

Wealth vs solidarity, and the need for compassion

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Dear friends,

I have been thinking about the how the corporate class, the bootlickers, the “upper middle class” and others utterly slavish to the capitalist simultaneously dehumanise themselves and others. A phenomenal piece of mental trickery: contortion, gaslighting and betrayal. Those who fancy themselves stable and wealthy (an ever treacherous position to claim), and often profess it so by engaging in “high culture” activities (themselves equal parts immoral and despicable) which range incredibly broadly from horse racing, to stock market investing, or apparently lately cryptocurrency market gambling. This, to me, is a fundamentally interesting group of “people” . Let’ s think on it.

In the imperial core —conceptually a useful imaginary space for us to consider in theorisation about “wealth”and culture —there are opportunities for multi-generational “middle classes”to establish themselves. However, there are no “middle classes”only capitalists and workers. So a false segregation has emerged similar to other divisions around identity. Except, differently to identity politics, the middle class often intentionally serves the capitalist class in their promotion of capital’ s ideals. Indeed, we’ ve seen recently post the CEO-killing (which Rupert Murdoch is very very unhappy about —lol) the clamouring of the middle class to attempt to protect and vanguard capital and its mistakes. And, almost as though it were natural, shift blame for the problems in society onto a perceived “lower class” (working class, but probably blue-collar and underemployed people).

So, within imperial core countries (majority white, western, largely european, and the “white” diaspora) there is a growing *fat* middle class that asserts to be different from those “lowly workers” . Beside the obvious snobbery, as mentioned, this is a false division. There is perhaps 1:10,000,000 chance that a member of the so called middle class could ever accumulate enough wealth that they be considered a capitalist. Particularly as the capitalist class currently hold so much wealth that they control more moneys than all the worlds governments combined. And often with a great deal more liquidity. The top 1% hold an absolutely unconscionable and utterly unrecognisable volume of capital such that their entire social organisation, purpose for being, and very existence is different to the 99%.

We might actually, to better understand this, consider that even if we combined all the wealth of people living on Kaurua Country (Adelaide, Australia) that this wealth would be less than Jeff Bezos pays himself in an hour. A. Single. Hour. Combine the wealth of Australia for ten financial years of extreme productivity and you *might* come close to the wealth of the empire that is Amazon, but it would be very close. Millionaires cosplaying that their wealth makes them a capitalist are a huge part of the problem of reinforcing this exploitative system. Even though they are still subject to a great many of the terrible conditions that the rest of us experience every day. Importantly, anyone whose *accumulation* overs \$1m is highly unlikely to hold solidarity with the rest of the working class, but millionaires are no longer wealthy, and they experience class struggle (albeit at a deeply atrophied rate to the rest of us). But I promised some cultural exploration, we know we are being exploited and that these people have a very active role in it, so let’ s get exploring what this does, culturally, to this group of people.

Guilt.

Just bucketloads of guilt. Deeply internalised, highly processed, and almost intangible. But there is palpable guilt, fear and a sense of anxiety that runs so deep amongst class traitors that they will be: recognised as imposers and thrown to the lower class “wolves” , seen

for what they are as enabling deep and unhinged violence against the working class, or ousted as incompatible with those they admire —the capitalists —because their godheads reject them. Interestingly, to me, the last of these is not unlikely. Actual capitalists, the strategists behind the human and planetary torment that is our existence, are psychopaths in the clinical sense. They have no recognition of the value of humans, have very little connection with humanity, and feel, experience and engage with the world in a way utterly different to the rest of us. Compassion is not in the dictionary. And the middle classes see this as the ultimate “sacrifice” to the altar of capital and seek to emulate the violent despotism of their masters upon anyone around them, including their so-called friends.

Grim assessment? Yes, but there’s no other way of thinking of this. Class ascendancy is a sociopolitical process that is tied to inequitable and deeply unethical behaviour. We can characterise two major features of ascendancy that enable the process of stripping the humanity from the ascendant: first, an economic accumulation which, at minimum, undermines and exploits the skilled labour of coal-face workers; second, a social process of utterly re conceptualising humanity as a workforce to be enslaved. This has deep implications for socialisation, culture, and participation in “high society” not least of which is Gatsbyesque political circus and backstabbing.

