

Rethinking the subaltern and the question of censorship in Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*

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Antonio Gramsci's writings are accredited as one of the major influences in the founding of the *Subaltern Studies* publication series and research project.¹ In the inaugural issue of *Subaltern Studies*, Ranajit Guha stated that one of the aims of the research project was to utilize 'the six-point project envisaged by Antonio Gramsci in his "Notes on Italian History"' to reclaim the politics of the people in South Asian history, a topic elitist and nationalist historiography tended to ignore.² According to Guha: 'The word "subaltern" in the title stands for the meaning as given in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, that is, "of inferior rank"', and the term is used 'as a name for the general attribute of subordination in South Asian society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender, and office or in any other way'.³ Prior to the publication of *Subaltern Studies*, the 'subaltern' was virtually overlooked in Gramscian scholarship.⁴ Guha and the South Asian Subaltern Studies Group are largely responsible for introducing Gramsci's concept of the subaltern into current discourse. By the 1990s, the influence of *Subaltern Studies* reached beyond India and South Asia, as intellectuals from various regions adopted similar research projects and modes of investigation. Beyond the scope of the *Subaltern Studies* publication series, 'subaltern studies' now encompasses a recognizable mode of investigation and field of study focused on marginalized members of society and closely linked with postcolonial analysis.⁵ Although Gramsci is often considered the 'original mentor of *Subaltern Studies*',⁶ the field of subaltern studies includes various points of view, theoretical orientations, and disciplines that are more numerous than the label suggests.⁷ In the words of David Ludden, 'Subaltern Studies deployed some of Gramsci's ideas', but ultimately '*Subaltern Studies* reinvented subalternity'.⁸

Even though Gramsci's name is nearly ubiquitous in subaltern and postcolonial studies, there is a widespread misconception throughout the literature that he developed the phrase 'subaltern social groups' in his prison notebooks as a codeword or euphemism for the word 'proletariat'. The idea put forward is that Gramsci used 'subaltern social groups' as a cipher or camouflage for 'proletariat' in order to evade prison censors, who may have revoked his authorization to write in his prison cell if his work appeared overtly Marxist or controversial to Fascist authorities. This myth largely stems from exaggerated claims of censorship perpetuated in Gramscian

scholarship and from the fact that nearly all prominent subaltern studies scholars refer to incomplete English translations of Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* and engage with relatively few of his writings on the subaltern, notably Notebook 25—the thematic 'special notebook' that Gramsci dedicated to the topic, which he entitled 'On the Margins of History. History of Subaltern Social Groups'.⁹ At first glance, the 'censorship thesis' appears to be a rather innocuous claim, but this misconception limits and confines Gramsci's conception of subalternity to strictly class terms and fails to consider the theoretical foundation and radical implications of his original conception. Due to the censorship thesis, subaltern studies scholars limit Gramsci's expansive conception of subalternity. In this sense, subaltern studies opened Gramsci to a new reading that highlighted the importance of the subaltern in his work, but then closed off its own reading by misinterpreting the meaning of the 'subaltern' in his writings.

Through an examination of Gramsci's use of the term 'subaltern' in the *Prison Notebooks*, I will demonstrate that he did not develop the phrase 'subaltern social groups' because of prison censorship, but in fact developed the concept of 'subaltern social groups' to identify and analyse the politics and activity of marginalized social groups in Italian history. In analyses of specific historical contexts, Gramsci refers to slaves, peasants, religious groups, women, different races, the *popolani* (common people) and *popolo* (people) of the medieval communes, the proletariat, and the bourgeoisie prior to the Risorgimento as subaltern groups. By extrapolating from these separate analyses, I will provide an explication of Gramsci's dynamic understanding of subalternity.¹⁰ On the relation between the subaltern and the popular, which has been an important point of discussion in subaltern studies,¹¹ I will show how Gramsci's concept of the national popular relates to his understanding and theorization of subalternity. Ultimately, for Gramsci, subalternity is not merely limited to class relations; subalternity is constituted through exclusion, domination, and marginality in their various forms, and given his praxis-oriented understanding of subalternity, the critical understanding of such conditions is vital to their transformation.

The myth of the 'subaltern' censorship thesis

Within Gramscian scholarship, exaggerated claims of censorship and the lack of critical engagement with the complete *Prison Notebooks* have contributed to many distortions and misinterpretations of Gramsci's original contributions to Marxian theory specifically and to social and political theory generally. For example, commentators often claim that Gramsci devised the phrase 'philosophy of praxis' simply as a codeword in his prison notebooks to disguise or camouflage his references to Marxism in order to deceive prison censors, who may have revoked the authorization allowing Gramsci to write in his prison cell if they deemed his writings overtly Marxist or too radical. Thus, according to the 'censorship thesis', when one reads the term 'philosophy of praxis' in the *Prison Notebooks*, one should understand it as

code for Marxism.¹² Although this claim is partially true, it is largely exaggerated. Because Gramsci camouflaged some of his references to Marxism, an explication of his use of ‘philosophy of praxis’ in the *Prison Notebooks* provides a foundation to analyse his use of ‘subaltern social groups’.

The meaning of ‘philosophy of praxis’ in the *Prison Notebooks* emerges with a comparison of Gramsci’s early and late notes. In the composition of his notebooks, Gramsci frequently wrote a first draft of a note in his miscellaneous notebooks and then later used the first draft as the basis for a revised version of the note in his thematically organized ‘special notebooks’. In the critical Italian edition of the prison notebooks, Valentino Gerratana identifies the first draft of Gramsci’s notes as ‘A Texts’, their revised versions as ‘C Texts’, and the notes Gramsci did not revise as ‘B Texts’.¹³ In his early notes, composed in the period from 1929 to mid-1932, Gramsci openly referred to Marx and Marxism literally hundreds of times, and he composed several notes specifically on the philosophy of praxis. In fact, in the first part of Notebook 7 (1930–1931), he translated 66 pages of Marx’s writings into Italian.¹⁴ During this period, he camouflaged only the names of individuals associated with the Soviet Union, such as Lenin, Trotsky, and Bukharin.¹⁵ But then after mid-1932, due to apparent heightened prison surveillance or just mere caution,¹⁶ Gramsci began to replace ‘Marxism’ with ‘philosophy of praxis’ as he rewrote and organized his earlier notes in his special notebooks. For instance, in Notebook 4, §1 (A Text), Gramsci discusses the methods of studying Marx’s works. When he revised the note in Notebook 16, §2 (C Text)—the special notebook ‘Cultural Topics. I’—Gramsci camouflaged his explicit reference to Marx with the phrase ‘the founder of the philosophy of praxis’. Similar instances appear throughout his notebooks after mid-1932. However, ‘philosophy of praxis’ does not simply mean Marxism. A philological understanding of Gramsci’s use and development of the phrase in the *Prison Notebooks* reveals that the philosophy of praxis represents Gramsci’s theoretical separation from Hegelian and Crocean notions of ‘philosophy of spirit’ on the one hand and the historical economism of orthodox Marxism on the other. The distinction between ‘philosophy of praxis’ and ‘philosophy of spirit’ appears early in the *Prison Notebooks*,¹⁷ and there are some notes, such as Notebook 8, §61, that contain both ‘Marx’ and the ‘philosophy of praxis’. Gramsci’s development of the philosophy of praxis originates from Italian discussions of Marxism and philosophy that took place prior to his arrest and imprisonment—notably from the work of the Italian Marxist Antonio Labriola, who used the phrase ‘philosophy of praxis’ to describe Marxism.¹⁸ This distinction in terminology signifies a major theoretical distinction between Hegelian (idealist) and Marxist (historical materialist) conceptions of history, while also separating Gramsci from mechanistic and positivist forms of Marxism. In other words, the philosophy of praxis signifies Gramsci’s self-defining conception of Marxism.¹⁹ Thus, in the *Prison Notebooks*, in some instances the ‘philosophy of praxis’ refers to Marxism, but in other instances, the ‘philosophy of praxis’ precisely refers to the philosophy of praxis.²⁰ Therefore, the notion that ‘philosophy of praxis’

