

1917–2017

MEMORY AND LEGACY

Perception of Communism in Europe



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NEMZETI EMLÉKEZET BIZOTTSÁGA

1917-2017: MEMORY AND LEGACY
PERCEPTION OF COMMUNISM IN EUROPE

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PERCEPTION OF COMMUNISM
IN EUROPE

Committee of National Remembrance
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This booklet contains the conversation extracts of the symposium held on the 100th anniversary of Lenin's Bolshevik coup, on November 6, 2017, organized by the Committee of National Remembrance in cooperation with Corvinus University.

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ANDRÁS LÁNCZI

Preface

“Divination” and historical necessity

One of the discoveries of The Enlightenment that has a most far-reaching impact is history as the modern, scholarly form of divination; of telling the future by knowing the past. Modern man has embraced two notions. One is that history is the methodological framework of human life and endeavours; historical thinking is an established frame of reference. What a thing is, can be learned from its history. Tracing back temporal events, actions and decisions makes it possible to make scientifically founded prognostications. History is the token of owning the future – not in a moral, but in an academic sense. Secondly, what is logical or satisfies the highest expectations of human rationality at the moment is worthy of being set as a political goal. In fact the latter is a more significant question. How do we appropriately set our aims for the community? Do we do that based on our past experiences or inspired by common sense, recognitions, or our imagination? Advocates of modernism would say only ‘new’ can be good. After The Enlightenment, the answer cannot be dubious: whatever “historical necessity” or worse – determinism demands. Demands?

Whatever the interpreters of the rules or necessities of history claim it to be.

Oddly enough, it was the German spirit that discovered history as divination, better said, openly objecting to it. The greatest dilemma of all great moments, to choose correct opinions (knowledge?) from the numerous options available, which in the modern sense means which of them can provide the diagnosis and the cure as well. As for the 1917 Soviet takeover, there are numerous assessments made and heard. Was it a revolution or a coup? Is this valid, just nitpicking, or are such questions wholly irrelevant? Besides historians, is anyone at all interested in what happened in Russia one hundred years ago?

One argument for why this question needs to be addressed is that history is one of the most influential and therefore most important phenomena of human experience. Each person is somehow influenced by what happened to them; especially when it comes to a community. When it comes to the past experiences of more and larger communities (nations), we can talk about the destiny or life of mankind. A fact is what actually happened. What happened and why it happened is a question of interpretation, i.e. history is one of the most abstract human experiences. Even in terms of events – especially in terms of events in which one personally took part. The closer one is to an event the less they are capable of seeing the intentions and eventualities, aims and desires, wishes and submissions in balanced proportion. History as a means of conquering the future, or to put it more simply, the past as a means to serve

a purpose is the discovery of progressivist thinking. Its key is the general implementation of the idea of necessity. In its original meaning, necessity was an expression of genuine need: when one is in desperate need of something, its acquisition is imperative, it derives from a need. This relation was changed by the modern historical mind, which turned specific needs and necessities into abstract imperatives to act, in other words it obtained laws, according to which history has its own course and direction, independent from human decisions. From this point it is a question of logic or ideological propaganda. The rationality of The Enlightenment linked the concept of law to the consistency of the logical mind. Hegel and Kant played an important role in this modern state of mind. Moreover, this idea fostered the impression of appearing omnipotent due to the universal nature of reason. The pinnacle of reason was modern divination, i.e. secular prediction or making forecasting of the future scholarly. Predicting the future based on secular, scientific and materialistic arguments was considered to be a modern innovation. In a sense it was the maximum extension of the possibilities of materialistic ethics. In other words, if it is possible to regulate human behaviour morally, without divine help, then foretelling the future is also possible in the realm of mere reason and will. In other words, divination can be rationalized. The political embodiment of this idea was the 1917 Soviet takeover. From a political point of view it was a coup, in terms of ideas, it was an act of defining necessity as an academic notion.

Nietzsche wrote about Socialism: “The main counter-argument against Socialism that it creates the possibility to do nothing for those with common nature.” He does that based on an abstract or speculative idea of equality. This notion however, does not consider the fact that there are not enough people left to do the work that is to be done; as if the worker would wish to have a personal servant:

“Such a developed worker is striving for leisure and he does not want to make work easier, but a relief from it, i.e. he wants someone else to carry the burden. The idea of fulfilling his wishes and importing barbarians from Asia and Africa would be worthwhile, so that the uncivilised world would be made to be subservient to the civilised world and therefore unculture would be considered as an obligation for hard labour.”

The author claims no less than any accumulation of wealth is based on the exploitation of others’ work. There are types of work that must be done, irrespective of what is fair and what is not. If Nietzsche was prophetic, the question is what that foretelling or prediction is based on. If someone, then it was Nietzsche who was almost disdainful in refusing modern sciences, which, at the time, involved destroying philosophy. Nietzsche was capable of predictions that were only possible on the grounds of classical philosophy. At this point emerges the difference between modern philosophy and the classical love of wisdom: modern philosophy aims at serving the act directly whereas the classical love of wisdom focuses on the correct act. There is an irreconcilable conflict between the two.

The former is called ideology, and the latter is the ultimate endeavour of human potential.

When we think about the Soviet takeover, it must be considered that the self-definition concerning the victory of Socialism in the 20th century is very strong to this day. The gist is that the very idea of Socialism is not utopian, but that it can actually be realized, and that the Soviet takeover in 1917 was necessary and fair. In reality it was neither. There are situations when taking power is not so difficult and nor is it unlikely. Lenin, whom Leszek Kołakowski considered to be the classical culmination of Marxist-Socialist thinking was capable of mounting a coup, for which the exhaustion of powers in the world war was necessary. More importantly, for those who wish to seize power successfully, a prolonged interval is needed first; during which time, enough moral capital is to be accumulated. There were two main questions before 1917: the attitude towards Western development and the economic-social-political situation of the Russian peasantry – the Russian people. Whatever happened in Russia in 1917 and however it happened, there were decades of “Marxization” of the Russian intellect, the beginning of which was hallmarked by Plehanov and culminated in Lenin’s political programme, including the Soviet takeover. However the political outcomes are viewed, one of the modern ideas of history succeeded: the failure of the Soviet attempt, which can be seen today, is in itself the clear refutation of historical necessity. It cannot be predicted how many such political experiments humanity can endure in the future. What can be argued is that proper examination of

political ideas, theories and programmes and the coexisting imperatives of usefulness and success can lead to generations setting the right goals (avoiding determinism as well as scepticism of aims that lead nowhere), in the service of political action, but not in the name of some purely logical construct, but by thoughtfully exploiting our human potentials to the utmost.

A prophet today is better than a scientifically founded action plan – the power of wisdom is more appealing, tenable and useful than a political action plan rooted in social sciences.



DEZSŐ CSEJTEI

A Brief Meditation on the Similarities between Bolshevik Marxism and Liberalism

At this particular moment, when we remember the one-hundred-year anniversary of the Bolshevik takeover in Russia, there should arise a question in us: how is it possible that Western-European inhabitants (not only everyday people, but educated intellectuals) display such a great sympathy even today toward extreme forms of leftism, radical Marxism and even towards its most extremist form, Bolshevism? This sympathy is all the more incomprehensible, because in the Western-European world (especially over the last 70 years) we have seen a rather well-functioning civil democracy (with a multi-party system, democratic elections etc...), whereas Bolshevik Marxism introduced a one-party system and total control over almost all areas of life. So, civil democracy on the one side, totalitarian dictatorship on the other; still, what are the reasons for these nearly century-old sympathies towards Marxism, whose representatives, sometimes cheerleaders,

were recognized intellectuals such as Wystan Auden, Anatole France, Theodore Dreiser, Jack London, Jorge Semprun or Jean-Paul Sartre?

The explanation is many-sided; now I should like to emphasize only one element, which comes from the past. It is well-known that Ortega y Gasset in his famous work (*La rebelión de las masas*, 1930)¹ distinguished three main types of the rule of The Masses: leftist and rightist totalitarianism and liberal emocracy. That is to say, he establishes a close correspondance among these three systems; in spite of the fact, that the first two are totalitarian regimes, whereas the third is civil democracy, still there is a common, profound element and this is the dominance of the masses, of common people. Seen from this side, totalitarian and democratic rule of the masses are already not so far from one another.

Let us dig even deeper in the past. If we are looking for true origins, we find that the roots of both Liberalism and radical Socialism can be traced back to The Age of Enlightenment. That is to say, these two spiritual currents are “offspring” of enlightenment alike. (In parentheses: we are still in great need of a thorough evaluation of The Enlightenment, of its advantages and deep disadvantages as well. It is no wonder, that Western beings are still living under the spell of it’s enchantment.)

¹ English translation: José Ortega y Gasset: *The Revolt of the Masses*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1957. Especially chapter XIII: “The Greatest Danger, the State”, pp. 115-124.

Now, what are the common elements of Socialist and Liberal creed? Without aiming at completeness I mention the following items:

1. The **rejection**, or even **denial** of the **past**, of tradition. The past doesn't appear in these spiritual currents as an inexhaustible treasury of accumulated human experience or as the essence of human existence, extended in time, but rather as the source of backwardness and superstition which should be eliminated at any cost.

2. Harsh **critique** of the **present**, of the existing social order, or even its complete decimation; annihilation. The present, which at that particular time was equal with the Feudal system, appears as a main antagonist, whose destruction was an indispensable condition of any further step to be done for both currents.

3. **Expropriation of the future**. Both currents assign an exceptional importance to the dimension of future; their representatives consider themselves to be the constructors or engineers of the future who got a free hand to establish a just, equitable and human society of the future. In the course of this they make a particular use of **progress**; they consider themselves the supreme depository; exclusive representatives of progress.

4. **The cult of reason**. During the critique of past and present and the vision of the future both currents lay a special stress upon human reason as an exclusive instance, with the help of which every problem can be solved, every question an-

swered. The so-called **rational subject** will be that agent, upon which future societies should be constructed.

5. **Anti-religiosity.** This is, of course, the inverse of the previous characteristic. Religion, as such, is interpreted by both currents as a fetter or shackle; a hindrance to the limitless use of reason. Religion is seen as a fundamental obstacle to ambitious human plans and societal aspirations.

This list, which is far from being complete, shows that there is significant overlap between the two currents from the very beginning.

In the next step, I will be concentrating more on Bolshevik marxism, I'm going to examine, how these two currents undermined, in the course of historical time, the cornerstones of conservative being, those values that can be summarized in the following slogan: God – fatherland – family.

1. **God:** Questioning and negating the role of God was taking place in the course of the 18th and 19th centuries which reached its culmination point in Nietzsche's famous saying: "God is dead".² Further upshots of atheism can be detected, on the one hand, in the incomparably cruel persecution of religion executed by Bolshevism in the 20th century, and, on the other, in that systematic de-Christianizing process that is still being carried out by left-liberal powers in present-day Europe.

² Friedrich Nietzsche: Thus Spoke Zarathustra. In *The Portable Nietzsche*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1968. p. 124.

2. **Fatherland:** its questioning and undermining was accomplished a bit later, in the 20th century, partly in the form of Proletarian Internationalism during the Bolshevik system, partly in the form of Cosmopolitanism, which is a constant element of liberal doctrine.

3. **Family:** There were attempts to destroy it already during the early period of Bolshevism (for example, in the form of polyandry), but its complete destruction is being achieved right now, in the 21st century with a left-liberal leadership; here belong, for instance, the acceptance and growing deference *numerous types of 'new' sexual orientations and gender identities (see S.O.G.I.)*, various forms of genderism as well as an increased popularisation of the single lifestyle.

So, on this field we can also observe a systematic and unified program for the dismantling of traditional European values from the late 18th century up to the present day, in which radical Socialism goes hand-in-hand with leftist Liberalism.

