

Looking Beyond Capitalism Through an Intersectionalist Lens

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Turn your despair into anger, turn your anger into knowledge, and turn your knowledge into action.

Introduction

Capitalism originated in Europe during the Middle Ages and expanded during the early modern period, driven by trade and mercantilism. It involved colonization, slavery, and exploitation of labor, leading to the rise of European economies [1, 2, 3, 4]. The Industrial Revolution further transformed production with mechanization but also brought harsh working conditions and labor exploitation, and in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, capitalism entered an imperialistic phase, seeking to dominate territories for resources and cheap labor. With the onslaught of exploitation, expropriation, and dehumanization, Marx and Engels developed a leading critique of capitalism that highlighted class struggle of the exploited proletariat against the bourgeoisie. They predicted that eventually, this class struggle will lead to a proletarian revolution and the establishment of a classless society. In order to better understand how ideologies manifest in capitalist oppression, I take on Haslanger [5] and Althusser's [6] theories that examine the role of cultural technē, ideological state apparatuses (ISA), and repressive state apparatuses (RSA) in shaping social agents and reproducing unjust and ideological practices. Practices, which are socially organized agencies, along with cultural technē, shape social relations and can become ideological formations that sustain oppression. In capitalism, practices like the division of labor and wealth distribution create unjust hierarchies, with the ruling class exploiting the working class. Althusser's ISA concept highlights how ruling ideologies are materialized, while the RSA enforces them through institutions like the government and police. When social movements challenge the status quo, the ruling class uses repression to maintain control. However, individuals can also shape ideological practices, providing opportunities for social change.

While Marxism offers valuable insights into the unjust social relations between ruling and working classes, intersectional theorists have argued that it overlooks the disadvantages faced by individuals based on other identities like race, gender, and sexuality, which intersect to create complex forms of oppression. Intersectional oppression arises

from overlapping oppressions experienced by individuals with multiple identities. Intersectionality sheds light on how ideologies and oppressive practices shape individuals and entire social formations. Material subsystems, like healthcare and education, can perpetuate ideological formations such as racism, capitalism, and patriarchy, which form the matrix of domination. Critiquing capitalism therefore requires challenging the entire matrix of domination, extending Marxist theory to incorporate other marginalized groups.

Given the critiques provided by intersectionality and Marxism, I argue that working towards an era of post-capitalism calls for a revolutionary approach to dismantle entangled systems of oppression: beginning with a paradigm shift that (i) identifies the role of ideological formations in shaping social dynamics and material systems, (ii) recognizes that the ideological formations overlap to reproduce and distribute intersectional oppression, and (iii) argues that the material systems are strongly intertwined with the ideological formations and are therefore unjust. To effectively challenge oppression, we must confront these ideologies directly. Working towards the ruptural transformation that eliminates oppressive systems happens in three waves. The first phase leading up to a revolution begins with protests and revolts, highlighting societal problems in the current structures and recruiting allies. The second wave is consciousness-raising, which educates both the privileged and the oppressed about systemic injustice. Here, individuals begin to identify the illusory nature of ideology, divide-and-rule tactics, intersectional oppression, and the harm inflicted on all individuals in the social formation. Marginalized groups, social theorists, and organic intellectuals play key roles in this process, offering first-hand experiences and theoretical frameworks to challenge oppressive systems. The final phase prior to a revolution and state breakdown is a paradigm shift. Paradigm shifts occur when trust in the old paradigm wanes, and a new, trustworthy alternative emerges. At this stage, state powers may offer symbiotic transformations, but these are insufficient as they aim to reform existing systems founded on oppressive ideologies rather than fundamentally change them.

While challenging the ideological formations that shape the dynamics of practices deconstructing the material systems that reproduce and distribute oppression through organized mobilization is a large and evolutionary task, these three waves of movement—protest, consciousness-raising, and paradigm shift—are the seeds of revolution against systems of intersectional oppression.

