is the Vulcan IDIC (Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations). The ego-centric imperative of such a mistaken conception of truth, science and universality must be replaced by an **eco-**centric imperative that embraces discipline with creativity, precision with the poetic, materialism with the meditative, and imperatives with the improvisational.

(3) Cadrification is the Key to everything, to our successes or failures. Any and all revolutionary movement require cadre. But the ideal-type of cadre of our past was modeled after a soldier, more of a follower and part of a group-think than a creative experimentalist who can, as we “jazz” musicians would say, play and interpret the score and ad lib, doing both with skill, individuality and daring.

The Left has clung to the incorrect view that revolutionary cadre will spontaneously emerge from mass movements and struggles. Or perhaps they would be mentored by more experienced revolutionaries. What we presently see is that neither is happening.

We as revolutionaries are soul-changers. We must struggle with each and every potential revolutionary, that is someone who consciously is committed to devoting their life, front and center, to building a revolutionary movement, to change not only their ideology, but their very ontology, their soul, to becoming creative, capable, committed

and clear revolutionaries. This requires we as revolutionary teachers and leaders to BOOT CAMP new people, to get into their souls and to consistently develop them, just as we would be practicing a musical instrument. Mastering all that needs to be mastered so that these neophytes and emerging revolutionaries become master artists themselves: able to play in an ensemble and to venture forth as soloists and improvisers.

For the last 30 years, as the revolutionary upsurges have been crushed, co-opted and imploded, a Mass Activist-ization of NGO-ism has become dominant and hegemonic, infecting large sections of those that consider themselves still-to-be-revolutionary. What are the symptoms? Today's mass activism incorrectly and ineffectively polarizes consensus-building with the necessary importance to disciplined theoretical work, and creative pre-figurative base-building strategies; today's mass activists organize around issues and incremental improvements by professional paid staff who don't elevate the independence and initiative of the oppressed; today's mass organizing continues to reflect all-or-majority white business-as-usual leadership and membership instead of maroon whites who join majority oppressed nationality forms; today's mass activism seeks acceptability to mainstream media and establishment entities instead of self-sufficient and self-reliant independent base-building; and so on.

Is there anything from our past movements, our so-called Left tradition, that isn't obsolete or toxic? Did we do things "better" in the upsurges and can we learn to revive such?

I would say that there is nothing of value to take forward, other than clearly knowing and breaking with that toxicity! We don't need the militaristic conceptions of discipline, the masculinist leadership models, the privileging of intellectuals and theorists, the philistinism of today's organizers who fail to study and develop creative theory, the passé and ineffective formulations of the past, such as "whites should organize other whites" (what that effectively does is continue to reproduce whiteness!); or the formulation of anti-racist/anti-imperialist/anti-sexist/anti-capitalist catchalls that list what we are against, but not daringly put forward what we are for? What do you replace patriarchy with? What do you replace racism with? What do you replace the American Empire with? Why the unwillingness to state the opposites as the replacements, such as the opposite of patriarchy is matriarchy; the opposite of racism is poly-cultural marooning; the opposite of the American Empire, or imperialism, is the return of the U.S. stolen lands to the indigenous peoples and building hybrid maroon societies; and the end of capitalism isn't an industrial socialism but the restoration of the matriarchal commons, in which local production for local needs/use is the sole imperative!

Let's look at some of the major quote-unquote issues of mass struggle today and see the reformist limitations and what could be revolutionary imaginative possibilities:

1. Immigration: instead of citizenship and documentation, how about the end to all borders and return of the lands to the indigenous peoples?

2. Environmental: instead of more state regulation and alternative energy production for unlimited consumption, how about the end to all fossil-fuels (including in petroleum-based production for plastics) and all industrial production?
3. Instead of Gay Marriage, how about the abolition of marriage all together?
4. Instead of Abortion and Women's Rights, how about the end of the nuclear family, the abolition of a gender division of labor and the common-ing of childrearing.
5. Instead of Economic Justice, how about the end to wage-labor, global capital accumulation and commodity production entirely?

Mass organizing and mass struggle must not REPRODUCE the massified imperatives of industrial capitalism, the very compromises and Trojan Horses of reformism, by the requirement of pre-figurative revolutionary organizing and production. I am not counter-posing Mass Struggle and Pre-figuration, only stating what now should be obvious: that Mass Struggle reproduces all of the degradation and compromises of massified-anything; and that pre-figuration is the essential requirement for de-massification and de-toxification of the industrial-capitalist-patriarchal Matrix that has colonized every one of us down to the cellular level.

I look forward to a discussion. Thank you.

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