

**Review Symposium: Mike Cole *Marxism and Educational Theory: Origins and issues* (2008, London: Routledge)**

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**First Review: Reviewed by Julia Hall**

In this book, Mike Cole presents an overview of contemporary theories in education, and he critiques them each from a Marxist perspective. He also provides origins for these theories. The theories under scrutiny are those which are currently popular in the academy, and include poststructuralism, postmodernism, transmodernism, and critical race theory. While Cole finds many thought provoking concepts raised in all of these theoretical vantage points, he contends each ultimately fails to link notions of power to larger structural conditions. He also argues none of these theories provide a cogent plan for change. Herein is the power and importance of Marxism, purports Cole, as it involves a structural analysis and a plan for social transformation.

The book begins with the author's personal and political reflections on his involvement in education over the course of his life. In doing this, Cole is able to lodge his views on political theory and global politics on firm ground. Cole explores the development of British/Western neo-liberal agendas and policies through the last several decades, and the impact this has had on his life as a student, manual worker, teacher, and professor in higher education. Due to his involvement in higher education, Cole talks about how he has had the opportunity to study the ongoing developments in educational theory, including witnessing the present situation in which Marxism is significantly under attack. It is through all these experiences and concerns that Cole comes to write this book. His stated objective for this volume is to open discussion on how current theories are/are not suited to deliver substantial social change.

The text is divided into two parts: origins and issues. In the first part of the book, Cole examines the origins of socialism and Marxist theory and then investigates the impact of Marxist theory on education. In this section, utopian socialisms and their precursors are explored, with considerable attention paid to major contributors of utopian socialist thinking, such as Henri de Saint-Simon, Charles Fourier, and Robert Owen. Their visions for a centralized, organized society focused on the common good and their views on education are considered. Critiques of utopian socialism are also presented by Marx and Engels. For instance, Marx and Engels put forth the concept of 'scientific socialism,' in which a scientific as opposed to moral critique of capitalism is introduced. Cole also emphasizes the centrality of Marx's labor theory of value. As Cole explains, this theory establishes that workers are not paid the full value of their work, and thus unpaid labor is the source of profit for capital. Wages are the mechanism for extracting profit, and record profits come first and foremost from this form of exploitation and super-exploitation. Another conclusion of scientific socialism is that labor power is not properly considered a cost of production. Unlike the utopian thinkers, Marx and Engels advocate for the liberation of workers through revolution. The role of planning and organizing in moving towards the socialist stage of society is also part of the scientific perspective. Louis Althusser's ISA essay, *Schooling in Capitalist America* by Samuel Bowls and Herbert Gintis, and the thinking by Glenn Rikowski are mined for the deep connections they make between Marxism and education. Each of these theorists asserts that both structural conditions and ideological state apparatus, such as schools, function to perpetuate the needs of the capitalist society.

Considerable attention is then given by Cole to the impact of the work of Friedrich Nietzsche on theory development, particularly in relation to the evolution of post-structuralism and postmodernism. The scientific socialist model of exploitation and liberation is passed over in this wave of thinking in favor of power/discourse models as a way to understand the troubling imbalance of power in society. For instance, in the work of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, power is not seen as located in some central system, but is understood as dispersed everywhere. For Derrida, power/oppression lay in the sign/signifier relationship, with power inequities embedded in texts. The injustices people experience on a daily basis are seen as textually mediated. The influence of Nietzsche on postmodernists such as Jean-

Francois Lyotard and Jean Baudrillard are also delineated. Baudrillard conceived that 'reality' itself has collapsed, and therefore the binary power/oppression opposition model is no longer relevant in understanding the world. In this view, present day life is at once suffocated by a sign system that is 'imploding' any semblance of order or veracity.

The second part of the book, which is concerned with issues, presents a Marxist critique of post-structuralism, postmodernism, trans-modernism, and critical race theory. Implications for education are also provided. The work of leading education-based, post-structuralist and postmodern thinkers is explored, including writings by Elizabeth Atkinson, Patti Lather, and Judith Baxter. These theorists say that post-structuralism and postmodernism can lead to social transformation, an assertion that is called into question by Cole. For instance, Lather rejects Marxism, as she says there is no 'single story.' Atkinson likewise questions whether there can be a single truth and therefore singular project for social change. All of these theorists, including Baxter, see Marxism as 'hierarchical and oppressive' and favor 'local struggle,' yet, according to Cole, none offer strategies for any kind of struggle and change.