The birth of the capital and death by Marxism

To understand how capitalist systems are oppressive and unjust, we must first understand its history and Marxist critiques.

Capitalism emerged in Europe during the late Middle Ages and early modern period, particularly in the context of expanding trade and the rise of mercantilism. European powers colonized vast territories, expropriating the land belonging to Indigenous populations, vending human beings as property via transatlantic chattel slavery, and exploiting the labor of the Indigenous and Black people they colonized—all of which historians have cited to be pre-capitalist modes of production [1, 2, 3, 4] that aided in the formation of European economies through the nineteenth century. The Industrial Revolution marked a major transformation in economic production, characterized by the mechanization of production processes, urbanization, and the rise of factory-based industries. While it led to increased productivity and economic growth, it also brought about harsh working conditions, low wages, and exploitation of labor among the working class. Labor movements—including the formation of labor unions, strikes, and protests—soon emerged to challenge capitalist employers and advocate for workers’ rights, better working conditions, and fair wages. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, capitalism entered a phase of imperialism. Imperialist powers sought to expand their markets by dominating territories in order to access resources, cheap labor, and establish political control. In the contemporary era, globalization has further integrated economies and facilitated the flow of capital, goods, and labor across borders, leading to new forms of exploitation and inequality.

To this day, capitalism is a system in which the production of goods is privately owned with the goal of accumulation of profit, and is frequently criticized for the accumulation of wealth at the exploitation of an oppressed class. The critique of ideologies, or ideology-critique, has been a long-standing component of Marxist theory [7]. In their *Communist Manifesto*, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels subscribe to the belief that there has always historically been a struggle between classes: plebians and patricians in Ancient Rome, serfs and feudal lords in the Middle Ages, and now in contemporary society, a simplification of opposing classes into two categories, the *bourgeoisie*, or ruling class, and the *proletariat*, or working class. This establishes an explicit and somewhat violent class division between the bourgeoisie, who own the means of production, and the proletariat whose labor was vastly exploited not financially justified. Marx and Engels argue that the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is characterized by constant class struggle. While the bourgeoisie continuously aims to maximize profits and maintain power, the proletariat class seeks to improve its working conditions and ultimately overthrow the unjust capitalist system that oppresses them. Marx and Engels predicted that this class struggle would eventually lead to a revolutionary working class uprising, resulting in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a classless society in which the means of production are collectively owned and controlled by the workers.

Ideology, state apparatuses, and social agency

To understand how capitalism is structurally unjust, we must first understand some terms that frame capitalism in the context of social theory. Here I will illustrate capitalism as an ideological formation that exists materially in the social formation.

Practices are nodes of socially organized agency, in which individual agency enables us to coordinate around the production, management, disposal of resources, which can have positive or negative value. Agents interpret things through social meanings and symbols— the cul-

tural technē—which create and stabilize social relations. The networks of social relations that are comprised of practices, cultural technē, and resources that both shape and constrain social agency are *structures* [8]. The construction of class is structural for example. Class practices are what define the position of an individual: salaried employee, manager, CEO. The social relations between different occupations within the job structure also constrain what rights, rules, social norms, and responsibilities each individual has.

The cultural technē can become *ideological* when it produces and sustains oppression and serves a primary social group under the guise of promoting the interests of the whole society [9]. Haslanger [5] highlights the difference between ideology and *ideological formation*:

An ideology is a cultural technē—the web of meanings, symbols, scripts, and such—that functions to create or stabilize unjust social relations. The unjust practices, institutions, behavior, and other artifacts guided or formed by an ideology are ideological formations.

Practices are what distribute and reproduce things of value and disvalue. In a capitalist society, the existence of social stratification such as wealth and power illustrates that there is an unjust hierarchical structure—namely, the ruling class and the proletariat. These unjust practices form structures and are guided by ideology—though ideology is defined functionally. Because we as individuals are shaped and constrained by the cultural technē, practices, and structures, and practices are guided functionally by ideology, this means that ideology interpellates us as social agents and makes us fluent in social practices. In capitalism, the practices of the division of labor and unfair distribution of wealth and the social positions of the ruling class (privileged) and the working class (oppressed) creates vulnerability within the working class in which their exploitation manifests in their oppression.

