

Appendix 1

The New Synthesis of Communism: Fundamental Orientation, Method and Approach, and Core Elements—An Outline

by Bob Avakian

Summer, 2015

Introductory Point of Orientation. The new synthesis is, in a real sense, a “work in progress,” as I am still actively applying myself to leading and to learning, from many sources, and hopefully this new synthesis will continue to be further developed and enriched as a result of ongoing work in the theoretical realm in dialectical relation with further developments in the world and in particular the further advance of a revolutionary struggle whose ultimate aim is a communist world. But it is correct to say that, as a result of work I have carried out, over a number of decades, summing up the experience of the communist revolution and socialist states and drawing from many diverse spheres of human activity and thought, there is already a further, qualitative development in the science of communism that is embodied in the fundamental orientation, method and approach, and the core elements, of the new synthesis. Because of the importance of what this represents—and the importance of presenting this in a form that is both concise and concentrated, as well as an accurate rendering, to serve as a basic grounding and guideline and to encourage and facilitate further engagement with the new synthesis—I have written the following outline. As with the new synthesis itself, this outline is not something final but a reflection of what has been brought forward up to this point, and the qualitative leap this represents, even as this is a process that is ongoing; it provides a basic indication of the essential method and approach, and other important components, of the new synthesis. In what follows, the different dimensions where communism has been further developed through this new synthesis are indicated, followed by some of the key sources where these points are spoken to (in some cases works by others, which speak to important aspects of the new synthesis, are cited; but where no authorship is indicated, the reference is to a work of mine).

Method and Approach: Communism as a Science— Further Development of Dialectical Materialism

- Freedom and necessity—a further synthesis:

Neither the emergence of the human species nor the development of human society to the present was predetermined or followed predetermined pathways. There is no transcendent will or agent which has conceived and shaped all such development, and nature and history should not be treated as such—as Nature and History. Rather, such development occurs through the dialectical interplay between necessity and accident and in the case of human history between underlying material forces and the conscious activity and struggle of people.

(This statement of mine is cited by Ardea Skybreak in *Of Primeval Steps and Future Leaps*, and this understanding of freedom and necessity is discussed in the film *BA Speaks: REVOLUTION—NOTHING LESS!* and in “Ajith—A Portrait of the Residue of the Past,” by Ishak Baran and K.J.A., in *Demarcations #4*.)

- Epistemology: a scientific theory of knowledge. Against relativism.
(*SCIENCE AND REVOLUTION: On the Importance of Science and the Application of Science to Society, the New Synthesis of Communism and the Leadership of Bob Avakian, An Interview with Ardea Skybreak*, available at revcom.us; “Ajith—A Portrait of the Residue of the Past”)
- Epistemology and morality. Against “might makes right,” and how relativism and “truth as narrative” ultimately lead to “might makes right.”
(*BASics 4:10; Away With All Gods!—Unchaining the Mind and Radically Changing the World*, especially Part Four; *BASics 5:11*; “Ajith—A Portrait of the Residue of the Past”)
- Epistemology and partisanship. In the relation between being scientific and being partisan, being consistently scientific is principal, and the basis for being, correctly and fully, partisan to the proletarian revolution and its goal of communism.
(“Ajith—A Portrait of the Residue of the Past”)
- Against populism and populist epistemology. Against reification—the mistaken concept that the oppressed, because of their exploited condition and place in society, have a “special purchase on the truth,” and in particular a special ability to understand the dynamics of society and its transformation. Against religiosity/religious tendencies in communism.
(*BASics 4:11; Observations on Art and Culture, Science and Philosophy; “‘Crises in Physics,’ Crises in Philosophy and Politics,”* in *Demarcations #1; Communism: The Beginning of a New Stage, A Manifesto from the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA*)
- A consistently scientific political economy, a consistently dialectical materialist approach to the relation between the economic base and the superstructure of politics and ideology.
(“On the ‘Driving Force of Anarchy’ and the Dynamics of Change,” by Raymond Lotta in *Demarcations #3*; “Can This System Do Away With, or Do Without, The Oppression of Women?—A Fundamental Question, a Scientific Approach to the Answer,” in the compendium *Break ALL the Chains!—Bob Avakian on the Emancipation of Women and the Communist Revolution; Birds Cannot Give Birth to Crocodiles, But Humanity Can Soar Beyond the Horizon*, Part 1)
- Beyond democracy and equality. A further development of Marx’s profound insight that the advance to communism involves society, and the people who make up society, moving “beyond the narrow horizon of bourgeois right,” in their material conditions and in their thinking, and his critical

understanding that right can never be higher than the economic structure of society, and the culture conditioned thereby.

(*Democracy: Can't We Do Better Than That?*; *Making Revolution and Emancipating Humanity*, Part 1)

- “Solid core with a lot of elasticity on the basis of the solid core.”
(*Observations on Art and Culture, Science and Philosophy*; *SCIENCE AND REVOLUTION: On the Importance of Science and the Application of Science to Society, the New Synthesis of Communism and the Leadership of Bob Avakian, An Interview with Ardea Skybreak*)
- “Emancipators of humanity.” The communist revolution is not about revenge, or “the last shall be first, and the first shall be last,” but is about emancipating humanity, ending all exploitation and oppression throughout the world.
(“Ajith—A Portrait of the Residue of the Past”)