Next, trans-modernism is critiqued, for instance, for its belief in the benefits of working towards a 'co-realization of solidarity' between social classes. As Cole argues, this could never happen as the oppressor has no vested interest in becoming liberated. By definition, Marxist readings of class relationships are oppositional, as the very nature of capitalism relies on capital having parasitic and exploitative control over the worker. The abolition of classes, therefore, as Cole reminds, can only arise out of struggle within the working class itself. Cole additionally answers the criticism among trans-modernism theorists that Marxism ignores the needs of those in the Southern hemisphere. Cole points out that much of the current Marxist scholarship is in fact directly focused on the lived realities of those in the South, including on issues such as violence, genocide, and debt-burdens. In yet another theoretical critique, critical race theory is also questioned by Cole. By insisting on viewing race as central above all else when it comes to identity construction and unequal power relations, Cole argues it disconnects race from the historical-structural conditions in which capital has created racialized categories in the first place. By using a case study of contemporary Britain, Cole maintains the ruling class continues to exploit these

'groups' through the power they have over the worker. Cole advocates for the emancipation of the entire working class -- across lines of race, gender, and so forth.

'Globalization' is explored by Cole as a word that is misused and overused by politicians, journalists, and at times, workers on the shop floor. The term is employed often to suggest a natural, inevitable, and even benign world order. Cole asserts globalization has been positioned as 'a fact of life,' with corporations being 'forced' to compete in this economy. In this paradigm, if companies want to survive and provide jobs at all, they must partake in consolidation, and yield to the multinational corporate structure. In this model, it is up to workers to accept the 'inevitable' direction of global capital. The worker must adapt by becoming 'flexible' in terms working conditions, wages, length of time spent at any given job, and the overall diminished role of the public sector. Cole interrogates this entire premise, by first arguing that globalization is nothing new. The state of global capital today, contends Cole, is a result of a cumulative process, and is the outcome of neo-liberal market and trade policies. As Cole reminds, the global market has been characterized by several features during its development, including the liberation of free enterprise from social and environmental regulations, the gutting of public expenditures, and the privatization of public spaces and services. In 1994, the ideology of neo-liberal market rule became more hyper-defined with the signing of the General Agreement on Trade in Services at the World Trade Organization. The goal of this agreement was to eliminate any government restrictions or regulations on service delivery that acts as a 'barrier to trade.' The policies of rampant neo-liberalism continue in their expansion.

As Cole elaborates, the liberalization of markets and trade laws has had wide-spread, negative impact on the environment. The wholesale exploitation of nature, which is seen as available for plunder by global capital, has resulted in several outcomes according to Cole, including the increased availability of unhealthy food, the proliferation of genetic modification, the mass destruction of natural resources, and the now observable effects of climate change. Cole explains that human produced carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases have been emitted so profusely into the atmosphere, especially over the last few decades in which market and trade rules have been most acutely liberated, that they have created an insulating layer of warmth around the earth. The scientifically documented effects of global warming include the

melting of glaciers and polar icecaps, which is resulting in a scarcity of fresh drinking water. This melting is also impacting the rise of sea levels, which will increasingly contribute to the flooding of low lying coastal areas. Another outcome of global warming is more storms that are growing bigger and more powerful. As the heated atmosphere absorbs increased amounts of moisture from soil, this is triggering draught, food scarcity, and species extinction. The effects of global warming are being felt, at first, most perniciously by those who are the poorest. This is especially being experienced right now by those in the Southern Hemisphere.