Althusser has enhanced the Marxist theory of the state by discussion of the ideological state apparatus (ISA), through which, coupled

with practices, the ruling ideology exists materially. This is not to be confused with the repressive state apparatus (RSA), which in Marxist theory, includes the government, army, prisons, the police, and others. Because the ruling class holds state power, not only can they wield the RSA but are also active in the ISA [6]. Therefore, when social, political, and economic movements threaten the social order established by the dominant social class, the ruling class invokes the stabilising functions of repression: police suppression, incarceration, and military intervention. No class can hold state power for a long time without employing hegemony in the ISAs, which often makes ISAs sites for class struggle. Furthermore, although ideology interpellates us as social agents and shapes us to perform or sustain injustice, ideology is also by and for social agents, and individuals can shape ideological practices just as much as practices can constrain and enable individual agency. Ideology and practices can therefore also be sites of social change [10].

Intersectionality Critiques Marxism

While Marxism is a useful tool to understand the unjust social relations between the ruling and working classes perpetuated by ideological formations, it does not account for the disadvantages that other identities face. Individuals may belong to a certain class, but also a certain race, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, or other identifying label—constituents of what create an intersectional identity, and all of which can subject the individual to oppression based on that identity of race, or gender for example. Additionally, intersectional identities become subjects of overlapping oppressions known as intersectional oppression. In this section, I sketch out the intersectionalist critique of Marxism and the intersectional oppressions that must be considered. Like Haslanger [11], I agree that the overarching system is an intersectional social formation that has material subsystems such as healthcare, the political system, and the education system. The social formation reproduces and distributes the constituents of race, gender, class, ability, etc., and its subsystems can be racist, classist, patriarchal, ableist,

etc. In this manner, the ideological systems of racism, capitalism, patriarchy, ableism, etc. can coexist and we can make the argument for intersectional oppression. Because capitalism, like racism or patriarchy, is an ideological system (or formation) that shapes the dynamics within the social formation and its material subsystems, it cannot be deconstructed alone as Marx and Engels argue. Rather, we must challenge all existing ideological systems instead.

Marx was born to a lawyer father with the privilege of attending university to study philosophy [12]. Engels' father was the owner of a textile factory and a partner in a cotton plant in Manchester, England, with Engels having the liberty to discover a plethora of personal talents ranging from poetry to journalism [13]. Both Marx and Engels had the ability and comfort to be able to think freely about ruling class oppression, the privilege to be perceived as White men in the streets before one could perceive them as fathers of communist thought, and neither had ever experienced oppression for being Brown or Black, or in extreme poverty, or a woman, or a combination of the three. Individuals of the latter case, shaped by their own experiences, certainly had different definitions than Marx and Engels of what it meant to be a member of the working class. Though Marx and Engels were able to critique the capitalist systems that they benefited from, their privilege may have filtered their foresight as they lacked the experience of extreme suffering that some members of the proletariat faced constantly due to their race, gender, sexuality, disability, or a combination of such factors. As such, though Marxist thought is one of the hallmark criticisms of capitalism, it still does little to incorporate other forms of oppression other than exploitation by class.

Social agents situated within an ideology and ISAs certainly belong to a class, but their social position also gives them an identity, located within and shaped by social structures [14]. Furthermore, in addition to class, agents also belong a certain gender, race, and sexuality, among other labels, which gives them an *intersectional identity*. For example, being a queer, Southeast Asian, working class woman is

an intersectional identity, and while intersectionality often centralizes marginalized identities, intersectional identities such as the straight, White, affluent cisgender man also exist. The intersectional identity is also explanatory of its constituent social determinables of race, class, gender, sexuality, and other labels [15]. To be a queer, Southeast Asian, working class woman, I can also envision what obstacles or oppressions are faced by someone who identifies as queer, or Southeast Asian, or working class, or a woman. These overlapping forms of oppression are defined as *intersectional oppression*, that is, the idea that different forms of oppression belonging to various social identities intersect and therefore create new forms of oppression that are different than the oppression experienced from belonging to each constituent identity. In other words, intersectional oppression is its own form of oppression in that it cannot be broken down into its constituent parts (i.e. race and class).