simply means Marxism is a distortion and misrepresentation of Gramsci's intended theoretical self-clarification.

A similar version of the 'censorship thesis' appears in subaltern studies and postcolonial literature with respect to Gramsci's use of the phrase 'subaltern social groups'. Many prominent scholars assert that Gramsci used the term 'subaltern' as a codeword or euphemism for the word 'proletariat' in order to evade prison authorities. For instance, David Arnold, a founding member of the *Subaltern Studies* editorial collective, published an influential and insightful article in the *Journal of Peasant Studies* on 'Gramsci and Peasant Subalternity in India' (1984), in which he alludes to the connection between the word 'subaltern' in the *Prison Notebooks* and censorship. First Arnold writes: 'At a minimal evaluation it [the term 'subaltern'] can be regarded as little more than convenient shorthand for a variety of subordinate classes— industrial workers, peasants, labourers, artisans, shepherds and so forth.' This description is largely consistent with Gramsci's use of the term, though incomplete. However, in a somewhat contradictory manner, Arnold also claimed that Gramsci's use of the term 'may have been prompted by a need to avoid the censorship which a more politically explicit word like "proletariat" might attract'.²¹ Arnold did not provide any textual evidence to support his hypothesis, but the mere possibility that Gramsci 'may have been prompted' to use the word 'subaltern' out of some form of prison censorship provided a foundation for others to present the supposition as fact. In a 1987 interview that was later published in *The Post-Colonial Critic*, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak presented the 'censorship thesis' as fact and alluded to the way the term had been 'transformed' beyond Gramsci's use, presumably by the work of Guha and *Subaltern Studies*:

I like the word 'subaltern' for one reason. It is truly situational. 'Subaltern' began as a description of a certain rank in the military. The word was used under censorship by Gramsci: he called Marxism 'monism', and was obliged to call the proletarian 'subaltern.' That word, used under duress, has been transformed into the description of everything that doesn't fall under strict class analysis. I like that, because it has no theoretical rigor.²²

In an interview published in the journal *Ariel* in 1992, Spivak repeated the same claim: 'the word "subaltern" as one knows is the description of a military thing. One knows that Gramsci used it because Gramsci was obliged to censor himself in prison.'²³ The implication of this assertion is that Gramsci did not theorize subalternity but in fact remained a strict orthodox Marxist interested only in class or working-class forms of subordination and the point is to transcend Gramsci and his contribution. For instance, as David Lloyd wrote in 1993: "'Subaltern", one of the many euphemisms by which Gramsci sought to evade prison censorship, could possibly be translated accurately back into orthodox Marxist terms as "proletarian".'²⁴ Because of Gramsci's supposedly narrow class understanding of the 'subaltern', Guha and *Subaltern Studies* are seen as expanding the definition and analysis beyond mere class oppression. According to Neil Rogall: 'The

term *Subaltern* [in the *Subaltern Studies* title] was taken from Gramsci's euphemism for the proletariat in his *Prison Notebooks*. However the Subaltern Studies collective used it as a catch-all term for all groups they viewed as oppressed—the proletariat, the peasantry, women, tribal people.²⁵ In his book *Subalternity and Representation*, John Beverley employs the censorship thesis to solidify the limitations of Gramsci's understanding of the subaltern:

It is clear that for Gramsci 'subaltern' and 'popular' were interchangeable concepts... In that sense, his recourse to the terminology of 'subaltern classes' or 'subaltern groups' (Gramsci used both forms) may simply be an aspect of the Aesopian language of the *Notebooks*—Gramsci's use of euphemisms so as not to alarm the prison censors unduly. If so, 'subaltern' should be read as peasants and workers, just as 'philosophy of praxis' should be read as Marxism, or 'integral' as revolutionary. And there, for many persons who consider themselves Marxists, the matter of the subaltern should properly end.²⁶

In this sense, according to this view, Gramsci has little or nothing to offer subaltern studies, given his Marxism and the alleged narrowness of his conception of the subaltern—or the lack thereof. In 'The New Subaltern: A Silent Interview', Spivak provides yet another iteration of the 'censorship thesis' and reiterates the point how the 'subaltern' actually expands beyond 'proletarian'. 'The imprisoned Antonio Gramsci', she writes, 'used the word to stand for "proletarian", to escape the prison censors. But the word soon cleared a space, as words will, and took on the task of analyzing what "proletarian", produced by capital logic, could not cover.'²⁷

Since 1984, iterations of the subaltern censorship thesis have appeared throughout subaltern studies and postcolonial literature, all without any textual evidence and all presented as fact.²⁸ The myth of the 'subaltern euphemism' is so widespread that even Timothy Brennan, who is critical of the ways in which Gramsci has been selectively incorporated into post-colonial theory, repeats the misconception:

Of course, the subaltern was in large part Gramsci's euphemism for 'proletariat', which he used to evade the prison censors as well as to articulate the multiple faces and differential feel of wage laborers in a global, Fordist system... The codeword nicely evokes Gramsci's sense of expanding the limits of social actors and giving to the oppressed the feel of multiple layerings.²⁹

In his book *Wars of Position* (2006), Brennan repeats the same misconception, while also criticizing others for their lack of 'philological care for context and detail'.³⁰ None of these claims regarding censorship are supported with textual references—the claims are either asserted or hypothesized—and none of the authors base their interpretations on a thorough analysis of the critical edition of the *Prison Notebooks* or refer to Notebook 25, in which Gramsci explicitly refers to proletarians and peasants numerous times.³¹ Most of the authors rely upon the anthology *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, and follow Guha's lead in referring to Gramsci's 'Notes on Italian History', but

Gramsci never composed a series of notes entitled ‘Notes on Italian History’ in which he discussed subaltern social groups—the title heading was a creation of the editors of *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, not Gramsci.