Internationalism

- The material basis and philosophical basis, and the overall approach, of communist internationalism.
(*Basics 2:12*; “Advancing the World Revolutionary Movement: Questions of Strategic Orientation”; “Communism or Nationalism?,” a polemic by the OCR, Mexico, in *Demarcations #4*)
- Summing up the first wave of the communist movement/socialist states.
(*Conquer the World? The International Proletariat Must and Will*; *Unresolved Contradictions, Driving Forces for Revolution*, Part 2 and Part 3; *Communism: The Beginning of a New Stage, A Manifesto from the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA*; “You Don’t Know What You Think You ‘Know’ About... The Communist Revolution and the REAL Path to Emancipation: Its History and Our Future,” An Interview with Raymond Lotta, *Revolution #323*, November 24, 2013)

The Strategic Approach to Revolution, Particularly in Imperialist Countries Such as the U.S.—But with Implications More Generally

- Lenin’s *What Is To Be Done?*—revived and “enriched”—in terms of heightened emphasis on putting the problems of the revolution before the masses, but also on how communist consciousness must be “brought from outside” the direct experience and struggle of the masses, the importance of the ideological realm, and transforming the thinking of the people; and on the need to “push on” objective developments, a further development of a core element in *What Is To Be Done?* Hastening while awaiting—acting to transform the objective situation to the maximum degree possible at any given time, while being tense to new, and perhaps unforeseen (or even unforeseeable), events and how other class/social forces are themselves “working on” the objective contradictions from their own point of view and in line with how their representatives perceive their interests.
(The first six paragraphs of Part 2 of *Making Revolution and Emancipating Humanity*)

Mao emphasized the dialectical relation between matter and consciousness, and stressed the need to be oriented to be prepared for unexpected developments; but precisely this kind of orientation, understanding, method and approach is synthesized—in a fuller, higher and more concentrated way—in the new synthesis.

(This informs “Some Principles for Building A Movement for Revolution” and the statement “On the Strategy for Revolution,” by the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.)

- Separation of the communist movement from the labor movement. Analysis of the bedrock base and driving force for revolution, and the broader united front under the leadership of the proletariat.
(*Birds Cannot Give Birth to Crocodiles, But Humanity Can Soar Beyond the Horizon*, Part 2)
- The role of intellectuals as political and literary representatives of a class, and the contradictions bound up with this in the proletarian revolution.
(*Ruminations and Wranglings: On the Importance of Marxist Materialism, Communism as a Science, Meaningful Revolutionary Work, and a Life With Meaning*)
- The pivotal role of the Black national question, the pivotal relation between national liberation and proletarian revolution, in the U.S.
(*Communism and Jeffersonian Democracy; “The Oppression of Black People & the Revolutionary Struggle to End All Oppression”*; the films *REVOLUTION AND RELIGION: The Fight for Emancipation and the Role of Religion*; *A Dialogue Between CORNEL WEST & BOB AVAKIAN*; *Revolution: Why It’s Necessary, Why It’s Possible, What It’s All About*; and *BA Speaks: REVOLUTION—NOTHING LESS!*; *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America (Draft Proposal)*, from the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA)
- The crucial role—and the even further heightened role in today’s world—of the struggle for the emancipation of women and its relation to the proletarian revolution and its goal of emancipating all humanity through the advance to a communist world.
(*Basics 3:22; Unresolved Contradictions, Driving Forces for Revolution, Part 3; Break ALL the Chains!—Bob Avakian on the Emancipation of Women and the Communist Revolution*)
- The seizure of power.
(“On the Possibility of Revolution,” by the Revolutionary Communist Party; *Birds Cannot Give Birth to Crocodiles, But Humanity Can Soar Beyond the Horizon*, Part 2)

Building the New Society, Advancing to a New World

- Carrying forward the socialist transformation of society, as part—fundamentally a subordinate part—of the overall world revolution toward the ultimate goal of communism.
(*Views on Socialism and Communism: A Radically New Kind of State, a Radically Different and Far Greater Vision of Freedom*)
- The “parachute point”—the “opening out” of social relations and the expression of social and class contradictions with the consolidation of the new socialist state.
(*The Basis, the Goals, and the Methods of the Communist Revolution*)
- “Solid core with a lot of elasticity on the basis of the solid core,” applied to socialist society. Recognition of the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the leadership of a communist vanguard, during the socialist transition to communism, and at the same time a heightened emphasis on the importance of dissent and ferment, politically, intellectually, culturally, on the foundation of and as a key part of exercising the dictatorship of the proletariat and carrying forward the transition toward communism, and, with the achievement of communism, the abolition of dictatorship of any kind.
(*Observations on Art and Culture, Science and Philosophy; “Alain Badiou’s ‘Politics of Emancipation’: A Communism Locked Within the Confines of the Bourgeois World,”* by Raymond Lotta, Nayi Duniya, and K.J.A., in *Demarcations* #1)

- The role of a socialist constitution, rights of the people and the rule of law with the dictatorship of the proletariat.

(Birds Cannot Give Birth to Crocodiles, But Humanity Can Soar Beyond the Horizon, Part 1; Constitution, Law, and Rights—in capitalist society and in the future socialist society, Selections from the writings of Bob Avakian and excerpts from the “Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America (Draft Proposal)” from the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA)

- The relation between abundance and revolution, within a socialist country and internationally.
(Birds Cannot Give Birth to Crocodiles, But Humanity Can Soar Beyond the Horizon, Part 1)
- All this is embodied, applied and amplified in the *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America (Draft Proposal)*.

Conclusion/Summary. What is most fundamental and essential in the new synthesis is the further development and synthesis of communism as a scientific method and approach, and the more consistent application of this scientific method and approach to reality in general and in particular the revolutionary struggle to overturn and uproot all systems and relations of exploitation and oppression and advance to a communist world. This method and approach underlies and informs all the core elements and essential components of this new synthesis.