Intersectionality theorists have criticized orthodox Marxism for its failure to recognize these complex social dynamics that exist beyond class oppression, namely the oppression of people of color and women [14]. According to Ashley Bohrer, “intersectionality theorists allege that Marxists reduce all social, political, cultural and economic antagonisms to class” [14], while Beverly Smith says that there are Marxists who believed that “when class oppression and racism end, definitely the oppression of women and lesbians will end [16]”. Simply assuming from an isolated axis of class injustice that an end to class oppression will result in an end to other forms of oppression pushes racial and gender injustice to be nothing more than secondary reverberations of class oppression. Creating a hierarchy of oppression further sustains the marginalization of those groups whose oppression is considered as an after effect [14]. Rather, “the major ‘isms’ ... are intimately intertwined” and cannot be separated [17], as Barbara Smith, co-founder of the Combahee River Collective, co-author of the Combahee River Collective Statement, and activist on multiple fronts, put it. For example, being a queer working class Southeast Asian woman is not an experience that can be understood from the analysis of womanhood, the analysis of

being Asian, and the analysis of queerness (though as described above the contrary is not true— from being a queer working-class Southeast Asian woman I can understand what it means to be queer, or Southeast Asian, or working class, or a woman). Not all womanhood is the same, and not all queerness is the same and unlike Marx and Engels suggest, not all working class experience is the same. Let's take the example of two working-class individuals: the nonbinary Black person and the straight, White cisgender man. Though both individuals suffer from class oppression under a capitalist system, the nonbinary Black person will encounter several situations in their life where they experience oppression of gender, race, and sexuality interweaved with oppression of class, as opposed to the straight White man who experiences the same class-induced grievances without the systemic and structural injustices of race and gender.

The necessity of intersectionality in Marxism is perfectly echoed in the words of the following excerpt from the Combahee River Collective Statement:

“We realize that the liberation of all oppressed peoples necessitates the destruction of the political-economic systems of capitalism and imperialism as well as patriarchy. We are socialists because we believe that work must be organized for the collective benefit of those who do the work and create the products, not for the profit of the bosses. Material resources must be equally distributed among those who create the resources ... We need to articulate the real class situation of persons who are not merely raceless, sexless workers, but for whom racial and sexual oppression are significant determinants in their working/economic lives. Although we are essentially in agreement with Marx's theory as it applied to the very specific economic relationships he analyzed, we know that his analysis must be extended further in order for us to understand our specific economic situation as Black women.” [18]

It is important to understand how ideology and oppressive prac-

tices shape individuals and are distributed throughout the system. Haslanger [11] argues that society is a system made of material subsystems such as healthcare, the political system, and the education system and racism, capitalism, patriarchy, ableism, and the like are ideological systems (or as mentioned in previous sections, ideological formations). The complex and dynamic collection of material subsystems, social agents, and ideological systems constitutes the entire social formation, which reproduces and distributes the constituents of race, gender, class, ability, etc. Its subsystems can be racist, classist, patriarchal, ableist, etc., though these subsystems are not individuated by ideologies. In this manner, the ideological systems of racism, capitalism, patriarchy, ableism, etc. can coexist and we can make the argument for intersectional oppression. The ideological systems of capitalism, racism, patriarchy, heteronormativity, and the like constitute the matrix of domination, which functions to elevate the primary social group (ruling class, White, male, straight, able-bodied, etc.) and oppress the subordinate one (working class, people of color, non-men, queer, with disability, etc.) [19, 1].