Now I should like to gather explicitly those traits – again, without striving for complete definitions – which connect present-day left-liberal creed with the typical Bolshevik train of thought; these striking similarities give, perhaps, an answer for the strange phenomenon of why a radical Marxist way of thinking has stayed so prevalent in Western Europe.

1. Both currents have the firm conviction that **history leads directly back to them**. Liberalism and Bolshevik Marxism both consider themselves as **the fulfilment of history**. They simply cannot imagine another scenario, they are simply unable to look beyond the horizon of their system of ideas,

respectively. Marx and Lenin, on the one hand, and Francis Fukuyama, on the other, are foster brothers in this respect.

2. It follows from the previous item that both currents can be characterized by **intolerance**, that is to say, a cruel persecution of those points of view that are different from theirs. On this field Bolshevik Marxism represented an outspokenly brutal oppression, whereas the methods of contemporary liberalism are, of course, much more refined, but such methods can also be found in its properties just like conspiracy of silence, character-assassination, existential threatening, the spectre of dismissal or even overt persecution.

3. The consequence of intolerance is the unconditional emphasis of their own doctrine, making impossible other convictions and concepts, which is called **propaganda** in the old jargon of the Socialist movement. This also can be found in both currents. Common elements are mendacity, the distortion and/or partial suppression of information; the arbitrary picking of facts out of their original and accurate context, the alteration of photographs (and other means of communication) and simply supplying biased or false explanations. The difference, perhaps, consists in the fact, that whereas propaganda-work was brutally violent in the Bolshevik system, the techniques of present-day left-liberalism are much more refined in this respect as well. Present-day brainwashing is making use of a full range of contemporary implements of the media, technology, the Internet, and, of course, advertising as well. Unfortunately, there is no time now to go into greater detail.

4. Another common trait of both currents is the unconditional insistence on **Internationalism**; we have already touched on this topic. In the meantime the term for the liberal version of internationalism, which was “cosmopolitanism”, has been exchanged for Globalization, a term that seems to be more acceptable to many. However, the main objectives have remained the same: the elimination of all locally-oriented issues, national separation and sovereignty.

5. In spite of Internationalism both currents have established a proper **centre** for themselves. In the case of Bolshevik Marxism it obviously became Moscow, Russia and the most important organ for the central will became the Komintern for decades. The centre of present-day Continental Liberalism is Brussels, Belgium without a doubt. This centre is only on the visible surface; the real centre is present only in a much dimmer way; these are the hardly perceptible centres, tiny cells of the international financial world. These also have their local representatives at their beck and call, which leads to the next item; which is...

6. The phenomenon of **Vanguardism**. It is one of the paradoxes of Bolshevism that although it defined itself from the very beginning as a mass-movement, nevertheless it made place to a narrow circle, to the “vanguard of the working class”, which directed (influenced, manipulated) the masses. The same phenomenon is also present in the ruling system of contemporary Liberalism, even if with a different name. To use a genuine Stalinist term, the so-called “driving-belts” of

minority will are certain universities, research centres, foundations and, of course, various non-governmental organizations.

7. Finally, let us call to our minds the concept of **freedom**; there seems to be a sharp contrast between Liberalism and Bolshevik Marxism in this respect; we know that the former trend considers of utmost importance the personal rights of liberty, whereas the latter proved to be one of the hardest dictatorships in history. Let us recall Marx's words from the third volume of *The Capital*,³ where he contrasts Communism as a "realm of liberty" with all the previous societies as "realms of necessity". So, the myth of liberty has a key-role in both currents; the difference is that freedom is embodied in the abstract fiction of the liberty of the system as such, whereas in the case of contemporary Liberalism/left-Liberalism it is embodied in the freedom of the individual, unhindered by any community ties (neighbor, family, nation, church etc...), which is, in the last analysis, just as abstract as the other.

If now, with a kind of synoptic vision, we run our eyes over the above-mentioned items, we can see that in spite of the seemingly fundamental differences there are numerous points of overlap between Bolshevik Marxism which came into power just a century ago and the left-Liberalism of recent decades; these similarities and overlaps give, perhaps, an explanation, why Marxism, even in its radical, Bolshevik version, still en-

³ Karl Marx: *The Capital*. Vol. 3. New York: International Publishers, [n.d.] Chapter XLVIII. p. 593.

joys such a warm reception amongst left-liberal intellectuals in today's society.

In conclusion, let me take a glance, in brief, at the recent past, the present situation and future outlook for Europe. In order to achieve this I refer to one of the works of Oswald Spengler *Jahre der Entscheidung*, (*"The Hour of Decision"*),⁴ which was published in 1933 in Germany, after Hitler's political takeover. In a substantial part of this work Spengler examines which forces contributed essentially to the decline of traditional Europe. In the course of this process he distinguishes two types of world revolution: one is coming "from below" and another coming "from the outside". Now, the first world-revolution has been realized by Marxism – especially in its Bolshevik version –, the result of which is, apart from many others, the evening out of society, the spreading of flatness and vulgarity on most areas of common life; a real rule of the masses. The second one, which is called by Spengler the "world revolution of coloured people" can be connected to left-liberalism and keying off of the low birth rates of European populations – is being fulfilled, albeit fostered under the efficient support of left-liberal ideology. Millions are migrating from non-European countries demanding free passage and equal opportunity within Europe. Many within this mass migration cannot be fully or adequately documented by the

⁴ Oswald Spengler: *The Hour of Decision*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1934. Part Four.

under-funded and over-burdened immigration authorities of several 'front-line' countries. So, Bolshevik Marxism and unrestrained left-Liberalism are common not only as far as the past is concerned, but also common heirs of so-called enlightenment. Regarding the future these currents will most likely continue; currents that not only facilitate but accelerate the annihilation of a historically traditional, sometimes, classical Europe.

In olden times rumour had it that “a spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of Communism”.⁵ Nowadays this saying should be modified to say the following: “a spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of her grave-diggers”.

Pondering further on this issue we can admit that the two are not so far from each other; not so far away at all.

⁵ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: Manifesto of the Communist Party. In Marxists Internet Archive (marxists.org). Source: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf>, date of access: October 16, 2018.



DAVID ENGELS

The Revolution of 1917 from the Perspective of the Morphology of History

INTRODUCTION

Seldom in the history of the West has an event been so disruptive as the Revolution of 1917, and yet so difficult to explain. If their analysis is rooted in the intellectual context of Marxist theory, the events of October 1917 are interpreted as the inevitable and pre-ordained result of the alleged tendency of human history to march from slavery through feudalism and capitalism to socialism.¹ If, however, the analysis is based on the (currently largely prevailing) historical model of Popper's 'open' history, where anything can happen anytime

¹ On Marxist historiography, cf. P. Anderson, *In the Tracks of Historical Materialism*. London: Verso, 1983 P. Blackledge, *Reflections on the Marxist Theory of History*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006; Fr. Kaplan, *Le matérialisme historique et les mécanismes de l'histoire*. Paris: Editions Kimé, 2014; G. A. Wetter, *Der dialektische Materialismus. Seine Geschichte und sein System in der Sowjetunion*. Freiburg: Herder, 1952; J. Witt-Hansen, *Historical Materialism. The Method, the Theories*. København: Munksgaard, 1960.

and anywhere, the October Revolution appears as the mere result of the collusion of an incalculable number of more or less random factors.² Unfortunately, both views fail to confer a real sense to the precise events: the Marxist interpretation is at odds with explaining the reasons why the actual reality of a Communist society was unable to set into motion the allegedly inevitable ‘world revolution’; and the belief into an ‘open’ history cannot even grasp October 1917 as a single historical phenomenon, as it is only pre-occupied with the purely mechanistic interrelation of its diverse components.

However, there is a third explanatory model, only rarely heard of in recent times, despite its obvious interest for our understanding of the Revolution of 1917: the morphology of history. It would lead us too far to recapitulate the complex structural models developed by thinkers such as Giambattista Vico, Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee or Vittorio Hösle;³ let us only remember the basic assumption following which

² On Popper’s ‘open history’ – defined in K. R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*. 2 vols. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1945 –, cf. M. Cornforth, *The Open Philosophy and the Open Society*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1977; H. Keuth, *The Philosophy of Karl Popper*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005; J. Nasher, *Die Staatstheorie Karl Poppers. Eine kritisch-rationale Methode*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck Verlag, 2017; P. A. Schilpp (ed.), *The Philosophy of Karl Popper*. 2 vols. La Salle: Open Court, 1974; J. Shearmur and G. Stokes (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Popper*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

³ On a more general introduction to these models, cf. the papers collected in D. Engels (ed.), *Von Platon bis Fukuyama. Biologistische und zyklische Konzepte in der Geschichtsphilosophie der Antike und des Abendlandes*. Bruxelles: Peeters Publishers, 2015. Esp. 8–46.

all human societies follow a similar pattern of evolution from their respective beginning up to their pre-ordained end.

However, social questions were of only limited interest to Vico and Höfle, of whom the former focused essentially either on literary and juridical issues, whereas the latter dealt with philosophical questions only. Spengler and Toynbee however, the one essentially writing before, the other after the October Revolution actually took place, fully acknowledged the morphological importance of social mass movements and interpreted the emergence of Communist ideologies as a typical feature of the last phase in the development of any human civilisation. Nevertheless, both philosophers were fundamentally influenced in their thinking by the conviction that Russia in particular and most of the Slavic countries in general were not, by any means, part of the occidental culture, but constituted a separate culture of their own, only vaguely linked to the West by the common heritage of Antiquity and Christianity.⁴ This seems to be a fundamental error, as in my view, the historical evidence points to the fact that ‘Western culture’ does not end somewhere at the Vistula and Danube, but rather at the river

⁴ On Spengler and Russia, cf. H.-Chr. Kraus, ‘Untergang des Abendlandes’. Rußland im Geschichtsdenken Oswald Spenglers. In G. Koenen and L. Kopelew (eds.), *Deutschland und die Russische Revolution 1917–1924*. München: Wilhelm Fink, 1998, 277–312; G. L. Ulmen, *Metaphysik des Morgenlandes – Spengler über Rußland*. In Chr. Ludz (ed.), *Spengler heute*. München: C. H. Beck, 1980. 123–173. On Toynbee and Russia, cf. J. D. Clarkson, *Toynbee on Slavic and Russian History*. *The Russian Review* 15, no. 4 (1956), 165–172; G. B. Paquette, *The Impact of the 1917 Russian Revolutions on Arnold J. Toynbee’s Historical Thought, 1917–34*. *Revolutionary Russia* 13, no. 1 (2000), 55–80.

Amur. One could even contend that many features of Russian history reflect the typical morphological evolution of Western culture in perhaps an even clearer form than the history of France or Spain – not only in the past, but also in the present.⁵

Moreover, given the fact that Spengler and Toynbee often argued on the basis of historical data today somewhat superseded, and that they were essentially pre-occupied with the history of the West and thus somewhat neglected other civilisations, it is high time to reconsider the place of the Russian Revolution in the context of a revised morphological approach to history.⁶ In the following, we will proceed in three steps: First, show how the comparison of October 1917 with parallel events from other cultures may improve our understanding of Western Communism; second, sketch the more or less violent end met by all attempts of actually constructing a functioning Communist society; third, reflect on the potential future of Europe on the basis of the analogous evolution found in previous societies.

⁵ On the intellectual base of such a revision, cf. D. Engels, *Ducunt fata volentem, nolentem trahunt. Spengler, Hegel und das Problem der Willensfreiheit im Geschichtsdeterminismus. Saeculum* 59, no. 2 (2009), 269–298.

⁶ Cf. D. Engels, *Kulturmorphologie und Willensfreiheit: Überlegungen zu einer neuen komparatistischen Geschichtsphilosophie*. In D. Engels and M. Otte and M. Thöndl (eds.), *Der lange Schatten Oswald Spenglers. 100 Jahre 'Der Untergang des Abendlandes.'* Waltrop: Sonderwege, 2018.