Towards the end of the book, Cole spends considerable time debunking standard objections to Marxism that are heard by detractors among the broad population. Solid responses are provided for all of these arguments. For example, in critiquing Marxism, it is often asserted that 'those who work the hardest should receive more rewards.' Cole presents the counterargument that in a world socialist system, everything is shared, so everyone would benefit from working hard, and no one would go without the things they need. It is also often argued that 'there will always be followers and leaders in any group.' Cole responds to this statement with the contention that under a socialist system, there will be more of a chance for all to take roles with responsibility, for under capitalism, those who are 'followers' and mostly those who are marginalized. The argument that 'socialism means an overall reduced standard of life' is counter-pointed with the explanation that members of the ruling class are the only ones who will experience diminishment, while everyone else will undergo an increased standard of life. 'Some people just do not want to work,' is another comment often heard. Cole argues laziness is a product of socialization within the Capitalist system, and in this system, as surplus value is extracted from the labor of workers and is harnessed to create profits for capital, this can result in troubled motivation among workers. In a socialist system, argues Cole, everything that is produced will go to the benefit of people, so there will be reasons to work. Another typical critique that abounds is that 'socialism will lead to a gray and lifeless world.' Cole explains this as a stereotype based on Stalinism, and its distorted version of Marxism. Cole maintains life under a world socialist system would be 'exciting, challenging, and globally diverse,' as various nations shape local versions of socialism, all the while striving towards a common goal. In response to the argument that a world revolution will involve violence and bloodshed, Cole says it is the

capitalist system that has resulted in massive poverty, terror, destruction, and death. Numerous other skepticisms are also addressed.

According to Cole, there are many who provide obstacles in a move towards emancipation from the oppressive conditions of global capitalism. These combatants include capitalists and their politicians who benefit from the current system; and left-leaning colleagues in the academy, who promote obtuse, directionless theories about power and inequality. As Cole purports, as long as academicians are embroiled in territorial battles and language debates, they assist in de-legitimizing Marxist views. Cole points out how damaging this is for many who are struggling at this very moment to envision collectively the possibilities of a world socialism system. Such possibilities, according to Cole, include providing access for all to quality housing, childcare, health care, education, and food supplies; and instituting decisive and lasting environmental initiatives.

In this important and informative book, dense theories are rendered understandable, making it highly accessible to a wide readership. In many ways, this text does so much – from couching theories historically to debunking often heard arguments against Marxism. As mentioned, the chapter on environmental destruction strongly connects the politics of neo-liberalism to the chilling reshaping of the natural world. This volume will be extremely useful to graduate and undergraduate students in a variety of disciplines, and will likely be considered a seminal text in fields such as education, sociology, anthropology, and political science. This book features a forward by Peter McLaren and highly detailed footnotes, which provide other dimensions to the ideas presented. It is worth noting an entire separate volume edited by Cole (Cole, M. (ed.) (2006) considers more specifically gender, 'race', sexuality, disability/exceptionality; and social class as related to education from Marxist and other left socialist perspectives.

## Reference

Cole, M. (ed) (2006) *Education, Equality and Human Rights: issues of gender, 'race', sexuality, disability and social class*, **2nd Edition**, London and New York: Routledge

## **Second Review: Reviewed by Kelvin McQueen**

**Imperialism, ambiguity and dialectics: A review of Mike Cole (2008) *The New Imperialism: Postmodern, transmodern and Marxist perspectives*. In *Marxism and Educational Theory: Origins and issues*, London: Routledge.**

### **Abstract**

*Mike Cole's new book *Marxism and Educational Theory: Origins and issues* (2008, London: Routledge) impressively explores in one particular chapter theories and issues of imperialism and their relationship to ideology and education. This review suggests that such a compendium-style treatment may increase ambiguity. This may be at the expense of presenting a simple dialectical analysis immediately useful for Marxist educators wishing to take up Cole's five prescriptions for making students critically aware of imperialism.*

The amount of theoretical terrain that Mike Cole traverses in his new book is breathtaking: Marxism, socialism, poststructuralism, postmodernism, transmodernism, globalisation, neo-liberalism, environmentalism, imperialism, racism. In the face of this I shall restrict my review to one chapter: 'The New Imperialism: Postmodern, transmodern and Marxist perspectives'. It deals with what Cole sees as the most pressing issue for Marxist educators: to enable students to understand how imperialism may lead to the destruction of the world. I shall further restrict most of my comments to the first part of the chapter where Cole explores theories and issues of imperialism.

The first part of the chapter progresses from a Leninist critique of the 'postmodern fantasy' of benign imperialism to an examination of the USA's 'New Imperial Project' and a rejection of the ideology of globalisation. The chapter then turns towards a critical analysis of the transmodernist concepts of enfranchising, enantiomorphism and narcissism and then the concepts of race and racialisation get a critical workout to produce a thoughtful Marxist conceptualisation of New Imperialism. The last part of the chapter, entitled 'Imperialisms and the curriculum', provides a set of five prescriptions for educators based on Cole's understanding of New Imperialism. And

this is only one of ten chapters! Cole's chapter on New Imperialism reflects both the value as well as the problems of using a compendium-style approach to explore social theories and social issues: a great deal can be covered but not all can be sufficiently explained.