Analysis of the complete *Prison Notebooks* reveals no indication that Gramsci devised and used the term ‘subaltern’ as a codeword or euphemism for the word ‘proletariat’. Gramsci first uses the phrase ‘subaltern classes’ in Notebook 3, §14, which he entitled ‘History of the dominant class and the history of subaltern classes’. The note is relatively short and generally of a theoretical nature. The note appears in a cluster of notes regarding the various ways intellectuals interpreted Italian history and society. The phrase appears again in Notebook 3, §18, entitled ‘History of the subaltern classes’. In this note, Gramsci compares the autonomies, institutions, and conditions of ‘the slaves of antiquity and medieval proletarians’ with the conditions of the modern state. The word ‘proletarians’ (*proletari*) appears a total of four times in this note. In this particular instance, Gramsci used Notebook 3, §18 (A Text, 1930) as the basis for Notebook 25, §4 (C Text, 1934). In the C Text, Gramsci retained his explicit use of the word ‘proletariat’, did not camouflage it, and actually used it one additional time. Because both ‘subaltern’ and ‘proletariat’ appear together in the two versions of the note before and after mid-1932, there is no basis to support the claim that ‘subaltern’ is a codeword for ‘proletariat’. If the ‘censorship thesis’ were true, it makes no sense as to why Gramsci used ‘subaltern’ and ‘proletariat’ together in the same notes and in two separate periods of his work.

For the sake of argument, if Gramsci devised and used the word ‘subaltern’ as a codeword for ‘proletariat’, one would assume that his use of the words ‘proletariat’ and ‘subaltern’ would follow his use of ‘Marx’, ‘Marxism’, and the ‘philosophy of praxis’ before and after mid-1932: that ‘proletariat’ would appear in his early notes and then begin to be replaced with the word ‘subaltern’ in his later notes. However, this is not the case. Gramsci used the words ‘subaltern’ and ‘proletariat’ throughout the *Prison Notebooks*. ‘Proletariat’ appears over 40 times prior to mid-1932 and around 30 times after mid-1932,³² and there is not one case in which Gramsci used the word ‘proletariat’ in an early note (A Text) and then replaced it with ‘subaltern’ in a later note (C Text). In addition to Notebook 3, §18 and Notebook 25, §4, the words ‘subaltern’ and ‘proletariat’ also appear together in Notebook 7, §33, which includes seven explicit references to Marx and Marxism as well. Because the word ‘proletariat’ appears throughout the notebooks and there are no instances in which Gramsci camouflaged his reference to the proletariat, one can conclude that Gramsci did not censor his use of the word. Moreover, there is no indication that he used the word ‘subaltern’ as a cipher for ‘proletariat’. If he actually intended to censor or limit his use of ‘proletariat’ in the notebooks, he could have abbreviated the word or could have used equivalent words or phrases, such as workers, working class, productive class, or inferior class, which in fact appear numerous times throughout the *Notebooks*.³³ Given these facts, there is no textual evidence to support the claim that Gramsci censored his use of the word ‘proletariat’, and there is no evidence to support the ‘censorship thesis’ claim that the word

‘subaltern’ or the phrase ‘subaltern social groups’ are euphemisms for ‘proletariat’.

The implication of the subaltern censorship thesis is that Gramsci did not develop a theory of subalternity at all, since ‘subaltern’ in the prison notebooks is actually code for proletariat. This is especially true given Beverley’s assessment. Because adherents of the censorship thesis understand Gramsci’s notion of the subaltern only in relation to the proletariat and orthodox Marxism, and do not understand it as unique to Gramsci’s theorizations of subordination and the philosophy of praxis, they fail to notice the dynamic characteristics of his conception. Without considering Gramsci’s complete texts and without providing any textual references, one could potentially claim that all of his conceptual categories, such as war of position, transformismo, passive revolution, modern prince, Lorianism, Brescianism, historical bloc, etc., are mere euphemisms or ciphers born out of some sort of censorship. These types of claims create ambiguity and confusion, and deprive Gramsci’s concepts of their full import. Understanding the concept of subalternity within the general trajectory of Gramsci’s thought, particularly with respect to subaltern political activity and the function of intellectuals, reveals the interconnection between political power, representation, and marginalization.

The ‘subaltern’ in the *Prison Notebooks*

Gramsci did not develop the concept of subaltern social groups out of the constraints of prison censorship; it is one of the original concepts that originated out of his multifaceted and open-ended investigation of Italian politics, culture, and history. Like many of the concepts in the *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci does not attempt to provide a precise definition of subaltern groups. The meaning is only ascertained by extrapolating from the ways in which he used the term in specific historical contexts. Moreover, it appears that Gramsci did not begin the prison notebooks with a pre-conceived conception of the ‘subaltern’. He did not mention a study of subaltern groups in his prison letters, and he did not include a study of subaltern groups in his original plan of study in Notebook 1 or in his revised plan of study in Notebook 8. The concept emerges in the *Prison Notebooks* as he proceeds with his projects of studying Italian intellectuals, the development of the Italian bourgeoisie up to 1870, and the ‘southern question’, which were all main topics included on the first page of Notebook 1. After Gramsci’s initial use of the phrase ‘subaltern classes’ in Notebook 3, the subaltern becomes a recurring theme in the *Prison Notebooks*. He examined various aspects of subaltern classes and subaltern social groups (he used both phrases interchangeably) in over 30 notes between 1930 and August 1933, and he used variations of the phrase ‘history of the subaltern classes’ as the title of 17 notes in his miscellaneous notebooks. Aspects of his analysis of subalternity also appear in his early ‘special’ thematic notebooks—Notebook 10, Notebook 11, Notebook 13, and Notebook 16. In February 1934, he

began working on Notebook 25, which is composed of 13 revised notes drawn from his miscellaneous notebooks. Interestingly, Notebook 25 includes several C Texts derived from A Texts that do not contain the word 'subaltern', such as the notes on David Lazzaretti (Notebook 3, §12), the medieval communes (Notebook 3, §16), and the series of notes entitled 'Utopias and philosophical novels' (Notebook 3, §69, §71, §75). This suggests that the theme of subalternity was at the forefront of Gramsci's thinking even as he was composing miscellaneous notes that do not immediately appear to relate to subalternity.

