



# MARXIAN SYSTEM AND ITS MYTHOS

Alexey Burov, Fermi Society of Philosophy  
Spring 2018







О свободе и демократии

Может быть, Маркс был в чём-то прав?

## Алексей Буров. Марксова Система и её Мифос



Dear friends, our *A Different View* publishes a high-quality article of Alexey Burov on Karl Marx, who remains and becomes over and over an object of sympathy for many intellectuals both in Russia and in the West. I do not understand it, but it is a fact. The article, I am warning you, is not an easy read, but it allows one to understand what kind of person the author of the “scientific socialism” is, and what is in fact this “scientific socialism”. Let me remind you that the previous year was the 150th anniversary of “The Capital”, and this one is the 200th anniversary of the birth of its author. The article is associated with the jubilee of the man, who, alas, turned the world upside down.

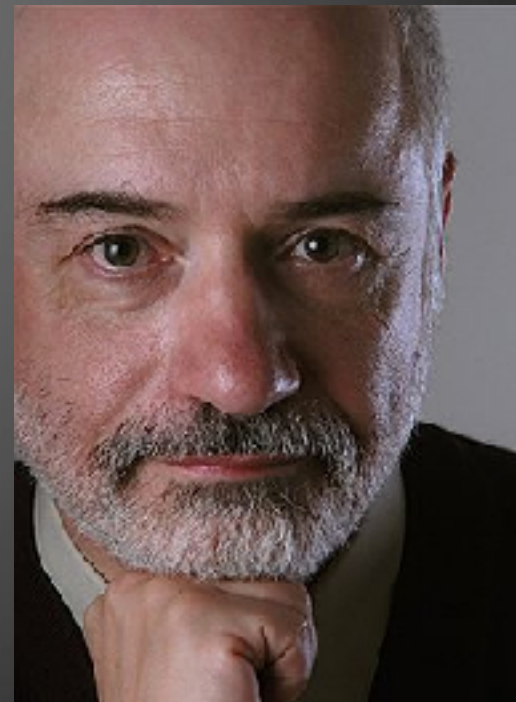
*Andrei Zubov*



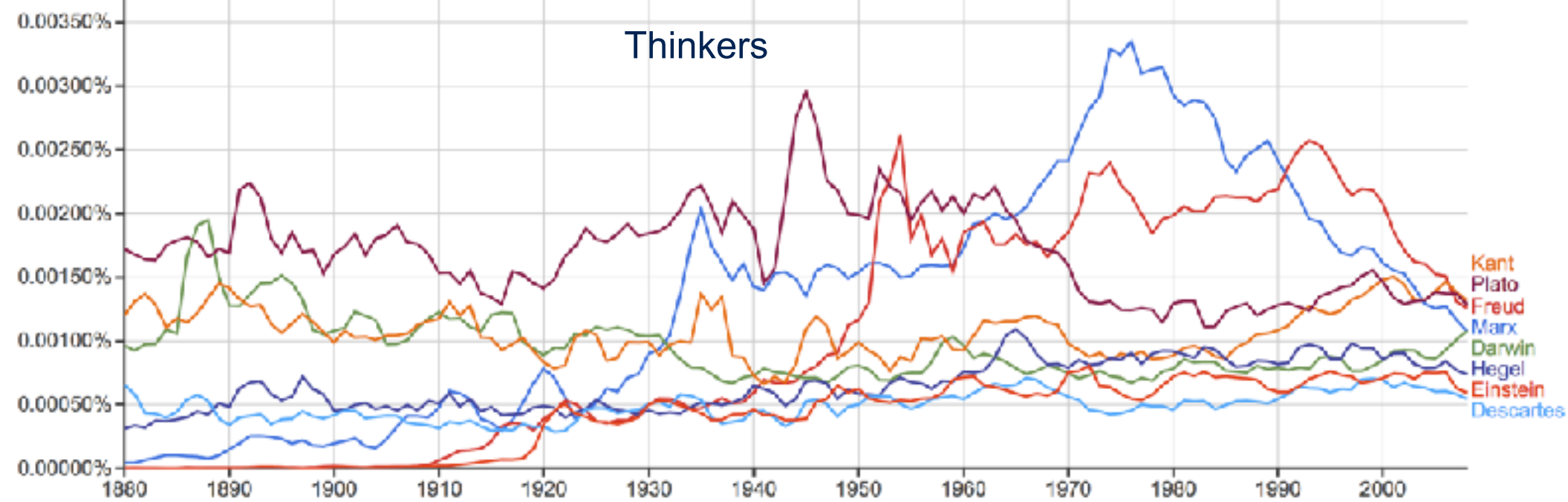
Dear Alesha, my congratulations with this publication, so systematic, convincing, and richly illustrated.

Yours, Misha.

*Mikhail Epstein*

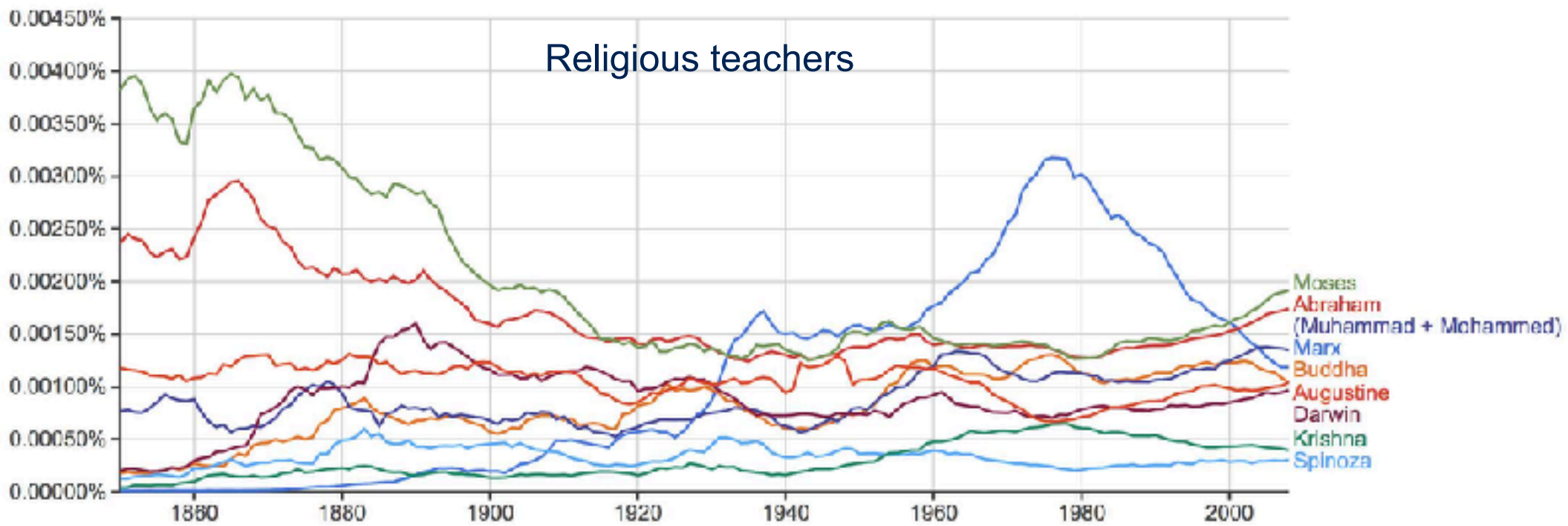


## Thinkers

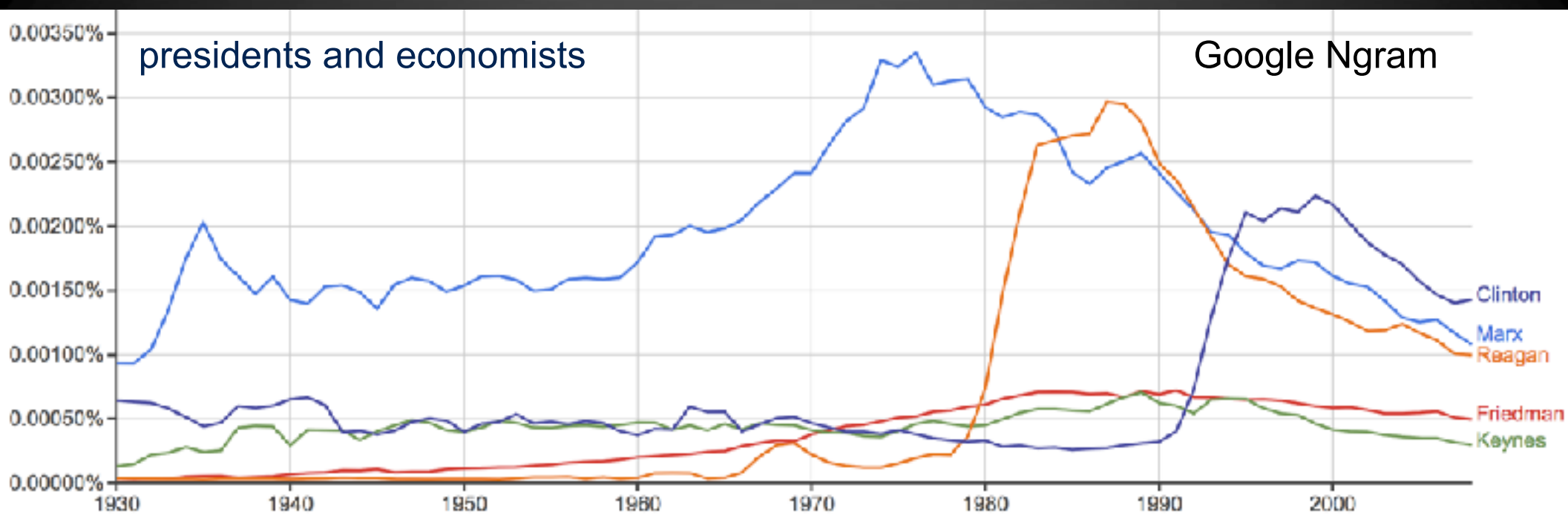


## Google Ngram plots

### Religious teachers







Nominee	% Accepted votes
1. Marx	27.93%
2. Hume	12.67%
3. Wittgenstein	6.80%
4. Nietzsche	6.49%
5. Plato	5.65%
6. Kant	5.61%
7. Aquinas	4.83%
8. Socrates	4.82%
9. Aristotle	4.52%
10. Popper	4.20%

BBC 2005 poll: "the greatest philosopher of all time", 30K responses

Here are the results from **a 2006 nationally representative survey of American professors**. The survey asked if the professor considered himself "radical," "political activist," or "Marxist." Survey says:

