



preparing for  
**power**  
**'90**

30p

Preparing for Power  
1990

Week of  
discussion and  
debate organised by  
the Revolutionary  
Communist Party  
University of  
London Union  
Malet Street  
London WC1  
Friday 20 to  
Friday 27 July  
Sponsored by

**LIVING  
MARXISM**

# preparing for power

## Specialist courses morning

### Introduction to Marxism 1

Convenor: Frank Richards  
Sessions on

- Historical materialism • Scientific socialism
- Class struggle and revolution • Ideology
- The party

#### Recommended reading

- K Marx, 'Theses on Feuerbach', in Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, student's edition
- K Marx, *The German Ideology*
- F Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*
- K Korsch, *Three Essays on Marxism*, pp11-38

### Advanced Marxism 2

Convenor: Mike Freeman  
Sessions on

- Individual and class identity • Materialisation of social relations
- Sexuality and society • Base and superstructure
- What is orthodox Marxism?

#### Recommended reading

- I Rubin, *Marx's Theory of Value*
- H Draper, *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution*
- I Meszaros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*
- G Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*
- F Jakubowski, *Ideology and Superstructure*

### Marxism and science 3

Convenor: John Gibson  
Sessions on

- Science and society today • Idealism and modern physics
- Biotechnology or genetic engineering?
- The debate about artificial intelligence
- The science of the future?

#### Recommended reading

- A Schmidt, *The Concept of Nature in Marx*
- F Engels



Preparing for Power is a week of discussion on the state of the world and how to change it. It is for everybody who wants to understand the Marxist view on everything from war and revolution to science and art. This year's Preparing for Power offers • a weekend focusing on the collapse of the Stalinist bloc—and on the start of a new cycle in history • sixteen specialist courses on Marxist theory—ranging from Contemporary capitalism and Marxism and science to The roots of racism and New international relations • more than 100 workshops and debates • guest speakers from Britain and abroad • swimming pool, sports facilities, bar and music • creche and accommodation • bands, discos and films • cheap transport from all over Britain



## Specialist courses afternoon

### 9 The roots of racism

Convenor: Kenan Malik  
Sessions on

- Marxist theory of racism • Biology and race
- Race and culture • Race and class • Fighting racism in the nineties

#### Recommended reading

- K Tompson, *Under Siege*
- P Fryer, *Staying Power*
- J Rex and D Mason (eds), *Theories of Race and Ethnic Relations*
- Z Layton-Henry and P Rich (eds), *Race, Government and Politics in Britain*
- M Marable, *Black American Politics*

### 10 An introduction to the Irish War

Convenor: Phil Murphy  
Sessions on

- Why Britain stays • Loyalism: myth and reality
- The strange case of Southern Ireland • The IRA
- Why we say Troops out now

#### Recommended reading

- Irish Freedom Movement, *The Irish War*
- RF Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600-1972*
- DG Boyce (ed), *The Revolution in Ireland 1879-1923*
- M Farrell, *The Orange State*
- P Bew, E Hazelkorn and H Patterson, *The Dynamics of Irish Politics*
- J Bowyer-Bell, *The Secret Army*
- B Rowthorne and N Wayne, *Northern Ireland: The Political Economy of Conflict*

### 11 Women's oppression: an introduction

*Dialectics of Nature* • J Gribbin, *In Search of Schrodinger's Cat* • J Searle, *Minds, Brains and Science* • J Glover, *What Sort of People Should There Be?* • A Rupert Hall, *The Revolution in Science 1500-1750*

## Contemporary capitalism 4

**Convenor: Tony Kennedy**  
Sessions on

- The formation of the world capitalist order
- Inside the credit system • National and international capital • Old and new capitalist powers • Back to the future: Lenin's theory of imperialism

**Recommended reading**

- T Kennedy, 'South Korea's take-off', in *Confrontation 3*
- K Marx, *Capital*, Vol 3 • EJ Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital* • AL Frieberg, *The Weary Titan: Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline* • S Marris, *Deficits and the Dollar*

## Between East and West: the third world 5

**Convenor: Daniel Nassim**  
Sessions on

- New thinking: Soviet retrenchment in the third world • Latin America: George Bush's backyard? • South Africa at the crossroads • Japan and the third world • Who is fighting imperialism?