Because of its breadth in tackling both theoretical debates and recent history, Mike Cole's discussion of imperialism offers up some rather unhelpful ambiguities. However, this is understandable given the diversity of theories of imperialism, not to mention the apparent diversity of imperialist schemes and practices. He rightly rejects, following Lenin, the notion that imperialism is simply a policy (p.100). This was the position put in 1916 by Karl Kautsky with his conception of 'superimperialism' or 'ultra-imperialism': that the Great Powers could formulate a policy to divide the world peacefully and to exploit subject peoples in common. But Cole (p.102), by relying on Benjamin Zephaniah's (2004) culture + finance description of imperialism proposes a definition so all-encompassing that the relationship between imperialist necessity and imperialist form, especially in terms of intention and execution, becomes ambiguous. So much so, in fact, that at one stage Europe is hinted at as being something of a 'better world power', to repeat Dorothee Bohle's (2004) phrase, because the execution of its imperial ambitions appears to be less comprehensive or ruthless than that of the USA's.

Keeping these two moments – necessity and form – distinct is important for educators if they are to abide by Lenin's (1983, p.84) prescription that our teaching 'embrace all the concatenations of a phenomenon in its full development'. From this basis we can assess whether the apparent differences amongst the Great Powers' current intentions and their execution are fundamental to the operation of 'their' 'imperialisms' or are only a passing phase on the road to a convergence on barbarism. Ascertaining the inner connection of the various manifestations of imperial power is the most crucial task for Marxist educators if they wish to produce a simple analysis to act as a starting point for students' own explorations.

It is important to remember that imperialism has arisen in all its current centres – USA, EU, Japan – on the same basis: the monopoly stage of capitalism where at a domestic level finance capital and industrial capital have merged with financial interests dominating the state, and globally where there is a struggle amongst these



Great Powers to redivide the world (Lenin 1983, p.84). A systematised understanding of the way that redivision is taking place is of most interest to Marxist educators if they are to pass that understanding on in a simplified, but not simplistic, form. This calls for an evaluation of the imminent forms existing within Lenin's characterisation of imperialism. In other words, are the fundamentals of Lenin's analysis still relevant today? And further to this, which is the dominant form of imperialism today: Kautsky's consensus or Lenin's antagonism?

While Lenin in his *Imperialism, the Highest stage of Capitalism*, first published in 1917, casts considerable doubt on Kautsky's proposed inter-imperialist 'policy' of consensus being likely or desirable, Kautsky's scheme was not pure fantasy. The US had achieved in 1899 a limited Great Power agreement to an open-door policy with China, while the Treaty of Fez in 1911 saw a peaceful, if limited, redivision of colonies. At an economic level Kautsky also argued, according to Lenin (1983, p.79), 'that raw materials "could be" obtained in the open market without a "costly and dangerous" colonial policy; and that the supply of raw materials "could be" increased enormously by "simply" improving conditions in agriculture generally.' That these conditions have come to pass show that the economic fundamentals of imperialism described by Lenin did not preclude at a later date the development of a Kautskyite inter-imperialist 'policy'. This present-day policy is managed by a cartel of organisations identified by Christopher Rude (2004) as the G-10 central banks, the G-7 ministries of finance, and inter-imperialist bodies such as the IMF, World Bank, UN, WTO and NATO. Cole (p.82) notes that the IMF and World Bank are 'entirely controlled by the creditor nations [and] exist to police the poor world's debt on their behalf'.