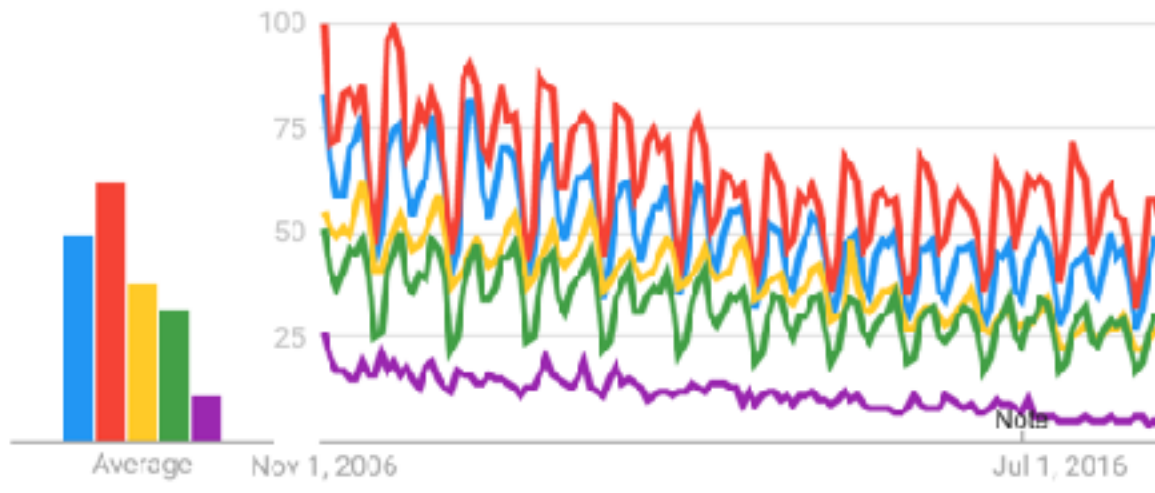
**Table 12**

	Radical	Activist	Marxist
Phys/bio sciences	6.3	2.6	0.0
Social sciences	24.0	20.6	17.6
Humanities	19.0	26.2	5.0
Comp sci/engineering	2.0	0.6	0.7
Health sciences	0.0	1.2	0.0
Business	5.3	3.2	1.9
Other	7.2	11.1	1.1
Total	11.2	13.5	3.0



● Karl Marx  
 ● Plato  
 ● Friedrich Nietzsche  
 ● Immanuel Kant  
 ● Richard Dawkins

## Worldwide



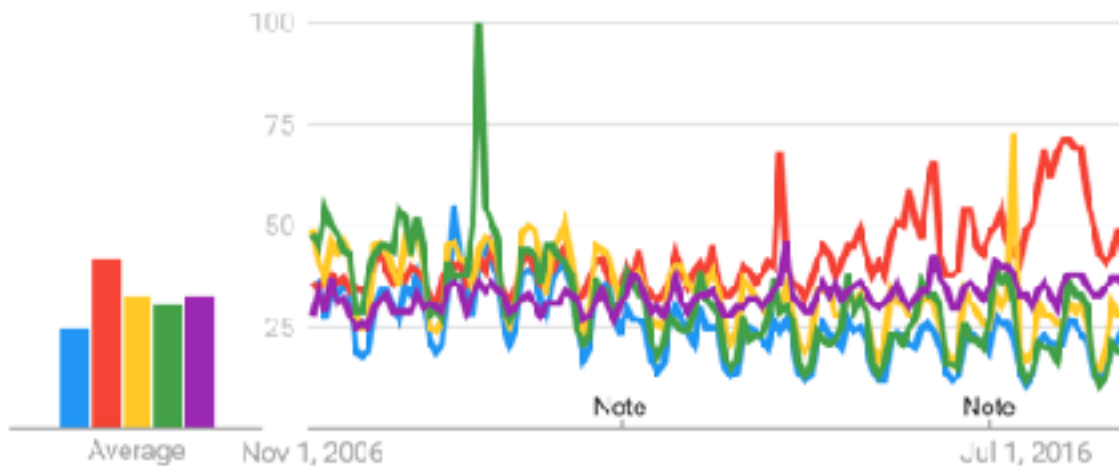
Philosophers  
 Religion teachers

## Interest over time

Google Trends

● Karl Marx  
 ● Moses  
 ● Sigmund Freud  
 ● Charles Darwin  
 ● Paul the Apostle

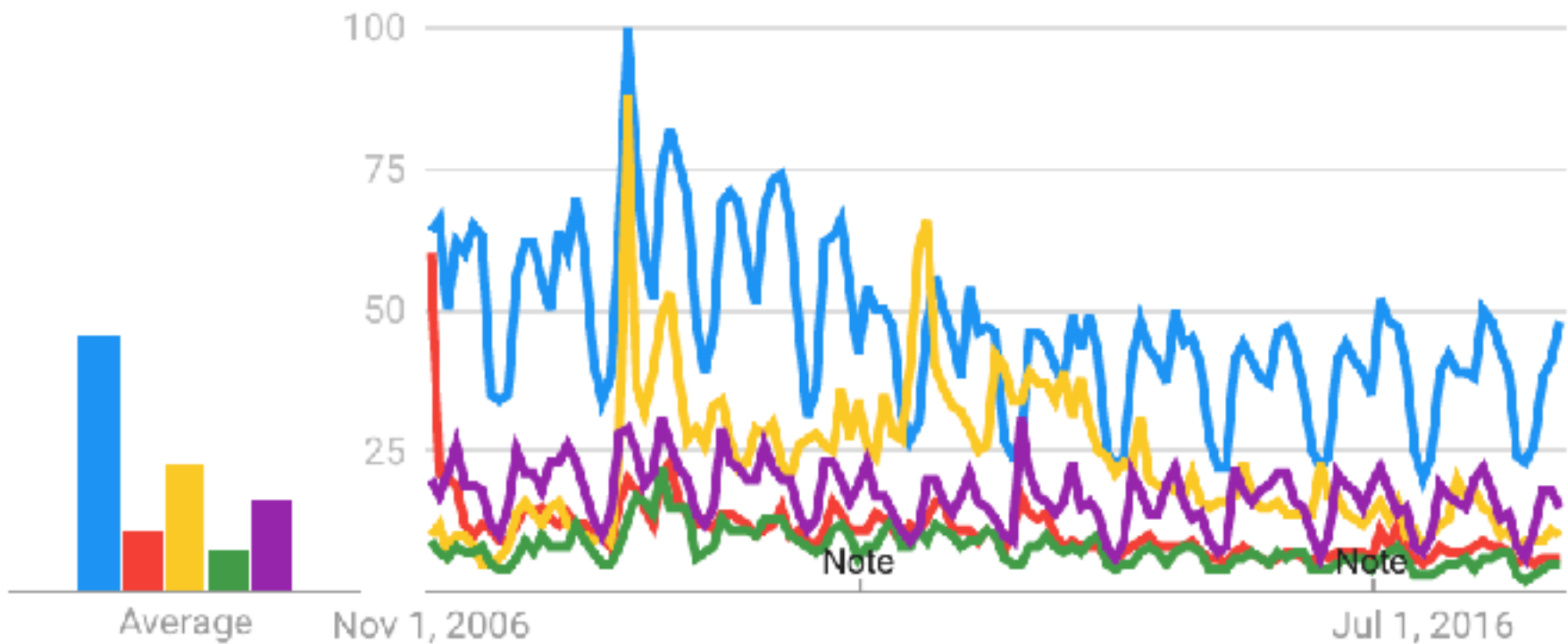
## USA



## Economists

● Karl Marx   ● Milton Friedman   ● Paul Krugman  
● John Maynard Keynes   ● Adam Smith

USA

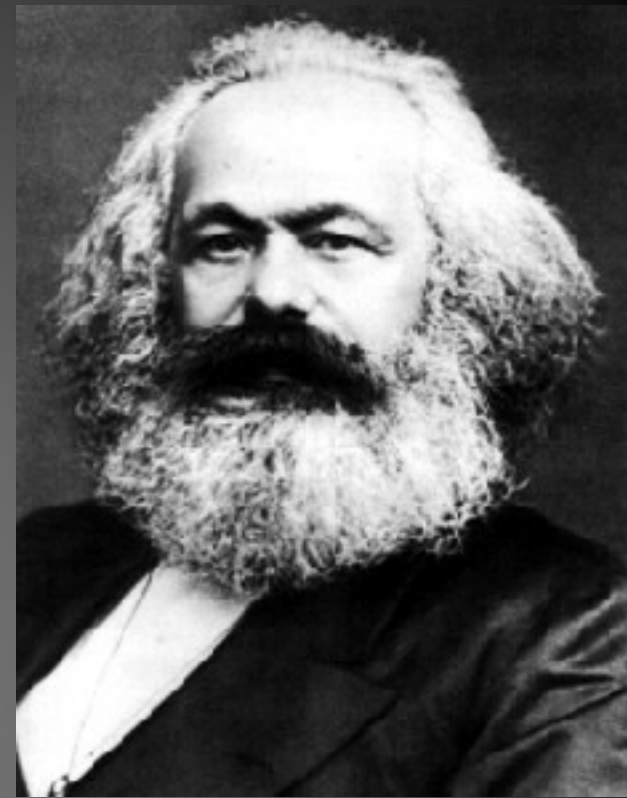






Why was his doctrine that popular among  
public and intellectuals and remains to be so?

Can Marxism be eternal?