**Recommended reading**

- KM Campbell and SN MacFarlane (eds), *Gorbachev's Third World Dilemmas* • S Branford and B Kucinski, *The Debt Squads* • P Johnson and D Martin (eds), *Frontline South Africa* • R Dritte, *Japan's Foreign Policy* • R Munck, *The New International Labour Studies*

## History and progress 6

**Convenor: Alan Harding**  
Sessions on

- The idea of progress • Rise and fall of great powers • Imperialism: growth and decay • Social engineering • The end of ideology

**Recommended reading**

- K Marx and F Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*
- E Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*
- H Grossmann, *The Law of Accumulation and Breakdown of the Capitalist System* • B Semmel, *Imperialism and Social Reform: England's Social Imperialist Thought 1895-1914* • G Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*

## Advanced course on women 7

**Convenor: Anne Burton**  
Sessions on

- Sociological theories of women's oppression
- Engels and his critics on the family • Domestic work • Family ideology and its contradictions
- Theories of patriarchy

**Recommended reading**

- C Burton, *Subordination: Feminism and Social Theory*
- R Hamilton and M Barrett, *The Politics of Diversity*
- M Evans, J Sayers and N Redcliff (eds), *Engels Revisited*
- F Mount, *The Subversive Family* • A Kuhn and A Wolpe, *Feminism and Materialism*

## The Marxist theory of the state 8

**Convenor: Kerry Dean**  
Sessions on

- Are Marx and Lenin out of date? • State intervention in the economy • State regulation of social life • Specifics of the German state • The British state and political life

**Recommended reading**

- VI Lenin, *State and Revolution* • J Keane (ed), *Civil Society and the State* • T Bunyan, *The Political Police in Britain* • A Levine, *The End of the State* • A Gramsci, *Selected Writings*



## Workshops

Throughout the week Preparing for Power will feature a wide variety of late afternoon and early evening workshops. There will also be debates, as well as films and entertainment for people who want a break from politics, during the early evenings.

**Current issues:** Speculation and the stock market • The left and perestroika

- Can the market take off in the Soviet Union? • What is history? • Race, religion and culture • What's so special about Islam? • The new anti-Semitism • Eco hot-spots • Charity and poverty • Rogues and robbers: the idea of the criminal class • Removing the brakes on technology
- The information society

**British politics:** Middle class protest under Thatcher • The Tory factions

- Conservatives and the family • The changing role of the modern monarch
- Bent coppers • Scab unions • Welsh nationalism • Alcohol, drugs and morality • Women and the demographic timebomb

**Art, sport and culture:** Post-modernism and the end of rationality • Realism in British cinema • War photography • The music theatre of Weill and Brecht

- Glasgow—City of Culture? • Architecture: the Prince Charles debate • Why is British food so bad? • What happened to good music? • Is boxing all bad? • Cricket and the decline of the British Empire

**Science and technology:** The quest for beauty in science • Proletarian science • In defence of Darwin • Genetic engineering • Physics and metaphysics • Consciousness, man and thinking machines • Why capitalism can't cure the common cold • Inventions for the 1990s

**Britain and Ireland:** Class war in Ireland • British counter-insurgency strategy in Ireland • Ian Paisley • Ireland—the open economy

- Cinema in Ireland

**International:** Noriega and the decline of US imperialism • Religion and the US right • Poland and Solidarity • Social problems in the Soviet Union • The disintegration of Africa • The ANC and the 1990s • Dictators and bankers—Nigeria and the West • Israel and the Palestinians • Myths about Japan

- Japanese aid to the third world • Imperialism in the South Pacific
- Cambodia—a second Lebanon?

**Women, sex and gay oppression:** The ABC of motherhood • Women's labour and childcare in the 1990s • Childhood • Origin of the family

- Homosexuality • Private lives • Mr and Mrs • Slimming magazines
- Prohibition and the family in the USA

## Where to go, what to pay, who to ask

The University of London Union is a couple of blocks east of Tottenham Court Road in central London. The nearest tubes are Goodle Street (Northern line), Warren Street (Victoria and Northern lines) and Euston Square (Metropolitan and Circle lines). Transport, accommodation and creche facilities will be provided—get in touch now to make your arrangements. If you want to come to Preparing for Power, sign up now! You can take advantage of special discounts if you register early.

