

## COSMOLOGY without HEADACHES

(Lecture Series)

(compiling, transcribing, researching, editing always in progress)

### LECTURE XXVIII: 19<sup>th</sup> Century Upheavals (3): Marxism

#### ‘Karlo’ Marx—Another Brother?

I have often referred to **Karl Marx** [1818-1883] as the “clown prince of economic philosophy”. While his arguments have depth and, particularly with Engels contribution of intensity, they have obviously been captivating, the conclusions are (to be kind) somewhat suspect. For example, his expectation of the ‘withering of the state’ is absurd, and the ultimate shape of the goal: the wonderful world of communism is nowhere clarified either in his writings or in those of his understudy, **Friedrich Engels** [1820-1895]. Marx took his bearings from Hegel’s ‘dialectic of ideas’ as the working-out of history. In place of the rather too amorphous (and willful) ‘Spirit of the Age’, and in even more deterministic fashion, he substituted the control and means of production. The resulting conflict between classes and inevitable revolutions were the natural forces driving history. The conflict of classes over time had narrowed to the last conflict of the two remaining classes: the bourgeois (owners/capitalists) and the proletariat (property-less workers). The collective could now be seen by social scientists as the final stage. The French Revolution was seen as the first of many such conflicts that would, ultimately, lead to victory for the many over the few—i.e., the proletariat forming the last and only class. He seems to have not noticed there was still a peasant class and a *meritocracy*.

Marx’s societal forces were more strictly materialistic than Hegel’s will of Nature. As with Darwinism in organic evolution, the socialist ‘forces’ of ‘dialectical materialism’ are the result of natural laws (sociological or historical laws, as it were); ‘scientific’, in that they have no need of consciousness or purpose to work out their ultimate end through continual conflict. (But if they have an end, how can they not have a purpose?—isn’t that the same thing? Thus we have what amounts to ‘non-teleological teleology’.) In this we find also the fingerprints of Comte: ‘social science is not the study of humans’. Recall his three stages of history: the ancient *theological* phase, which was terminated by the *metaphysical* stage whereby man abandons the seeking of false spirits and deities, replacing them with magical but impersonal forces as in alchemy and astrology, all of which is discovered, finally, as false in the *positive* phase, which, according to F.A. Hayek’s reading of Comte,



...aims at directly connecting the observed phenomena by rules about the coexistence of sequence or, to use a modern phrase not yet used by Comte, at merely “describing” their interrelationship by general and invariable laws. In other words, since the habits of thought which man had acquired in interpreting the actions of his own kind had long held up the study of external nature, and the latter had only made real progress in proportion as it got rid of this human habit, the way to progress in the study of man must be the same: we must cease to consider man anthropomorphically and must treat him as if we knew about him as little as we know about external nature.

[Hayek; THE COUNTER REVOLUTION OF SCIENCE; ch.16, *Sociology: Comte and His Successors*; Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, 1979 (Free Press, Glencoe IL, 1952); pp.326-327]

This would work, the socialists presumed, in sociology as well as in physics. We will simply ignore the mind; not concern ourselves about the silly illusion of a soul nor about Kant's transcendental world of pure reason nor about the ramifications of thoughts and dreams. We'll just observe humanity as an entomologist studies beetles. Thus we shall uncover the natural laws of society, by which we can then learn to control and manipulate it and thus perfect it. No wonder there was a Romantic reaction. But ever since those laws had been discovered by the German social philosophers and 'properly' understood by Marx it had seemed plain that 'resistance is futile' (as with the 'Borg' in *Star Trek*). Impatient to assist Nature in achieving the inevitable and final social equilibrium, communists tend to evangelize as if on a mission from the cosmos to foment the revolution rather than wait for it to inevitably happen—so that they might, I suppose, live to see it. They might even help guide it toward (and perhaps be worshipped as heroes in) the 'glorious' era of what Nietzsche spurned as the 'last-men': witless, spineless, soulless nebbishes too stupid, habit-laden, and/or weak-willed to recognize his prophet of the superman, Zarathustra, and who, therefore, would—*must* (not out of freedom to do their duty to each other as honorable citizens of a noble state, but out of their miserable feebleness and pitiful ignorance) ultimately succumb to the future super-tyranny—and the cycle would recommence repeatedly as 'eternal recurrence'.

To prevent something like Nietzsche's super individual, the *übermensch*, from cancelling the new social experiment and dominating by force and fear, Marx taught us to expect the 'dictatorship of the proletariat': a period of social training before we can dismiss the state. The existing proletariat, inexperienced in such things as government and politics and economics, is incapable of ruling even themselves, so a super-socialist committee (invariably controlled by its strongest mind—Robespierre comes to mind) will stand in their place while workers learn their new jobs (from him); fit into to their roles in the collective (as decided by him); devote themselves to the whole (per his directions). For how long? Undetermined. What will be the roles in the new society? Undetermined. What are the steps to eliminating the state? Here is finally something suggestive of a plan: First, the revolution will take over the existing state and its modes of production and distribution, thus all will share in the profits and the wealth liberated from the rich. Then, to prevent backsliding, the previous elite establishment will have to assimilate downward into the working class. Should they resist degradation they must be deported or eradicated as there can be no opposition to the new order. Royalty, of course, cannot be assimilated, so the king (or Tsar) and his queen; his offspring, certainly; his brothers and their families and 'his sisters and his cousins and his aunts'—anyone tainted with royal blood who might claim legal, pre-revolutionary sovereignty must be expunged. Justly or unjustly, painlessly or painfully, no matter, it must be done for the ultimate good of the new society. And then?—well...*all* the laws of society it seems have not been quite discovered. But as they are found out, the route to the final situation and the blueprints for its stabilizing institutions will become clear. After all, this is a mechanistic world and predetermined. We can study and accumulate the facts and gradually discover the laws of sociology. We can hurry or delay the consequences, but we are powerless regarding the final outcome. There is no point, then, in being overly concerned about the end. The way of the world is progress, so we know the goal will be worth whatever intensity of pain and suffering might be inflicted by what could be a difficult climb. Until the summit is attained, everyone must have faith in the revolution and do as they are told.

So Marxism, requiring a considerable level of faith, is like a secular religion. But what gives it sufficient appeal to draw converts? After all, as George Sabine points out, despite its lean to the left, communism is as *il*liberal as fascism,

...both claimed to be the exponents of 'true' democracy and branded liberalism as sham democracy, yet both overrode the civil liberties that democratic constitutions had been designed mainly to protect and destroyed the political liberties that had been the supports of democratic government. Both denied that the protection of rights and liberties is a primary purpose of government, and also that the individual human being is a competent judge either of his own ultimate interests or of the policies and practices which governments ought to follow in order to protect a general or social interest. Both set up a collective entity—the race in the case of fascism and society or the community in the case of communism—as the possessor of a higher value than the individual and described human beings as agents or organs of the collectivity. Both, therefore, described politics as a mystery above the grasp of ordinary men and conceived it as the function of an elite endowed with a special capacity or faculty. Fascism represented this capacity as instinct or intuition or genius beyond the range of ordinary intelligence. And communism represented it as a higher type of science and therefore the prerogative of experts trained to recognize the necessary course that historical progress must follow.