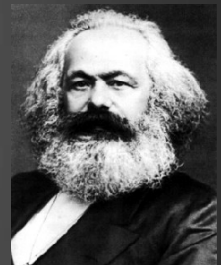


1818–1883

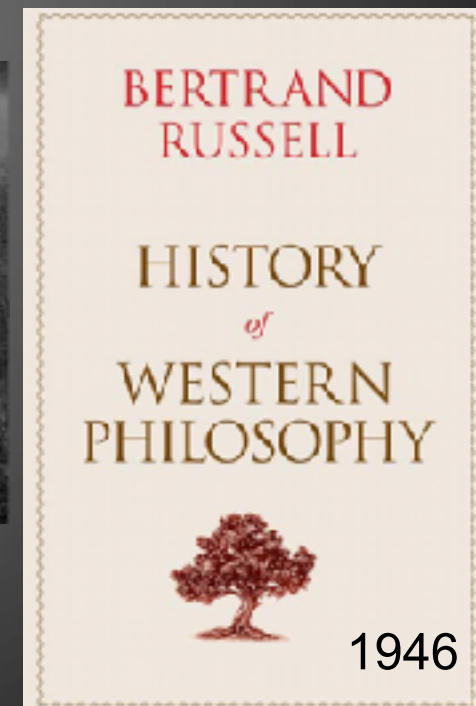
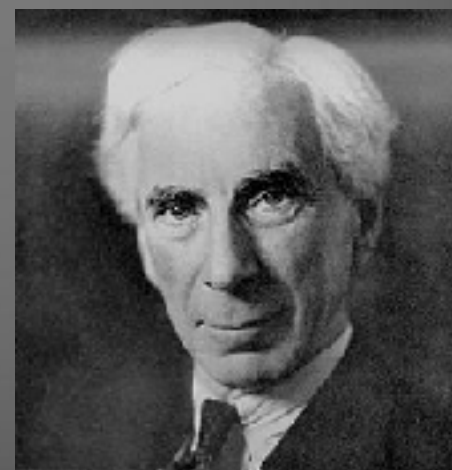
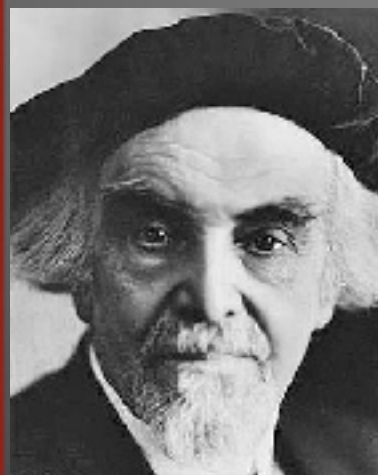
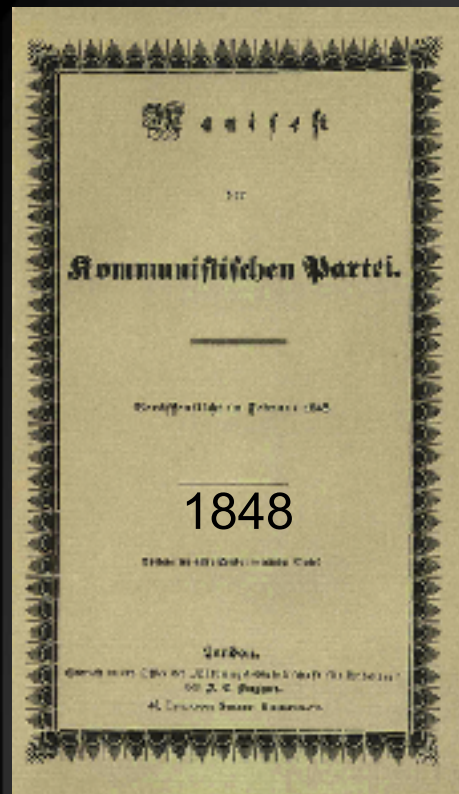




Marxian teaching and Marxist regimes:  
To what degree were the latter driven by the former?



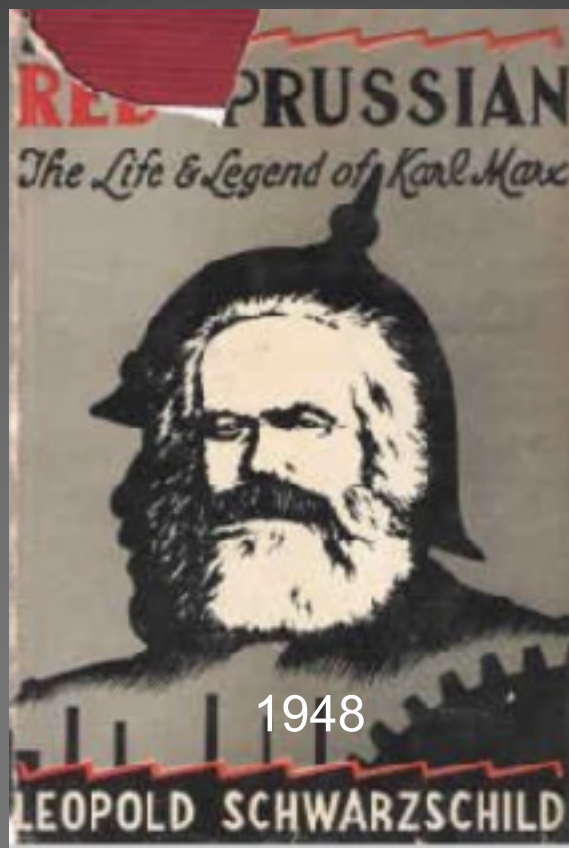




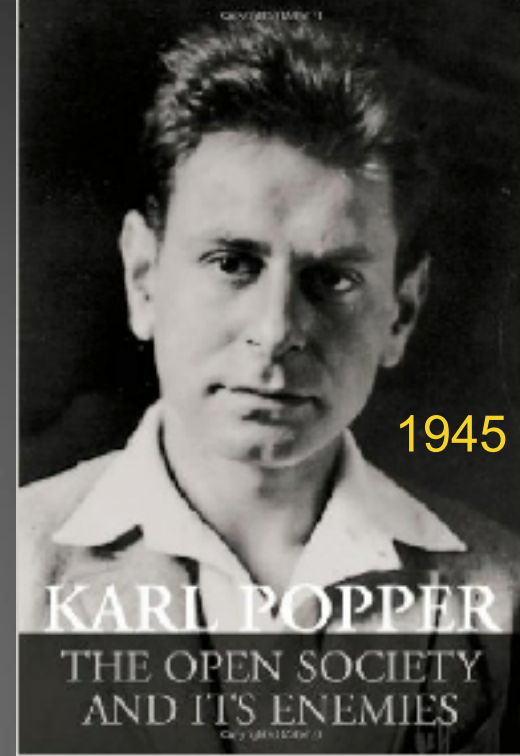




1891-1950



1948



1945

1902-1994

In the first edition of his *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945), Karl Popper distinguished between Karl Marx himself and his followers, claiming that they had transformed Marx's works into an unscientific dogma. However Popper added a note to the fifth edition: "Some years after I wrote this...Leopold Schwarzschild's...*The Red Prussian*...became known to me...it contains documentary evidence, especially from the Marx-Engels correspondence, which shows that Marx was less of a humanitarian, and less of a lover of freedom, than he is made to appear in my book. Schwarzschild describes him as a man who saw in 'the proletariat' mainly an instrument of his own personal ambition. Though this may put the matter more harshly than the evidence warrants, it must be admitted that the evidence itself is shattering"

Cambridge  
Texts in the  
History of  
Political  
Thought

## Bakunin Statism and Anarchy

Edited by  
Marshall Shatz

1873



1814-1876

## KARL MARX WAS NOT A SOCIAL SCIENTIST

ANTONY FLEW



1991

Sociological Notes No. 13

ISSN 0367-7113 EISSN 1567-0518

(An occasional publication of the Libertarian Alliance)



1923-2010



1927-2009

## Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy

ECONOMIC CLASSIC

JOSEPH A. SCHUMPETER



1942, 1946



1881-1950

## THE CLASSIC TEXT, NOW IN ONE VOLUME MAIN CURRENTS —OF— MARXISM

THE FOUNDERS • THE GOLDEN AGE • THE BREAKDOWN

TRANSLATED FROM THE POLISH BY W. J. GAY  
WITH A NEW PREFACE AND EPILOGUE BY THE AUTHOR

1978 LESZEK  
KOŁAKOWSKI

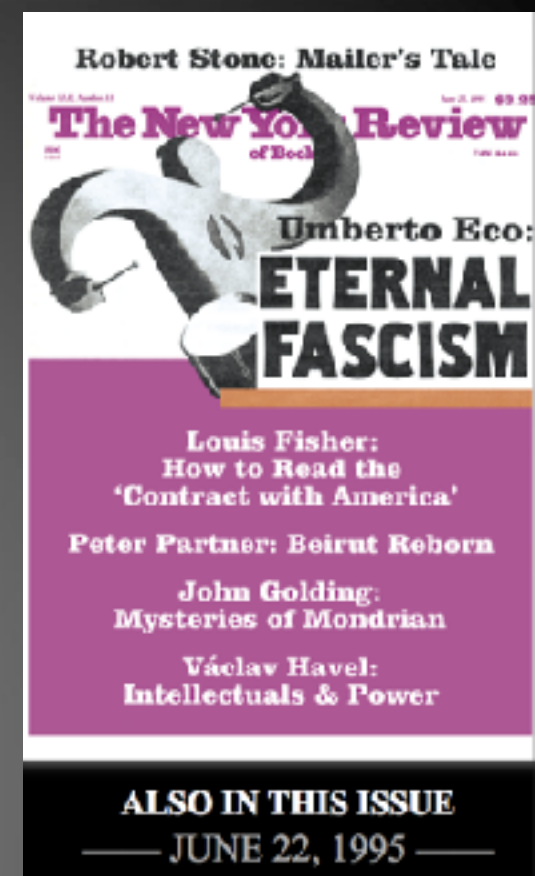
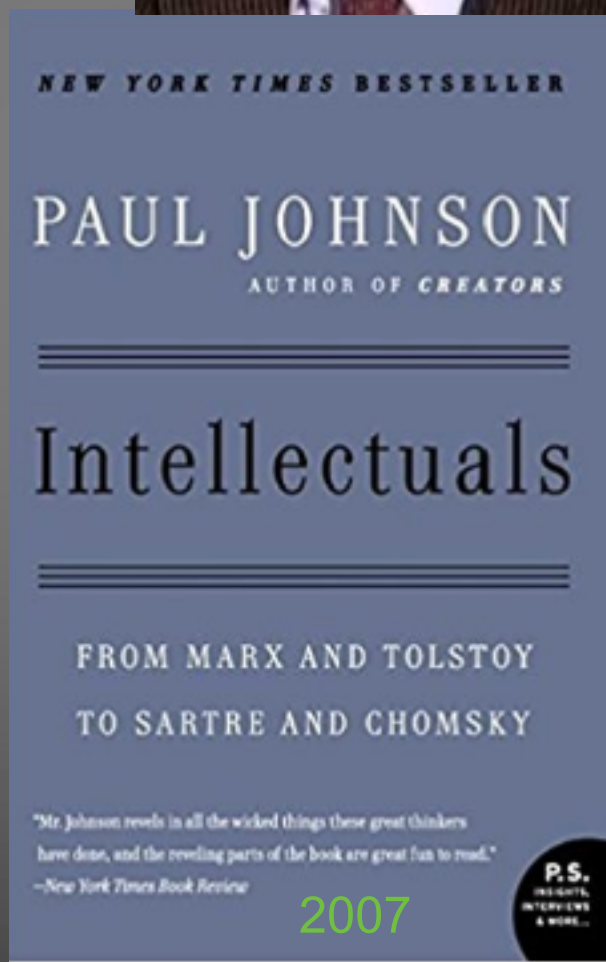
WINNER OF THE JOHN W. HUGHES PRIZE FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