COMMUNISM DURING HISTORY: SOME CASE STUDIES

Indeed, when we look back at the history of past civilisations, we cannot but see that, sooner or later, there is always a moment when their initial creative impetus starts to slow down and transforms into a period where reason replaces belief, technology replaces art, technocracy replaces popular leadership, multiculturalism replaces tradition, money replaces honour, and individualism replaces solidarity; a transformation often defined as being a transition from a 'cultured' to a 'civilised' stage of evolution.⁷ Hence, everywhere in world history, at a certain point, the old forces of tradition, nobility, religion and order become gradually superseded by two new powers equally based on a purely materialist approach of humanity: on the one hand, 'liberal' elites, monopolising access to wealth and power on the basis of an essentially Capitalist ideology, and, on the other hand, 'Socialist' movements aiming at overthrowing the general order of society in order to

⁷ On the subject of 'Kultur' vs. 'Zivilisation' (going back to Schiller's 1795 treaty 'Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung' and masterly developed in Thomas Mann's 1918 monograph 'Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen'), cf.: R. Eckert, *Kultur, Zivilisation und Gesellschaft*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1970; M. Pflaum, *Die Kultur-Zivilisation-Antithese im Deutschen*. In J. Knobloch et al. (eds.), *Europäische Schlüsselwörter. Wortvergleichende und wortgeschichtliche Studien*. Vol. 3. Oldenburg, München: Hueber, 1976. 288–427; J. J. Fisch, *Zivilisation, Kultur*. In O. Brunner, W. Conze, and R. Kaselleck (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. Vol. 7. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992. 679–774.

establish a new, egalitarian state dominated by party bureaucracy.

Obviously, this is exactly the historical moment where the results of the Russian Revolution and its numerous ideological counterparts fit in. A totalitarian state, the redistribution of land, the severe restriction of private property, the rise to power of a corrupt bureaucracy, the fight against traditional religion, megalomaniac building projects, destruction of the aesthetic ideal of the preceding period, growing importance of the military and police, eradication of political opponents – all this is not ‘new’ in world history, but has happened several times already, as can be easily demonstrated by a few selected examples.⁸

Thus, already in Egypt in the late 14th century B.C., Akhenaten,⁹ whose totalitarian characteristics have often been stressed in research, not only opposed the economic wealth

⁸ It may perhaps be of interest to the reader that the following examples have been taken out of a work on world history the author of this paper is currently writing; a first, very short sketch of the underlying assumptions and preliminary results can be found in: Cf. D. Engels, Spengler im 21. Jahrhundert. Überlegungen und Perspektiven zu einer Überarbeit der Spengler’schen Kulturmorphologie. In S. Fink and R. Rollinger (eds.), *Oswald Spenglers Kulturmorphologie. Eine multiperspektivische Annäherung*. Wiesbaden: Springer, 2018, 451–486.

⁹ On Akhenaten, cf. J. Bertram, *Echnaton, der große im Schauen. Eine religionsphilosophische Studie*. Hamburg: Hamburger Kulturverlag, 1953; A. Dodson, *Amarna Sunrise. Egypt from Golden Age to Age of Heresy*. Al-Qahira: The American University in Cairo Press, 2014; J. K. Hoffmeier, *Akhenaten and the Origins of Monotheism*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015; E. Hornung, *Echnaton. Die Religion des Lichtes*. Zürich: Artemis & Winkler, 1995; D. Laboury, *Akhenaton, Néferti, El-Amarna, Aton, Karnak*. Paris: Pygmalion, 2010; N. Reeves, *Akhenaten. Egypt’s False Prophet*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2001.

of the Amun-clergy by disbanding all sects and/or diverting their income to his new, quasi-monotheist cult of Aten. He also defaced inscriptions mentioning other gods, re-wrote the history of the past and imposed himself as sole mediator between Aten and the masses in order to bypass the traditional religious elites. Despite utopian claims of having inaugurated an ideal age of universal bliss, his regime was characterised by the corruption of officials, failures of the new centralism, the expense of gigantic projects such as the construction of Amarna as well as the increasing influence of the army.

Similarly, in the Chinese world of the 4th century B.C., we could refer to Shang Yang's disruptive reforms of the kingdom of Qin, based on the ideology of Legalism which wanted to break with the traditionalism and ritualism inherited from the old institutions of the Zhou-dynasty and to impose a wholly new, rationale and totalitarian order.¹⁰ In order to break the influence of the elites, social hierarchy was henceforth to be strictly meritocratic and the traditional aristocracy replaced by a quasi-military re-ordering of society controlled by bureaucracy. Land was to be redistributed in order to create egalitarian conditions at village level, strict harvest quotas im-

¹⁰ On Legalism, cf. Zh. Fu, *China's Legalists. The Earliest Totalitarians and Their Art of Ruling*. Armonk: Routledge, 1996; P. R. Goldin, *After Confucius. Studies in Early Chinese Philosophy*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005; P. R. Goldin, Persistent Misconceptions about Chinese 'Legalism'. *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 38, no. 1 (2011), 64–80; Y. Li (ed.), *Shang Yang's Reforms and State Control in China*. White Plains: Routledge, 1977; Y. Pines, *Envisioning Eternal Empire. Chinese Political Thought of the Warring States Era*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009.

posed, opponents deported or enslaved, the police and military massively increased and denunciation of non-conformists officially encouraged.

The late Hellenistic period of the 2nd century B.C., too, was filled with episodes where not only slaves, but also the lower classes, influenced by “religious movements” and philosophical schools, revolted against the oligarchic rule of wealthy land-owners and merchants¹¹ and set up short-lived dictatorial regimes. These were characterised by the redistribution of land, the freeing of slaves, the banning or even extermination of the rich, the militarisation of society and the promotion of new civic religions, from the sun-state of Aristonikos and the Spartan revolution through the social stirrings within the members of the Achaian League and the Sicilian slave revolts up to the tribunate of the Gracchi in Rome.

A further, though generally less well-known example comes from the early 6th century A.D. in Sasanian Iran. Here,

¹¹ On social movements in Classical Antiquity, see Kl. Bringmann, *Die Agrarreform des Tiberius Gracchus. Legende und Wirklichkeit*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 1985; D. Engels, Ein syrisches Sizilien? Seleukidische Aspekte des Ersten Sizilischen Sklavenkriegs und der Herrschaft des Eunus-Antiochos. *Polifemo* 11 (2011), 231–251; J. Ferguson, *Utopias of the Classical World*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975; Cl. Nicolet (ed.), *Les Gracques, ou: Crise agraire et révolution à Rome*. Paris: Julliard, Gallimard, 1990; R. von Pöhlmann, *Geschichte der sozialen Frage und des Sozialismus in der antiken Welt*. 2 vols. München: C. H. Beck, O. Beck, 1912; W. W. Tarn, *The Social Question in the Third Century*. In J. B. Bury et al. (eds.), *The Hellenistic Age*. Cambridge: The University Press, 1923, 108–140; J. Vogt, *Struktur der antiken Sklavenkriege*. Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, 1957.

it was the religious movement of the Mazdakites¹² which rose against the wealthy land-owning elite that controlled the major state structures. With the initial support of the ruling king, Kavadh I, who hoped to strengthen his empire against the very influential nobility of the time, the Mazdakites abolished private property, imposed a 'community of women' and thus made patrilineal heredity impossible. They confiscated land and riches and challenged the Zoroastrian clergy in order to set up a utopian and egalitarian state.

In the Islamic world as well, the extreme social injustice of the late Abbasid era was contested by numerous Communist movements, most notably the Qarmatians.¹³ Influenced by the increasingly popularised social doctrines of the Isma'ili movement, the Qarmatians promoted the redistribution of land, preached an egalitarian, Communist society based on collectivised slavelabour forces, successfully founded a state which controlled much of southern Iraq and the Persian Gulf Coast in the 10th century and opposed many traditional re-

¹² On the Mazdakites, see A. Christensen, *Le régime du roi Kawād̄h I. et le communisme mazdakite*. København: Høst, 1925; P. Crone, *Kavad's Heresy and Mazdak's Revolt. Iran* 29 (1991), 21–42; O. Klima, *Mazdak. Geschichte einer sozialen Bewegung im sassanidischen Persien*. Praha, 1957; J. Wiesehöfer, *Kawad, Khusro I and the Mazdakites. A New Proposal*. In P. Gignoux et al. (eds.), *Trésors d'Orient*. Paris: Peeters Publishers, 2009, 391–409; E. Yarshater, *Mazdakism*. In *Cambridge History of Iran*. Vol. 3. Part 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983. 991–1024.

¹³ On the Qarmatians, see M. J. de Goeje, *Mémoire sur les Carmathes du Bahraïn et les Fatimides*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1886; W. Ivanow, *The Rise of the Fatimids*. Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1942. Esp. 127–156; B. Lewis, *The Origins of Ismailism*. Cambridge: W. Hoffur and Sons, 1940. Esp. 49–73; K. Ramahi and D. Quintern, *Qarmatien und Ihwan assafa*. Hamburg: Theorie u. Praxis, 2005.

ligious rituals such as pilgrimage, fasting and Friday prayer; even closing down mosques and pillaging Mecca.

Finally, let us mention the late Muromachi-period in Japan, where the exploitation of the peasants by the rich local lords of the 'warring-states' period prompted the Buddhist school of Ikkō-shū,¹⁴ led by Jōdo-Shinshū, since 1475, to promote social revolution, to conquer the province of Kaga and to expand its activity all over Japan. The ikko-ikki revolution endeavoured to found an egalitarian society, replaced social hierarchy by grass-root village democracies dominated by the clergy of the temple of Hongan-ji, and even refused to obey the commands of the imperial administration.

From such a comparative perspective, the aborted Communist adventure beginning in 1917 Russia and ended in 1991 is neither to be considered as a mere prologue to the ultimate victory of Socialism, nor as a mere accidental result of an incalculable number of historical factors. By comparing it to similar events from world history, it rather seems that the rise of Communism was a tragic, but pre-ordained step in the history of Western culture.

¹⁴ On the school of Ikkō-shū, see J. C. Dobbins, *Jodo Shinshu: Shin Buddhism in Medieval Japan*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989; Sh. Katsumata, *Ikki. Coalitions, ligues et révoltes dans le Japon d'autrefois*. Paris: Cnrs, 2011; N. McMullin, *Buddhism and the State in Sixteenth-Century Japan*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984; C. Richmond, Tsang, *War and Faith. Ikko Ikki in Late Muromachi Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007.

THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

It is not only the possibility to understand what is typical and what is accidental in past history that makes the morphology of history so interesting and fertile, it is also the opportunity to gain some insight in the probable outlines of future history. Indeed, all the regimes mentioned above not only resembled each other in their general characteristics; they also were all, without exception, subject to a violent collapse, a brief restoration of an extreme form of liberal government, a period of growing social and cultural unrest and then, finally, the emergence of conservative mass movements succeeding in founding a new state based as well on ancestral traditions as on high social awareness.¹⁵

Thus, the shortcomings of Atenism led to the downfall of Akhenaten's regime and worldview after his death and the brief restoration of the exploitive economic structures of the priesthood of Amun under the reigns of the kings of the late 18th dynasty. However, the Amarna-period left deep scars and explains the ultimate rise to power of the 19th dynasty and thus the Ramessides in the 13th century B.C., who combined

¹⁵ On this evolution, see D. Engels, *Construction de normes et morphologie culturelle. Empire romain, chinois, sasanide et fatimide – une comparaison historique*. In T. Itgenshorst and Ph. LeDoze (eds.), *La norme sous la République romaine et le Haut-Empire. Élaboration, diffusion et contournements*. Bordeaux: Ausonius, 2017. 53–73; D. Engels, „Reinheit“ als Konzept in der römischen Religion? In B. Eckhardt and K. Zimmermann (eds.), *Reinheit und Autorität*. Münster, forthcoming.

a traditionalist outlook on Egyptian culture and religion with social preoccupations and strong centralism.¹⁶

In China, Shang Yang was executed together with his family, after the death of his royal patron, by the latter's successor, king Huiwen, and thus the previous elites were reestablished once again. Nevertheless, the ideology of Legalism was to remain very influential and ultimately enabled Shi Huangdi and Han Gaotsu, the first Chinese emperors, to found a new, unified state in the 3rd century B.C. In the era following, the Qin and Han empires renewed with many ancestral, often archaic traditions while protecting the simple people from exploitation and presenting itself as defender of the 'black-haired people', i.e. the peasantry.¹⁷

In Antiquity too, the Socialist movements of the 2nd century B.C. were all quelled by oligarchic counter-revolutions, and their leaders, such as the Gracchi, were summarily executed.