[Sabine, A HISTORY OF POLITICAL THEORY, ch.XXXII: *Liberalism Modernized*; pp.743-744]

Marxism, then, is in great part rationalized revenge disguised as social science: revenge on whatever is the present establishment in a given society for their exploitation of the property-less. Is the 'inevitable' communist revolution then really a work of Nature using history to bring about a preordained reaction of workers to their alienation by owners, thus a true insurrection of the oppressed? Or is it rather a cabal: a minority of usurping gangsters organizing a *coup* in the name of the people? After all, especially in modern democracies, the instrument of universal adult suffrage and the institution of representation make change possible without requiring revolution. Can potentially illegal revolutionaries avoid the violence inevitable in overthrowing government? Perhaps—by convincing voters that the revolutionaries, if politically empowered, can 'improve' the existing system. The many might be thus hoodwinked and not notice that not only Marxism but the whole socialist-egalitarian map lays out a direct route to despotism.

It is true that some Marxists claim to be democratic, in the sense of being based on the best interest of the people, but only after the people have been properly changed from natural human beings into ideal workers: the uniform proletariat. Marxism's principles are not at all in conformity with the way we define democracy today. It may pretend to believe that sovereignty lies with the people, but its strongest advocates strive for dictatorial power, stopping at nothing, abiding no ethical shackles in achieving it and, perhaps (inevitably?), 'suffer' the eradication of even former friends to stay in command. Where has that not been so? Where is the communist martyr-dictator; the socialist Cincinnatus who will step down voluntarily and declare the end of the revolution and termination of the state—or even allow a free, tamper-proof election? They *cannot* do so; not until the society is properly stabilized: until individuals have been completely reshaped and indoctrinated to think only in terms of the whole, the social fabric, of humanity instead of themselves. Does that idea seem practical?

Tamper-proof elections, of course, are difficult to come by even in the U.S., whereas communism has no need of elections. Since everyone has been trained to see the world in the same way, what would they be ‘electing’? But does socialism have to be so severe? Can’t we have soft-socialism: a beneficent, cozy, quasi-communism where dictators are nice and take care that no one will be angry or upset? What’s so important about freedom anyway? Thinking for ourselves only gets us into trouble. All we really need is drugs, sex, and rock-n-roll—food, too, and shelter and health care. Even money is unnecessary when we are given all the materialistic things we need. Why, government could simply give us large doses of ‘soma’, nourish us intravenously so we wouldn’t have to chew our food or brush our teeth or even leave our beds, except to attend ‘heavy metal’ concerts by robot bands every few weeks. Even that could be done electronically today, with giant wide-screens and stacks of Marshalls in every dormitory. And in between those peak experiences we could just play video games and watch reruns of *Bay Watch* and *ER* or *American Idol* and *Dancing with the Stars* from cradle to grave. On that note, the whole society might just as well be reduced to brains kept alive in vats of LSD.

If we must be changed into little more than copies of one another, and if that must be done by force or trickery, how can Marxists or any extreme leftists call themselves liberals? They are not about liberty. They are not even promising to liberate us from work. The only thing they would free us from is choice. I shall not attempt, here, to fill the chasm left open in your education, but only to throw in a few shovelfuls of information concerning the perceived rift between the political ‘left’ and ‘right’ in our era. It is a rift which is, in fact, a symptom of the crisis of modernity, although modern socialists do not seem to sense the crisis and do not seem to understand why there is opposition to their goal—or even the true nature of that goal.

Some of you, particularly the closed-minded, already covertly indoctrinated by collectivist ideas, will not much like what I have to say in this regard. You are, of course, free to disagree, since we are not yet living in a collectivist colony, but you must win the argument, not simply demonize the speaker. And your view—the view too often ‘recommended’ with a Molotov cocktail then enforced with a machine-gun and expected to be imposed on all humanity—must coincide not only with nature but with logic; must work in the real world of real people and, generally, to the advantage of real people, and not ‘THE people’ as some gargantuan amoeba, but conscious and willful *persons*.

In fact, liberalism, in one sense—the original sense—is already victorious; freedom in the West not only has been proclaimed desirable but has been granted. I speak of course of political freedom: the only kind that can be effected by a political body like the state. That means, and can only mean, *individual* freedom: the freedom to attempt to fulfill one’s potential as a human being—within reasonable limitations, of course, as long as one does not interfere with the like pursuit of others: the ‘pursuit of happiness’, i.e., the freedom to compete. This is the basic message of J.S. Mill’s *On Liberty*.

Mill’s essay is a classic statement of liberalism. You ought to read it [*not a course requirement*]. It amounts to a weakened form of Bentham’s utilitarianism, in that it proposes a moral basis something like Kant’s: that if anything is ultimately desired, but not for selfish reasons, it can be considered a proper end, and that conduct toward that end is good for the individual as well as for society—society seen as all other *individuals*. Pleasure is such a desire and a proper end because it is naturally desired by all. So, if to seek what is desired by all is good, and if you seek it *for all* it will consequently be good

for you as it is for everyone. Mill, like his father and Jeremy Bentham, apparently forgot that the happiness of all may require a sacrifice: a decrease in the happiness of particular individuals. Thus it is not equality of happiness for all but the equilibrium of happiness and unhappiness that results; certainly not *maximization* of happiness. Alternately stated (presuming an abstraction like a society can experience happiness at all), the spreading of happiness over a whole nation or civilization is achieved by equalizing the total *unhappiness* among its individuals. But still he wants to say that folks should be allowed to live as they please as long as they do not harm others or thwart their similar pursuit. Therefore government should stay out of private business. But to prevent internecine harm, even in the case of families in domestic disputes, there must be legislation prohibiting it, and police to enforce those laws; laws which inevitably limit individual pleasure (not to mention the increase of *displeasure* associated with punishment for violators), thus severely limiting the total social happiness (if there could be such). So, even in the most noble attempt of government (as if governments could be noble) to promote only the general *pursuit* of happiness, the result is increasing control. After all, 'government' means 'control', so we can expect it to grab as much power as possible.