Flowing from this for non-US economies, or at least for their elites, joining in a consensual 'kind of voluntary imperialism' may be the answer to a number of their domestic problems. But Cole rejects this understanding of imperialism (p.99). Yet the me-tooism of 'Poodle' Blair and 'Deputy-Dawg' Howard (duly noted by Cole: pp.99&102 note) (and now 'Saluting' Rudd) should alert us to their attempts to construct imperialist endeavours in concert with the US. They wish to police and plunder the world together, yet Cole expresses some doubts about this understanding of imperialism (p.100). Even so, the multiplicity of forums now provided for

imperialist soirees, including the WEF (where European participants outnumber American), APEC, G-8 summits, even the UN Security Council, is where these joint endeavours are developed. In this context, Ellen Meiksins Wood's (2003, p.168) suggestion that 'states have become more, not less, involved in organizing economic circuits' can be extrapolated to the level of inter-imperialist 'policy' construction to explain the 'voluntary imperialism' often on display.

In the present less-antagonistic climate of Great Power international relations, calls for an inter-imperialist policy of co-plunder of the developing world are realistic. Indeed, the points Cole draws from the *Project for the New American Century* and the *National Security Strategy of the USA* seem to support the idea that architects of imperialism are searching for a mutually agreeable inter-imperialist policy that includes Europe, even if in a subordinate position, and that strengthens America's 'ties to our democratic allies' (p.101).

Yet Cole's intuitive cataloguing of apparent inconsistencies in imperialist activity between chafing at the US muzzle on the one hand and joining its adventures on the other should alert us to the dialectical nature of imperialism and to the therefore necessarily ambivalent responses by imperialists. On the one hand this ambivalence reflects the strength of domestic capitalist and popular pressures. Educators need to understand the power of national interests in shaping ruling-class responses to imperialism. But they also need to understand that the national interests that were so ominously antagonistic before World War I are currently less so, mainly because the aggressive nature of territorial acquisition characterising late colonialism is less prevalent in this era of more pervasive finance imperialism. One of the great achievements of Lenin in *Imperialism* was to use data mainly drawn from a colonial context to develop his theory of finance-led imperialism. Today this 'higher' type of imperialism is slowly degenerating into a new round of colonialism, of which the Iraq invasion is a key example. For the current national interests of the Great Powers to threaten a collision similar to 1914 would probably need something like the same trigger: that the dominant players refuse to redivide their spoils. This situation is certainly developing in international relations, but there is still a way to go before the collapse of the inter-imperialist 'policy' of cooperative policing and plundering.

Underscoring as educators the complexities of imperialism and of the current inter-imperialist struggle should not blind us to the current reality of a cabal of Great Powers plundering subordinate economies. In light of this, Cole's positioning of Europe as subordinate to the USA in this cabal is a strange splitting of hairs: 'In the real world, it is the US, of course, which is the key player in the New Imperialism, not the European Union' (p.100). While true enough in itself, nevertheless, from my perspective in an Australia located on the contested margins of the Great Powers' spheres of influence, it makes little difference whether I'm mugged by an American- or a European- or even a Japanese-based imperialism, especially since all spring from the same intention and all are ultimately no less ruthless in their execution. As Bohle (2004, p.301) states with regard to the EU, 'instead of exporting welfare capitalism and a security order based on multilateralism and human rights, EU expansion has entailed the re-emergence of economic center-periphery relations within the new Europe. Moreover, Western European states bear a heavy dose of responsibility for the violent break-up of Yugoslavia.' (For an elaboration of the US-EU convergence in Yugoslavia, see Parenti 2000.) This is hardly reassurance of the superior civilising capacity of non-US imperialism. Cole doesn't dwell too long on this convergence of intentions between the Great Powers, his interest is more to expose the role of the US. Yet it is precisely the similarity in intention of the imperialist players, rather than the current (slight) difference in execution, that needs to be teased out and examined by Marxist educators if we are to understand the real motion of actually existing imperialism.

In terms of supposed subordination of all other Great Powers to the US, we should not be fooled by the fact that Europe, for example, seeks to imitate the US socio-economic model. This model is being adopted in the EU to compete against the US, not to become absorbed by it (Grahl 2004, pp.292-293). In fact, this imitation of a more heartless regime of accumulation reveals that US-European competition is so intense as to be heedless of popular opprobrium. Cole correctly suggests that ultimately the greatest threat to civilised existence is inter-imperialist rivalry rather than inter-imperialist cooperation.