¹⁶ On the post-Amarna and Ramesside restoration, cf. A. A. Dodson, *Amarna Sunset. Nefertiti, Tutankhamun, Ay, Horemheb, and the Egyptian Counter-Reformation*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2009; Th. G. H. James, *Ramsès II*. Paris: Gründ, 2002; K. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant. The Life and Times of Ramesses II, King of Egypt*. London: Aris & Phillips, 1983.

¹⁷ On the foundation of the Chinese empire, cf. G. Hardy and A. B. Kinney, *The Establishment of the Han Empire and Imperial China*. Westport: Greenwood, 2005; M. Lewis, *The Early Chinese Empire. Qin and Han*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007; M. Loewe, *The Government of the Qin and Han Empires, 221 BCE–220 CE*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006; Y. Pines et al. (eds.), *Birth of an Empire. The State of Qin Revisited*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2014; J. Portal (ed.), *The First Emperor*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007; D. Twitchett and M. Loewe (eds.), *The Cambridge History of China. Vol. 1. (The Ch'in and Han Empires, 221 BC–AD 220)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

However, in the long run, these movements awakened and set free deep resentments ultimately leading to the downfall of the senatorial regime and the rise of Augustus. The Augustan Principate was characterised by a complex equilibrium between a conservative ‘restauration’ of old republican and religious institutions, and a deep preoccupation with the social issues of everyday citizens who considered the emperor as ultimate champion of their interests.¹⁸

In Iran, the counter-revolution of the wealthy classes created a long political chaos from which it could only be saved, after the short interlude of the liberal ruling period of Kavadh I, by the authoritarian reforms of king Chosroes I in the 6th century. Chosroes endeavoured to restore ancestral social and religious order while simultaneously improving the living conditions and moral education of the simple people and fortifying the political position of the ‘king of kings’.¹⁹

¹⁸ On Augustus, cf. J. Béranger, *Principatus. Études de notions et d'histoire politiques dans l'antiquité greco-romaine*. Genève: Droz, 1973; J. Bleicken, *Prinzipat und Republik. Überlegungen zum Charakter des römischen Kaisertums*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1991; H. Castritius, *Der römische Prinzipat als Republik*. Husum: Matthiesen, 1982; W. D. Heilmeyer et al. (eds.), *Kaiser Augustus und die verlorene Republik*. Mainz: Philip von Zabern, 1988; R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939.

¹⁹ On Chosroes, compare H. Börm, Das Königtum der Sasaniden. Strukturen und Probleme. Bemerkungen aus althistorischer Sicht. *Klio* 90 (2008), 423–443; J. Howard-Johnston, State and Society in Late Antique Iran. In V. Sarkhosh Curtis and S. Stewart (eds.), *The Sasanian Era*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2008, 118–129; Chr. Jullien (ed.), *Husraw Ier. Reconstructions d'un règne*. Paris: Peeters Publishers, 2015; Z. Rubin, The Reforms of Khusro Anūshivan. In A. Cameron (ed.), *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East*. Vol. 3. Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1995, 227–297.

In the post-Classic Islamic world, the Qarmatian State gradually declined during the 10th century through the endeavour of the rich merchants controlling Arabian trade routes and endangered by Qarmatian raids and social reforms. However, the new hegemonic power of the Islamic world, the Fatimids, who, after an initial alliance, were instrumental in the Qarmatians' final demise, took over many of the latter's ideological features and social claims, though they restored most of the traditional ritual forms of Islam and its society despite their own, Isma'ili identity.²⁰

In late 16th century Japan, the re-unification of the island during the late Sengoku-period finally put a violent end to the ikko-ikki movement, but nevertheless prefigured many of the social measures of the Tokugawa shogunate despite the latter's traditionalist conservatism.²¹

²⁰ On the end of the Qarmatians, see M. J. de Goeje, *La fin de l'empire des Carmathes du Bahraïn*. *Journal Asiatique* 9, no. 5 (1895), 5–30; W. Madelung, *Fatimiden und Bahrainqarmaten*. *Der Islam* 34 (1959), 34–88. On the Fatimids, see M. Brett, *The Rise of the Fatimids*. Leiden: Brill, 2001; H. Halm, *Das Reich des Mahdi. Der Aufstieg der Fatimiden (875–973)*. München: C. H. Beck, 1991; H. Halm, *Die Kalifen von Kairo. Die Fatimiden in Ägypten (973–1074)*. München: C. H. Beck, 2003; Y. Lev, *State and Society in Fatimid Egypt*. Leiden: Brill, 1992.

²¹ On the conservatism of the Tokugawa-Shogunate, cf. Ch. R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan: 1549–1650*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993; Berkeley, 1993; Sh. Ryotaro, *Tokugaw Ieyasu, shogun suprême*. Monaco: Editions du Rocher, 2011; A. L. Sadler, *The Maker of Modern Japan. The Life of Tokugawa Ieyasu*. Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle, 1981; C. D. Totman, *Politics in the Tokugawa Bakufu, 1600–1843*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967; St. Turnbull, *Tokugawa Ieyasu*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2012.

CONCLUSION – EUROPE’S FUTURE

In conclusion to this short presentation, I am not sure whether the study of history can really help us to change our common future, but I am convinced that comparative history can help us at least in guessing which future tendencies are to be considered as most probable. In this view, the dialectical evolution leading from Socialism through Liberalism to Conservatism which once characterised the history of past civilisations such as Egypt, China, ancient Iran, the Islamic world or Japan seems to correspond quite exactly to the political shifts so typical for the current Western world of the 21st century. True Communism has failed and has largely disappeared but in its place an ultra-capitalist materialist ideology has taken over; imposed by technocratic governments and supra-national associations. Conservative movements are rising everywhere throughout the West and challenging this new order.²²

The reasons for this opposition are obvious, as it becomes clearer every day that Socialism and ultra-Liberalism, due to their identical materialist, individualist and internationalist approach, are merely two sides of the same coin. Both are

²² On these analogies, cf. D. Engels, *Le Déclin. La crise de l'Union européenne et la chute de la république romaine. Analogies historiques*. Paris: L'artilleur, 2013. See also the heavily revised German translation: *Auf dem Weg ins Imperium? Die Krise der Europäischen Union und der Untergang der römischen Republik. Historische Parallelen*. Berlin, München: Europa, 2014; and now the Hungarian translation with updated preface: *A birodalomvá válás útján. Az Európai Unió válsága és a Római Köztársaság hanyatlása*. Budapest: LHarmattan, 2017.

fundamentally opposed to religious belief, to cultural identity, to civic autonomy and to any form of traditional solidarity. Both tend to eradicate the middle classes and to further a fundamental inequality between an atomised, uprooted and anonymised mass on the one hand and a small elite on the other. It is thus only a question of time before, once again, the horrors of unemployment, globalisation, mass-immigration, depopulation, insecurity, poverty and secularisation will make people understand the fundamental shortcomings and inherent paradoxes of a purely materialist and rationalist ideology and realise that only with a renewal of tradition can we prevent Western societies from falling apart.²³

This is the ultimate reason why, everywhere in Europe and North America, and not the least in Hungary and the Visegrad states, new, revolutionary forms of conservatism are on the march, calling for the cultural and spiritual renaissance of Europe. Though they are generally ousted by the mainstream media as ‘populist’ or ‘rightist’ (and are sometimes indeed still in need of fully defining themselves), comparative history suggests that they will have to play an important, perhaps

²³ On the possibility of a civil war, cf. D. Engels, Ceci n'est pas une crise, mais pourrait bien être le début de la fin. In J.-P. Labille (ed.), *Brexit! Le 'non' britannique décrypté*. Waterloo: Renaissance du Livre, 2016. 57–67; D. Engels, The European Union and the Decline of the West, or: Determinism or Determination? In *Erträge* 5 (2017), 93–124; D. Engels, Europa in nicht allzu ferner Zeit. Eine Dystopie. In R. Grätz (ed.), *Kann Kultur Europa retten?* Berlin: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2017, 29–40.

even crucial part in the future of The West, at least in the long term.²⁴

The road towards the goal of a reconciled Europe will not be easy, and without a doubt, the coming decades will be marked by unrest, upheavals and possibly wide-spread destruction. Nevertheless, if there is to be even a single hope for the future survival of the European culture on the world stage, it will not rely solely on the subscription to a list of vague Universalist values which can be interpreted and manipulated at will; it will also rely on a positive commitment to the specific form of Christian humanism²⁵ once defined by Paul Valéry and still at the heart of what Europe was about in the past and, hopefully, what it will soon be again in the future:

*“Wherever the names of Caesar, Gaius and Virgil, wherever the names of Moses and the Apostle Paul, wherever the names of Aristotle, Plato and Euclid simultaneously have meaning and authority, there is Europe. Every people and every country that was Romanised, Christianised and that submitted itself to the discipline of the Greeks is absolutely European.”*²⁶

²⁴ Cf. e.g. D. Engels, Populistes et populaires - ou: Trump n'est que le début. *La lettre des Académies* 39 (2016), 5–6.

²⁵ Cf. e.g. D. Engels, Die Islamisierung des Abendlands? Eine Langfristperspektive. *Frank&Frei* no 4. (2017), 13–18.

²⁶ P. Valéry, Note (ou l'Européen) (1922), In J. Hytier (ed.), *OEuvres. Vol. 1*. Paris: Bibliothèque De La Pleiade, 1957. 1000–1014.

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SID LUKKASSEN

Marxism in the West and in the East

An immense wave of scepticism surged in the 1960s, which revolted against the church and families as respect-worthy forms of authority in those days. It was a societal form of scepticism; yet simultaneously a philosophical form appeared, which argued against objective knowledge and well-defined truths. This form of scepticism ranged from Jacques Derrida to Paul Feyerabend, from Woodstock to the Dutch Provo movement. On the ruins of that scepticism a mass-consumerism blossomed, as well as attempts to 'deconstruct' the basic facts of life – including biology. According to Theodore Dalrymple, the contemporary European lives on an inherited moral substance nurtured by the now-lost traditions of a previous generation. As this moral fabric is depleted, forms of *identity politics* arise to fill the void.

ACADEMIC POWER HEGEMONY OF THE LIBERAL LEFT

In my book *Avondland en Identiteit* – Occident and Identity – I take a historic-philosophical approach to European geopol-

itics and Western identity. Globalism and the 1968 wave have thoroughly influenced our identity: sexually, economically and culturally. In the US, political correctness is now so powerful that the number of dis-invitations for speakers with ‘undesirable’ views or beliefs at universities is higher than ever.¹ Even *The Washington Post* reports that “the shift of universities towards the left is hurting students’ education.”² Meanwhile in West-Europe the situation is now so desperate that anyone who resists the encroaching influence of political correctness, has their position marginalized and their work will be boycotted. There is truly a power hegemony of the liberal left.³

As academics, we get ‘worked out of’ our positions and usually cannot fight back because people simply do not perceive it as their problem – and so we do not have any allies. This means that we have no choice but to reach out to Central Europe and to East-Europe, to support us and give us a chance to continue our work as academics. The popula-

¹ Alex Morey, Campus Disinvitations Set Record in 2016. *Thefire.org*, December 20, 2016. Source: <https://www.thefire.org/campus-disinvitations-set-record-in-2016>, date of access: November 16, 2017.