With that in mind, 'government by consent of the governed' is the fashion in the Western world; a strictly modern view. The idea is that individuals (as conscious entities with feelings) are in a precarious position under a government institution that represents the whole society (an entity that has no feelings or awareness): that individuals are not only the constituents but the reason for society. So representative government means government designed to serve all individuals by *securing and stabilizing society in the interest of its members*, not by determining or presuming or inventing such an interest and imposing it upon its constituents. This was the *English* view and, perhaps to a degree, the *French* view leading to the Revolution, though the excesses of the Reign of Terror and the dictatorship of Robespierre and the committee on public safety, instead of leading to individual freedom, brought on simply a new form of despotism.

As we have seen in Hegel, on the other hand, the *German* view of socialism held not for individual freedom as nature's end, but for the advance of the society as a unit: a whole made up of parts that were significant and useful only in as much as they cohered and operated for the good of the greater 'being'—going so far as to suggest that such greater being included a spirit; that there exists even a social consciousness or soul.

F.A. Hayek has argued, however, that such wholes do not exist. What we actually study is interrelationships. Wholes are (except for the sheer accumulation of irreducible parts) wholly theoretical. Even the parts, if examined in their turn as smaller wholes, will be found, at least 'partly', theoretical. Hayek is speaking of historical wholes: states, civilizations, governments, armies, classes, etc., including, of course, societies. "These 'wholes'... do not exist for us apart from the theory by which we constitute them;" Hayek points out, "apart from the mental technique by which we can reconstruct the connections between the observed elements and follow up the implications of this particular combination" [THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN SCIENCE, pp. 125]. Hayek is criticizing historicist social science wherein nations and religions and cultures are treated as if they were observable things when they are only names for complicated relationships which we, ourselves, blend into quasi-reality by our intellect: a "schematic representation" or, loosely, a 'theory' of those relationships between ever-changing elements. This seems easy enough to accept in connection with the attempt to 'scientize' history or society, but

as we have seen, in the early attempts at a philosophy of science (Locke, Hume, Kant, *et al*), this problem applies also to the harder sciences. It is less obvious because the probabilities in the relationships are so much higher that they seem to be the result of natural laws, especially given the laboratory's ability to isolate the factors and conduct experimental repeats of the observed activities or events. Social and historical (and cosmic) events, however, do not repeat and cannot be lab-controlled. They are unique.

Even if social structures are reduced to their individual 'atom-like' constituents, we cannot know these elements for what they truly are, nor can we predict their behavior because they are mostly intellect in that respect rather than simply mechanistic, so we depend on probability and statistics in the place of laws of classical physics. And now, today, we see (or we soon will as we progress through our study) that atoms in physics, too, are individually unpredictable: that if they seem less *unpredictable* it is because they are more constrained in their actions by the limited possibilities available to them—mostly 'emit or absorb', 'spin-up or spin-down', 'expand or contract', 'one or zero', etc., and so in their immense conglomerations they allow practically perfect predictability statistically. The historical and/or social 'things' or events, which we discuss as if they were wholes and assume to be individual 'items', are really not given to us as wholes but are constructed by us; useful formulations by which we hope to gain some guidance in our behavior, and which have provided, by the poverty of our language or by a laziness in definition, a misconstrual of their artificiality. This inaccuracy in our terminology allows us, actually *inclines* us to formulate our arguments about history and society as if they were mechanistic contraptions. But things like the feudal system and the Renaissance and the First Republic or the Third Reich are not definite 'individuals' or 'things' in the sense with which that term is applied to natural objects. Upon reflection from a 'post-modern', relativity oriented or 'quantist' perspective, neither are there 'objects' of physics. Such 'things', as we *think* we see, change under differing light; at varying distances; from different angles; and when they are viewed differently through different instruments by different observers at different times under different circumstances. Though this has been masked temporarily by the ability of physics to control these variables for experimental purposes, in social science and history no such experiments are possible. Does that mean no science is possible? It seems to mean science needs redefining. Hayek explains that

However doubtful their status, these theories of development have achieved a hold on public imagination much greater than any of the results of genuine systematic study. "Philosophies" or "theories"\* of history (or "historical theories") have indeed become the characteristic feature, the "darling vice" [L. Burnschvicg, in *Philosophy and history, essays presented to E. Cassirer*, ed. R. Klikbansky and H.J. Paxton (Oxford, 1936), p.30] of the nineteenth century. From Hegel and Comte, and particularly Marx, down to Sombart and Spengler [and we might add Toynbee] these spurious theories came to be regarded as representative results of social science; and through the belief that one kind of "system" must as a matter of historical necessity be superseded by a new and different system, they have even exercised a profound influence on social evolution. This they achieved mainly because they looked like the kind of laws which the natural sciences produced; and in an age when these sciences set the standard by which all intellectual effort was measured, the claim of these theories of history to be able to predict future developments was regarded as evidence of their preeminently scientific character.

Though merely one among many characteristic nineteenth-century products of this kind, Marxism more than any of the others has become the vehicle through which this result of scientism has gained so wide an influence that many of the opponents of Marxism equally with its adherents are thinking in its terms.

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\*There is, of course, also a legitimate sense in which we may speak of historical theories, where *theory* is used as a synonym for *factual hypothesis*. In this sense the unconfirmed explanation of a particular event is often called a historical theory, but such a theory is of course something altogether different from the theories which pretend to state laws which historical developments obey. [Note #10 from p.130]

[see THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION OF SCIENCE: Studies on the Abuse of Reason by F.A. Hayek; esp. ch.7: "The Historicism of the Scientistic Approach"; Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, 1979 (from Free Press, Glencoe IL 1952); above quotes from pp.130-131]

Ill prepared to redefine science, let us try to think sociologically: Consider nations, for example, as taking the part of individuals in the world social order. We will see folks of individualist orientation expecting these separate nations to act as free agents for self-sufficiency and to compete, and with only the natural results of dynamic international interactivity acting hemostatically upon the ever-changing relationships—evolving, thus, with no particular purpose. On the other hand, a collectivist must turn to a single mind or some arbitrary or 'revealed' doctrine to impose control over what presents itself as a 'super-organism' called world society and to assume or to formulate a goal for it that will ultimately benefit all nations. Should superpower nations, as a consequence of the globalist vision, control the way of the world, or should individual nations (including superpowers) act in their perceived self-interest and self-improvement to prevent (or to gain their freedom from) the unavoidable oppression of world central planning?