Because ideology and ideological formations shape the dynamics within our social formation, we can see how they manifest in practices, state apparatuses, and our social agency. The water crisis in Flint, Michigan where the mostly Black residential population was subjected to harmful conditions like contaminated water [20], for example, happened due to government decisions influenced by economic problems and failing to prioritize the safety of the residents. Oil and gas projects by companies in Canada have been noted as “critical infrastructure”, which legitimized the environmental harm caused by the oil industries and deprioritized and ignored the resistance of Indigenous voices [21]. Transatlantic chattel slavery was complicit in the formation of European economies through the nineteenth century [2, 3, 4]. The gender bias plays a role in the amount of women that take up careers in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. It has been well-studied and how the characteristics of individuals, their immediate social environments, and cultural and structural factors pro-

mote or hinder successful passage through the science pipeline for men and non-men. Coincidentally, STEM careers are also more highly valued from an economic and political perspective than those of psychology, nursing, and education, which are careers predominantly consisting of women. *Social reproduction*, that is, unwaged household labor, education, and childcare, is a gendered separation as social reproduction is often performed by and expected of women, though many women are also working [22]. Women are expected to be mothers, but Black motherhood was outsourced by White mothers who wanted the maternal abilities of Black nannies for their own children. Additionally, not all women are able to give birth, either due to medical complications or they may be transgender. In these examples, we can see how political systems and companies can be material sites for racist and capitalist distribution and reproduction (lack of urgency for the health of the mostly Black residents in Flint, expansion of financial projects at the ignorance of Indigenous retaliation, chattel slavery where Black people are dehumanized as property for financial gain), patriarchal and capitalist distribution and reproduction (social reproduction expected of women in a capitalist society and disproportionately small participation of women and nonbinary individuals in highly-valued STEM careers), and patriarchal, ableist, and racist reproduction and distribution (women expected to be mothers when some are unable and the outsourcing of Black nannying for White mothers). The experience of individuals with multiple identities illustrates the disadvantages they face, further supporting the idea that these material systems are oppressive. The persistence of racist, capitalist, patriarchal, ableist, etc. dynamics in material subsystems also demonstrates the inseparability of an intersectional identity and how belonging to multiple marginalized identities can subject individuals to intersectional oppression. In this view of social formation, the notion of ideology and state apparatuses still hold, as ideologies constrain our social agency and influence our practices, the ISAs and RSAs are sites through which ideology can exist materially (material subsystems), and primary social groups can wield the power of the state apparatuses. The only difference now is that it is

not confined to class, and our view of the entire social formation is intersectional.

Note that my agreement with intersectionalists of Marxism lacking the incorporation of intersectional thought is not necessarily a rejection of Marxism but rather a critique whose aim is to extend on the original Marxist theory to include other marginalized groups. Recognizing that oppression is intersectional means that the oppression of class, race, gender, sexuality, and other identities are intimately intertwined within the social formation, and that to critique class oppression would require critique other forms. Because capitalism, like racism or patriarchy, is an ideological system (or formation) that shapes the dynamics within the social formation and its material subsystems, it cannot be deconstructed alone as Marx and Engels argue. Rather, we must challenge the ideologies and the entire matrix of domination instead. Implementing this requires a paradigm shift and a revolutionary approach to deconstructing the entangled ideological formations and material systems of oppression.

Towards an era of post-capitalism

Attempting to tackle intersectional oppression requires a deeper understanding of the intricate ways in which forms such as racism, sexism, homophobia, and classism are intertwined to form the matrix of domination. We have shown that ideological systems such as racism, capitalism, and patriarchy form the dynamics of the material subsystems and constrains social agents within the social formation. The material subsystems can be capitalist, racist, patriarchal, ableist, and so on, but because the ideological systems are what constitute the dynamics of political systems, transportation systems, and education, the ideologies must be challenged directly. If those ideologies manifest strongly in material systems, then those material systems must also be deconstructed entirely to eliminate oppression. From an intersectional perspective, we have argued that the material systems can reproduce and distribute ideologies through the material systems, and because the ide-

ological formations shape material system dynamics, it does not make sense to only challenge capitalism as oppression will still exist through racism, patriarchy, ableism, heteronormativity, etc. In order to critique and dismantle capitalism then, its brother forms of oppression that are racism, sexism, homophobia, must also be critiqued and dismantled in conjunction. In other words, removing intersectional systems of oppression require intersectional solutions.