² The dramatic shift among college professors that’s hurting students’ education. *Washingtonpost.com*, January 11, 2016. Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/01/11/the-dramatic-shift-among-college-professors-thats-hurting-students-education/?utm_term=.721983b2848d, date of access: November 16, 2017.

³ Sid Lukkassen, Niet-progressieve wetenschappers hebben te maken met een glazen plafond. Universiteiten en hogescholen zijn broeinesten van GroenLinks- en D66-denken. *Politiek.tpo.nl*, October 15, 2017. Source: <http://politiek.tpo.nl/2017/10/15/niet-progressieve-wetenschappers-hebben-te-maken-met-een-glazen-plafond/>, date of access: November 16, 2017.

tion of West-Europe thus far, unfortunately, is too decadent to care or to protest: we are isolated in our fight and deprived of livelihood. In The U.S., there is at least a scholarly conservative tradition to keep track of disinvitations and to report on them.⁴ In WesternEurope, scholars keep quiet about it, in fear of losing their own positions.

OCCIDENT AND IDENTITY

While political Islam stirs in the South and Russian Orthodox nationalism looms in the East, Europe is left ‘navel-gazing’ as it struggles with multiculturalism and the identity issues brought about by the New Left and its social justice warriors (SJW). Young Europeans find themselves in a world that feels hollow and vacuous compared with the promises made by utopians and progressives: they seek leaders capable of identifying and positively defending the values that once made European civilization a leading force in culture and science.

Despite its secularization, Europe has inherited a Christian culture of guilt and original sin. The success of the New Left is its masterful knowledge of how to exploit this, as well as ‘colonial trauma.’ That Achilles’ heel, combined with decades

⁴ Warren Treadgold, *The Death of Scholarship*. Leftists are limiting academic work to demonstrations of leftist dogma. *Commentarymagazine.com*, November 2017. Source: <https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/the-death-of-scholarship/>, date of access: November 16, 2017.

of progressive utopianism, makes Europe vulnerable to aggressive *realpolitik* by others. Europe needs to reconstitute an identity that unifies the classical virtues of antiquity with the ideals of civic humanism.

As previously stated, my book also discusses what precipitated the crisis of European identity in the first place. It covers topics such as postmodernism, the breakdown of modelled roles and the rise of narcissism and passive aggression as default social strategies. Its essential message is that Europe is waking up to a world it no longer understands, and that pure consumerism is not sufficient to bear a civilization. Yet in this *mêlée*, we can usefully draw upon philosophies bequeathed to us by the Ancients – particularly Plato and Aristotle.

Throughout the twelve chapters of *Avondland en Identiteit*, I focus on the origin of Cultural Marxism and its influence, the role and identity of European civilization in a globalising world, and even address the impact of it all upon the politics of sexuality.

An important aspect of this book – one which breaks new ground in political philosophy – is how sexual inequalities have actually been magnified by the 1968 cultural revolution. What started out as a push for egalitarianism evolved into a counter-culture that injected narcissism as a mainstream current in society. Today, this ‘Me, Myself and I’ philosophy of bogus liberation wages war on traditional families and true, healthy forms of masculinity and femininity through legal institutions: Cultural Marxism thus creates a ‘sexual proletariat’.

In 2015, author Gabriele Kuby published *The Global Sexual Revolution: The Destruction of Freedom in the Name of Free-*

dom.⁵ She criticizes the idea that we can just change our sex (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) – an ideology that is beginning to permeate all of society down to the basic level, even kindergarden. As the founding stones of this ideology, Kuby pinpoints Communist doctrine, radical feminism and the leftist student revolutions of the sixties. Radical feminism in particular is aimed against women as mothers and life givers, simultaneously driving fathers away and down-playing the importance of masculinity. Through a ‘long march through the institutions’ these activists infiltrated public offices, global corporations, academia and the justice system. Going forward, we will examine the long-term consequences of that infiltration.

First, we have to point out that Marxism developed differently in the East than it did in the West. In the West there was a functioning Capitalist democracy: Marxists operated ‘behind enemy lines’ – their mission was to *criticize* from within the nation states operated by the ‘Bourgeois-Capitalist System’. Eastern Marxists, by comparison, had a different mission: they served to *legitimize* the Communist states that were part of the Soviet Union as being justified for being in accordance to Marx’ teachings. For Europe this means economic Marxism in the East and Cultural Marxism in the West. The failure of economic Marxism was laid bare by the fall of the Berlin Wall

⁵ Gabriele Kuby’s The Global Sexual Revolution: The Destruction of Freedom in the Name of Freedom. *YouTube.com*, October 25, 2016. Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ykQFrW2Nkxo>, date of access: November 16, 2017.

and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Cultural Marxism on the other hand still thrives – surviving in the form of policies pursued by so-called progressives, gender diversity activists and other social justice warriors.

A NEW FORM OF MARXISM

During the Socialism 2017 conference in Chicago, Paul D’Amato wore a shirt with the phrase “civil rights” while singing the internationale.⁶ However, as Marx argued in *Zur Judenfrage* (1843), the concept of a *civil right* recognizes the legislative system as a source of sovereignty, whereas – according to Marx – only economic redistribution and seizing the means of production can create equality. Such was the core of Marx’ critique of Bruno Bauer and the political emancipation of the Jews. One creates equality by taking over factories and not by asking recognition from the legal system.

According to Marx, the question for legal recognition *legitimizes* the Bourgeois organization of productive relations, because it legitimizes the Bourgeois legal system that supervises the Capitalistic economic system. From a Marxist standpoint, social justice warriors and civil rights activists – no matter how many Marxist slogans they circulate – remain trapped in

⁶ “The Internationale” sung at Socialism 2017 in Chicago. *YouTube.com*, July 9, 2017. Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0d_2BfT-5E, date of access: November 15, 2017.

the ‘superstructure’ and thus in Hegelian Idealism. It goes to show how *absurd* Marxists have become: so much that they on the one hand no longer understand their own basic theorems, while on the other, Marxism has managed to eat its way inside pressure groups as a cultural doctrine. Cultural Marxism has merged with activism and infiltrated the legal system itself.

Cultural Marxism even contaminates the economic relations of production, to the point where it amplifies what it sought to destroy. French author Éric Zemmour points out that Capitalism used to require a workforce – this meant that physical labour provided men with a basic masculine identity. Today physical production has been outsourced to Asia which elevates consumption to a prime importance. According to Zemmour, the ideal consumer is a woman: therefore men are increasingly feminized, so that they will buy beauty products, to give just one example. Whoever resists this and pleads for a clear distinction between the sexes, is branded as a misogynist, fascist or inappropriately “macho”.

“I believe that this strange behaviour stems, first of all, from the will of men not to be ‘men’ anymore, under the traditional criteria; I think this dates back to World War I. The relation of men with war, which had for centuries defined their identity, has changed: the man is not a hero anymore. He is in the mud, in the trenches, under the earth to avoid the machine guns. This also changes the way in which the male body is represented. Capitalism has changed: Capitalism needs consumers, and no longer producers, who are now in China and India. Today we need consumers, and the best consumers are wom-

en, so we must turn everyone into a woman; and thirdly, I note the action of certain minority movements, such as feminists and gay activists – and I clearly say ‘gays’ and not ‘homosexuals’, because I make a distinction – who have an interest in and who work toward non-differentiation, the desire for the ‘same’.”⁷

Men who do not submit to the process of becoming more effeminate no longer have a *social praxis*, no rituals to guide the formation of their masculinity. In the inner cities this lack of masculinity is filled with brutish and even barbaric behaviour. A virility that is humiliated is a virility that becomes barbaric. However, a virility that is properly channeled benefits society at large.

This mixture of commerce with subversive ideological propaganda no longer bounces off the social fabric of society, but digs into it increasingly deeper. The social exclusion of freethinkers and sabotage of traditional values are linked to economics and politics. Not only in West-Europe but also in The U.S. and Canada. Politicians maintain close ties with global corporations. These companies are so large that they have more or less monopoly positions. Their only counterpoint is the realm of politics itself: united citizens who express themselves in a political sense about the role of capital.

⁷ Eric Zemmour sur le feminisme. *YouTube.com*, May 28, 2013. Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUEgJvbB3xs&feature=youtu.be>, date of access: November 15, 2017.

The said elite would rather see the European-oriented *Leitkultur* broken up into a conglomerate of minorities. Those minorities can only cooperate in temporary alliances. As a result, the organizational capacity within society ends up exclusively at the control of business – especially big business. In that situation, there is no overarching ideal of nation or politically motivated citizenship that can substantially or consistently challenge these globalists.

Following on from this, we find ourselves in a post-political reality – one in which the principles of Cultural Marxism are so deeply embedded that the average person is not aware that there is an ideology at work around him. People no longer recognize the building blocks of the Ideology of '68 but assume them instead, to be part of normal, everyday life.

CULTURAL MARXISM AND FREDRIC JAMESON

Fredric Jameson, a Marxist literary critic, authored the book *Conversations on Cultural Marxism* in 2007, while Derk Jan Eppink analyzed Cultural Marxism in *The Wall Street Journal* in 2001.⁸ Branding this 'away with us' ideology as a 'con-

⁸ "The bearers of Cultural Marxism impose a framework that binds the freedom to speak and (they hope) think. They may no longer dominate the economic infrastructure, given that Marx lost that battle badly, but so they try to dominate the political, cultural and historical superstructure." Derk Jan Eppink, Political Correctness Is Wrong. *European Wall Street Journal*, September 5 2001. Source: <http://www.freere-public.com/focus/f-news/517502/posts>, date of access: September 5, 2017.

spiracy theory' is therefore based upon misinformation; quite the reverse – we observe that the ideology of the Frankfurt School positioned itself on fertile soil: the Christian way of putting oneself into perspective, the trauma stirred up by decolonization, the feelings of guilt towards the persecution of Jews, shame in Continental Europe about collaborating with the German invader; all this was put together by the Marxist struggle of the labour class and women's movements, during a period where mass consumption and increased mobility accelerated the laceration, in some cases avulsion from traditional ties and relationships. As ordinary citizens, Cultural Marxists appear only marginal, yet the fertile soil for their agenda yielded an enormous long-term influence.

*“A totalizing politics is the only solution. I know there are people who object to this word, but one can point out that Jesse Jackson’s Rainbow Coalition, for example, was very much a totalizing operation in which Jackson never talked about women without talking about working-class women and about race; never talked about race without talking about class or gender; and that all of these things had to be done simultaneously.”*⁹

⁹ Ian Buchanan (ed.), *Jameson on Jameson. Conversations on Cultural Marxism*. Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2007. 232.

SOCIAL ENGINEERING AND UTOPIANISM

Jameson shows Cultural Marxism to be a permanent critique of Capitalist and civic cultural values, which results in a political Rainbow Coalition of the previously mentioned ‘marginals’. He promotes the deconstruction of “gender privileges” and therefore points at “Marxist feminism” and “utopian lesbian feminism.”¹⁰ This “utopianism” is concerned with an all-encompassing form of *social engineering*.

The five-year old Jacob Lemai was initially born as Mia: her parents changed Mia’s name to ‘Jacob’ when she displayed behavior atypical to girls.¹¹ The LGBTQ movement portrays Jacob as a Messiah who may stimulate the much wider acceptance of transgender children. (see SOGI) But there are critical voices, such as Dr. Paul McHugh, head psychiatrist at Johns Hopkins Academic Hospital in Baltimore. The results of his research suggest that up to 80% of transgender children could spontaneously lose their desire for gender change.¹²

The quest for utopian social engineering reached its peak when GLAAD (the American LGBTQ lobby) launched a Twitter bot that searched the web for media referrals to ‘he’ as to specify Caitlyn Jenner, previously named Bruce Jenner.