So, getting back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, we find two sorts of socialism: one that called for an economic takeover by the state *for the good of each and every individual* who, together, constitute society (view of the English socialists); the other believing in total control over individuals *for the good of the society*. Then came Darwin's insight, the process of natural selection in biology, giving biology and science an influential boost in regard to popular thought, while lending support to Spencer's idea of 'survival of the fittest' as a universal principle, including 'social Darwinism'. So now we have social evolution as a natural process: control of man by cosmic forces rather than the more pragmatic view of man getting control of nature through science. Accordingly, science—at least social science—would be limited to *understanding* Nature: to discovering the laws so that humanity could learn to behave in concert with Nature rather than enslaving her. By the proper understanding of history, the laws and the goals of society would be revealed. Hegel and Marx, in fact, had already experienced such revelation. Despite the English tendency toward treating the individual as the proper focus of politics, and the earlier institution of that view, based on Locke, in the founding documents of the USA, continental European thought began leaning, if unwittingly, toward Hegelian/Germanic socialism and away from the more liberal Mill and Benthamite understanding. Just as there now appeared to be a goal in the process of biology: a tendency toward improvement and thus progress, the same tendency was allotted by Spencer, generally, to Nature in her *every* aspect, thus the inevitable conflict between societies or races or nations, etc., in line with Hegel's historical process and the subsequent Marxist conflict between classes—a firming of the foundation of today's political 'progressivism'.

With that, incidentally, another point ought to be made. As has been mentioned in connection with Marxist communism, the end or goal—the result of the natural process—has not been made clear. Where Hegel thought it would be some sort of well constituted Monarchy, Marx believed the state would whither away, noting that the State is “at best, an evil inherited by the proletariat after its victorious struggle for class supremacy, whose worst sides the proletariat . . . cannot avoid having to lop off at the earliest possible moment, until such time as a new generation, reared in new and free social conditions, will be able to throw the entire lumber of the State on the scrap-heap” [1891, Introduction by Frederick Engels: On the 20th Anniversary of the Paris Commune: Postscript *per* [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dictatorship\\_of\\_the\\_proletariat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dictatorship_of_the_proletariat)]. How that might work out, practically, is not well explained. The final or ‘best’ regime is not sufficiently described so that mankind might know how to proceed and behave in helping nature achieve it. Apparently, despite this new science of history, we cannot know the future with much accuracy. It is simply something that will happen inevitably. Like beasts, biologically but unwittingly directed toward improvement, we can only stumble along while Nature finds her determined trail via the dialectic, a process hardly distinguishable from the idea of natural selection but operating among societies per Spencer’s social Darwinism—hardly distinguishable from Hobbes ‘state of nature’. The goal, then, since it cannot be known, becomes unimportant to progressives in their recommendations or their policy making. The goal of their policy is only to rid the world of the false idea that society is artificial and to countermand all policies and institutions fostered by that idea. To them, civil society was not ‘invented’ to serve individuals, so they must teach the wholeness of humanity and, as tools of Nature, promote the ultimate, single, all-encompassing, natural, political unit—which, ironically, they believe is already determined, with or without their help. In that sense sociology is not what most people think: not a study of humans, but an *a*-human study of what some consider a concept but which most sociologists consider a ‘being’—society itself, with humans seen as something like atomic particles in the greater social whole or ‘thing’.

So we ought to understand that a society, though undeniably shaped partly by economics (a sub-social science), is not a purely economic entity or creation. Socialism, then, ought not to be seen as merely an alternate economic system, appearing possibly in the context of a democracy in which private property is prohibited; where everything is simply owned by the state; a state that still represents individuals. If that were the case, absolute monarchy would be socialism, or would have the same effect. Socialism is rather an ideological belief: a politico-economic ideal: a cosmic viewpoint whereby wholes take precedence over parts. So a society is seen as a ‘being’ of not only greater significance, but one considered more noble and of a higher nature than the much simpler human souls in its charge. Therefore, no matter the prattle from the prime administrator or the Supreme Soviet or the *fuehrer* claiming to be promoting the happiness of individuals, happiness is not the goal of society. Society, though dynamic, has (like nature) *no goal*—not even its own continuation. It simply exists in the same sense that a stone exists by virtue of its atomic structure. Society is thus seen purely as a system, and people are as cogs in its metaphysical clockwork—or from our perspective in the subatomic era, humans as ‘sociotrons’. That view goes beyond mere social Darwinism to something more like social Newtonianism. Perhaps we could call it ‘volktronics’. If things continue in this direction, no doubt some future quantum sociologist will discover a wave-function for humans. Humans, then, ought to see this meta-rock called society as a fortress rather than a prison; a force to be utilized for liberation rather than oppression.

Then ‘democratic socialism’ is an oxymoron. Society for socialists means a social meta-consciousness or a social ‘being’ as an entity of higher nature than the elements of which it is composed—is a whole that is greater than its parts: an extension of scientific materialism; a view from classical physics, reducing the human mind and soul and consciousness to illusion; devaluing individuals by granting them meaning only insofar as their place has been established in the largest organized group: the state. The state does not represent the demos. The society stands only for itself as sovereign and controls (or tries to control) the human material that constitutes its working parts by means of a government, just as the organs and appendages of the human body are operated to the individual’s advantage by means of a brain. That is Hegel’s view, and clearly that is where Marx and Engels come from; that is the ground of communism; that is socialism.

Democracy, then—in the sense of the American democratic republic—cannot affiliate with socialism. It is in fact its opposite: the recognition of *individuals as the source of the society*; the several *persons* whose freedom and rights are inalienable—the protection of whom and of which is the purpose of society (or rather the purpose of the individuals in creating a government, since ‘society’, as an abstract product of individual interrelations, can have no purpose in the sense of a goal). So government does not represent the society, excepting outwardly, in relations with other organized governments, and it is expected to act in accordance with the intentions and decisions of its thinking and ruling members. Democracy is imperfect, certainly, and not perfectible. Yet in one way or another—in the sense of sovereignty emanating not from Nature or the cosmic process but from the people as individuals—the idea has been strongly established, if only in the West, and only in parts of the West.

What?—‘established’! But the very notion of ‘establishment’ is anathema to political revolutionaries who are restless by nature. Their rebellious urgings seem to reflect an underlying hatred of all authority—even of the people they pretend to defend. They cannot accept authority *per se*. No matter how it is achieved or how it is packaged, it seems unfair: unequal. ‘What about the poor’ they wonder, ‘and the infirm’? In a sense, the struggle has been won against tyranny and now we, in the West, are free to pit all our revolutionary fervor against inequality.

We must inquire first: Are we now perfectly free? Certainly not. Can we actually be completely free? No. Can we have too much freedom? Ah, the answer to that is undoubtedly affirmative. We all know that. There is no doubt about it, and we even have a word for it: ‘anarchy’. Anarchy is a non-system: a breakdown of all institutions that provide the stability that is necessary for freedom of learning, freedom of action, freedom of thought—in short, the only anarchic or totally free ‘state’ is the Hobbian, pre-political state of nature, “red in tooth and claw” (an overused phrase of Tennyson’s coinage [*In Memoriam*, LXI]). The complete victory of liberalism as freedom from authority, therefore, would be the *opposite* of freedom; would *kill* freedom. Or from a different perspective, only thieves and murderers would be free—and then only those who operated surreptitiously and alone. For gangsters (as employees of a sort) are no more free than the citizens of NAZI Germany or the old Soviet Union or of today’s Iran and People’s Republic of (communist) China or North Korea, etc. Thus, much to the chagrin of anarchists everywhere, freedom is only of value when it is somewhat *limited*.