In this section I finally bring the quote from the beginning of the paper into relevance. I argue that challenging the ideological systems that shape the dynamics of the material systems would require a paradigm shift in the social agents and a ruptural transformation to deconstruct the material systems that reproduce oppression. In the first phase of a ruptural transformation, those who are oppressed identify problems of the current structure via protest, uprising, or revolt. Through the act of protest, the oppressed bring awareness to their problems and recruit allies to their cause. The second phase is consciousness-raising, in which both the privileged and the oppressed are made aware of the systematic injustice. This is done by the experience of organic intellectuals, social theorists and analysts who can provide models and frameworks for understanding the ideological formations and human behavior, and those who have both knowledge and experience. The final phase before a ruptural transformation is a paradigm shift, which is the general loss of trust in the old paradigm and the promise of a new one.

Despair into anger: identifying problems of the current structure

We have seen from countless revolutions in history that the dominant social groups can only exercise hegemony and rule through the material systems for so long. When the illusions of ideology break down, individuals no longer have a reason to be complacent with their misfortunes. Experience itself is enough to move people into action: the slave revolts in the early United States and the protesters of the Stonewall Riots experienced the discrimination and witnessed their people get

beaten and murdered in the streets, and that moved them enough to start a revolution that deconstructs the system that oppresses them. As said by Jack Goldstone, these movements highlight that there is something wrong with the current systems:

“The conditions that give rise to state breakdown— state fiscal distress, elite alienation and conflict, and unemployment, increased vagrancy, and associated riots and disorders among the populace— also give rise to a widespread perception that something has ‘gone wrong’ in society. This perception may be expressed as complaints about specific conditions or state actions, or more broadly, as diagnoses and prescriptions for society’s ills.” [23]

These social movements identify that there is a problem with the current structure. For example, women, trans men, those who have uteruses, and their allies protest the overturning of Roe v. Wade in the name of reproductive justice and the Black Lives Matter movement calls for Black equity and an end to police brutality. Yet even more crucial to these movements are the testimonies of Black women and Black trans men who showcase the terms in which the material systems oppress them racially, patriarchally, *and* sexually. Individuals who experience and protest intersectional oppression, therefore are first-hand accounts of how several unjust systems collaborate to affect them and can amplify the fact that oppression exists and must be challenged on more than one axis.

The revolts, protests in the streets, and digital content-sharing of verbal discrimination and brutality are immediate and pivotal. These actions provide a “secondary-source” experience of their oppression and informal consciousness-raising for those who are more privileged, consequently establishing more allies to their cause. The role that organically develops of those who experience (intersectional) oppression then, is (i) identifying there is a problem via complaint, disruption, protest, or riot, (ii) bringing their experiences of oppression the light, and (iii) activating others to mobilize against systems of oppression. In other

words, (intersectionally) oppressed individuals are a catalyst for revolution.

Anger into knowledge: consciousness-raising as education

An effective social movement disrupts one's worldview by challenging their inadequacies and unjust beliefs [5]. Here, the path towards revolution involves working towards a collective consciousness that critiques the current paradigm which lets social agents reproduce unjust practices. Although ideology interpellates us as social agents and influences practices, we as individuals also have the ability to shape practices and challenge ideology. It is up to us as individuals to challenge the ideologies that run through our material systems and shape our social formation. To do so, we must identify:

