

those trying to apply intersectionality across borders without seeking to uproot the divide between the imperialist countries and the Third World, and the role of the U.S. atop this, this is at best a pipe dream, at worst an apologia for imperialism, concentrating the essence: being “woke” without fundamentally changing a goddamn thing!

A CHALLENGE AND AN INVITATION

We do not need any more people getting played—squandering their desire for real change into following hustlers or schoolyard bully types who rationalize turning oppressed “identities” into political capital, at times with seemingly radical veneer like “abolitionism” on harmful illusions and meaningless reforms, other times pitching for candidates of the ruling-class, war-criminal Democratic Party. **We do not need the “right to speak” and “leadership” legitimated by identity and narrative, but judged by the content of what is being said, and where it is being led.**

WHAT IS URGENTLY NEEDED: radically and fundamentally changing the world and all its oppressive social relations. That requires serious dialogue and debate on *reform vs. revolution*: what is the source of these horrors and what is the solution, what will emancipate all of humanity and what will be mere rearrangements within the same system!

Every person of conscience should engage the Call on Revcom.us

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INTERSECTIONALITY: FEEL-GOOD MAKE-BELIEVE IN THE “WOKE” SPACES OF EMPIRE

BY NAYI DUNIYA

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Welcome to the land of intersectionality—where a seemingly radical and all-encompassing framework can comprehend and traverse multiple oppressions faced by billions on this planet without the “messiness” of overthrowing the system that generates and enforces these oppressions; where truth is determined and wrong is righted by anointing the most oppressed as authority and leadership in struggles for reform; where the most fundamental and deep-seated social divisions and lopsided gulfs of the world such as between rich and poor nations are effectively ignored and where identified “intersections” and “direct experience” shared across “lanes” are sufficient to change the world.

This is feel-good make-believe “woke” world. In the **real world** of horrendous—and needless—suffering, it is a cruel joke inflicted upon the billions of humanity. The world is a horror for the vast majority—oppression and exploitation of whole peoples, genocidal wars and violence in the intimate sphere, millions driven off homes by conflict and global warming. This world is shaped and stamped by a system: the system of capitalism-imperialism.

As Bob Avakian says:

**Let’s get down to basics. We need a revolution.
Anything else, in the final analysis, is bullshit.**

From BAsics, from the talks and writings of Bob Avakian (BA), 3:1

Intersectionality is a framework for ranking and adjudicating different forms of oppression which can only leave the world as it is, with people fighting each other over turf and privilege. With its “standpoint epistemology,” it disallows the necessary and possible analysis of underlying driving dynamics that are the **systemic** causes of this

horrific oppression—felt and lived by billions! There is NOTHING “radical” about intersectionality, either on **the problem** (the root causes of the oppression) or **the solution** (what is to be done to fundamentally uproot and get beyond it). To do *that* takes **science**, looking beyond the surface at underlying mainsprings and drivers, how they historically evolved, function, and continue to change.

Would one diagnose and cure any serious disease like cancer or Ebola just on the shared “intersectional” lived experiences of each patient, confining oneself to their symptoms and suffering, instead of the application of science—bringing to bear underlying causes like gene mutations or germs, corresponding treatments, and in this context, learn from and work with patients?

Objective social reality actually exists and is not just an adjudicated compilation of narratives, nor is it determined by what people think even while that’s a part of it. Societies, like all natural phenomena, come into being, change, and go out of existence—and **science can be applied to society, as it can to nature, to grasp the underlying and driving dynamics and the multiple pathways of development within those dynamics.**

These are the questions that must be confronted and dug into: What are the real and dynamic links between capitalist production relations and the deep-rooted forms of social oppression that are embedded in this society, such as the oppression of Black people, of women, of LGBTQ people, of immigrants? Can we do away with one without the other? Will it take a revolution, overthrowing this whole system, or can we do something less? How can an actual revolution be made in a country like the U.S.? What sort of society needs to and can replace this? Is it possible, and how do we fundamentally get to a world beyond all this oppression, exploitation, and antagonistic social division, to the emancipation of all of humanity? What does that look like, as part of a worldwide process?

There are approaches and answers to ALL **these** questions, **concentrated in the breakthroughs of Bob Avakian, BA.** The scientific discovery made by Marx of how societies develop and the possibility of a future without class divisions and all forms of oppression, and the further developments of that understanding through a whole first wave of communist revolutions, were world changing advances for humanity. But there were significant aspects in theory and practice that ran counter to communism’s

fundamentally scientific and emancipatory character and goals. BA has resolved this and has forged a whole new framework for **emancipating all of humanity, the *new communism***. So, yes, there *is* a **radical and scientific framework that can not only comprehend the multiple oppressions faced by billions on this planet, but chart the way beyond it!**

“Standpoint epistemology” or applying “intersectional analysis” do not even broach **these critical questions**—and are obstacles in this much-needed process. Of course, these forms of oppression “intersect,” for they occur in the context of a worldwide system of capitalism-imperialism, but proceeding from the “standpoint” or “narratives” of even the most oppressed does not get to the underlying system, and how all these oppressive social relations are interwoven in the history of this society and the nature of this system. Class, approached as an “intersectional identity,” is not a substitute for or the essence of, or even begins to comprehend, capitalism-imperialism as a global system of production relations which puts its stamp on the social relations and ideas of the time.

Without science and a scientific approach to get at the root causes, what is needed to uproot this and set up a radically different system and society, ALL resistance and struggles are channeled back into the very same system that is the source of this oppression in the first place. Without this, even the sincerest and best of intent, insight, analysis, and struggle is constrained or straitjacketed by **the fundamental lack of seeing beyond the capitalist mode of production**, the permanence of this system. The narratives and lived experiences of the oppressed, silenced for too long, have a critical role—*but in **this** context, to make revolution and to get beyond it all, for the emancipation of all of humanity, not to “get mine” or get atop a “woke” world!*

Tellingly, American privilege is deafeningly absent in “woke” world’s intersectional matrix of oppression, unmentioned in “safe spaces,” even while the U.S. is atop this parasitic food chain of capitalism-imperialism! Focused on “me” and “my” oppression, what about the 7 billion people—in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Central and South America, or Bangladesh; the billions in the sweatshops, the mines, the farms providing your clothes, technology and food? And the list goes on and on...

In “woke” spaces of America, standpoint is mere guideposts to adjudicate scraps of spoils, spoils of empire, not a framework for the emancipation of all of humanity. For