## IS GOD HAPPY?

Selected Essays

LESZEK  
KOŁAKOWSKI  
2006





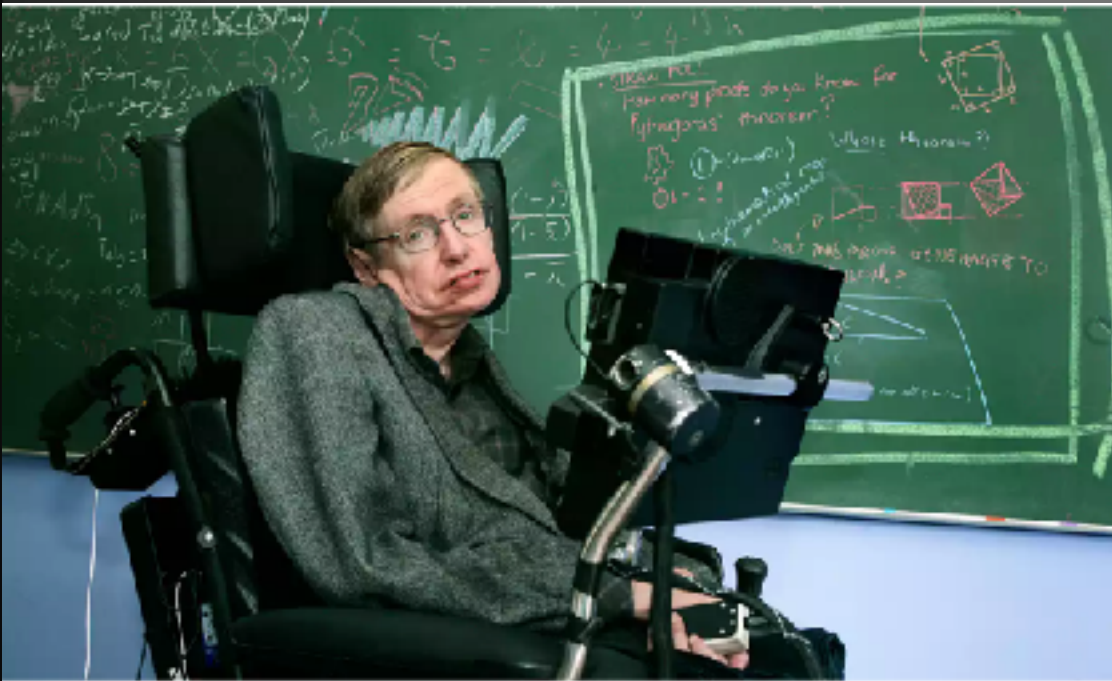




## 'Mind over matter': Stephen Hawking - obituary by Roger Penrose

Theoretical physicist who made revolutionary contributions to our understanding of the nature of the universe

● **Stephen Hawking dies aged 76**



▲ Stephen Hawking at his office at the department of applied mathematics and theoretical physics at Cambridge University in 2005. Photograph: Murdo Macleod for the Guardian

The image of **Stephen Hawking** - who has died aged 76 - in his motorised wheelchair, with head contorted slightly to one side and hands crossed over to work the controls, caught the public imagination, as a true symbol of the triumph of mind over matter. As with the Delphic oracle of ancient Greece, physical



Einstein once asked the question: “How much choice did God have in constructing the universe?” If the no boundary proposal is correct, he had no freedom at all to choose initial conditions. He would, of course, still have had the freedom to choose the laws that the universe obeyed. This, however, may not really have been all that much of a choice; there may well be only one, or a small number, of complete unified theories, such as the heterotic string theory, that are self-consistent and allow the existence of structures as complicated as human beings who can investigate the laws of the universe and ask about the nature of God.

**S. Hawking, A Brief History of Time, 1988**

*1. Ausgabe*

*St. Petersburg 1915*

# Das Kapital.

Kritik der politischen Oekonomie.

Von

**Karl Marx.**

Erster Band.

Buch I: Der Produktionsprozess des Kapitals.

Hamburg

Verlag von Otto Meissner.

1867.

New-York: J. W. Schmidt, 24 Barclay-Street.

1867

*Уч. б.*

# КАПИТАЛЪ.

КРИТИКА ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЙ ЭКОНОМІИ.

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Сочиненіе

КАРЛА МАРКСА.

Переводъ съ нѣмецкаго.

ТОМЪ ПЕРВЫЙ.

КНИГА I. ПРОЦЕССЪ ПРОИЗВОДСТВА КАПИТАЛА.

Харьковский  
Университетск. Библиот.  
— ИМ. УМРУКА —  
НАУЧНАЯ БИБЛИОТЕКА

С.-ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ.  
ИЗДАНИЕ П. П. ПОЛКОВА.

1872



# КАПИТАЛЪ.

КРИТИКА ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЙ ЭКОНОМІИ.

СОЧИНЕНІЕ

КАРЛА МАРКСА.

ПЕРЕВОДЪ СЪ НѢМЕЦКАГО.

ТОМЪ ПЕРВЫЙ.

КНИГА I. ПРОЦЕССЪ ПРОИЗВОДСТВА КАПИТАЛА.

1872

С.-ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ.  
ИЗДАНИЕ Н. П. КОЛЛЕКОВА.

1872

# БИБЛІЯ

ИЛИ

КНИГИ СВЯЩЕННАГО ПИСАНІЯ

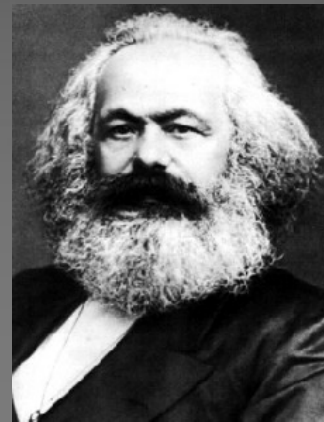
ВЕТХАГО И НОВАГО

ЗАВѢТА

ВЪ РУССКОМЪ ПЕРЕВОДѢ.

1876

СААНТ-ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ.  
ВЪ СИНОВАЛЬНОЙ ТИПОГРАФИИ.  
1876.



Marxian teaching and Marxist regimes:  
To what degree the latter were driven by the former?





## Marxist totalitarian states

USSR  
China  
Vietnam  
Cambodia  
North Korea  
Poland  
Czechoslovakia  
Eastern Germany  
Hungary  
Bulgaria  
Romania  
Yugoslavia  
Albania  
Ethiopia  
Zimbabwe  
Cuba

## Marxist non-totalitarian states

# National Day for the Victims of Communism

Today, the National Day for the Victims of Communism, marks 100 years since the Bolshevik Revolution took place in Russia. The Bolshevik Revolution gave rise to the Soviet Union and its dark decades of oppressive communism, a political philosophy incompatible with liberty, prosperity, and the dignity of human life.

Over the past century, communist totalitarian regimes around the world have killed more than 100 million people and subjected countless more to exploitation, violence, and untold devastation. These movements, under the false pretense of liberation, systematically robbed innocent people of their God-given rights of free worship, freedom of association, and countless other rights we hold sacrosanct. Citizens yearning for freedom were subjugated by the state through the use of coercion, violence, and fear.

**The White House**

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 07, 2017

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# Marxist States

Beginning: civil war; class, national, ideological terror; mass emigration, mass prisoner camps (Gulag), mass artificial starvation (golodomor).

Totalitarian regime.

Elimination or strong suppression and control of all religious organizations.

Elimination of all sorts of free thinking, humanities, philosophy.

Tough government censorship on all books, media, art; omnipresent propaganda, repression of thinking people. Full spiritual slavery.

Elimination of private property. Total economical slavery.

Closed borders, impossibility to go out of the country.

Poverty. Militarism.



# Are Marxist dictatorships really Marxist?

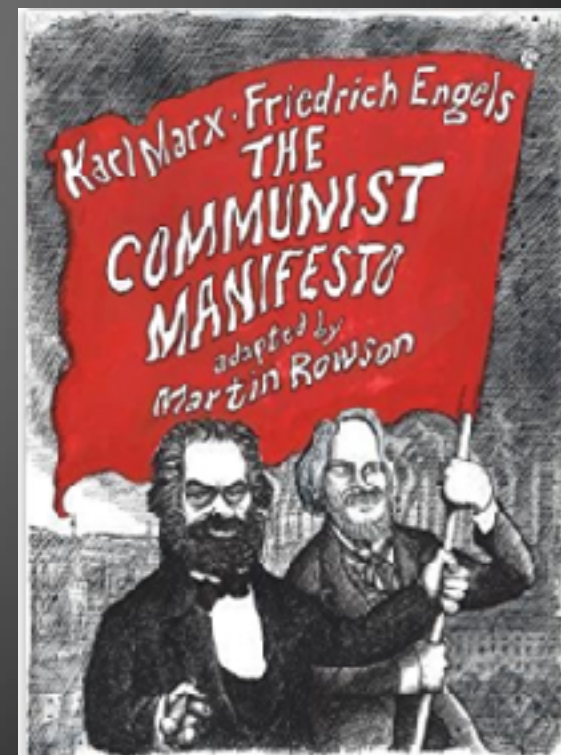
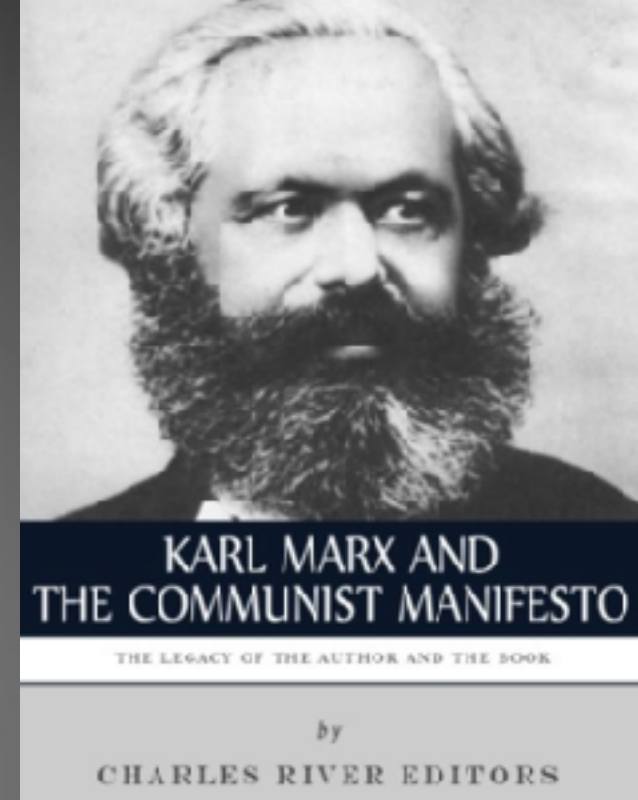
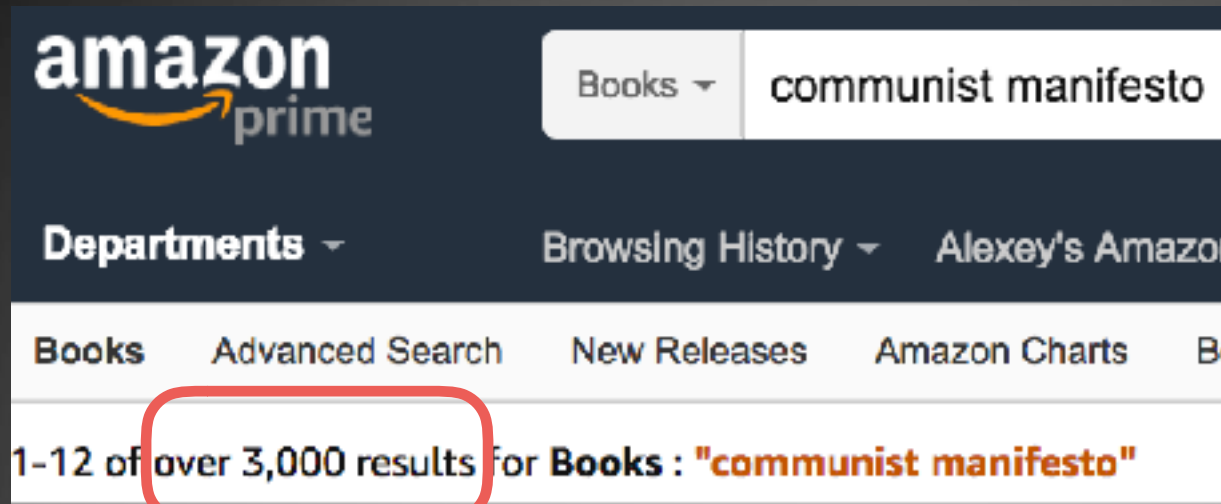
Maybe, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Castro, Pol Pot and others simply did not understand the great teaching and perverted it to serve their vicious passions?