- *The illusory character and oppressive function of an ideology:* We as social agents participate in social practices, and if those practices are ideological, then we also reproduce the ideological practices that sustain and distribute oppression. The ideology of the matrix of domination serves the primary social groups: in capitalism—the ruling class, in patriarchy—men, in racism—White people, in ableism—those who don't have disabilities, and so on. The oppressed groups may then not challenge the system because they believe that the system is designed to fail them and changing it would be nearly impossible. The primary social groups on the other hand, have no reason to challenge the existing ideologies because they shape the material subsystems to serve them, thereby continuing to uphold the practices—whether intentionally or not—that exploit and oppress the nondominant social groups.
- *The forms of divide and rule used to control the masses:* Ideological formations also form divisions within society. Within the social formation whose dynamics are shaped by ideological formations, those whose multiple identities belong to marginalized groups are further divided from the dominant social groups. Women and nonbinary people steer away from STEM careers which are male-

dominated and also coincidentally highly-valued. The working class that may work multiple jobs just to keep up with the inflation in housing and grocery costs becomes enraged with the outlandish spending of celebrities and billionaires that turn a blind eye to the reality of the majority. On social media, it has become a hallmark joke for (queer) people of color to share their dislike for the “straight White cis rich man” because of their disdain with the thought of having to explain their experiences of systemic oppression to someone with multiple privileges. While certainly these frustrations of oppressed groups are valid, it is the ideological systems shaping the social formation that promote division and forcing people to believe that one another is the enemy, obstructing the main problem that is the systemic injustice of materialized ideologies. Those with privilege hold power and influence in these systems of oppression, and so the oppressed must use our perspective of oppression and hardship to wield the allyship of those with privilege.

- *Oppression can be reproduced intersectionally through the material systems:* I have already sketched in previous sections the role of overlapping ideological formations deeply ingrained in material systems (political, educational, transportation) makes them racist, capitalist, patriarchal, ableist, homophobic, and so on. These systems of oppression and their respective ideologies are all interconnected, and once people can identify that—both the privileged and the oppressed, we can begin to work towards a solution that reconstructs these systems.
- *Systems of injustice are damaging for all parties:* While certainly they do harm to oppressed groups, Diane J. Goodman has argued that dominant social groups participating as agents in unjust systems are also at a disadvantage [24]. Those who are socialized into certain practices and patterns are limited, and may become fearful or avoidant than those who are different than them, or can be ostracized by their peers when acting differently than expected of the privileged group. Those who are privileged may also feel guilt

for their unfair advantages but may also feel the social pressure to maintain the status quo.

Certainly, the identification and learning of the above is quite daunting. Consciousness-raising requires the involvement of several willing social agents and is a collective and united effort. Teachers can include the following individuals:

- *Marginalized groups*: Those who are oppressed mobilize their oppression into activism and do the work of acting on the flame of resistance. Their role of consciousness-raising develops by demonstrating that there is a problem via protest and recruiting allies to view the existing systems as unjust and oppressive. They recruit allies by elucidating their issues with the system via protest, and demonstrating and communicating how the systems of oppression affect them. Once enough allies are recruited to help amplify the struggles of the oppressed, those of privilege who benefit from oppressive systems can no longer ignore it, and their illusion of ideology is destroyed.
- *Social theorists and other highly-educated analysts*: These individuals formalize the work of the activist and the experience of the oppressed. Prof. Haslanger says that the “critical social theorist is not a neutral third party in disputes over justice, but is committed to a particular social movement, at a particular time, and seeks to provide resources for that movement” [5]. Theorists create social models and work towards building a social framework in order to understand the social movement, with their audience being (i) those who do not experience oppression, (ii) those who are oppressed who want to invoke a double consciousness, and (iii) everyone, really.
- *The organic intellectual*: Especially crucial to the development of successful social movements is the individual that possesses duality of both experience and theory. An organic intellectual is an intellectual or professional who remains connected to their social class that may not normally produce intellectuals. While often, there

