Notes about Giussani's considerations about
"The algebraic Marxism" by A. Vitale

The first issue of the review "Quaderni di Operai Contro" from page 61 to page 148 deals with the criticism to Giussani.

The presentation of the review in Milan last June, took place as a public initiative at Calusca bookstore. Giussani could have participated in it and stated his own position. He did not. He answers a month later by a letter with a resentful tone. This letter is public and can be found in the same bookstore.

If we hurt his self-esteem, we apologize. If, on the contrary, he has been hurt by our systematic demolition of his position about the economic analysis, we do not regret at all and we find it is very petty for him to answer with such a personal hysteria to theoretical problems which are much more important than a personal skirmish.

Sooner or later the time of those freethinkers who believe to be legitimated to assert any foolishness about the economic structure of the society and, at same time, hiding themselves behind the Marx's criticism of political economics, was to come to an end.

At the first serious confrontation with Marx's analysis of modern society, Giussani replies with anger: I am not a Marxist. A cunning.

Marx could certainly have said not to be a Marxist. Giussani should be supposed to say I am not a Giussanian, if his position had any demonstrable consistence and had made some proselyte.

We are particularly interested in this statement: "I am not a Marxist", which amounts to say "do not verify my positions through the Marx's analysis of reality". That is OK. We take note of such a position.

In the writings against Giussani there is an examination of his position. In this work we got Marx to help us and we found out that the position of such not very eminent thinker are definitely based in the vulgar economics.

Giussani gets angry because of the quotations used to criticize his writings, however they are considerations of Marx which are nothing but descriptions of capitalistic reality. We understand him, differently from Vitale he can not find any quotation which could be used to support his positions.

He hates so much the quotation that he attributes to Vitale completely invented positions, without quoting anywhere the sentences from which he has derived these supposed positions. A good work.

But perhaps Giussani refers himself to the sing-song: "if as Marxist one intends...I am not Marxist", we would ask him to spare us this shady rhetoric.

Giussani has understood quite nothing of the concept of value discovered by Marx, as a consequence he knows little or nothing about the way in which exchange takes place, in fact in the questions he asks in his letter, he defines exchange in three different paragraphs: exchange among different commodities, exchange of commodities produced by joint production and finally exchange of commodities produced by labors with different levels of skill.

The thinker has been affected by the merchandising, so that he has seen the lathe without considering his social character of fixed capital, the producer without his specific condition of labour-power and the producing-value-labour-time as particular production time.

Commodities, whatever they are, in the society founded on capital are exchanged according to their value which is determined by socially necessary labour-time. Only through exchange the socially necessary time in the production of commodities becomes the measure of their own value.

The thinker has not understood any real relation, in fact he wonders if the value of a commodity is determined before and independently from exchanges. If society does not exchange, there is no need to determine the exchange-value. The labour times are not compared one with another and each of them remains labour time useful to the production of determined good, not a commodity.

If society is founded on exchange, this fact does transform the production in production of commodities revealing the socially necessary labour time and defining on this basis the exchange-value. What kind of question is: can value be determined before and independently from exchange ?

In Giussani perspective exchange is just an additional item, money and prices just superfluous forms.

He is not thinking of determined society but of his imaginary society where there exists exchange-value without exchange, useful labor directly assumed as abstract labour, the time needed to concretely produce a good directly assumed as socially necessary time to produce it.

The technologist revenges himself on the trader. For many years the trader has claimed that without prices there could not be any value, now the technologist answers that value is determined by the fact that commodities are "objectivization of labour". Whether we refer to labour for the industrial capitalist or in the shop of the medieval craftsman, is not very important for Giussani, he does not intend to look into what kind of labour produces value and what role has the exchange in this determination. We have dealt with this matter for more than 100 pages in "Quaderni di Operai Contro".

Giussani can surely satisfy his whims in answering to all criticisms, let him even mystify the positions taken by Vitale, describing them as they are not. To understand his positions will be sufficient for anyone to read his questions about different determinations of value relevant to the particular kind of production and working activity. His position can easily be explained. We will apply to him no insult of betrayal. A betrayer is one who takes side with one part and then passes the other, this is not the case of Giussani. One can not define "betrayer" one who has never sided a part and consequently he could have not betrayed it.

Giussani has been criticized because we are working to get rid of the Marxism of small and big bourgeois. We are trying to found a theoretical thought which provides a basis for the possibility of the factory workers to uprise against the capital in order to overthrow it. Marx represents the finally completed historical breaking between the working class and capital and for this reason we consider him as our theoretical-practical reference.

Could we ignore Giussani, Pala and others who from their academic place in the universities represented a mystified capital without class struggle and the economic necessity of the factory workers' uprising ? But even worse, could have we given them the possibility to pass this fibs as part of Marx's economic analysis ?

"I am not a Marxist", yells Giussani. If this is the case he is a less strong adversary. We can face him as a petty researcher who in the context of the bourgeois economic science tries to find solutions of problems which continuously arise in his own picture of reality. Marx's solutions did not fit to him, can a researcher-inventor spread what has already been discovered ? He will die for starvation, it is better for him to ask imaginary questions and to give them fanciful answer and, if possible, to have them published by university.

In his written answer spread at Calusca, Giussani has been for a while the representative of all those privileged peoples who feels guilty. He has publicly asserted: no one will be still able to blackmail us morally with Marxism or the factory workers' exploitation. The objective was his false conscience of Christian sinner. No worker and least of all ourself, who have printed the review, have thought to get Giussani help us, everyone has to personify without any mystification the economic function which has been attributed to him by society. It is necessary to get free Marxism from the bourgeois forms in which those like Giussani have imprisoned it because of their own personal interests. This is the programme of factory workers who wants to develop their own emancipation movement. He could have thought to refer to Marx ignoring the problem of factory workers' uprising as logical consequence. He has thought to be able to pass as theoretically grounded an analysis of society which mystifies about value and surplus-value, namely about the economic ground of factory workers' condition. He did not succeed because every effort of factory workers to get their liberation has to face with the fact that in these years the class enemy has tried to deprive Marx of his subversive content. Giussani could not pass over in silence.

After the first Issue of "Quaderni di Operai Contro" he can write pages of insults against Andrea Vitale, but he can not cancel one hundred pages of criticism to his position, the demonstration that his view of reality is false and extraneous to Marx. His haughtiness has received a strong stroke also because the criticisms has been published on a review which is completely guided by factory workers.

He does not face the workers' "poverocristismo"[1] any longer, but a group of Marxist factory workers, the theoretical war to make Marxism become the science of factory workers' liberation has started.

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[1] Slang to express a supposed stupid self-pity of workers