Could it be that Marxism is still awaiting its genuine implementation?

What if the most important wisdom of Marx & Engels is not yet discovered?



# One of the world's most influential political documents



"With the clarity and brilliance of genius, this work outlines a new world-conception, consistent materialism, which also embraces the realm of social life; dialectics, as the most comprehensive and profound doctrine of development; the theory of the class struggle and of the world-historic revolutionary role of the proletariat—the creator of a new, communist society."

—Vladimir Lenin on the Manifesto,  
1914

# Rethinking the *Communist Manifesto*

JEFFREY C. ISAAC

The *Communist Manifesto* is perhaps the most extensively published and widely read text in the history of political thought. An obscure pamphlet penned by and for marginal German émigré radicals in 1847–48, in its 160-plus years it has been translated into scores of languages and published in hundreds of editions. According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, it is the second best-selling book of all time.<sup>1</sup> Of course, much of its circulation is due to its long-standing

In recognition if not appreciation of this influence, in 2005 the *Manifesto* was named number one among “the most harmful books of the 19th and 20th centuries” by the American conservative journal *Human Events*, outpacing *Mein Kampf* (number two), *Quotations from Chairman Mao* (number three), and even the dreaded *Kinsey Report* (number four). That same year Karl Marx, the

Jeffrey Isaac  
James H. Rudy Professor

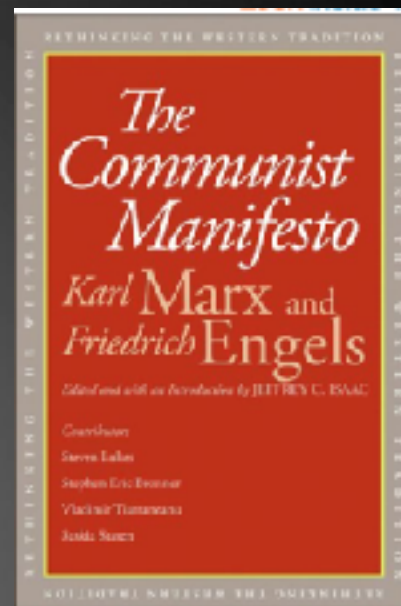
Woodburn Hall, 415 | (812) 855-8605 | [Send Email](#)

✦ Vita 

#### Education:

Ph.D., Yale University, 1983

Professor Isaac was an undergraduate at Queens College, CUNY, and from there went to Yale University, from which he received his Ph.D. in 1983. Since 1987 he has taught at Indiana University and lived in Bloomington. He recently served two terms as department chair (2003–2009). In 2006 he became the Book Review Editor of *Perspectives on Politics*, and in 2009 he was named Editor in Chief of the entire journal. He edits *Perspectives* in Woodburn Hall with a staff of seven that is supported by the American Political Science Association and the College of Arts and Sciences.



## The Communist Manifesto

KARL MARX  
and

FRIEDRICH ENGELS

Edited and with an Introduction by

Jeffrey C. Isaac

with essays by

Steven Lukes

Stephen Eric Bronner

Vladimir Tismaneanu

Saskia Sassen

Yale  
UNIVERSITY PRESS  
New Haven & London



A specter is haunting Europe – the specter of communism...

## I. Bourgeois and Proletarians

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of **class struggles**. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, **oppressor and oppressed**, stood in **constant opposition to one another**, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open **fight**, a **fight** that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the **contending classes**... Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified **class antagonisms**. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into **two great hostile camps**, into two great classes **directly facing each other** – Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.

**Their focus: the social strife**

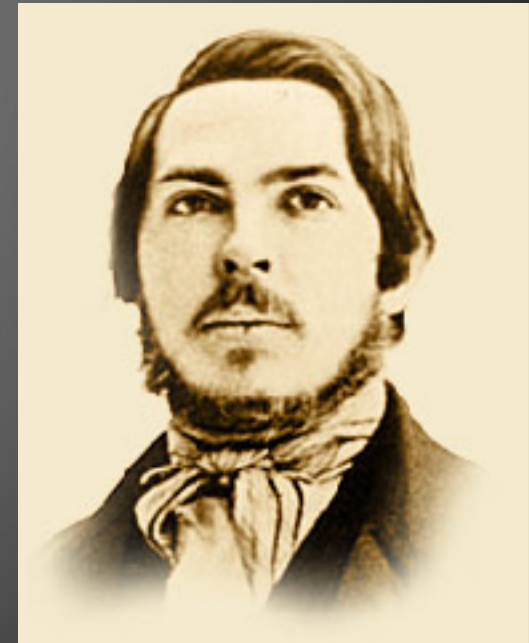
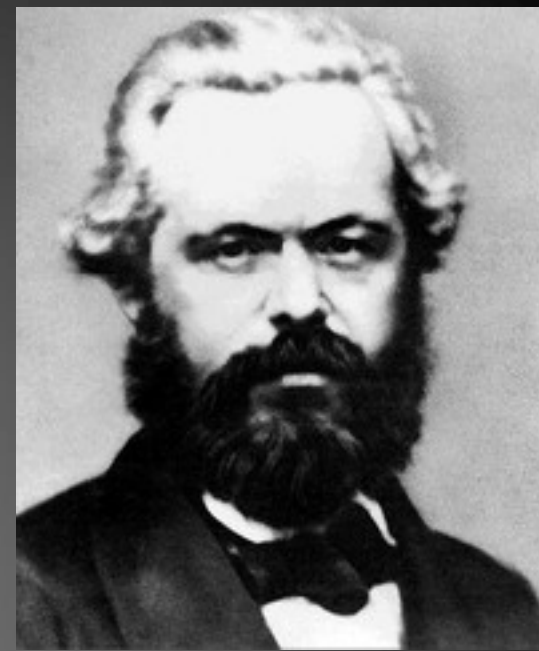


The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part. The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his “natural superiors”, and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous “cash payment”. It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into *exchange* value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom – Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.

The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers.

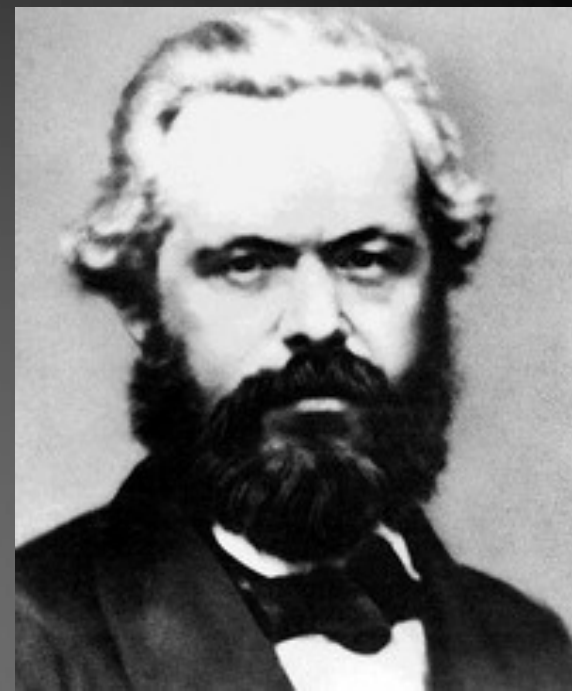
The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation.



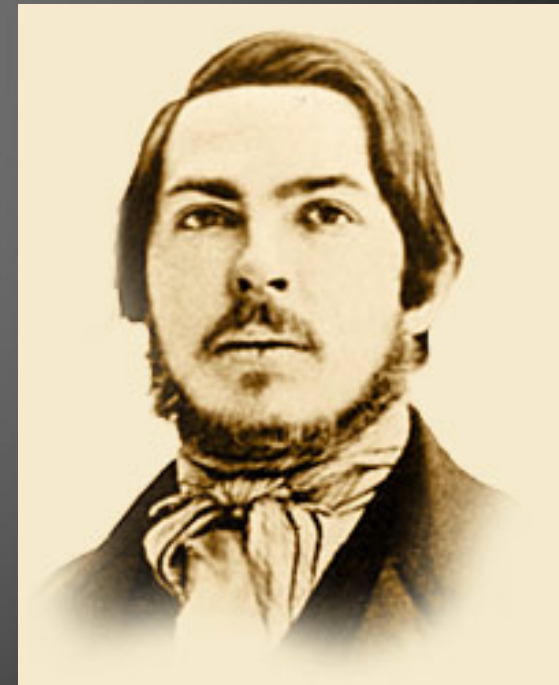




The bourgeoisie has been the first to show what man's activity can bring about. It has accomplished *wonders* far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals; it has conducted expeditions that put in the shade all former Exoduses of nations and crusades.



The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form, was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation *distinguish* the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at *last* compelled to face with *sober* senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind. ...