The arguments between the rational left and the rational right in the USA are generally about how and how much it should be limited. Freedom having been won

(forced, as it were, upon the Old World conservatives or traditionalists), today's intellectuals and the ever-present power-to-the-people revolutionaries, along with a number of suspicious self-indulgent political exploiters and power mongers, influenced by anti-tradition post-Revolutionary European socialists and thus seeing freedom as patently 'unfair', are now ready to sacrifice it in the struggle against inequality.

Now, if there can be too much freedom, can there also be too much equality? You bet there can! You can see its fullest accomplishment in the social insects, and even those are equal *only within their distinct classes*, for which clearly they are genetically and anatomically designed, as well as being resigned to their particular duty. Please when noticing the social insects pay attention to the fact that they are also not aimless or by any means anarchic. They are strictly organized around a central figure that provides the only means of continuance of the horde. The queen is sustained entirely by the colony, which thus (through her) also sustains itself. That is to say, the individuals are not sustained by government; nor are the many sustained by the few. That is generally the way it has been in human society for by far the majority of history. The many have been expected to sustain themselves *and*, often at great extra cost, also to support the few, not only through taxation but by allowing themselves to be organized and trained to serve the organizers and trainers and to provide nourishment and goods necessary for the health and for the defense of the social unit—thus, unintentionally (often forcibly), to their own advantage. Whenever that concept has been turned on its head, as when Rome felt the need to provide bread and circuses to the mob—when a citizenry is sufficiently idle to allow the forming of mobs—it heralds decomposition of the civilization rather than advance. While all of that may be true, we are neither wasps nor termites. Why would we imitate them in our social arrangements? Should there not be more to human experience than marching and plowing and forging and sewing and cobbling? Isn't elevation part of liberalism?

The rich irony is that extremists among today's 'liberals' have actually arrived at the view that the cause of ultimate equality is hindered by *too much liberty*. After all, if individuals are free to reach their potential—allowed to develop—won't some rise above the others, one way or another, even to dominate?—and won't the 'others' fall behind to be used and abused? But that's unfair. So, since those who progress least cannot be much improved, the winners must be limited. In fact, *all* must be limited to the same level of achievement. We'll have no domination. The very idea of achieving must be suppressed. The current leftist thinkers and leaders have found it necessary to infect their comrades, a horde of non-objective journalists and their unsuspecting readers, their own children, practically every institution in society including the teachers in public schools, and thus perhaps you, with the very disease against which our liberal forebears originally fought and won. The difference is only that it will now be the foot of the many, or 'feet', as it were, of the *non*-achievers and less fortunate—on the neck of the few. That may seem righteous, but it also seems that *strict order* (the 'new world order'?) and the necessary authority to enforce it is the only way to achieve equality while preventing descent into mob rule and vigilante lynchings. Of course, like the dictatorship of the proletariat, such authority will only be temporary—until we all learn to get along, or are *made* to get along. What Marxist-Hegelian liberals preach, then, implicitly, is the tyranny of equality.

While 'left-wing liberals', in the interest of 'fairness', trend toward despotism in their desire to force the issue of total equality, conservatives (who, to be consistent, we ought to now call 'right-wing liberals', having been once forced to accept an increase in

political freedom by the victory of liberalism over autocracy), are now fully engaged in the attempt to preserve that liberty. So in that sense, the gap narrows: *we're all liberals in America*. But now the 'right-wing *liberté* liberals' are painted by the left-wing *égalité* liberals as vile and racist and bigoted nationalists; haters of immigrants and despisers of the homeless and the helpless, lovers of famine and pollution and disease, and who (as one US senator recently has actually accused Republicans) want to kill your grandmother (and their own, presumably) by denying her health care. The leftist, super-egalitarians, by the way, are really no longer 'liberals' at all but, essentially, 'statists' who have lost faith in (or were never properly taught) the concepts of popular sovereignty and self-government. All their disparagement is heaped upon the 'right' simply because modern conservatives are of the opinion that individuals combine to make a society: forge it naturally out of families and villages and communities as opposed to 'creating' it scientifically or compared against some transcendent, global, insentient social mass, somehow gathering up the individuals like the Sun gathers cosmic dust. They believe in a different version of social Darwinism: that individual achievement and strength of character vitalizes the group and benefits society; that a strong society can therefore be achieved only by strong individuals; and that it is through free and open competition—including the necessary risks of failure—that individuals advance. Thus, though hope of perfect equality is forfeited, personal character is strengthened, through a no less imperfect freedom, and society is enriched.

Well, then, which will it be: freedom or equality? It is obvious that it must be both. A balance must be sought, certainly, but in so seeking we must understand that these are not compatible notions; that they co-exist only in eternal conflict. So the political scenario is a dynamic balancing act, the weight always shifting in favor of one end or the other but never coming to rest or tipping completely to one side—always in flux. These are not directly opposing ideas that might be synthesized by the Hegelian dialectic process, but a sideways clashing of concepts that deflect and redirect one another rather than meeting head on. We must accept, as Machiavelli taught, that this is an imperfect world; a world in which we can only find temporary relief and partial solutions to the difficulties that inevitably arise. No man, no party, no policy, no government, no *science* can alter that. A good regime is possible, though with faults requiring continuous corrections. It is a relative rather than absolute thing. It is a dynamic thing. The best regime, if it could be achieved at all, would hardly be recognizable as such and would be fleeting. The perfect regime is impossible to achieve for, just as in math and science, some problems (consider the three-body problem: e.g., precise predictions of movement of Moon, Earth, and Sun; or squaring the circle; or finding the square root of 2, etc.) simply cannot be solved, but might only be closely estimated (like limiting  $\pi$  to a reasonable and practical number of decimal places). Furthermore—a harsh, or what we might call today, an 'inconvenient' fact is—as with Socrates of the hackneyed 'all men are mortal' syllogism—'no society is immortal', (which doesn't imply that we should give up on improvement).

So how has Marxism, if so poorly conceived and seemingly so silly, spread so successfully—or how does Marxism accomplish any respectability in the world? After all, it has been, at least by name, in general disrepute since the shocking Soviet failure after less than three-quarters of a century of superficial success during its attempted isolation from reality behind the 'iron curtain'—but we still have a lot of very smart

Marxist intellectuals. The USSR's progress seems to have been fueled almost entirely by negativity and paranoia concerning Western capitalism, without which its existence would have been even more markedly brief—if it were possible at all. Witness, for instance, the annual gifts of American surplus wheat—purchased, incidentally, by the US government at tax-payer expense—which the huge and rationally organized Asian collective farms seemed incapable of producing in sufficient quantity to properly nourish their enormous social-being. So, typical for America, we charitably nourished our declared mortal enemy, keeping them at bay but alive while they continued to foist injustice, including murder and attempted virtual genocide, on their own citizens and terrorized their 'Eastern Bloc' protectorate.