The three primary historical contexts Gramsci analyses in Notebook 25 include Ancient Rome, the medieval communes, and the period of the Risorgimento and its aftermath. The point of Gramsci's historical comparisons is to understand the various relations of power and subordination in distinct political formations: the composition of the state, the formulation of dominant culture, intellectual representations of the subaltern, the conditions in which subaltern groups organize institutions to represent their political will, the possibilities of and impediments to subaltern autonomy, and the constructions of identity and otherness among subaltern groups. His comparative historical analyses illustrate that his interest in subalternity was not restricted to only the modern proletariat, and in his analyses he considers the ways in which relations of class, race, gender, religion, nationalism, and colonialism interact with conditions of subordination. His analyses in Notebook 25 also touch on a recurring theme in the *Prison Notebooks* of the non-national popular character of Italian history and how subaltern groups are excluded from participating in dominant political institutions.

In Notebook 25, §4, entitled 'Some General Notes on the Historical Development of the Subaltern Social Groups in the Middle Age and in Rome', Gramsci considers the ways in which subaltern groups organized themselves as political forces in Ancient Rome and in the medieval communes. Gramsci comments on the problems of using the method of historical analogy as a criterion of interpreting the experiences and institutions of subaltern groups in different contexts, since each historical period constitutes specific sets of relations and thus requires separate analysis. However, Gramsci recognizes a similarity in the composition of the ancient and medieval states: both states were composed of a 'mechanical bloc' of social groups in which the political and social centralization of power was minimal at various moments and provided subaltern groups with the flexibility to create their own institutions. In the context of Rome, the plebeians successfully organized the tribune of the plebs to represent their interests and to confront the power of the patricians. However, this level of autonomy and self-representation was not afforded to the slaves of Rome, who were prohibited from organizing separate institutions, making it difficult for them to align themselves with the plebs. The Roman Senate understood the potential problem of slaves recognizing their collective strength and rejected a proposal requiring slaves to wear distinctive clothes for fear they would recognize their great number (Notebook 25, §6). However, Gramsci

observes that the nucleus of the slave revolt in Rome led by Spartacus was composed of prisoners of war, which eventually provided a basis of organization. Yet, as Gramsci notes, the Spartacan slave revolt was not a call for revolution but for representation and liberty: ‘Spartacus demanding to be taken into the government in collaboration with the plebs, etc.’ (Notebook 25, §4).

With respect to the medieval communes, Gramsci was interested in how the emergent bourgeoisie of the people (*popolo*) was able to establish its own political organizations that were capable of challenging and overcoming the power and institutions of the nobility. However, the political ascent of the emergent bourgeoisie of the *popolo* was limited, not hegemonic, and ultimately a failure, in Gramsci’s view. The manufacturing and merchant bourgeoisie acquired political domination through military organization but was incapable of consolidating its power, because it failed to go beyond its economic-corporate limits and yield some of its corporatist interests to draw support from members outside its class, such as the common people (*popolani*) and workers. Throughout the *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci repeatedly returns to the point that ‘the bourgeoisie of the communes was unable to go beyond the corporative phase and hence cannot be said to have created a state’.³⁴ Because the communal bourgeoisie lacked its own category of intellectuals to provide it legitimacy and direction, it ruled by institutional and organizational domination and not by consent, therefore excluding common people and the proletariat from participating in organized collective life. Because the bourgeoisie did not exercise political hegemony, therefore, it could not lead members outside of its class by consent. In this sense, the medieval communes did not constitute integral states, meaning a unity of force and consent; they functioned as syndicalist states, exercising force without consent. The decline of the communes that gave way to the rise of principalities, therefore, was due to the fact that the communal bourgeoisie was not hegemonic and perpetuated the relations of subordination, exclusion, and subalternity on the part of workers and common people by not incorporating them into dominant political institutions and reinforcing their own position against the communal nobility. Thus, in comparing Ancient Rome and the medieval communes, Gramsci writes: ‘However, even though, from many points of view, the slaves of the ancient world and the mediaeval proletariat were in the same conditions, their situation was not identical’ (Notebook 25, §4).

In Notebook 25, §4, Gramsci also addresses the issues of identity and otherness in the construction of subalternity and the politics of exclusion. Gramsci writes: ‘Often the subaltern groups are originally of other races (other cultures and other religions) of the dominant groups and often they are a concoction of various races, like in the case of the slaves.’ In this sense, Gramsci recognized that subalternity was not merely defined by class relations but rather an intersection of class, race, culture, and religion that functioned in different modalities in specific historical contexts. The focus on identity and otherness also concerns the issue of constructing categories of identity that provide the basis to exclude particular groups from participating

in dominant political organizations and the practical difficulty associated with developing subaltern political organizations. This also suggests that Gramsci recognized that constructed categories of identity provided the basis for relations of inequality and exclusion and in turn produced the subaltern as the marginalized 'Other'.

Immediately after the points on race, culture, and religion, Gramsci then mentions the position of women in Roman history.

The question of the importance of women in Roman history is similar to the question of the subaltern groups, but up to a certain point: 'masculinity' can be compared to class domination only in a certain sense; it, therefore, has greater importance for the history of customs than for political and social history.

Here Gramsci specifically recognizes that the subordination of women functions differently from class subordination, thus not reducing gender to class, or subsuming the domination of women under class domination. Although it is not entirely clear in what ways masculine domination can be compared to class domination, in Gramsci's view, the idea that masculinity 'has greater importance for the history of customs than for political and social history' suggests that he viewed masculine culture and custom as being more influential in the subordination of women than political institutionalization. In contemporary analysis, the conditions contributing to the subordination of women include tradition and custom,³⁵ as well as masculine conceptions of law and politics.³⁶ Aside from these points, Gramsci does not investigate the status of women further in Notebook 25. However, in his pre-prison writings and in his notes 'On Some Aspects of the Sexual Question' in the *Prison Notebooks*, which resembles the title of his 'Southern Question' essay, Gramsci argues that women, similar to subaltern groups, should develop social independence, not in relation to dominant ruling groups, but in relation to male supremacy.³⁷ Gramsci viewed the subordination of women functioning across class, in that both bourgeois and working-class women were excluded from participating in collective political life.³⁸ This aspect of Gramsci's thought and his focus on the 'Sexual Question' indicate that his critical understanding of exclusion and the production of otherness is not based merely in class terms and in fact incorporates aspects of gender.³⁹ If Gramsci considered subalternity only in economic terms, as the censorship thesis suggests, or if his worldview was 'mono-gendered', as Spivak argues,⁴⁰ it makes no sense why he would introduce the question of the subordination of women in relation to subalternity.