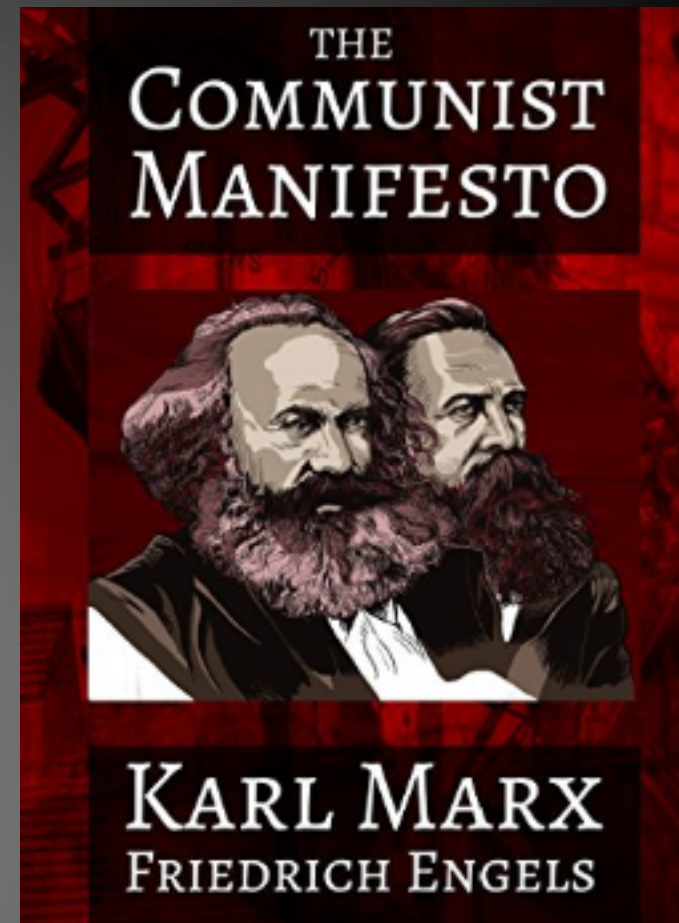
The *bourgeoisie*, during its rule of *scarce* one hundred years, has created more *massive* and more *colossal* productive forces than have *all* preceding generations together.



The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them. And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented.

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself. But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the *weapons* that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to *wield* those weapons – the modern working class – the proletarians...

The various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of the proletariat are more and more equalized, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labour, and **nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level.**



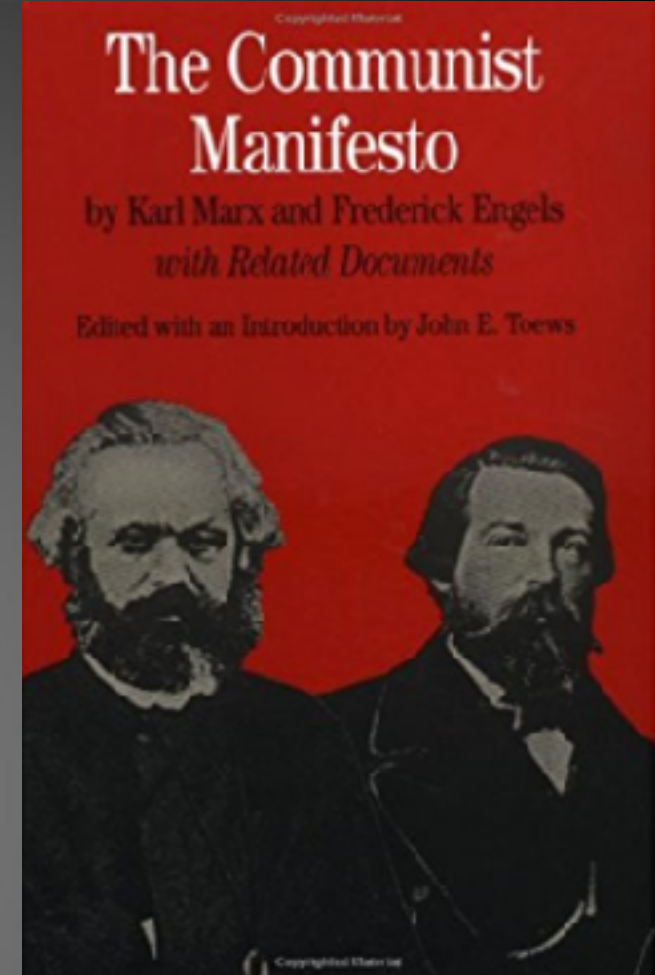


The proletarian is without property... Law, morality, religion, are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests.

They have nothing of their *own* to secure and to fortify; their mission is to *destroy* all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property.

All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air.

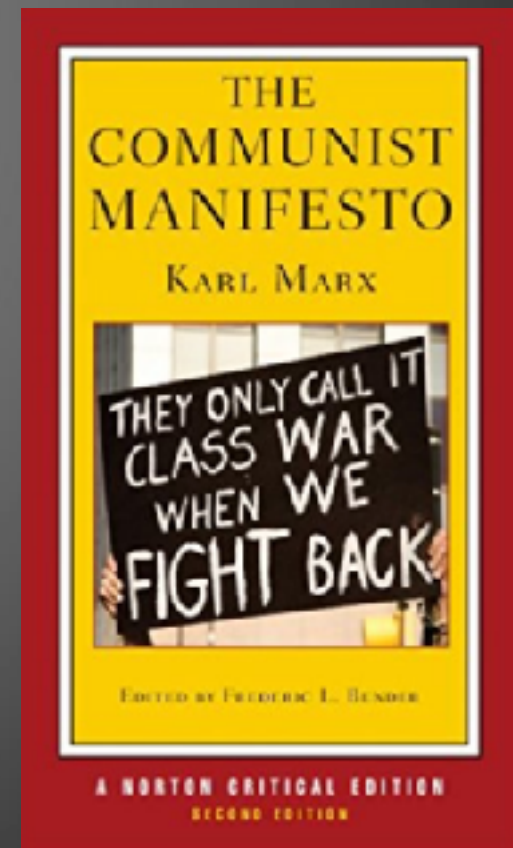
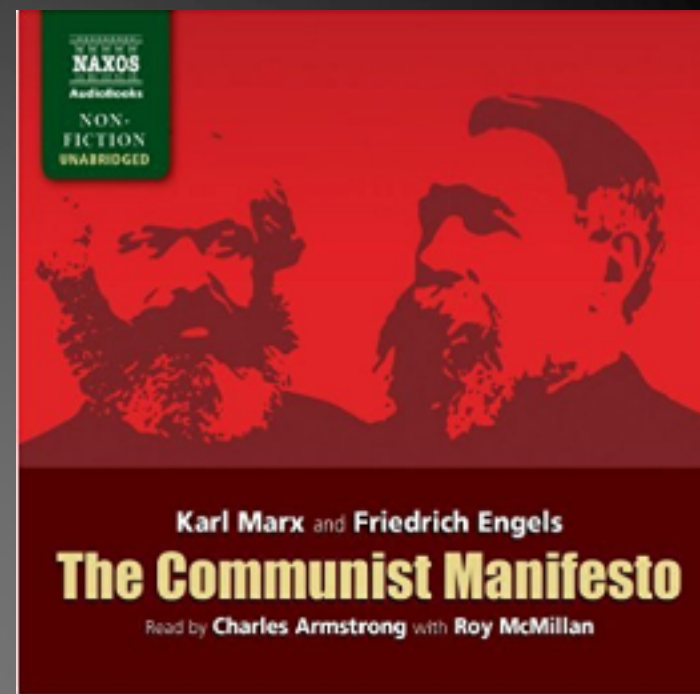
In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat.





The modern labourer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the process of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident, that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an over-riding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.



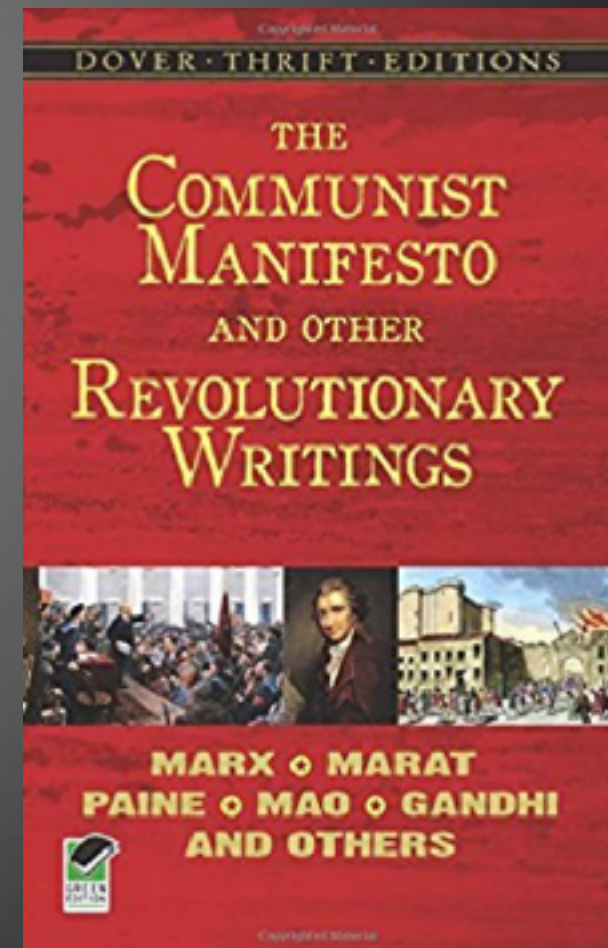
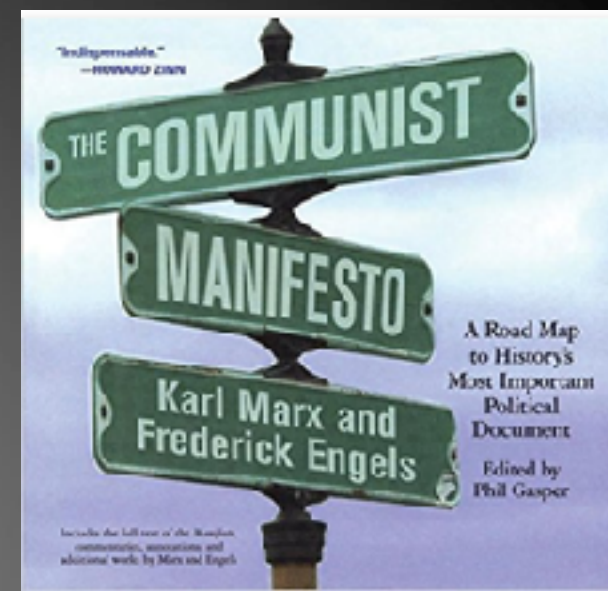


And the abolition of this state of things is called by the bourgeois, abolition of individuality and freedom! And rightly so. The abolition of bourgeois individuality, bourgeois independence, and bourgeois freedom is undoubtedly aimed at.

Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views, and conception, in one word, man's consciousness, *changes* with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations and in his social life?... The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class.

Question 22 [Engels' Draft]. Do Communists reject existing religions?

Answer: All religions which have existed hitherto were expressions of historical stages of development of *individual* peoples or *groups* of peoples. But communism is *that* stage of historical development which makes *all* existing religions superfluous and *supersedes* them.



The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degree, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class; and to increase the total productive forces as rapidly as possible.

Of course, in the beginning, this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property, and on the conditions of bourgeois production; by means of measures, therefore, which *appear* economically insufficient and untenable, but *which*, in the course of the movement, outstrip themselves, necessitate further inroads upon the old social order, and are unavoidable as a means of entirely revolutionising the mode of production...

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

**Proletarians of All Countries, Unite!**



- 👤 What constitutes the core of Marxian Doctrine?
- 👤 Which principles of the Manifesto and later works played the major role for those Marxist groups that seized power to implement them?
- 👤 What are implications and consequences of these principles?
- 👤 What made the doctrine especially attractive?



- What is there? (ontology or metaphysics)
- What should I do? (ethics and politics)
- What is the truth? (epistemology)

Ontology:  
God, Cosmos, Society, Person

Marxian Ontology:

~~God, Cosmos, Society, Person~~



Marxian Ethics:  
Necessity of Technological Progress



Marxian Truth:

Whatever Marx said is true



# MARXIAN SYSTEM: FIRST PRINCIPLES

1. Culture, religion, morality, science, state and law constitute the social superstructure, which is determined by the production relations, which, in their turn, are determined by the productive forces or technology. Thus, technological progress (TP) entails transformation of culture and all social structures. What makes his first cause, TP, fast or slow, Marx did not ask.
2. Production relations determine the classes of people. Dominant ideas are rooted in class interests; this determinism is normally subconscious. Relatively to Progress, the classes are divided into the revolutionary and reactionary ones. Progress inevitably takes on cruel and violent forms of the class struggle.
3. Literature, art, philosophy and morality are of class nature, being either progressive or reactionary. Today, all religions are reactionary, opium of the people.
4. Private property, separation of powers and the rule of law today are reactionary means of the bourgeoisie dominance over the proletariat.
5. TP inevitably leads to a perfect society, bright future, paradise on Earth—to Communism—where people will be free from injustice, the burdens of labour and adversities. Powerful machines and human kindness will provide that.

# MARXIAN SYSTEM: FIRST PRINCIPLES

6. The road to Communism inevitably runs through a dramatic deterioration of life for the entire society under capitalism, climaxing in the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.
7. The dictatorship of the proletariat is established by the Marxist party. Its coming to power is followed by the abolition of civil liberties and the liquidation of the democratic, judicial, religious and economical structures – the entire civil society. Having accomplished that, the party begins to build the new society.
8. Progress is fostered by means of cruelty to reactionaries, thus justifying the violence. Progress is the only measure of ethics.
9. This 'scientific socialism' is 'dialectical': any logical or historical contradiction of the doctrine is removed by pointing out that the Marxian teaching is alive, its contradictions are dialectical and are to be resolved by life itself. Objections and attacks on the scientific socialism are *explained away*, if not by stupidity of those who did not learn dialectics, then by reactionary interests, maybe subconscious. Thus, no critical analysis of the doctrine is possible from inside the groups.
10. The style of the "scientific socialism" is that of preaching and precluding any doubt. Doubts are considered as acts of hostility.

# MARXIAN SYSTEM: IMPLICATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

1. While all doctrines just reflect various class interests, the Marxian 'scientific socialism' is implied to be uniquely exceptional: it reveals the 'true interest' of the proletariat, and, eventually, of the entire humanity. The 'true interest' becomes known only through this prophetic revelation. The Marxist party, armed with this all-true all-powerful teaching, will lead the proletariat to the bright future. The party learns the truth from the Teacher, who thus becomes the self-proclaimed Savior of humanity. Marx by fact put himself forward as the Anti-Christ, while the Marxist parties formed as sects of fanatic believers in him.
2. Since all the democratic institutions have to be destroyed by the proletarian dictatorship, the dictatorship turns out to be an absolute totalitarian tyranny, legitimized by the cult of Marx and his top apostles, with cruel suppression of those who does not consider Marx as the prophet, suppression of free thought. Everybody becomes a slave to the state.
3. From here, the new ethics of total slavery is established. The old Christian / aristocratic / humanistic ethics is denounced.
4. Totalitarian power requires unceasing terror. Terror thus becomes the true ruling spirit. Everybody, including the dictator, is utterly insecure, which can lead to even more terror.
5. Later on, high ranking officials may try to secure their positions by reducing the terror. Transferred downward, this leads to the ubiquitous theft, halting of production and the erosion of society, marking the end of the Marxist regime.



# MARXISM APPLICATIONS

Everywhere, as soon as the Marxist party came to power, a dictatorship was established with catastrophic consequences for life, humanity, civilization, culture and economy. These features were not caused by local mistakes or pathologies of the Marxist leaders, but they were consequences of the core Marxian doctrine.

Marx insisted that practice is the criterion of truth. By this principle, what truth can the humanity deduce from the numerous invariably devastating practical applications of Marxism?

How many more examples are necessary to make the judgement regarding the relationship of the Marxist doctrine and the catastrophes that always accompanied its application?

# CRITICS OF MARX

“If you took the most ardent revolutionary, vested him in absolute power, within a year he would be worse than the Tsar himself.”

When the people are being beaten with a stick, they are not much happier if it is called "the People's Stick".



Bakunin speaking to members of the IWA at the Basel Congress in 1869

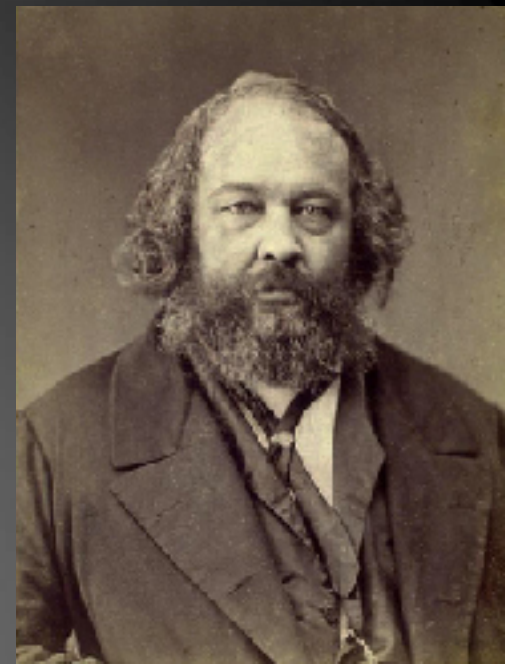


## Michael Bakunin, *Statism and Anarchy*, 1873

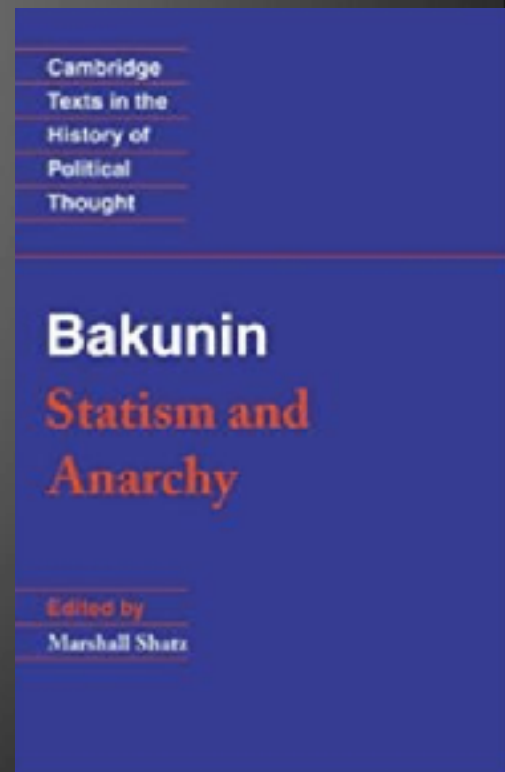
The expressions “learned socialist,” “scientific socialism,” etc., which continuously appear in the speeches and writings of the followers of Lassalle and Marx, prove that the pseudo-People’s State will be nothing but a despotic control of the populace by a new and not at all numerous aristocracy of real and pseudo-scientists. The “uneducated” people will be totally relieved of the cares of administration, and will be treated as a regimented herd. A beautiful liberation, indeed!

Marxists insist that only dictatorship (of course their own) can create freedom for the people. We reply that all dictatorship has no objective other than self-perpetuation, and that slavery is all it can generate and instill in the people who suffer it.

...according to Mr. Marx, the people not only should not abolish the State, but, on the contrary, they must strengthen and enlarge it and turn it over to the full disposition of their benefactors, guardians, and teachers – the leaders of the Communist party, meaning Mr. Marx and his friends – who will then liberate them in their own way. They will concentrate all administrative power in their own strong hands, because the ignorant people are in need of a strong guardianship; and they will create a central state bank, which will also control all the commerce, industry, agriculture, and even science. The mass of the people will be divided into two armies, the agricultural and the industrial, under the direct command of the state engineers, who will constitute the new privileged political-scientific class.



1814-1876



Marx made detailed notes throughout the Bakunin's book,  
quoted it several times when it worked for him,  
and never responded to its devastating criticism.

“These [Bakunin’s] dire and prescient predictions have been described by Noam Chomsky as “perhaps among the most remarkable within the social sciences”. That Marx made no attempt to publish his own responses suggest that he himself recognised their feeble inadequacy. That he seems never to have been seriously disturbed either by these or by earlier criticisms on the same lines constitutes a further confirmation that he was no more dedicated to increasing the liberties of individuals than to the discovery of social scientific truth.”

“Is there indeed so much as a single passage in the Collected Works in which anything at all is thus recognised as a challenging and worrisome difficulty for that never adequately stated theory?”

“I took the risk of prognosticating in this way, as I was compelled to substitute for you as correspondent at the Tribune ... It is possible I may be discredited. But in that case it will still be possible to pull through with the help of a bit of dialectics. It goes without saying that I phrased my forecasts in such a way that I would prove to be right also in the opposed case.”