The prices for Preparing for Power are as below

**For the week (20-27 July)**

- waged: £35 on the door; £33 in advance; £30 before 1 June; £25 before 1 April
- unwaged: £25 on the door; £23 in advance; £21 before 1 June; £19 before 1 April

**For the weekend only (20-22 July)**

- waged: £22 on the door; £20 in advance; £18 before 1 June; £17 before 1 April
  - unwaged: £17 on the door; £15 in advance; £14 before 1 June; £13 before 1 April
- Make cheques payable to RCP Association, and send to BM RCP, London WC1N 3XX. Your Preparing for Power ticket will be sent to you upon registration and a final timetable will be available before the conference. For all enquiries about Preparing for Power, contact Lesley Banham on (071) 375 1702, or write to her at BM RCP, London WC1N 3XX.



**Convenor: Sara Hardy**  
Sessions on

- The moral offensive and the family • Are women inferior? • Images of women • Women's troubles
- Men: part of the problem?

**Recommended reading**

- J Phillips, *Policing the Family* • L Segal, *Is the Future Female?* • G Chester and J Dickey (eds), *Feminism and Censorship* • S Rowbotham, *The Past is Before Us*
- R Chapman and J Rutherford, *Male Order: Unwrapping Masculinity*

## 12 Visions of the future

**Convenor: Andrew Calcutt**

**Sessions on**

- Frankenstein: Prometheus unbound • Science fiction: the Empire strikes back • Futurism in the Soviet Union • Punk: no future • Marxism and the future

**Recommended reading**

- R Holmes, *Shelley: The Pursuit* • P Calvocoressi, *World Politics Since 1945* • L Trotsky, *Art and Revolution*
- P York, *Style Wars* • H Draper, *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution*

## 13 New international relations

**Convenor: Helen Simons**

**Sessions on**

- The post-war order • Changing patterns of US social relations • The USA and Japan • The German question • Britain and Europe

**Recommended reading**

- C Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe* • MT Klare, *Beyond the Vietnam Syndrome: US Intervention in the 1980s* • P Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*
- E Moreton (ed), *Germany Between East and West*
- WR Louis and H Bull (eds), *The Special Relationship*

## 14 Reform or revolution?

**Convenor: Mick Hume**

**Sessions on**

- Why the working class? • The battle of ideas • The vanguard party • Permanent revolution
- Proletarian dictatorship

**Recommended reading**

- R Luxemburg, *Reform or Revolution?* • VI Lenin, *What is to be Done?* • VI Lenin, *State and Revolution*
- L Trotsky, *Permanent Revolution* • G Lukacs, *Lenin: A Study in the Unity of His Thought*

## 15 Sociology and Marxism

**Convenor: Joan Phillips**

**Sessions on**

- Marx's critique of capitalist society • Weber's alternative • Analytical Marxism • The debate about class • The Marxist theory of ideology

**Recommended reading**

- K Korsch, 'Leading principles of Marxism', in *Three Essays on Marxism* • HH Gerth and CW Mills (eds), *From Max Weber* • J Roemer, *Analytical Marxism*
- H Draper, *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution*, Vol II
- F Jakubowski, *Ideology and Superstructure*

## 16 The Soviet bloc in transition

**Convenor: Rob Knight**

**Sessions on**

- Economic changes since perestroika • Political changes since Gorbachev • The Soviet working class • The national question • Glasnost and Eastern Europe

**Recommended reading**

- F Furedi, *The Soviet Union Demystified* • M Goldman, *Gorbachev's Challenge* • E Hewitt, *Reforming the Soviet Economy* • RJ Hall and JA Dellenbrant, *Gorbachev and Perestroika* • C Donnelly, *Gorbachev's Revolution*
- A Aslund, *Gorbachev's Struggle for Economic Reform*