The note on David Lazzaretti and his political movement, which is the first note in Notebook 25, addresses many of the themes regarding the non-national popular character of the Risorgimento and the dominant intellectual portrayal of subaltern groups as barbaric and biologically deficient. Lazzaretti's (1834–1878) political movement originated in the Monte Amiata region of the southeastern corner of Tuscany. In 1868, Lazzaretti experienced religious visions, underwent a spiritual conversion, and convinced himself and his supporters, who were mostly peasants, that he was the messiah of a

new moral and civil order. He promised to establish ‘The Republic and Kingdom of God’, which would have included land and crop redistribution. The movement partially grew out of a manifestation of the larger issue of the Vatican’s non-expedit, which became a formal papal order in 1874 that stated that it was ‘not expedient’ for Catholics to participate in Italian politics, because the state had despoiled the Church’s temporal power during the period after the Risorgimento. With the lack of political participation in dominant political institutions and the absence of regular political parties, the rural masses sought political leaders who were drawn from the masses themselves, which allowed Lazzaretti’s movement to grow. On the day Lazzaretti ceremoniously proclaimed his establishment in a peaceful procession with thousands of supporters, including women and children, the Carabinieri assassinated him with a gunshot to the head.⁴¹

Gramsci criticizes the ways in which Italian intellectuals portrayed and represented Lazzaretti and his movement. Several of the books and articles written at the time viewed Lazzaretti from a psychological perspective, invalidating, ignoring, and ultimately depoliticizing the significance of the political movement. Dominant interpretations viewed Lazzaretti as psychologically mad and abnormal, as if political and religious dissent signified inappropriate responses to political discontent. As Gramsci writes:

Such was the cultural habit of the time: instead of studying the origins of a collective event and the reasons why it spread, the reasons why it was collective, the protagonist was singled out and one limited oneself to writing a pathological biography, all too often starting off from motives that had not been confirmed or that could be interpreted differently. For a social élite, the members of subaltern groups always have something of a barbaric or a pathological nature about them. (Notebook 25, §1)

Italian intellectuals, in Gramsci’s view, tended not to investigate the ‘origins’ of Lazzaretti’s movement and explained it away with psychological explanations that disregarded the violence perpetuated by a supposedly liberal and united state, which essentially cohered with the nationalist meta-narrative of the Risorgimento. For instance, Giacomo Barzellotti viewed the Lazzaretti case as an isolated incident of a “‘totally special character, due solely to the state of mind and culture of the people living there” and just “‘a little through [the people’s] natural love for their own fine native places(!)”.⁴² In response, Gramsci writes:

It is instead more obvious to think that Barzellotti’s book, which served to mould Italian public opinion about Lazzaretti, is nothing more than a manifestation of literary patriotism (for the love of one’s country!—as they say) which led to the attempt to hide the causes of the general discontent that existed in Italy after 1870 by giving explanations for the individual outbursts of this discontent that were restrictive, particularist, folkloristic, pathological, etc. The same thing happened on a bigger scale with regard to ‘brigandage’ in the South and the islands. (Notebook 25, §1)

The elements of Italian nationalism and ‘literary patriotism’ that Gramsci touches on relate to his larger argument that the Risorgimento, and the purported ‘unification’ of 1870, constituted the North’s colonization and subjugation of the South, as well as a ‘passive revolution’ or non-national popular movement, in that it did not mobilize the masses or peasants in a unitary movement. Just as Lazzaretti’s political movement was considered pathological and abnormal according to the nationalist meta-narrative, Southern political discontent was considered barbaric and a result of the South’s biological propensity for crime and brigandage.⁴³ Because the dominant classes of the Risorgimento did not exercise hegemony among the masses through the process of promoting a national or inclusion conception of politics, the peasantry actively revolted against the newly instituted administrators and against the usurpation of property, which was met by government suppression supported by both liberals and conservatives. Because the Risorgimento was not a popular movement—but in the end actually the juridical suppression of a potential mass movement—it reinforced the non-national popular aspects of Italian culture that actively excluded subaltern social groups from participating in dominant political institutions and culture.

The non-national popular character of Italian political history, although not obviously apparent, is one of the themes that ties Gramsci’s separate historical analyses together in Notebook 25. Gramsci’s analyses of Ancient Rome, the medieval communes, the Risorgimento, and post-Risorgimento politics all address the motif that dominant social groups failed to provide the intellectual and moral leadership necessary to cultivate a national and popular hegemonic culture that incorporated the interests, participation and representation of subordinate social groups in dominant political institutions. In a letter to his sister-in-law Tatiana Schucht on 7 September 1931—written during the period in which Gramsci was in the process of composing his early notes on the subaltern—he explains his idea of the integral state and how the function of intellectuals within civil society reinforces the ‘hegemony of a social group over the entire national society’. Through his analysis of intellectuals, Gramsci addresses the non-national popular character of Italian political history:

In my opinion, this conception of the function of the intellectuals helps to cast light on the reason or one of the reasons for the fall of the medieval Communes, that is, of the government of an economic class that was unable to create its own category of intellectuals and thus exercise hegemony and not simply dictatorship; the character of Italian intellectuals was not national-popular but rather cosmopolitan, patterned after the Church. . . The Communes therefore were a syndicalist state, which never went beyond this phase to become an integral State. . . It follows that the Renaissance must be considered a reactionary and repressive movement when compared to the development of the Communes, etc. I present these comments to convince you that every period of history that has unfolded in Italy, from the Roman Empire to the Risorgimento, must be viewed from this monographic standpoint.⁴⁴

Although Gramsci does not refer to the subaltern here, the letter ties together one of the major themes included in Notebook 25 and the *Prison Notebooks*: that the non-national popular aspect of Italian history developed out of the process in which leading social groups exercised domination, not hegemony, by not incorporating the interests of subaltern groups into national and popular culture, and by excluding subaltern groups from participating in dominant political institutions.⁴⁵ Thus, the absence of a national popular spirit in Italy contributed to political exclusion, cultural marginalization, and domination. In a national popular formation, Gramsci suggests that dominant social groups maintain their power not simply through domination but by developing a hegemonic political culture that transcends their narrow economic-corporate interests, that includes the interests of subaltern groups, and is capable of acquiring the active consent of the popular masses.

Gramsci's analysis and critique of the non-national popular character of Italian history extends to post-Risorgimento politics and to the ways in which intellectuals represented the political dissent of subaltern groups. In Gramsci's view, the Risorgimento was a movement of the dominant classes, not the masses, but the history of the Risorgimento was written as if it were a popular movement. Therefore, the meta-narrative of national unity overruled the counter-narratives of mass discontent and revolt on the part of subaltern groups. According to this meta-narrative, the brigandage and revolts throughout the South, as well as Lazzaretti's movement in the North, could be explained away as isolated events caused by the natural tendencies of abnormal, inferior, barbaric people. Peasant and mass movements were considered outbursts caused by inherent biological or mental defects; they were not viewed as indications of differing political projects or counter-political forces. Such narratives introduced a normalization of subordination and depoliticized subaltern groups. In Gramsci's view, therefore, the political history of the subaltern had not been written, since subaltern history had been either eclipsed or obscured by the dominant narrative of the Risorgimento, in this case, and by dominant narratives of ruling groups in general. In other words, subaltern history was misrepresented or not represented at all in dominant history. Thus, to draw from the title of Notebook 25, subaltern groups exist 'on the margins of history', or to use Spivak's language, 'the subaltern has no history and cannot speak'.⁴⁶