¹⁰ Ibidem, 42; 230–231.

¹¹ Kate Snow, *Jacob’s Journey: Life as a Transgender 5-Year-Old*. *NBC News*, April 21, 2015. Source: <https://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/transgender-kids/jacob-s-journey-life-transgender-5-year-old-n345131>, date of access: October 2, 2017.

¹² Paul McHugh, *Transgender Surgery Isn’t the Solution*. *The Wall Street Journal*, June 12, 2014.

These referrals were corrected to 'she' – the bot also “corrected” earlier references about a time in which Bruce actually was a masculine father of six children.

War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Man is woman.

All these dynamics prove what we can call a *hierarchy of victimization*, as confirmed by professor of sociology Joel Best: “During the 1960s, Americans became sensitized to victims and victimization; by the 1970s, there was a widespread ideology of victimization.”¹³ Coinciding with the ‘long march through the institutions’ of Cultural Marxism, “this ideology gained acceptance in key institutions and created a victim industry – a set of social arrangements that now supports the identification of large numbers of victims.”¹⁴ Playing into this “industry” there will be those who feel disadvantaged by society, and go to extremes to get their identities recognized and protected.

POLITICIANS BECOME MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKERS

In this situation there is only the choice between delusional utopianism, an artificial optimism ‘to keep spirits high’, and

¹³ Joel Best, *Victimization and the victim industry*. *Society* 34, no. 4 (1997).

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

stark pessimism. With politicians calling for positivity – ideologically indistinguishable as they are (all having sold their souls to globalists and multinationals), they become *motivational speakers*: “Do not give in to fear, to wrong thoughts, but keep faith!” For an accurate example consider the speeches by European Commissioner Frans Timmermans.¹⁵ The path is ever winding upwards and if we break faith for even a second, woe awaits. Timmermans warns against ‘nationalism’, ‘islamophobia’ and ‘xenophobia’: he does not, however, reflect upon the possibility that he may be pushing his own project too far and that the resistance he encounters could be legitimate. In contemporary politics, moral preaching and Neuro Linguistic Programming ((NLP)) take up all room for genuine debate on content.

Here we see that ‘people’s representatives’ no longer convince their electorate by performing the intellectual labour of forming a compelling argument: instead they behave as preachers and *feel-good* gurus. It is as the German-Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han demonstrates: in a society where each inhabitant is the ‘entrepreneur of his or her own life’, there gloominess and realism become taboo, leading to a perpetual self-help stimulation that feels surreal. Fears, worries and legitimate concerns are pushed into the sphere of ta-

¹⁵ Europe will be diverse, or war! – Frans Timmermans. *YouTube.com*, March 29, 2016. Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q94syUDDhxA>, date of access: November 15, 2017.

boos – particularly worries about national sovereignty and the changing demographic development of West-Europe.

In spite of a contemporary commercial culture that is so thoroughly imbued with a subversive Cultural Marxist propaganda, there are portents of change. Through the popularity of series' such as *Game of Thrones* and *The Walking Dead*, the audience expresses a fascination with a previous, more authentic time. When roles were clear and defined, when a man knew what it meant to be a man. Their popularity expresses a longing for an era where one's achievements can truly have an impact on the fate of the group, and where genuine courage and reverence are thus possible. A time when in order to survive you have to be prepared to kill. Likewise, such a desire to know where you stand resonates with Muslims in West-Europe – so strongly that many have joined, or at least attempted to join the self-proclaimed Islamic State: willing to live under what can be justly described as a 'Theocratic Mad Max'.

But perhaps – for a way out of this double bind between realistic pessimism and delusional optimism – we have to look to Nietzsche, and to what he teaches about *slave morality*. How can Cultural Marxism be successful? By using the moral building blocks of the Christian faith. Guilt, self-deprecating humility, turning the other cheek.... etc. In a largely secular era this would also mean the end of Western guilt: as stated in the building blocks of Cultural Marxism – glorifying everything that seems vulnerable and fragile, warping the history of colonialism into the White Man's *original sin* while looking forward to a utopian-messianic redemption where the meek and

downtrodden can exact their revenge – these are Christian building blocks being misused in an attempt to construct a society fostered by the social justice warrior movement.

Without the utopian SJW-movement, however, no one will adhere to these building blocks any longer – they will immediately lose all their influence. In this way, the downfall of the SJW's opens the way for a new Renaissance. This is largely a demographic matter as most SJW's are too busy with their activist and globalist-cosmopolitan lifestyle to raise families. Once the SJWs and their movements are defeated, the door for a genuine Western rebirth can be opened. The main question is whether by the time that the SJW's have died out, will West-Europe be inextricably enamoured with Islam?

CONCLUSION

Thusfar there is nothing that keeps the states of West-Europe together except an ideology of “agree to disagree”, which until recently seemed to hold the chaos at bay, but as victimhood hierarchies and identity politics encroach, that ideology is failing: the permissive neutrality between the narratives is being steadily filled with dominant and mutually exclusive group identities. The victim industry, hierarchies of oppression and the long-term influence of Cultural Marxism, can only lead to Western civilization coalescing into atomized chunks that drift ever further apart.

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27 Események

Események

Naptár

Születésnapok

Továbbiak

**Communist & Queer:
LGBTI rights after
October Revolution**

Korábbiak

+ Esemény létrehozása ▾



NOV.

7

**Communist & Queer: LGBTI rights after
October Revolution**

Nyilvános · Zhenya Belyakov szervezésében



Debate

PARTICIPANTS:

Áron Máthé, Vice-Chair of the National Committee of Remembrance

Dezső Csejtei, Philosophy historian

David Engels, Belgian historian

Sid Lukkassen, Dutch historian and philosopher

Áron Máthé: We now have plenty of time to discuss what has been said. I have seen that all of you have made notes during each other's panel, so I would like to ask, if there is anything you want to discuss regarding any of the other's presentations?

David Engels: Sid: not really a question, but rather a reflection. After hearing your paper, I fully agree with most of what you are saying, so we are quite on the same line. However, you sometimes contrasted the different forms of "Cultural Marxism" to what you called "Bourgeois Capitalism". Now, I wonder to what degree many of the forms assumed by today's "Cultural Marxism" are to be considered not as in direct opposition, but rather as the inherent complement of radical and extreme forms of capitalism. I mean, there is obviously a highly prof-

itable Capitalist industry built upon the grounds of “Cultural Marxism”; think only about the monetarization of the cult of the most diverse “victims” or about all the pop-culture merchandising of Communist heroes such as Che Guevara. So, I am not sure whether today’s manifestations of Liberalism and of “Cultural Marxism”, as you call it, are really “extremes” opposing each other, or to the contrary two sides of the same coin: One triggers the other and at the same time creates new economic needs and benefits, and so forth. For example, even the (Marxist) cult of “the victim” and of the “minority” become highly profitable issues for many Capitalist investors, showing how Cultural Marxism and liberal Capitalism are complementary and can work quite well hand-in-hand. For me, the real opposite to these two variants of materialism would rather be a more “Traditionalist” form of society, such as the one dominating Europe at least up to the pre-industrial society. What do you think about that?

Sid Lukkassen: Thank you very much, Engels, for your keen observations. Let me start with pointing out the evolution of the labour class. We can basically say in the West that the revolution of the “labourers” has been bought off with import products from China. That is Point 1, which also means that nowadays even the working classes have to consume things like facial creams and even cosmetics for men and such things are being pushed now, as the Professor said. Essentially commercials are now also forms of socio-ideological propaganda. We can say that the ideals of the ‘68 revolution are so in-

grained into day-to-day life that people no longer recognize them as being part of an ideological agenda, but just think that this is basically an intrinsic part of daily life, because we can see them in all our commercials, all our TV soap operas, and so they think that these are the basic building blocks of daily life, but, in reality, are building blocks stemming from political ideologies. Basically, men had to work in coal mines, had to work in railroads, had to work in wool-spinning mills, during the industrial revolution, when masculinity was mostly about physical labour. But now we have moved all that to various places within Asia. So what are we going to do? Now we also need men using face cream, 'make-up' and other appearance-enhancing products, because we need to replace the traditional base of the economy with another base to keep people consuming. That means that we need to make men more effeminate so that they buy these products. Because we know from statistics that in the household most of the purchases are done by women. Men, on average make most of the money and the women on average, spend most of the money. That is a generality and, of course, there are exceptions. Nowadays we need to keep this capitalism going, we need to create new needs for people, and this also tends to make men more effeminate, so men will also purchase these products.

That is Part 1. We can expand this model to education; for example. In the Netherlands we educate so many psychologists and psychiatrists; but we also educate therapists simultaneously in order to give emotional support to all these mental health professionals who can't find employment once they

have graduated. So we can say this when everyone is either a manager or a job coach, a sociologist, psychiatrist or a therapist, and so on. But who is doing actual physical labour nowadays? We either move that work to Asia or we transfer those tasks to algorithms and robots and machines. It is difficult to have a true middle-class. That's the problem. Maybe the wages here in Central Europe are a bit lower, so you can continue to produce for a while, but in Western Europe wages are so high that we have moved pretty much all of our direct economic production toward the East. This reality helps create a scenario that is quite useful for social justice warriors (SJW) because, let's say, the middle-class have always had to pay their taxes. Add to this the significantly increased burden of migration. Migration drives down wages, but it is very useful for Capitalism, because the birth rates of migrants are higher on average for the capitalists which contributes to the continuance of a cheap labour pool. So they can continue to sell, let's say, nappies, strollers and other products for small children. Who is crushed between migration and increased automation? The middle class. If they object against this 'double bind', they are labelled as racists, Fascists, and so on. This is very useful for both the Proletariat, I mean the social justice warrior aspect of the Proletariat and for the Elite. For the Capitalist Elite it means continued lower expenses to cover wages. It is also useful for the social justice activists, because they can simultaneously target the middle classes as the enemy. The nationalist Bourgeois appears to be the one resisting it. They will say: Ok, but at the same time you embody the sins of Colonialism and

the sins of Nationalism and the sins of the past. At the same time this is the class that is hit the hardest by Globalism. So it makes it useful for both the SJW and the Capitalist elites to re-frame the middle class, as a sort of lightning rod for globalism.

The final point is also the politicians: for instance, politicians such as Hillary Clinton and Justin Trudeau. Irrespective of their rhetoric they have very strong bonds with Capitalists. So what is the one thing at this point that can stop them? It is political thinking, really. Just citizens taking hand-in-hand; making consistent steps forward for defending their nation states by being politically aware. That can stop this phenomenon. So what do you do? You are going to deconstruct society to make 'chunks' of small minorities: a minority for blacks, a minority for women's rights, a minority for LGBTQ rights, a minority for Muslims. You create more and more minorities, and these minorities can only co-operate within small temporary coalitions as temporary allies. But they can never completely take meaningful initiatives in a way that a strong middle class society can. That means that the organizing power then shifts to the top of the capitalists. Big business is then the true organizing force of society because they control the political initiative, they have lobbies, they can always organize, they can hire people. They possess the power to put their items on the political agenda and they pay people to keep concentrated on those items, to focus public attention on them. You have all the organizing force because the other smaller allies can only work together in temporary coalition. A temporary coalition between Catholics and Muslims, a temporary coa-

lition between Feminists and LGBTQs, and so on. These on again, off again ‘alliances’ can never completely take meaningful initiatives in a way that a strong middle class society can. It is surely in the interest of big business to continue to dominate the political agenda by exploiting the lack of a strong middle class.