The capitalist class exists in what we might term a “parallel society”, one which operates with fundamentally different temporal, spatial, and social coordinates than the world inhabited by workers. Their leisure practices aren’t merely more expensive versions of working-class recreation, but rather constitute an entirely distinct mode of being-in-the-world that systematically reproduces their class position. Consider how their relationship to time itself differs fundamentally from wage labourers —they experience neither the tyranny of the clock nor the anxious relationship to future security that characterises working class existence. Their leisure isn’t carved out from work time but rather represents their primary mode of existence, with “work” (in the form of capital management) seamlessly integrated into social activities.

This manifests in spaces of exclusive socialisation —private clubs, invitation-only events, closed “philanthropic” circles —where the real work of class reproduction occurs through what C. Wright Mills termed the power elite network. Here, marriages are arranged (let’s not even get into how deeply sexist and misogynistic these people are), business deals are conceived, and perhaps most importantly, the psychological and cultural foundations of ruling class consciousness are maintained through constant reinforcement of shared values and perspectives. Their children are socialised from birth, at a distance, into this parallel world through private schools, exclusive summer camps, and carefully curated social circles that ensure they never meaningfully encounter or understand the lived reality of the working class. This creates what we might term an epistemic bubble that renders the violence of capitalism natural to its beneficiaries such that it “always was”, allowing them to conceptualise their position as natural and deserved rather than the product of systemic exploitation. The result is a form of class consciousness that is simultaneously highly developed in terms of protecting class interests and profoundly unconscious of its own conditions of possibility and exploitation.

The interplay between ruling class consciousness and middle-class aspiration creates a self-reinforcing system of social reproduction that extends far beyond mere economic relations into the very fabric of cultural and psychological existence. There is a deeply broken nature to this relation, not only naturalising violence, extraction, inequity, inhumanity, and exploitation, but making those suffering most feel worst about their own suffering. Understanding this through hegemony gives some hope. *The* system perpetuates itself not primarily through direct coercion but through the active participation of its subjects in their own domination —particularly the middle classes who, despite their material position as workers, function as the most zealous defenders of capitalist social relations, perhaps

more than the capitalists themselves. Their desperate performance of ruling class values, combined with their anxious policing of class boundaries, serves to maintain an epistemological fortress of capital (it hurt me not to write solitude), where the violence of exploitation is rendered simultaneously invisible and natural.

This process of class reproduction operates through a tripartite of alienation: first, the fundamental alienation from labour that Marx identified; second, the alienation from class consciousness that results from the middle class' s false identification with capital; and third, the profound alienation from human solidarity that characterises the ruling class' s parallel society. Each level of this alienation reinforces the others, creating a totalising system where the very possibility of alternative social relations becomes utterly unthinkable. Hello, capitalist realism. The ruling class' s complete detachment from working class reality, maintained through their distinct temporal and spatial existence, isn't a symptom of wealth inequality but rather a fundamentally necessary condition for the continuation of capitalist exploitation. One that the middle class desperately tries to emulate even as it ensures their own continued subordination.

The path forward requires more than recognition of these mechanisms - it demands a fundamental rupture in the reproduction of class relations at both material and ideological levels. See, I' m doing the hope thing from the last post. This rupture must begin with the recognition that the middle class' s position as capital' s loyal foot soldiers is fundamentally untenable, both materially and psychologically. Their guilt, their anxiety, their desperate performance of ruling class values —these are not individual psychological phenomena but rather structural features of a system that requires their active participation in their own exploitation. Only through the development of what Gramsci termed organic intellectual leadership, combined with practical solidarity across the working class (broadly defined), can we begin to imagine and construct alternative forms of social organisation that don' t require the systematic dehumanisation. The challenge, then, is not only to critique these mechanisms but to actively construct new forms of consciousness and solidarity that can break the cycle of class reproduction and create possibilities for genuine human emancipation.

The answer is quite literally compassion.

In solidarity,

Aidan.