Conclusion

Rethinking Gramsci's concept of the subaltern informed by analysis of his complete *Prison Notebooks* reveals that class is a major element of his understanding of power and subordination but that subalternity is not simply reducible to class or confined to the concerns of the proletariat, as the censorship thesis suggests. Throughout the *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci uses the phrases 'subaltern social groups' and 'subaltern classes' in the plural, which suggests that he conceived subalternity in relation to multiple social groups, not just the proletariat. In his early and late notes, he refers to slaves,

peasants, religious groups, women, different races, the *popolani* (common people) and *popolo* (people) of the medieval communes, the proletariat, and the bourgeoisie prior to the Risorgimento as subaltern groups.⁴⁷ In his separate analyses, Gramsci never reduces subordination to a single relation, but rather conceives subalternity as an intersectionality of the variations of race, class, gender, culture, religion, nationalism, and colonialism functioning within an ensemble of socio-political and economic relations. Gramsci's analysis considers the composition of dominant political power within the state, civil society, and hegemony, as well as the conditions in which subaltern groups organize institutions to represent themselves. The Gramscian notion of 'subalternity' implies that subaltern groups are subordinated to the power, will, influence, leadership, and direction of a dominant group or a 'single combination' of dominant groups.⁴⁸ However, subaltern groups do not necessarily lack political power by definition. Rather, in Gramsci's conception, subalternity is constituted through exclusion, domination, and marginality in their various forms, and a subaltern group's level of subordination is relative to its level of political organization, autonomy, and influence upon dominant groups and dominant institutions.⁴⁹ The racial, spatial, class, religious, and gendered differences among subaltern groups require separate analyses of the modalities of subordination and the construction of power in specific contexts, which is to say that the specificity of subalternity is relative to the social, political, economic, and cultural conditions subordinate social groups confront in specific social formations.

Ultimately Gramsci's investigation of subalternity is founded upon a transformative praxis that attempts to understand the subaltern past and present in order to envision the political prospects of subaltern political struggle and the possibilities of a post-subaltern future. Gramsci was not merely interested in the absence of subaltern themes in written history or in the elitism present in dominant historiography. Gramsci was interested in revolutionary change and the empowerment of subaltern groups in overcoming their subordination and in turn ceasing to be subaltern. His analysis of the ways in which dominant groups maintain power, by including or excluding subaltern groups from dominant political institutions and culture, provides a basis to envision the ways in which subaltern groups can resist their conditions and attempt to develop their own organizations that represent their political vision and will. One of the underlying normative implications of Gramsci's notion of subaltern praxis is the development of a national-popular politics founded upon the formation of inclusive political structures that disallow the subordination of one group by another.⁵⁰ However, this project does not simply involve the recognition of the subaltern within the pre-existing structure; it involves the transformation of the subaltern from a position of subordination to one of hegemony.⁵¹ Thus, in many ways, the object of Gramsci's investigation is related to the modern political project of incorporating the masses and the marginalized members of society into the democratic structure of politics.⁵² For Gramsci, this process is not brought to the subaltern but is developed out of the subaltern themselves. The necessary first step is the development of a critical

consciousness in which subaltern groups critically understand the nature of their conditions in order to facilitate the leadership, direction, and organization in the struggle to transform the relations of subordination.⁵³

With respect to subaltern studies, returning to Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* and rethinking the subaltern question in his work may provide insights and possibilities for conceiving the 'new subaltern',⁵⁴ overcoming the purported impasse of subaltern studies,⁵⁵ and (re)introducing a historical materialist understanding of capital and class into the subaltern studies project, which some have suggested.⁵⁶ Given that Gramsci conceived the subaltern in broader terms than the censorship thesis suggests, perhaps rethinking the subaltern in the current context can produce new insights into the politics of domination and subordination in their various forms across political space,⁵⁷ especially considering the seemingly neo-colonial aspects of neo-liberalism, global finance, the international division of labour, and the intersectionality of race, class, gender, and religion. Translating Gramsci's analysis and critique of subalternity to the politics of the global South⁵⁸ and the global subaltern may provide avenues to rethink the possibilities of alternative political formations and organizations of subaltern political praxis.

Notes

- ¹ Ranajit Guha, 'Gramsci in India: Homage to a Teacher', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 16(2), 2011, pp 288–295.
- ² Ranajit Guha, 'Preface', in Ranajit Guha (ed), *Subaltern Studies I: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982, p vii. To date, the Subaltern Studies Editorial Collective has published 12 volumes of *Subaltern Studies*. Guha acted as the principal editor of the series from 1982 to 1988 and edited the first six volumes.
- ³ Guha, 'Preface', in *Subaltern Studies I*, p vii.
- ⁴ Joseph A Buttigieg, 'Sulla Categoria Gramsciana di "Subalterni"', *Critica marxista* 1, 1998, pp 55–62.
- ⁵ Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'Subaltern Studies and Postcolonial Historiography', *Nepantla: Views from South* 1(1), 2000, pp 9–32.
- ⁶ K Sivaramakrishnan, 'Situating the Subaltern: History and Anthropology in the Subaltern Studies Project', in David Ludden (ed), *Reading Subaltern Studies: Critical History, Contested Meaning and the Globalization of South Asia*, London: Anthem, 2002, p 234.
- ⁷ On the theoretical development and transformation of *Subaltern Studies*, see Gyan Prakash, 'Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism', *American Historical Review* 99(5), 1994, pp 1475–1490; Kate Currie, 'The Challenge to Orientalist, Elitist, and Western Historiography: Notes on the "Subaltern Project", 1982–1989', *Dialectical Anthropology* 20(2), 1995, pp 219–46; Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'Marx after Marxism: History, Subalternity, and Difference', in Saree Makdissi, Cesare Casarino and Rebecca E Karl (eds), *Marxism Beyond Marxism*, New York: Routledge, 1996, pp 55–70; Vinayak Chaturvedi, 'Introduction', in Vinayak Chaturvedi (ed), *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial*, New York: Verso, 2000, pp vii–xix; Sumit Sarkar, 'The Decline of the Subaltern in *Subaltern Studies*', in Chaturvedi, *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial*, pp 300–323; Nalini Persram, 'Spatial and Temporal Dislocations of Theory, Subjectivity, and Post(Re)ason in the Geocolonial Politics of Subaltern Studies', *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 11(1), 2011, pp 9–23.
- ⁸ David Ludden, 'A Brief History of Subalternity', in Ludden, *Reading Subaltern Studies*, pp 5, 15.
- ⁹ Antonio Gramsci, *Quaderni del carcere*, 4 vols, Valentino Gerratana (ed), Torino: G Einaudi, 1975, Notebook 25, 'Ai margini della storia (Storia dei gruppi sociali subalterni)', pp 2277–2294. Following what has become the international standard of Gramscian studies, I cite the critical editions of Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* by providing the Notebook number, followed by the section symbol (§) to identify the note number. To date, Columbia University Press has published the first three of five volumes of Joseph A Buttigieg's critical English translation of the *Prison Notebooks* (1992, 1996 and