is a cognitive dissonance between social theorists and activists in which theory is divorced from experience, the organic intellectual acts as a proper bridge between the two. Just as Frederick Douglass, a former slave turned vocal abolitionist harmonized his traumatic experiences with theory by articulating the necessity of the abolishment of slavery, the organic intellectual is able to draw on their experiences of intersectional oppression to develop theories and frameworks for the social movement while also using such frameworks to articulate the ideological and systemic oppression to fellow marginalized individuals. I, for example, am a queer Filipina woman, and my sad graduate student stipend places me in the working class. However, I also have the privilege of receiving my engineering and social theory education from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and vow to use the leverage of attending this elite institution to help amplify the voices of my intersecting marginalized communities and beyond. Organic intellectuals serve as messengers of communication to reconcile the frameworks of social theorists and the activism of the oppressed people so that together they can enact a robust form of consciousness-raising, backed by both experience and theories.

Dislodging intersecting systems of oppression requires a robust agreement (collective consciousness) among the mobilizing groups that ideologies— which shape practices and exist materially in systems— are illusive and oppressive, ideologies can create divisions among social groups, oppression can be reproduced intersectionally, and that everyone is disadvantaged in systems of injustice. The marginalized groups’ and organic intellectuals’ experiences, amplified by the educational frameworks of social theorists and analysts, produces an expansive social program to move towards an era of post-capitalism, but also an era beyond the matrix of domination.

Knowledge into action: paradigm shifts as seeds of revolution

Consciousness-raising is essential so that the current ideologies and ideological state apparatuses or unjust institutions practices can be critically evaluated for their failures. Once there is a strong resonance with the belief that the systems of oppression intersect, collective consciousness is achieved, and revolutionary ideologies are able to take root [23]. The curtain of ideology is lifted, and we are able to accept a new paradigm. “A paradigm shift only occurs when both of the following are true: the community members have lost trust in the old paradigm after the appearance of serious anomalies and a trustworthy, potential new paradigm has emerged” [25]. The new paradigm does not reflect the ideologies of complacency with racism, patriarchy, and capitalism anymore; instead, we have accepted that the systems of oppression are intersectional and that change needs to happen. However, while these paradigm shifts are important, they are not enough to dismantle oppressive structures. One must act on the paradigm shift, and the ability to act on this awareness must be organized and mobilized in order to create effective change.

At this stage, the state powers have witnessed civilian unrest and a new wave of collective consciousness, and may try to offer *symbiotic transformations* as solutions to appease the masses. Symbiotic transformations aim to work with the oppressed to make changes within the state’s core institutions. However, if the material systems are built on the ideologies of oppression, then they are built to fail the people. It is at this point in the collective consciousness that the people know that the systems cannot be fixed with reform, but rather, only a *ruptural transformation*. The foundations of these systems are oppressive at their cores, and must be destroyed and replaced with something new. These are the seeds of revolution.

Conclusion

Marxist analysis of capitalism originally gave a clear understanding of class oppression, but intersectional theorists have shown that race, class, gender, sexuality, and other identities cannot be separated, and as such, the corresponding systems of oppression are also intertwined. Because the systems of education, politics, healthcare, transportation, and other material systems are intertwined with ideological formations of racism, capitalism, patriarchy, ableism, and beyond, deconstructing capitalism would also require the deconstruction of the corresponding ideological formations that constitute the matrix of domination and the systems that materialize these ideological formations. In other words: a ruptural transformation.

Systemic oppression can make it difficult to challenge or even comprehend the source of injustices in the current structure. Eventually, however, growing frustrations within groups facing intersectional oppression push them into justified anger. In the form of protests, uprising, or riots, these individuals awaken the consciousness of others and recruit allies by demonstrating the injustices of their oppression. Knowledge then comes in by identifying the sources of their oppression—the system, and helping the oppressed and their privileged allies to discard the repressive and ideological tool of hierarchical difference in the process. In the final stages prior to a ruptural transformation, the system may try to enact harsher reinforcements or offer systems of reform, but by this time, the paradigm has shifted. The system is built to function on oppression, and cannot be emancipated, it needs to be undone. These are the seeds of revolution towards an era not only of post-capitalism, but also an end to the era of the matrix of domination.

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