Dezso Csejtei: First I would like to start with a confession, and afterwards a question, or rather a remark to David’s lecture. As a senior participant of this mini-conference, perhaps I have the right to make a confession. 50 years ago – that is in ’67 – I would like to emphasize two things. In June of that year, the Beatles’ most famous album, Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band was released. That was the greatest L.P. from The Beatles. In October it was the 50th anniversary of the Great Socialist Soviet Revolution. That is 50 years more that we are commemorating now. I would not like to hide that in that particular year, when I was a 16-year-old boy, I won a competition in Csongrád county, where I used to live. The title of the competition was: *‘Who knows more about the Soviet Union?’* Before that, I listened to the Sgt. Pepper’s album on Radio Free Europe, so these two things went together. If I can compare those events 50 years ago, when there were competitions like this, and that I liked to take part in them with similar competitions nowadays, I cannot hold back my joy that at last we can speak freely and openly about the whole thing. It is important; therefore I wanted to mention this first. After this, I would join in to the lecture of David. At one point, perhaps I wish to modify

his view, because he made a rather simultaneous glimpse at various civilizations to catch that particular moment when a kind of Socialist uprising or revolution – however we might call it – took place. This was done brilliantly and naturally with many historical details, still I would put the emphasis on its continuity. Since all three are Spenglerians in a way, so it was he who has opened my eyes. Whereas before I saw the Russian Revolution as an isolated fact and partly a typically Russian issue, because it was a generally accepted opinion that it was a special Russian affair. Now I can see it as part of a process, as a long history for almost three centuries, which started with the destruction of European traditional values that began during The Enlightenment, then came the Jacobinians, the French Revolution, the formation of Marxism and then the Bolshevik Revolution of 100 years ago. Yet again, there are events in Europe that upset people in a way. This should be seen as one great movement. Within this, the events in Russia in 1917 are no longer seen as a special Russian phenomenon, but as a moment within the entire process.

Since I would like to finish up my short meditation. This is the second thing I wish to point out: David has stated that Socialism, Liberalism and Conservatism are part of a third step that could become some kind of a renaissance, or how shall I put it? Personally, I doubt it. As far as I see, perhaps you will criticise me for that, but as far as contemporary Europe is concerned, on the one hand we can see a black pessimism about what is going on, so this will go down and further down. No one can put an end to it, whereas on the other hand, there is an

empty and shallow utopianism, which was Marxism, as such. What is left for the actual people, especially for young people, who have much time ahead of them? In 30 or 50 years, if there are only these two options from which to choose: either pessimism or utopianism. personally I cannot think of any way out of this dilemma. Maybe David can convince me that I am wrong in that.

Áron Máthé: For myself, I have a short remark concerning what Sid Lukkassen has told us, namely that the Great Capital joined forces with Cultural Marxism. It reminds me of a proverb by Adolf Hitler, who said: “I am not going to nationalize the economy; I am going to nationalize the people themselves.” It just reminds me. I’m not sure it is the same. I have pointed out some common statements from our discussion so far. First of all, the middle class society, the organically developed middle class society is being replaced by a mosaic of artificial minorities. The second one from the meditation of Dezső Csejtei about the Beatles and ‘*Who knows more about the Soviet Union?*’. This is my question. I am not sure it can be answered. At that time, 50 years ago, you could hear something from there, from an outer world. But now, is there any way out of the matrix? Is there any way out of Facebook, Google, Twitter, Instagram and so on, which we all use, which we are all part of in a way? I have a third question. I am not sure I have understood it properly. David, did you say that the rising of Communism in the modernity, I mean in 20th century Europe, was a result of historic determination?

David Engels: Thank you for the question, and Dezső, thank you too for your remarks concerning my paper. My comparison between different cultures is, of course, very strongly influenced by the thoughts of Oswald Spengler, of Arnold Toynbee, and of Vittorio Hösle, a modern philosopher working on the cycles within the history of philosophy. My current scholarly project consists in the redaction of a study on universal history in which I am trying to compare, in a systematic way, all major human civilizations. What strikes me very much when considering my historical material is the fact that Communism, indeed, is not an *accident de parcours* in the evolution of the Western world, but part of a typical morphological pattern happening in each and every civilization. Thus, towards the end of the history of every single human civilization, we witness the rise to power of Communist or other collectivizing and utopist ideologies. However, after two or three generations, they slowly lose their attraction, be it because of their inner decay or because of an outer aggression, and are replaced by radical liberalism; though a liberalism fully benefiting from the previous destruction of the last remnants of a traditional society by Socialist materialism and thus combining the interests of the Big Capital with the consumerism of “Cultural Marxism”. The extreme social polarization and spiritual dissatisfaction generated by this period finally leads to a momentary breakdown: a period of fundamental civil unrest witnessed hitherto by all human civilizations. I strongly fear that the West is just before, if not beyond the edge of this situation, as first symptoms of the impending breakdown of

our political, economic and social systems have become very obvious during these last years, at least in Western Europe. Sooner or later, as always in history, this downfall will be followed by the rise of a new, authoritarian State. However, though most contemporaries will be happy to have escaped the horrors of civil unrest, we may doubt the sincerity of new government's conservatism. This becomes very obvious when considering the Augustan Principate which stood at the end of the organic evolution of Classical Antiquity. Certainly, the Augustan Principate – not unlike the first Chinese Empire and many other similar States – was based on a certain form of traditionalist and conservative values such as marriage, family, piety, patriotism, and so on. However, despite its stabilizing and positive effect on Roman society, the Augustan conservatism was also very artificial, and I fear that we may expect a similar evolution in Europe: even a new, conservative European State will never truly enable a “real” return to our moral sources, a “real” Renaissance of the arts, or a “real” return to Christianity. At best, it will provide a merely historicizing and nostalgic restoration of the outer facade of an inner content which is and will remain dead. That would also be my response to Dezső's doubts about the possibility of a real conservative uprising. Though everywhere, we see the rise of so-called *Populist* movements which already prefigure such a new “Augustan” regime, I think that real conservative thinkers would feel quite awkward in a State actually founded on these principles. On the one hand, they would, of course, appreciate that many of their values would, once again, be fully support-

ed by the government; on the other, they would be unable to ignore the deep artificiality and inner contradiction of a regime where, exactly as with the Augustan Principate, an outer Republican conservatism and an inner dictatorial authoritarianism have undergone a permanent alliance. This is why I myself also feel very ambivalent towards such a perspective, though I am unable to see any possibility of the West escaping a historical mechanism which has, time and again, marked the final evolution of every human civilization.

Sid Lukkassen: Thank you very much, Professor, for your extremely clear remark that now we have a political life where we can choose between either pessimism or utopianism. When you said this, I was like: *'Yes, that is exactly how it is'*, because I can see on the one hand a generation with no job security, no job stability, high amounts of debt, an aging society, lots of migration, replacement or elimination of jobs. You are forced to be pessimistic. Reality forces you to be pessimistic, if you confront reality. Therefore the alternative is an allure: a false consciousness. I see this exactly in our political society. When we see our political leaders speak in Western Europe, look at European Commissioner Frans Timmermans, for instance, he is constantly saying: *'Don't give in to that fear, keep your hopes up! You have to move forward, you are already on track! You are almost there; utopia is just around the corner! Don't give in to those dark thoughts; don't give in to the xenophobes and the nationalists! Open your heart and strive towards the Great!'*

They are not people with ideologies. About Marx you can say many things, but he did have an ideology. These people are motivational speakers. If you look at Dutch politics, for instance, you no longer see that people try to convince you on the basis of having a superior constructive argument. They don't try to win you over with intellectual labour and well presented facts. No, that is not how they convince you. They are ideologically indistinguishable; the only thing that distinguishes them is the motivational speeches. Our politicians in Western Europe have become motivational speakers because indeed, there are only two choices: either you face the very grim truth, or you delude yourself into a false optimism and false utopianism. That is where this allure comes from.

What I really wanted to say is that maybe we shouldn't go back to Spengler, but instead to Nietzsche. Nietzsche gives us the answer. For instance, all these things that I touched upon in my speech and now we hear David Engels answering the question: *Is this historical determinism?* Think about how Cultural Marxism can be so effective in the West. It can be so effective because it misappropriates Christian building blocks by taking them out of a theological framework and putting them into a political context. We have guilt, self-depreciation, humility, turning the other cheek, glorify all that is weak and vulnerable, the meek and downtrodden shall inherit the Earth; then you have the hope for a utopic 'Second Coming of Christ' and the hope of a utopic messianistic deliverance. Utopian activists just project this upon the earthly sphere. In essence, they secularize a theology.

However, now we can note – because this has been so destructive – that without the base within the SJW movement, eventually, no one will believe in it any longer. However strong these building blocks may be, mistake you dismantle the social justice movements, then you will also destroy these blocks, because without a progressive demagogue platform, people will no longer adhere to these ideals. That opens the way for a genuine renaissance and a genuine reawakening of Western Europe. That's why maybe we have to be a bit more Nietzschean and we have to face Cultural Marxism as something that we have to weather out. We have to live through it, because these SJWs usually have no children, they are too busy travelling from New York to Copenhagen to have children; they are way too busy protesting in the streets to have genuine, long-term relationships. They don't establish families, they rarely sire children, so they will eventually fade away, but it will take a few generations. Once this happens, the question will be: Is the Muslim faith already so strong in the West that Islam becomes the new guiding force? Or do we really have a chance to create a genuine awakening, a genuine rebirth without long-standing guilt bearing down on us? No more Nazi-guilt, no more guilt about Imperialism, no more guilt over the Holocaust, no more guilt about the slave-trade and The Crusades and so on. Maybe we can shove that aside now, we have done that, we have had that. Perhaps we can have a genuine reawakening of Western peoples. It is a question for the future if this actually happens or not. But it is at least one significant thing to have a glimmer of hope on this otherwise dark horizon.

Áron Máthé: OK, Dezső, please.

Dezső Csejtei: One question has remained for me about the Beatles and ‘*Who knows more about the Soviet Union?*’ and the way forward. I would say that 50 years ago there were at least two ways out. The first really was The Beatles. I would like to quote one sentence from Plato’s *Republic*. He says at a particular point: “*If the modes of music changes, the wars of the polis are demolished.*” These are prophetic words written 2500 years ago. This refers not to the wars of the polis, but the wars of the Iron Curtain. I think the first nail in the coffin of Communism was rock music. This was a way out in a sense for many young people in those times. The other way out was reading which was – I did not mention before – a long, long journey. I don’t want to say that when I went to that competition about the Soviet Union, I was a free adherent of Communism; nothing of the sort. It was a part of the way of living: to read step by step, to read something by Koestler, to read something by Orwell, and then by Solzhenitsyn. When I was returning from England in 1973, I tried to smuggle *The Gulag Archipelago* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn into Soviet-occupied Hungary. It was confiscated at the border. I was very angry and desperate because the customs officers simply confiscated it. This awakening lasted for years. Step by step one could find other ways out, which was getting information and deepening the knowledge about what had happened 100 years earlier and judging history in another way. As far as the situation of the present moment is concerned, I am uncertain. The way out

of the world of Facebook or Google is irreversible. It is tragic. As a university professor I would say that though the iPhone is over ten years old, Steve Jobs invented it at the beginning of the 2000s. That generation has already started graduating from high school and some are attending college and university. These are the students who were conceived along with the iPhone. I can see by their attitude that they simply cannot be taken to read profound, lengthy literature and make efforts to read even more, apart of course, from SMS messages. When I give them some longer literature, they simply abandon the course when possible. It is impossible to convince them that this is useful to them. As far as the way out, or at least the way forward is concerned for today, I am rather pessimistic about this aspect.