However, there are also dialectical subtleties that complicate this undiluted Leninist interpretation. For those on the imperial margins Great Power cooperation

(Afghanistan) can be just as threatening as Great Power rivalry (Iraq). On the other hand, for some oppressed peoples heightened inter-imperialist conflict can provide opportunities for liberation struggles. Nevertheless, to return to Lenin's insight, while a particular Great Power may dominate world affairs at any one time and give the appearance of seeking a consensual 'policy' approach with lesser Powers in train, this should not detract from an understanding of the overall destructive nature of the inter-imperialist struggle: 'politically, imperialism is, in general, a striving towards violence and reaction' (Lenin 1983, p.86). It is in the nature of imperialism for at least two to tango and when those behemoths cavort, either consensually or antagonistically, then life on the margins can become especially dangerous.

Indeed, Lenin goes so far as to assert that the economic basis for imperialism – the domination of monopoly capitalism led by finance capital – is actually precipitated by heightened global competition: 'It is beyond doubt, therefore, that capitalism's transition to the stage of monopoly capitalism, to finance capital, is connected with the intensification of the struggle for the partitioning of the world' (Lenin 1983, p.74). Lenin refused to apportion more blame or greater intent to one Great Power over another, 'for it is not a fight between free trade and protection and colonial dependence, but between two rival imperialisms, two monopolies, two groups of finance capital' (Lenin 1983, p.107). Today it's three rival groups – the EU-bloc, the Japan-bloc and the US-bloc – notwithstanding their on-again off-again inter-imperialist pacts.

Therefore, Cole's warning of the 'very real threat posed by the US to the very existence of the world' (p.101) is rather one-sided. It ignores the fact that this destruction will arise from inter-imperialist struggle between the US, the EU and Japan, that is, between the respective controllers of 23, 14 and 11 per cent of world GDP. That great bogey-man of the present, China, controls 4 per cent. However, in terms of immediate aggression, Cole is more correct when he notes Cooper suggesting that 'they all have a vested interest in collectively policing the world' (p.100). That is the current policy goal of the Great Powers: to share this policing (and plundering) equally with the US. While Cole notes that the US wants Europe 'to be kept subordinate to, and dependent on, US power', nevertheless he also notes that Europe is to be part of a NATO 'reshaped as a global interventionist force under US

leadership' (p.102). Subordinate and dependent, but globally active and interventionist: these are the subtleties and even contradictions that educators need to highlight for a full understanding of the nature of present-day imperialism.

Ultimately, it seems that Cole wants his definition of imperialism to be a little ambiguous. For Cole, following Zephaniah (2004), apparently imperial ambitions can be achieved by 'sending in the troops in the short-term or, indeed, the longer term, or it can be done without armies' but by 'men in suits' (p.102). As a summary of types of imperialist action, Cole's description leaves the field pretty open, which is precisely the case in reality. However, it is probably useful for educators to rank these tactics in some order of importance. The point is that there is a current tendency for finance capital to dominate Great Power activities and thus their relationships take on the appearance of a consensual 'open-door' type policy. But this consensus occasional breaks down because financial imperialism operated by men in suits is not the only form that imperialism can take in this day and age nor can all disputes over access to raw materials and markets be resolved by mutual 'open-door' plunder of subordinate economies.

Similarly, that the proponents of imperialism examined by Cole (pp.98-103) appear to be searching for a modus vivendi to resolve inter-imperialist conflict should not fool us. That this resolution leans strongly towards the Great Powers acting in concert or in alliances, either with or without the US in the lead seat, should not fool us either.

Beneath the surface appearance this is the stuff of capitalist power politics: compromise until the time to strike. A recent flurry of books by authors Leo Panitch and Colin Leys (2004), David Harvey (2005), Naomi Klein (2007) and Steven Hiatt (2007) has gone considerably further than earlier attempts in connecting historical events to develop interpretive patterns that reveal the systematic ruthlessness and largely unacknowledged human cost of the 'policy' of inter-imperialist cooperation. I believe that these authors' analyses are even able to be set within Lenin's parameters without too much symbolic violence. As well, Noam Chomsky, Chalmers Johnson, Joseph Stiglitz, Amy Goodman and many others have provided useful details. That Cole gives a reference to only one of these named authors simply tells us that he has come to an understanding of imperialism by a different route.