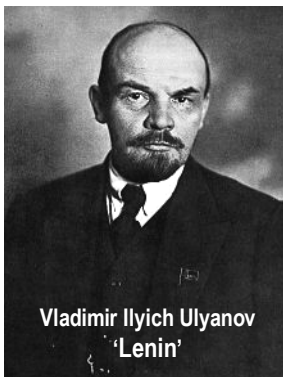
By relentlessly attacking whatever was the given establishment in every country, however, it was not difficult for Marxists to gather support from the many who (as individuals) saw themselves as (or had allowed themselves to be convinced they were) oppressed. Poverty, at least relative poverty in comparison to the mighty and the royal and the immensely wealthy, is always more prevalent than riches. So it is not hard to convince the poor—or even a good many members of a healthy working class—that they are exploited; that they 'have not' because everything that they do not have is being hoarded by the rich; and that it is all the fault of a corrupt regime in league with the wealthy, the banks, the economic manipulators. In fact, it is pointed out to the poor by socialists that their very poverty is the proof of their having been exploited. Then, after showing them how they have been victimized, it is explained that their political power as a mass is irresistible, if only they would organize and direct their enormous inertia. Then the tables would be turned, for after all it is labor that supports the rich.

It is easy to forget that (*a*) not everyone is a worker, and (*b*) a tremendous amount of working goes into the self-support of small and private businesses, most of whom are exploiting no one by offering jobs that the potentially exploited may freely refuse or quit. But then even small business owners are seen as opportunists and/or unwitting tools of capitalism. So it is the whole politico-economic system that oppresses us and which must be swept away. The world, we are told, was not meant to be owned. Nature provides freely to all alike and thus "property is theft", according to Proudon (who was not himself a Marxist or communist, but as an intellectual is considered a 'rational' anarchist, preceding and strongly influencing Marx). Therefore, 'join the international and anti-national communist movement' is the socialists' advice, and together we can destroy the evil oppressors; break the invisible capitalistic and nationalistic chains that bind us. It will be easy enough, now, since the self-serving capitalists, in order to exploit us and steal our vital energy through ceaseless toil, have built the factories and established systems of distribution and provided the machinery and the inventions that are now sufficient to care for all—to paraphrase: 'the capitalists in their greed will produce the very rope by which we shall hang them'. That is, in fact, the historicism preached by Marx: the idea that history had to go through all these earlier stages to bring about the situation where now we need only to murder all the property owners and pry the economic controls from their cold, dead, bourgeois hands. That is what, supposedly, will be the great accomplishment of the communist revolution.

It was the *destructive* aspect of the revolution that was always (and *is* always) emphasized: first, freedom from oppression—only then would come, somehow, magically, redistribution of wealth to eliminate poverty. This is no less 'pie in the sky'

preaching than what every nation hears from its political leaders about how the next wave of increased taxes will not happen—but, of course, if it should somehow happen it won't be their fault and, besides, it will be actually necessary and even beneficial, leading to the solution of all problems. Or we are told by our religious leaders that if we just bow our heads in submission to The Lord's will and offer up our miseries to Him and live in concord with the Bible we will be rewarded with immeasurable riches—if not here, then in the afterlife. Apparently the enticing cocktail of envy, division, invective, and hollow promises (which, as Stalin remarked, are “like pie-crusts: made to be broken”) is all it takes to round up a following and incite them into a mob—or to get votes as the means to power. The resulting power is not necessarily—in fact is very seldom—used to fulfill the impossible promises made to voters representing the down-trodden. If it were, the system as a whole would be unsustainable and cease to cohere. Yet those voters fall for the same promises election after election and, predictably, get the same results.

Not everyone, however, is so easily convinced that destruction of the present will ensure future improvement either in system or in status. It occurs to a few of the thoughtful that the weight of oppression; the sheer despotic force necessary to maintain let alone establish such a radically and unnaturally egalitarian system might be—would *have to be*—much worse than what already exists. Only in societies where the vast



majority has nothing left to lose might such ideas have even a slight chance of igniting the masses, and even then such a society is too busy with sheer subsistence and lacks the energy and political acumen to be organized in revolt. Besides, as with the Bolshevik Revolution, a poor and undeveloped country is precisely the wrong one for the communist take-over.

Russia of the early 1900s was hardly a modern state, having very little in the way of modern industry and nothing resembling Marx's massive proletariat to be alienated. The serfs, though some undoubtedly worked hard enough and were not much pleased with Tsarist policies and the oppressive aristocracy, were hardly a decent stand-in for Marx's industrial labor force. As Jean-François Revel points out in *WITHOUT MARX OR JESUS* [Doubleday, Garden City NY, 1970], the USA is the only place where a truly communist revolution makes sense, as no other nation—save possibly England (at the time he wrote the book but no longer) is sufficiently industrialized or capitalistically corrupt enough to fit the Marxist scheme.

It is not as if there isn't plenty of alienation in the world. It just needs to be guided; organized. That, of course, is what international communism is about. But now, in our present day, with the US government accepting responsibility for all manner of evil in the world and unable to claim credit for any good that has been done, and since the contemporary human world is generally understood as evil and in decay: the result of evil nations run by evil people in charge of evil systems—and in America especially with removal of the industrial base mostly to Asia—alienation is increasingly directed toward government (from the right) for perceived *excessive* meddling or (from the left) for *insufficient* meddling in the interest of establishing economic equality, which (action or inaction) has resulted in economic decline. The decline has been exacerbated since the centralized administration has directly involved itself in banking and private industry, making the federal government into a holding company—and with 'toxic assets'.

Crossing so far over that politico-economic dividing line may have been an administrative mistake, for the people are beginning to believe there are no more barriers to ending poverty as now we all have been made bankers and industrialists. Since becoming citizen-stockholders in several (potentially all) American economic enterprises—there are literally millions who are seriously expecting a big dividend check soon, directly from the President; or thinking they won't have to pay taxes anymore while the government sustains itself and pays off the national debt with the earnings of its stock in all of our now 'public', partially nationalized companies. And, hey, if that is what works, let's nationalize them all.