David Engels: Let me develop your thought even further. It is very important to realize that, in opposition to the Communist world, current Western society does not have the benefit of a “window” permitting contemplation of another, “freer” world outside that could send pulses of hope. Of course, we still have the opportunity to become acquainted with “alternatives” to our current society through the literature, art and music of our past, but as you rightly stated, the new electronic means of communication have interposed themselves between the younger generation and their historical heritage. When people choose not to read much more than text messages or Instagram, it is not easy to come to terms with books such as the *Glasperlenspiel* by Herman Hesse, for example. But I think

there is perhaps a sign of hope that even within this capitalist mass culture, there is a deep longing for radical change, for the rise of another society. For me, this becomes most obvious when looking at most of today's TV shows. Think only about the two topics which have doubtlessly become the most popular subjects of mass culture. First, post-apocalyptic societies: on every TV-channel and cable network, you are confronted with movies about zombies, nuclear fallout, the end of the world or disastrous natural catastrophes, and there are so many of them that it is obvious many people are not only fearing such a post-apocalyptic society, they are also longing for it as well, longing to see everything fall apart in order to begin anew. Second, the fascination with archaism. Think about the current success not only of Tolkien's novels, but also of "Game of Thrones", the very archetype of an archaic medieval society where every cultural ambiguity or social inhibition is replaced by the simple need to fight, to rule, to kill or to love. At that time, people gradually come to the realization that they do not feel happy in modern society as it is and cherish the wish to fundamentally change their world, which can be a positive thing. At the same time, they have abandoned the hope to effect these changes through actual political reforms and thus cannot see any solution to this dilemma except a total annihilation of modern society leading back to a previous era. Hence, this subconscious longing for death (Thomas Mann's "*Sympathie mit dem Tode*"), this sympathy with decline, with civil war and with apocalypse is, of course, extremely dangerous, as such a longing sooner or later, always ends up as a

self-fulfilling prophecy. Even if most people would probably not actively participate in the destruction of our current society, it has to be expected that they will tolerate it by just letting it happen and think in their innermost self: *At last, we can now start building something new from scratch.* Once everyone is animated by this spirit, such a destructive evolution can happen quite quickly. As I said, I think we are in a transitional period between the last years of ultra-liberalism and are heading full steam towards the crash, which will then, indeed, be followed by a conservative and authoritarian society.

Sid Lukkassen: As you say, the fascination with apocalyptic images and destroying things, returning to traditional values, ‘You know what you are? You are a warrior, you fight for what you do, you build your way up the hierarchy, you know how everything is because everything is clear and delineated, destroy things!’ Don’t we already see this with so-called Islamic State? And the popularity of Islamic State with many Western people and immigrants and the descendants of immigrants and Muslim converts, and so on? They all went for this propaganda and these videos, they went to Islamic State, also known as Daesh in the Islamic world.

Áron Máthé: Yes, Islamic State is a kind of theocratic Mad Max.

Sid Lukkassen: Exactly!

Áron Máthé: My only question is – which I don't know if we have the time and occasion to answer – that is this wish for a post-apocalyptic society or even for the apocalypse the same as what we experienced one hundred years ago, when the avantgarde wing of the European intellectuals wished for a great war? They were longing for a huge fight, a huge combat. They were speaking about a kind of fire which would clean up the restlessness of European Bourgeois society. I am not sure it is the same because at that time I think only the intellectuals wished for it. Now, maybe, more people have a kind of taste for it. Not really a wish; I wouldn't say that. They are too convenient, but rather a kind of taste or cherished wish. We have to care for our audience, as well, which seems to have declined in number. I am not sure if they have any questions, but if they do, please do not hesitate to put it forth. I think we have gone through all the issues that we could.

David Engels: Let me respond to your question: Is the current state of mind really the same as one hundred years ago? I would say: no. A hundred years ago there was, of course, an atmosphere of *Fin de Siècle*, of *décadence*, but the rejection of the present was coupled with an optimism in technology and progress. People wanted to abandon the old values represented by the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie and the clergy in order to put in their place a more progressive and “technicized” society: clean angles, democratic governments, rationalist thought, social justice and so on. There was a deep hope in the progress and the belief that one had merely to shed an old skin in or-

der to access to a more advanced stage of civilization. Today, however, I no longer see optimism; nor do I see young people still thinking that, for example, technological progress will help them in solving their social or political problems. I only perceive a longing for a more primitive form of society, which was certainly not the case at the beginning of the 20th century.

Áron Máthé: Finally, we have to close our discussion. As Stalin said at the funeral of Lenin: “*Communists are people of a special mould. We are made of a special stuff.*” This “special mould” is still present in our world, and that’s why we gathered this evening to examine this problem. Thank you very much!

ÁRON MÁTHÉ

The Legacy of Communism – Utopia not lost but transferred

During the long-term occupation of Hungary, my generation got to hear numerous World War II stories at home. Almost every Hungarian family had someone who fought on the Eastern front, was a victim of that calamitous time, was a prisoner of war in Soviet captivity or who was witness to the deeds of the occupying Soviet army. There were devious attempts during successive Communist dictatorships to twist families' collective memory.

As a precursor to joining the Communist “scouting” movement, the Pioneers, school children were first groomed by becoming “Little Drummers” (“kisdobosok”) which happened at the end of the first year of primary school. In 1985 a booklet became part of the Little Drummer preparation course; in it there was a cunningly drawn image of a “benevolent” Soviet soldier with a happily smiling Hungarian family. The title of the lesson was: “Ask your parents and grandparents about meeting the Soviets.” Moments after meeting our family hiding in a bomb shelter during the war, one of the Red Army soldiers insistently inquired of my grandfather, ‘Davay Chasy’

“Give me watch!”). That was when I learned that my grandfather had to hide his watch from the “liberating” Soviet army who were known for their particular affinity for wrist watches. My grandfather told the soldier that he had already given it to another group of soldiers. I heard of other, less benign stories, which were only quietly uttered, with the shame of unavenged grievance: my great aunt had been gang-raped by ten Soviet soldiers. Certainly, the sharing of these kinds of stories was not expected in class, and the teacher who happened to be only a simple “doctrinaire”, did not over enthusiastically push this indoctrination lesson. Or maybe this was exactly the type of story they expected in order to instill a fearful obedience.? That was all part of the totality of the Communist dictatorship, where true reality did not mean anything, or rather, it meant the world – everything that the Party deemed to be reality.

First-hand memories of the Second World War are fading. The First World War had disappeared from most family lore long since – for the generations in their twenties and thirties, the Great War is not any less fable-like than folk tales of the 19th century. It is similar with the Bolshevik takeover. The red partisans “who saw Lenin” died out long-long ago; 1917 ceased to have any relevance with the dissolution of the Soviet Union during Christmas of 1991, and the attempts of classic Communism were officially put aside. China, which is supposed to be Communist, is far from a European people, and although they are trying to update and spread a Chinese version of Communist ideology, the people of this booming country (empire) seem to care little about it. North-Korea

is a deterrent bubble, where there is horrible news from the 'Kwanliso' death camps, the local version of the Laogai re-education camps, but the Communist state itself is attracting more warranted attention with its nuclear armament aspirations while a mixed economy seems to be developing. The Venezuelan Socialist attempt that collapsed so dramatically has left a dilapidated and ever-worsening country in its wake. Cuba is similar in the sense that its revolutionary past remains a romantic example for the western Communists and delusional supporters, but the dreary everyday life in Cuba has proven much less attractive. Moreover, even as the Castro-brothers at the head of the country have already begun dying off, Cuba and Cubans are not likely to export Communism in the near future like they did in the 1960s and 70s.

Stalin is a national hero again in Russia, and there are related retrospective interpretations of history. This can hardly be connected to Communism, rather to the patriotic fights of the peoples of the former Soviet Union, and to the romanticism of victories achieved creating a prideful sense of Russian nationalism.

Since *The Black Book of Communism* [Courtois et al: *Le livre noir du communisme*, 1997] which was published at the turn of the millennium, the academic assessment of the true vices of European Communism has gained ground in the academic disciplines of history. While loyal remnants of former networks of dis-information sometimes still attempt the whitewashing of historical facts, neither the Holodomor genocide in Ukraine nor Communist crimes in Europe can be

explained away. (Whether this has anything to do with recent geopolitical struggles is far beyond the breadth and scope of this booklet).

The 1917 Communist takeover and all that followed it could and should be clear to most everyone.

So why is the history of Communism not met with total refusal?

Why are the crimes of Communism considered to be more or less venial sins? Why are some of the icons of Communism conveniently portrayed as role models, or their heroic images proudly displayed on items of pop-culture clothing?

The reason is not only that the collapse of the Communist dictatorships was not nearly as horrible and spectacular as that of other totalitarian attempts. It might not even be the reason that the free world 'learned' to live with the Communist Bloc. It is also of very little importance that there was no trial against Communist leaders similar to the Eichmann-trial in Jerusalem. Moreover, it is not even about the fact that by the 1970s and '80s the Soviet regime was skillful at masking its endemic brutalities while losing more and greater power.

It is rather the fact that throughout the Soviet attempt not only the free world was against totalitarian states, but traditional, Christian Europe was in opposition to Marxist Europe. Vladimir Bukovsky, former Soviet-Russian activist and dissident traces this opposition even further back: *"In fact it has been 200 years since the self-proclaimed, power-thirsty elite, these utopists who resort to force are at war with the individual, and its rights, dignity and integrity. Communism is simply a*

consistent representation of their endeavours; its failure discredits the idea of the utopia itself.”

Sadly, the legacy of Communism is not that utopia cannot be realized, but the attempt can be repeated following a very similar logic to Communism. Nowadays this is called ‘Cultural Marxism’ which can be linked back to 1968. Some think that the term itself is meaningless and see it as a political baseball bat; others – members of neo-Marxist groups are eager to elaborate their views which are related to the notion. One thing is clear: there is a socio-political-cultural (even academic) movement, which is broadly diverse, and yet, the common elements are rather clearly recognisable. Cultural Marxism seeks to eliminate ‘oppression’ and to implement ‘social justice’, as well as to question the roots of the Western World, to radically transform inherited relationships, and generally to identify themselves in opposition to Western civilization.

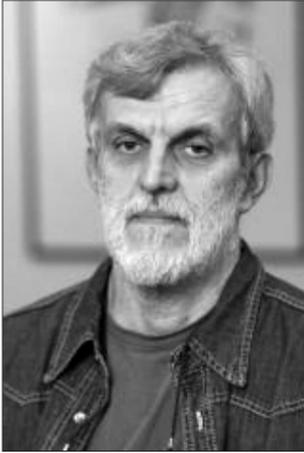
This means that the roots of Communism – i.e. the works of Marx and Engels – did not suffer any harm from the fact that the classic Communist attempt failed. In similarly surprising way, anti-fascism did not fade away even if there is no true Fascism – as so-called “Fascists” might appear anytime and anywhere. Soviet-Russian dissident, Boris Groys said: *“the subject of the Communist, dialectical-materialist discourse is the whole. This does not mean that there is no enemy recognised, but it does not let itself be deprived of the power to choose them. Communism does not recognise any hostile relations that would precede or define it. ...Communist leadership has always kept the right to specify who belongs to the Proletariat or the*

Bourgeoisie as well as when and why they do so. The orientation to totality means that we have no enemies – beside the ones we intentionally and deliberately choose.” The striving for totality is a desire to “totalize” everything experienced in reality, i.e. define it. Somehow it resembles what we see around us today.

Simply put: The legacy of Communism is the misconception that ‘noble ideas were implemented poorly’ – however, the very starting point is the problem. The legacy of Communism is that the current person has to be replaced with someone else, the current inhabitants have to be replaced with others, and the current society must be replaced with a ‘Brave, New World’. Anything and everything is replaceable.

Reality itself is replaceable.

The primary legacy of Communism is therefore, Totality itself.



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Source: Wikipedia, Photo: <http://www.u-szeged.hu/showimage.php?imageID=11013>



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Engels regularly publishes concerning issues which are not directly linked to ancient history such as: historical parallels between the crisis of the European Union and the fall of the Roman Empire; the philosophy of Hegel and the Reception of Spengler and its relevance in the 21st Century.

Photo: Facebook



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Source.: Wikipedia; Photo: <https://pestisracok.hu/tag/lanczi-andras/>)



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