While Cole doesn't explore the theory of imperialism any further than the points raised above nevertheless in the process he raises some very important issues, but without resolving them. He moves too quickly to safer ground, which in this instance appears to be his very useful discussion of racism and racialisation (which includes further discussion in his endnotes). If we as Marxist educators propose that imperialism is the main threat to civilisation as Cole does, then our analysis, or at least some crucial part of it, needs to be hammered out to the end. A Cook's tour of some aspects of imperialism is not in the best interests of activists who need to cut through the complexities and ambiguities of imperialist activity: the oscillations from inter-imperialist struggle to inter-imperialist 'policy', from antagonism to consensus and back again, and especially the lag between intention and execution generated by uneven development. That is, Marxist educators need to express clearly that underneath the differences all the Great Powers are wearing the same colours. Marx best expressed the nature of this commonality in intention: Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets! And the particular regime of accumulation known as imperialism currently proposes a global system of oppression that will ultimately lead to a global war. Cole knows all this but only undertakes his task in a limited and ambiguous way. And ambiguity is not a useful substitute for dialectics.

This gives some pause to the way Cole uses the concepts of 'enfrauding' and 'enantiomorphism' – two rather cumbersome neologisms that probably won't have the rate of uptake in the academy of a term like 'postmodernism'. Enfrauding appears to refer to the powerful, in this case imperialists, misrepresenting (p.104) or veiling (p.103) their intentions. Enantiomorphism describes the act of claiming to be doing one thing when actually doing the opposite. In other words, both are forms of hypocrisy. The situation in Iraq is provided as the example for both in terms of firstly not mentioning the amount of 'slaughter' needed to spread democracy and free markets (p.104), while an invasion aimed at ending torture and establishing democracy has in reality done the opposite. That the fine line differentiating enfrauding from enantiomorphism becomes rather blurred under Cole's treatment tends to make these concepts less useful, or 'convincing' to use Coles' term (p.104), than ones like coercion, consent, legitimation and hegemony based on a Marxist theory of ideology. Nevertheless, the processes alluded to by the expressions 'enfrauding' and 'enantiomorphism' are probably worth some exploration as

examples of rhetorical devices used by the powerful, which is precisely Cole's understanding (p.104).

Mike Cole provides a useful discussion of race, racism and racialisation to round out his chapter on New Imperialism. He explores new ground by directly connecting an ideological form – racism/racialisation – with a conception of imperialism based on Lenin's understanding. Lenin, while expressing sympathy for the plight of colonised peoples, did not examine the relationship between imperial ideology (jingoism, racism, etc.) and imperialist practice: 'I shall not be able to deal with the non-economic aspects of the question, however much they deserve to be dealt with' (Lenin 1983, p.16). While Lenin was not dismissive of the role that such ideology could play, his slight treatment of the imperialist ideology of his own era could perhaps provide a measure of how much motive force we should ascribe to the process of racialisation as a causal factor in imperial ambitions today. In this light, Cole's insistence that his consideration of the imperialism-racialisation relationship is a Marxist one means that this extremely interesting discussion needs closer examination than I can give it here.

In total, Cole's exploration of 'New Imperialism' is worthwhile in setting the scope of the project that needs to be undertaken by Marxist educators. His five prescriptions at the end of the chapter for carrying through this project are commendable:

- 'a thorough and critical analysis of theories of imperialism';
- a case study of 'the way in which British imperialism was taught in the past and why';
- students being 'given the critical...skills to deconstruct...imperialism' and racism;
- students being given a 'critical awareness of how British imperialism relates to and impacts on racism and racialisation, both historically and in the present,' framed in terms of the concepts nationalism, xenophobia, xenoracism, xenoracialisation;
- and students being given the 'skills to evaluate the New Imperialism and the "permanent war" being waged by the US with the acquiescence of Britain' (p.110).

These prescriptions overlap, which may not be a bad thing, and at least give some guide to the skills and concepts needed to begin formulating an anti-imperialist curriculum. That there is still so much more to be said and done on these topics is no fault of Cole's compendium-style book, even if this form renders it less useful for Marxist educators as a simple analysis for immediate classroom use. Its sweeping treatment of diverse theoretical propositions and concrete circumstances means that theoretical clarity and simplicity without ambiguity are not always achieved. A starting point for an educational activity could be to find examples that fit or contest Lenin's (1983, p.84) fourfold definition of imperialism, which 'is capitalism at that stage of development

- at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established;
- in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance;
- in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun;
- in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed'.

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