Of course there are selfish detractors: those damnable disbelievers and pragmatists who threaten to block and overturn the dream of an economic perpetual motion machine that would effortlessly propel all of our carts from tee to tee on the endless golf course of life. But then there are always people in the way of progress. Even the War of Independence had its American colonial detractors—a lot of them. The blade of dissent cuts both ways, however. In just this past century, right here in the 'land of the free', during both world wars the US government felt the need to augment its propaganda machine with press and artistic censorship, domestic spies (e.g., even an organization called, believe it or not, "The Boy Spies of America"), complete with detention camps and denial to its own citizens of the constitutional right of due process—wartime policies, incidentally, which were set by Democratic and 'progressive' administrations. So do not allow yourselves to be persuaded that such restrictions of freedom as represented by the McCarthy era disgrace and the House Un-American Activities Committee's commie witch hunts were unique to Republicans. The same panicky response arose again with the war on terror: watch lists created, non-violent but increasingly dissident organizations of generally virtuous and patriotic citizens (like the Tea Party folks and the National Rifle Association) demonized, and news/opinion organizations and talk-show media personalities critical of government policy (or lack thereof) are actually labeled seditious and subjected to 'investigation' and IRS audits—and by the very people who vociferously condemn McCarthyism as a re-visitation of the Inquisition—such that a perceived excess of individual freedom seems to present a greater problem to our government than political and economic corruption, border control, trafficking in drugs and humans, or even anti-Western Islamic jihad. It also seems increasingly clear that government—of any sort—is not so interested in looking out for the people as in looking out for the best interest of the governors, their minions, and their patrons. It shouldn't be surprising. After all, government does mean 'control', even where such government is supposed to be *of, by, and for the people* in a "nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal". But the powerful will want always to remain powerful. And of what use is power if one can't exercise it? And of what use is wealth if one can't purchase privilege?

In the realm of reality we see that 'practical' and successful revolutions are carried out not by 'the people' but merely 'in the name of the people' by a minority of headstrong despisers of authority and their indoctrinated cadres inflamed by rhetoric and/or mercenaries lusting after booty, creating huge civil disruption but with no template for administration nor experience in governing. Thus, in victory, however well warranted by the dastardly doings of the defeated despot, a revolutionary leader inevitably becomes what he formerly professed to hate: a tyrant who finds himself not only eradicating the

remainder of the old establishment but having to kill his most loyal supporters and even his closest friends to avoid ending up like Julius Caesar when, inevitably, the grand ideals of the revolution become mired in the less exalted details of practical, everyday government—including the need to counter continual resistance with abusive repression, secret police, kangaroo courts, political prisons (often subsumed under ‘psychiatric treatment facilities’), and, ultimately, assassinations and death squads.

HANDOUT: Introduction: *The Revision of History from THE PSYCHOLOGY OF REVOLUTION* by Gustave Le Bon; Dover, NY, 2004; pp.11-20 (*repub.* T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1913)

The point of all this is not an attempt to alter or to necessarily condemn anyone’s practical or idealistic political views but to impress upon you a problem presented by a deeply influential idea of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; an idea variously formulated by men of considerable genius but to no tolerable conclusion; an idea that could be a fatal mistake but which we will continue to explore because it haunts us: the idea that knowledge of man and his society and even his mind ought to be gained exclusively by the same scientific method that gave us the industrial revolution; that classical physics (or ‘natural philosophy’, despite its little noticed internecine difficulties) was not only a means to comprehend matter and motion but the way to understanding *everything*—moreover, the generally accepted cosmology of that age, that *matter and motion is everything*.

So, though we wish to deny it, we have been brought to a kind of ‘social Darwinism’, whereby natural selection becomes the driving and creative force determining social and historical things no less than in biology—or we come to believe social and historical things *are* natural organisms, thus subject to the same laws as all ‘other’ living beings. But such a social ‘survival of the fittest’ can work in several ways depending on one’s pre-positioned politics. To a devoted individualist, social Darwinism means only the strong survive in the struggle for power and reproduction. That could mean

*a)* something as simple as the most potent men and most fertile women will develop into a society marked by super-lust and uncommon skill in child rearing, or something as ominous as Nietzsche’s superman. *Or*

*b)* does it mean, in the natural conflict of various types of societies for world domination, those less fit will be eradicated, as weaker societies always have been; as primitive societies were extinguished or culturally rearranged by the scourge of imperialism during the various ages of colonization? *Or*

*c)* could it be a racial thing, where the various sorts of humans contend for survival, ending in a ‘best’ or ‘last’ racial type? *Or*

*e)* could it mean that a best form of government will evolve so that all nations can live in peace through their similarity of belief—or under central control? *Or*

*f)* are nation states themselves products of this evolutionary process and, as with the various species of animals, is the strongest type (and the most fortunate in regard to natural resources) destined to win; always to dominate or annihilate the less fortunate in warfare? *Or*

*g)* will higher and better mutant human types continually develop until, either through redundancy or diversity, we arrive at the ultimate pinnacle: the one, global, harmonic meld of mankind? *Or*

*h)* will the end be a big-brother totalitarianism where the greatest individual ends up in control of every facet of existence in a perfectly compliant, global, robot-like mass?

None of these ‘final solutions’ will be possible, anymore than one species, like Franklin’s fennel, could cover the earth or Englishmen could take over the world. There is simply too much diversity in the diverging paths and the incompatibility of the ends of the many types and the variety of ideas. Furthermore, social and political goals (and even natural ends, if there could be such) are never completely achieved due to unpredictable environmental and cultural dynamics. Instead, since all is in flux, there will always be room for a great many winners, as with the several weight classes in boxing and leagues in baseball and divisions in the NCAA.

That is not to say there will not be a final solution. The end, of course, will ultimately be brought by the Four Horsemen: War (the red horse), Famine (the pale horse), Death (the black), and (though less sciencistic) the Second Coming (the white horseman, generally thought to represent Christ by those in sync with John’s message in *Apocalypse*. But he could, possibly, also be interpreted as the re-creation of the world rather than its salvaging—or as a distinct *new* Creation, the next in an infinite cycle).

Can we do anything about that—or has humanity got beyond evolution; escaped from Nature’s teeth and claws by creating an artificial, indoors-like environment that we can adjust as needed, such that we are no longer victimized by Nature’s caprice—or is even *that* Nature’s way and we are still at her mercy, little more than dust in the cosmic wind subject to the same deterministic laws as insentient matter?

As one Darwinist admirably put it, those who do not believe in matter must be perpetually weeded out of existence through the operation of natural selection.

[in JACQUES BARZUN: DARWIN, MARX, WAGNER; Doubleday, NY, 1958; p.123]

On the other hand, the anarchist, Proudon [1809-1895], thought

The diversity of its [history’s] subject matter prevents it from being a science. It is only material for science ... Fatality does not govern society ... there is a life, a soul, a liberty which defies precise and fixed measurements of the kind that applies to matter. As regards society, materialism is absurd.