- 2007). A concordance table that cross-references the critical edition with the major English-language anthologies of the *Prison Notebooks* is available on the International Gramsci Society website: www.internationalgramscisociety.org/
- ¹⁰ Gramsci used the actual word 'subalternity' (subalternità) only once in the *Prison Notebooks*, in relation to Giovanni Gentile's position of 'intellectual subalternity' (Notebook 10II, §14). However, the term nicely complements his use of the term 'subaltern social groups'.
 - ¹¹ See the special issue of *Postcolonial Studies* 8(4), 2005, on 'The Subaltern and the Popular', edited by Swati Chattopadhyay and Bhaskar Sarkar.
 - ¹² The 'philosophy of praxis' codeword thesis originated in the way Gramsci's prison notebooks were first edited and published in Italian and then translated into English. For the earliest examples, see Antonio Gramsci, *Il Materialismo storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce*, Felice Platone (ed), Torino: Einaudi, 1948, pp xix–xx; Antonio Gramsci, *The Open Marxism of Antonio Gramsci*, Carl Marzani (trans), New York: Cameron Associates, 1957, pp 13–15; and Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince and Other Writings*, Louis Marks (trans), New York: International Publishers, 1957, p 57.
 - ¹³ Valentino Gerratana, 'Prefazione', in Gramsci, *Quaderni del carcere*, pp xxxvi–xxxvii.
 - ¹⁴ On Gramsci's translation of Marx and Engels' writings, see Joseph A Buttigieg, 'Notebook 7: Description of the Manuscript', in Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, Vol 3, Joseph A Buttigieg (trans), New York: Columbia University Press, 2007, pp 487–489.
 - ¹⁵ For instance, in Notebook 3, §31, Gramsci openly discusses Marxism and refers to Marx, Antonio Labriola, Plekhanov, Otto Bauer's book *Socialism and Religion*, and Luxemburg, but then disguises his reference to Trotsky with the pseudonym 'Leon Davidovich'.
 - ¹⁶ Currently there is no external evidence to support or refute the possibility that prison authorities tightened their surveillance of Gramsci's writings in mid-1932. Because of this, as Haug points out, it is difficult to rule out this possibility. However, as Haug also shows, the nature of Gramsci's prison letters changed during the period of mid-1932 as well, and it is not certain if the changes were due to prison pressure or due to Gramsci's state of mind. See Wolfgang Fritz Haug, 'Gramsci's "Philosophy of Praxis"', *Socialism and Democracy* 14(1), 2000, pp 1–19; and Derek Boothman, 'A Note on the Evolution—and Translation—of Some Key Gramscian Terms', *Socialism and Democracy* 14(2), 2000, pp 115–130.
 - ¹⁷ See Gramsci's notes and bibliographic references in Notebook 4, §1 (n 2), §3, §28, §37; Notebook 5, §127; Notebook 7, §18; Notebook 7, §35; Notebook 8, §61, §198, §220, §232, §235.
 - ¹⁸ Antonio Labriola, *Socialism and Philosophy*, Ernest Untermann (trans), Chicago: C H Kerr & Company, 1907, pp 60–61.
 - ¹⁹ Roberto M Dainotto, 'Gramsci and Labriola: Philology, Philosophy of Praxis', in Joseph Francese (ed), *Perspectives on Gramsci: Politics, Culture and Social Theory*, New York: Routledge, 2009, pp 50–68; Wolfgang Fritz Haug, 'From Marx to Gramsci, from Gramsci to Marx: Historical Materialism and the Philosophy of Praxis', in Marcus E Green (ed), *Rethinking Gramsci*, New York: Routledge, 2011, pp 205–216.
 - ²⁰ Peter D Thomas, *The Gramscian Moment: Philosophy, Hegemony and Marxism*, Boston: Brill, 2009, p 107.
 - ²¹ David Arnold, 'Gramsci and Peasant Subalternity in India', *Journal of Peasant Studies* 11(4), 1984, p 162. This article is reprinted in Chaturvedi, *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial*, pp 24–49.
 - ²² Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Negotiating the Structures of Violence', in Sarah Harasym (ed), *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*, New York: Routledge, 1990, p 141.
 - ²³ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Interview with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: New Nation Writers Conference in South Africa. Interview Conducted by L. De Kock', *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature* 23(3), 1992, p 45.
 - ²⁴ David Lloyd, *Anomalous States: Irish Writing and the Post-Colonial Moment*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993, p 126. See also David Lloyd, 'The Subaltern in Motion: Subalternity, the Popular and Irish Working Class History', *Postcolonial Studies* 8(4), 2005, p 425.
 - ²⁵ Neil Rogall, 'Subaltern Studies', *London Socialist Historians Group Newsletter* 4(Autumn), 1998, p 2. Others have made similar claims. E.g. Alex Tickell, *Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p 82.
 - ²⁶ John Beverley, *Subalternity and Representation: Arguments in Cultural Theory*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999, p 12. Later in the same text, Beverley states that 'for Gramsci the subaltern is a kind of euphemism for the working class and peasantry' (p 102). Beverley repeats a similar claim in *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004, p 10.
 - ²⁷ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'The New Subaltern: A Silent Interview,' in Chaturvedi, *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial*, p 324.