[Quoted in *ibid.*; p.212; from *CREATION DE L’ORDRE* by Pierre Josef Proudon; p.357]

But it was the mechanist view that generally prevailed despite a sneaky re-introduction of vitalism by the Darwinian theory—the difficult to understand but hard to dismiss idea that Nature was progressive, goal oriented, alive. It was this *élan vital* that would provide **Henri Louis Bergson** [1859-1941], who we will briefly encounter in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the third leg in his philosophical attempt to stabilize the wobbling cosmic stool. The other two legs, were prominently established in the dualism of Descartes, so we have three original principles: *matter*, *mind*, and now *life*, to possibly act as an interface between the first two.

So Darwin, with *THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES*, gave us the method of biological evolution (natural selection), and since it was not strictly and logically limited to biology, Spencer, in his multi-volume *SYSTEM OF SYNTHETIC PHILOSOPHY*, worked out the idea of evolution as applied to every aspect of nature and society, leading from the simple to the complex, adapted it to everything in nature (*survival of the fittest*), while Hegel and Marx presented us with social beings (groups, classes, nations) that would evolve progressively through conflict: the dialectic and historical determinism unfolding inevitably for Hegel via the clash of nation-states, and for Marx through the conflict of classes over how to control the means of production.

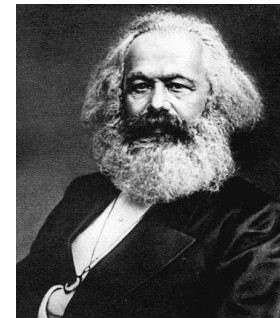
The last two classes in the Western world are left to do combat on the Marxian battleground. The proletariat is foreordained as victor over the bourgeoisie, leaving only one class and one world as states disappear and politics is rendered inconsequential by the final verdict of economic law. How ironic that even as the enlightened logic behind classical physics fades from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century scene into the haziness of quantum mechanics, the outline of a new sort of materialist faith is already discernable through the mists, scoffing at romantic appeals to the heart; obliterating the soul; heralding the entry of *social science* as a major player in a ‘brave new world’. Why brave?—because, without a complete theory, a thorough social revolution risks disastrous failure. After all, as one of the aristocrats in Charles Dickens’s *Tale of Two Cities* observes,

“Repression is the only lasting philosophy. The dark deference of fear and slavery, my friend,” observed the Marquis, “will keep the dogs obedient to the whip, as long as this roof,” looking up to it, “shuts out the sky.”

[Dickens, *TALE OF TWO CITIES*; Book 2, ch.9; Penguin Classics, London, 2003; p.128 ]

His roof was short-lived, ripped away by the cyclone of the French Revolution, still reverberating in European memory, and the dogs ran free for a blessed moment of anarchy. But only for a moment can absolute freedom can be grasped. Anarchy is much too volatile to last. That sort of freedom is like free-fall: exhilarating initially, but if you don’t have a parachute you will be very soon consumed with anxiety over your landing.

Soon enough the dogs were collared again, and their anger, rather than their hunger, would be assuaged with a steady diet of aristocrats and loyalists and even the king and queen. Certainly the aristocracy had long been out of control and, in their intoxication with themselves as the glory of France, had ignored their responsibility to the common classes and the good of the French. They seemed to have forgotten that the commoners and the peasants and the artisans and the priests were humans, too. So in 1789 the ‘dogs’ had their day, feasting on their former masters, only to suffer the rise of their own leaders: the ‘alpha-dogs’, especially Robespierre and the Reign of Terror. Could Marx not have noticed revolution’s terrible failing?



Marx, Hegel too, and the Continental socialists generally, saw this as the inevitable and irrevocable if not glorious sweeping away of the last vestiges of feudalism. Marx had no concern about what exactly ought to replace the old, exploitative system. That was up to Nature. For him the demolition was sufficient. The aftermath would be left to a new world order which was not conceivable beyond the expectation that it would be the antithesis: the opposite of what had been demolished. For him and for the dream of communism this instance of revolution had been untimely. Capitalism had not yet occurred in France so there was no industrial production to speak of and no proletariat to rise into control of that meager economic engine. Even in the England of 1789 capitalism had been far from reaching a level where the means of economic sustenance would have been sufficient to allow the mostly illiterate workers to successfully take over production and distribution. Even by 1859, he seems to have realized, the day of the Marxist revolution was still a long way off and much remained to be done to help prepare it. He looked back to the French Revolution as more than a warning fore-shock. Rather it was a necessary step in the inevitable process; the natural working-out of determinist history; the next stage of ‘dialectical materialism’.

Nowhere does Marx discuss the aftermath of the communist revolution. He did not lay out a plan for communism. It was expected to simply happen, it seems, in accordance with the laws of social science. Therefore it also seems incongruent that he would concern himself about somehow pushing the revolution, since it, too, was inevitable. Or, if it was, indeed, part of Nature's inexorable development that the pronouncements of Marxism were fore-ordained: a necessary prelude to the communist revolution, why would she leave Marx out of the planning session for the ultimate communist system?—unless, of course, as a predetermined conclusion, it didn't need to be planned; but then, as a predetermined event, neither would the revolution need a plan. In a predetermined materialist world, what exactly did Marx think he was doing, if anything beyond simply 'discovering' some future happening in his dialectical crystal ball and making himself, thereby, the major prophet in his godless economic religion?

So we have now *Romanticism*, *Darwinism*, Spencer's '*social Darwinism*', and *Marxism*, plus *materialism*, *positivism*, *empiricism*, *historicism*, *utilitarianism*, *socialism*, *utopianism*, *liberalism*, *communism*, *collectivism*, *individualism*, *capitalism*, *nationalism*, *internationalism*, *anarchism*, *uniformitarianism*, *catastrophism*, and a host of other 'isms' including a new sort of *humanism* in the mid-nineteenth century. At Jacques Barzun's suggestion, we will turn next to *Wagnerism*. But what could that mean?—and what does it have to do with cosmology—or with anything other than opera? We will explore that question and consider some important thoughts of another profound thinker who came to Richard Wagner, great artist and visionary, as a supporter and friend, and departed from that celebrity and showman as an adversary; a fearless, farseeing, forceful, formidable, soon to be famous philosopher, the ever unpopular, barb-tongued Friedrich Nietzsche.

**HANDOUT for READING:**

Introduction: *The Revision of History from THE PSYCHOLOGY OF REVOLUTION* by Gustave Le Bon; Dover, NY, 2004; pp.11-20 (*repub.* T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1913)

AND

*from* Will Durant; *THE STORY OF PHILOSOPHY*; ch.IX, *Friedrich Nietzsche*; Garden City (Simon & Schuster), NY, 1927; pp.435-486

**RECOMMENDED (not required):**

Bernard Shaw; *THE PERFECT WAGNERITE*

and/or

see what articles or essays by Wagner himself might be found in your school's library or available for download on the internet

(e.g., *Artwork of the Future*, etc.)