- ²⁸ For example, in addition to the authors cited above, see: Khair Khair, 'Amitav Ghosh's the Calcutta Chromosome: The Question of Subaltern Agency', in Tabish Khair (ed), *Amitav Ghosh: A Critical Companion*, Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003, pp 142–161; Ronald Niezen, *A World Beyond Difference: Cultural Identity in the Age of Globalization*, Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004, p 158; Vinayak Chaturvedi, 'A Critical Theory of Subalternity: Rethinking Class in Indian Historiography', *Left History* 12(1), 2007, pp 9–28; Tickell, *Arundhati Roy's the God of Small Things*, p 82; Christian Lee Novetzke, and Laurie Patton, 'Subaltern', in Sushil Mittal and Gene Thursby (eds), *Studying Hinduism: Key Concepts and Methods*, New York: Routledge, 2008, pp 378–393; James A Sandos, 'Does the Term "Subaltern" Apply to Colonial California? "Testimonios" in Context', *Reviews in American History* 36(2), 2008, pp 160–170; O P Dwivedi, 'The Subaltern and the Text: Reading Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things', *Journal of Asia Pacific Studies* 1(2), 2010, pp 387–394.
- ²⁹ Timothy Brennan, 'Antonio Gramsci and Post-Colonial Theory: "Southernism"', *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 10(2), 2001, p 158.
- ³⁰ Timothy Brennan, *Wars of Position: The Cultural Politics of Left and Right*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2006, p 249.
- ³¹ Only Spivak (2000) and Brennan (2001 and 2006) refer to the critical English edition of the *Prison Notebooks*, but their familiarity with the integral text is unclear. Spivak makes reference to Volume 1 of Buttigieg's critical edition of the *Prison Notebooks*, which includes only Notebooks 1 and 2. Brennan makes reference to Volume 2 of Buttigieg's edition, which includes Notebooks 3, 4, and 5. However, neither Spivak nor Brennan consult the critical Italian edition of the *Prison Notebooks* or Notebook 25. Brennan alludes to the volume *Past and Present*, which is a thematically organized Italian volume of Gramsci's prison notebooks and not a component of Gerratana's critical Italian edition (*Wars of Position*, p 242).
- ³² For instance, see Notebook 1, §42, §150; Notebook 2, §47; Notebook 3, §1, §4, §18, §124; Notebook 4, §56; Notebook 5, §126; Notebook 7, §33, §35; Notebook 9, §142; Notebook 10II, §2, §41x, §61; Notebook 13, §29; Notebook 23, §14. For the dating of Gramsci's notes, I follow Gianni Francioni, *L'officina gramsciana: Ipotesi sulla struttura dei 'Quaderni del carcere'*, Napoli: Bibliopolis, 1984, pp 140–146.
- ³³ For instance, see Notebook 1, §43, §61, §62, §122, §135; Notebook 3, §1, §4, §5, §9, §10, §26, §44; Notebook 4, §8, §31, §52, §53; Notebook 8, §100; Notebook 9, §8, §110; Notebook 13, §20; Notebook 16, §11, §21; Notebook 19, §6, §7, §26; Notebook 22, §6, §10, §11, §14. To be clear, I am not suggesting that these references indicate instances in which Gramsci replaced the word 'proletariat' with a different word or phrase. I only want to highlight the fact that he did indeed use words and phrases that could be interpreted to have the same meaning as proletariat.
- ³⁴ Gramsci, Notebook 5, §147. Cf. Notebook 5, §123; Notebook 6, §13; Notebook 13, §1; Notebook 19, §1.
- ³⁵ Cf. Martha C Nussbaum, *Sex and Social Justice*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, especially ch 1.
- ³⁶ Cf. Catharine A MacKinnon, *Feminism Unmodified: Discourses on Life and Law*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987.
- ³⁷ Antonio Gramsci, 'Morality and Standards (Ibsen's "A Doll's House" at the Carignano)', *Avanti*, 22 March 1917, in Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Cultural Writings*, David Forgacs and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (eds), William Boelhower (trans), Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991, pp 70–73; Notebook 1, §62; Notebook 22, §3; Notebook 22, §9. See also Marcia Landy, 'Culture and Politics in the Work of Antonio Gramsci', *Boundary 2* 14(3), 1986, pp 49–70.
- ³⁸ Gramsci, 'Morality and Standards'; Jane Slaughter, 'Gramsci's Place in Women's History', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 16(2), 2011, pp 256–272.
- ³⁹ Nelson Moe, 'Production and Its Others: Gramsci's Sexual Question', in Green, *Rethinking Gramsci*, pp 131–146.
- ⁴⁰ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Scattered Speculations on the Subaltern and the Popular', *Postcolonial Studies* 8(4), 2005, p 479.
- ⁴¹ Eric J Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, New York: W W Norton, 1965, pp 65–73.
- ⁴² Notebook 25, §1. Here Gramsci is paraphrasing and quoting the words of Domenico Bulferetti taken from a review article on Lazzaretti. Domenico Bulferetti, 'David Lazzaretti e due milanesi', *La Fiera Letteraria*, 26 August 1928, IV, 35.
- ⁴³ Antonio Gramsci, *The Southern Question*, Pasquale Verdichio (trans), West Lafayette, IN: Bordighera, 1995, pp 20–21. Frank Rosengarten, 'The Contemporary Relevance of Gramsci's Views on Italy's "Southern Question"', in Francese, *Perspectives on Gramsci*, pp 134–144.

- ⁴⁴ Antonio Gramsci, *Letters from Prison*, Vol 2, Ray Rosenthal (trans), Frank Rosengarten (ed), New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, p 67.
- ⁴⁵ For instance, see Notebook 8, §145; Notebook 13, §1; Notebook 21, §5.
- ⁴⁶ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988, p 287.
- ⁴⁷ See, for example, Notebook 3, §18, §90; Notebook 25, §4.
- ⁴⁸ Notebook 4, §38.
- ⁴⁹ On the levels of subalternity, see Marcus E Green, 'Gramsci Cannot Speak: Presentations and Interpretations of Gramsci's Concept of the Subaltern', in Green, *Rethinking Gramsci*, pp 68–89.
- ⁵⁰ In his biography of Gramsci, Dante Germino demonstrates that the leitmotif of a 'new politics of inclusion' is apparent throughout the *Prison Notebooks* and in Gramsci's political practice. Dante Germino, *Antonio Gramsci: Architect of a New Politics*, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990, see especially pp 1–24, 253–262.
- ⁵¹ Benedetto Fontana, 'Political Space and Hegemonic Power in Gramsci', *Journal of Political Power* 3(3), 2010, p 351, n 14.
- ⁵² See especially Notebook 3, §48.
- ⁵³ Marcus E Green and Peter Ives, 'Subalternity and Language: Overcoming the Fragmentation of Common Sense', *Historical Materialism* 17(1), 2009, pp 3–30.
- ⁵⁴ Spivak, 'The New Subaltern: A Silent Interview'.
- ⁵⁵ Vasant Kaiwar, 'On Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* and Ranajit Guha's *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India*', *Historical Materialism* 12(2), 2004, pp 189–247.
- ⁵⁶ Pranav Jani, 'Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial' Edited by Vinayak Chaturvedi', *Historical Materialism* 11(3), 2003, pp 271–288; Vinayak Chaturvedi, 'A Critical Theory of Subalternity: Rethinking Class in Indian Historiography', *Left History* 12(1), 2007, pp 9–28; Persram, 'Spatial and Temporal Dislocations of Theory, Subjectivity, and Post()Reason in the Geocolonial Politics of Subaltern Studies'.
- ⁵⁷ On Gramsci's understanding of political space, see Benedetto Fontana, 'Political Space and Hegemonic Power in Gramsci', *Journal of Political Power* 3(3), 2010, pp 341–363.
- ⁵⁸ Peter Mayo, 'Gramsci, the Southern Question and the Mediterranean', *Journal of Educational Studies* 17(2), 2007, pp 1–17; Cesare Casarino, 'The Southern Answer: Pasolini, Universalism, Decolonization', *Critical Inquiry* 36(4), 2010, pp 673–696.