# KARL MARX WAS NOT A SOCIAL SCIENTIST

ANTONY FLEW



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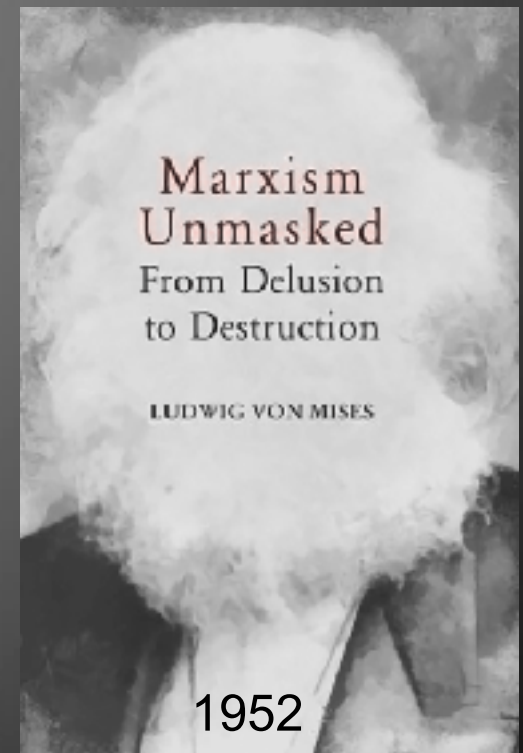
1923-2010



“Communist purges are not something which happen just because men are imperfect. Purges are the necessary consequences of the philosophical foundation of Marxian socialism. If you cannot discuss philosophical differences of opinion in the same way you discuss other problems, you must find another solution—through violence and power. This refers not only to dissent concerning policies, economic problems, sociology, law, and so on. It refers also to problems of the natural sciences. The Webbs, Lord and Lady Passfield, were shocked to learn that Russian magazines and papers dealt even with problems of the natural sciences from the point of view of the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism. For instance, if there is a difference of opinion with regard to science or genetics, it must be decided by the “leader.” This is the necessary unavoidable consequence of the fact that, according to Marxist doctrine, you do not consider the possibility of dissent among honest people; either you think as I do, or you are a traitor and must be liquidated.” (*Mises, 1952*)



Ludwig von Mises  
1881-1973

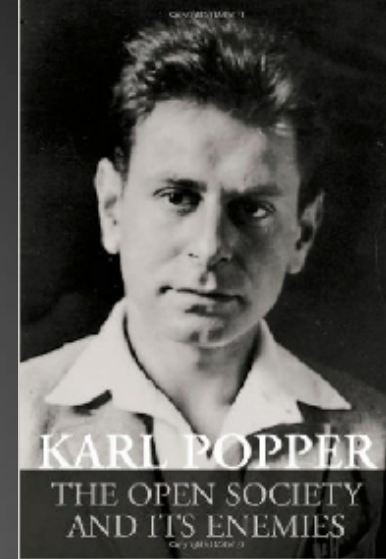


...dialectic is used by Marxists, following the example of Engels' Anti-Dühring, mainly for the purposes of apologetics – to defend the Marxist system against criticism. As a rule critics are denounced for their failure to understand the dialectic, or proletarian science, or for being traitors. Thanks to dialectic the anti-dogmatic attitude has disappeared, and Marxism has established itself as a dogmatism which is elastic enough, by using its dialectic method, to evade any further attack.

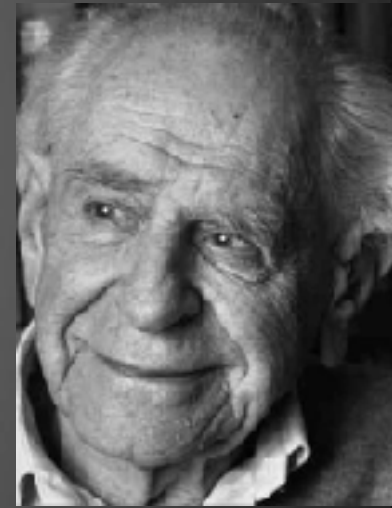
...the attempt to make heaven on earth invariably produces hell. It leads to intolerance.

It took me some years of study before I felt with any confidence that I had grasped the heart of the Marxian argument. It consists of a historical prophecy, combined with an implicit appeal to the following moral law: Help to bring about the inevitable! (UQ)

...the ruling religious belief that the social world we live in is a kind of hell. This religion is spread by the intellectuals, especially by those in the teaching profession and in the news media. There is almost a competition of doom and gloom: the more radically one condemns our Western society, the greater seems to be one's chance to be listened to (and perhaps to play a leading role in it).

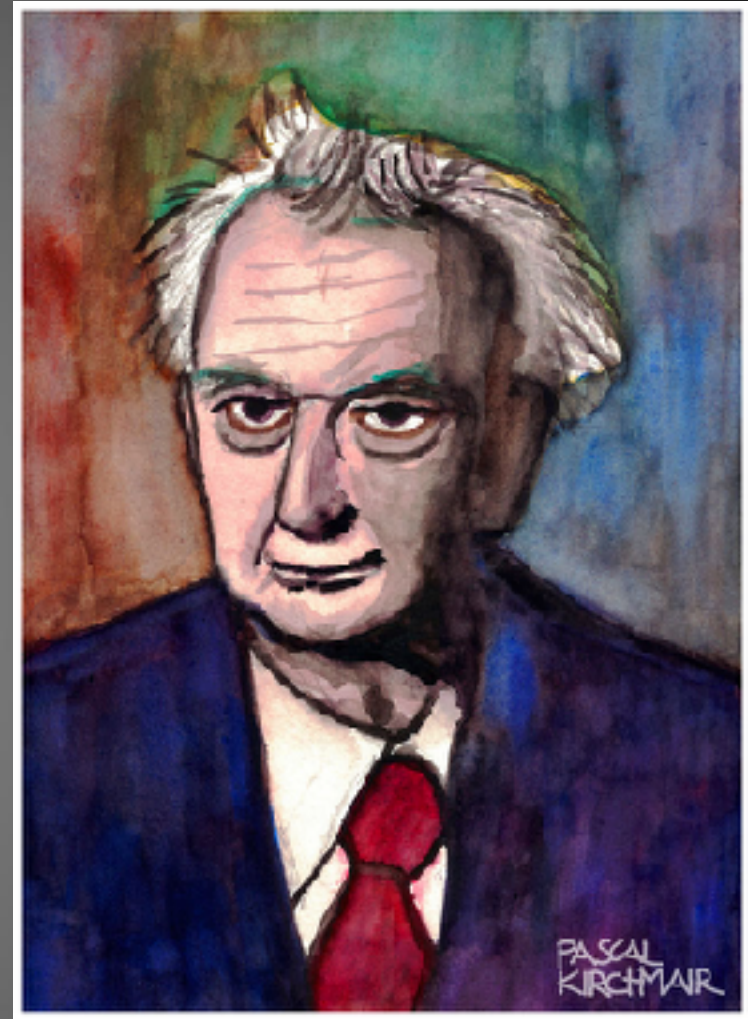


1902-1994



The style of Marx's writings is not that of the investigator...he does not quote examples or adduce facts which run counter to his own theory but only those which clearly support or confirm that which he considers the ultimate truth. The whole approach is one of vindication, not investigation, but it is a vindication of something proclaimed as the perfect truth with the conviction not of the scientist but of the believer.

Karl Jaspers, 'Marx und Freud' (1950).



1883-1969

## Irrationality of Marxian Doctrine:

1. Historical Materialism generates the Epimenides paradox;
2. Prophetic self-assurance, taboo on any doubt on Marx' scriptures;
3. Scientific necessity, incompatible with political appeals and agitation;
4. 'Dialectical' insensitivity to any criticism and total ad hominem;
5. Failure of all predictions;
6. Catastrophic practice.



Criticism of the Marxian doctrine by prominent thinkers was devastating.

Its practical consequences were invariably catastrophic.

Intellectual defense of Marxism always was and still is just miserable.

Does it really matter?

# POPULARITY OF MARXISM

No thinker in the nineteenth century has had so direct, deliberate and powerful an influence upon mankind as Karl Marx. (I. Berlin, *Karl Marx*, 1939, ...,1978)

The philosophy of today is that of Karl Marx. He is the most powerful personality of our age. Karl Marx and the ideas of Karl Marx—ideas which he did not invent, develop, or improve, but which he combined into a system—are widely accepted today, even by many who emphatically declare that they are anti-communist and anti-Marxist. To a considerable extent, without knowing it, many people are philosophical Marxists, although they use different names for their philosophical ideas. (Mises, 1952)

In the case of the Marxian system, such adverse judgment or even exact disproof, by its very failure to injure fatally, only serves to bring out the power of the structure. (J. Schumpeter, 1942)

Karl Marx has had more impact on actual events, as well minds of men and women, than any other intellectual in modern times. The reason for this is not primarily the attraction of his concepts and methodology, though both have a strong appeal to unrigorous minds, but the fact that his philosophy has been institutionalized in two of the world's largest countries, Russia and China, and their many satellites.

(Paul Johnson, *Intellectuals: From Marx and Tolstoy to Sartre and Chomsky*, 1988)

# Part I: The Marxian Doctrine

## Chapter 1: MARX THE PROPHET

“It was not by a slip that an analogy from the world of religion was permitted to intrude into the title of this chapter. There is more than analogy. In one important sense, **Marxism is a religion**. To the believer it presents, first, a **system of ultimate ends** that **embody the meaning of life** and are absolute standards by which to judge events and actions; and, secondly, a guide to those ends which implies a **plan of salvation** and the indication of the evil from which mankind, or a chosen section of mankind, is to be saved. We may specify still further: Marxist socialism also belongs to that subgroup which **promises paradise on this side of the grave**. I believe that a formulation of these characteristics by an **hierologist** would give opportunities for classification and comment which might possibly lead much deeper into the sociological essence of Marxism than anything a mere economist can say... Purely scientific achievement, had it even been much more perfect than it was in the case of Marx, would never have won the immortality in the historical sense which is his.

[The religious quality of Marxism also explains a characteristic attitude of the orthodox Marxist toward opponents. To him, as to any believer in a Faith, the opponent is not merely in error but in sin. Dissent is disapproved of not only intellectually but also morally. There cannot be any excuse for it, once the Message has been revealed.]”



1883-1950

### Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy

ECONOMIC CLASSIC

JOSEPH A. SCHUMPETER



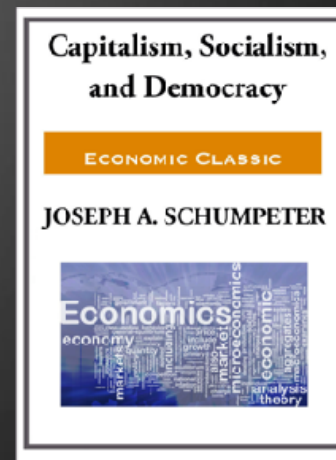
1942, 1946



“Observe how supreme art here succeeds in weaving together those *extra-rational cravings* which receding religion had left running about like masterless dogs, and the rationalistic and *materialistic tendencies of the time*, ineluctable for the moment, which would not tolerate any creed that had no scientific or pseudo-scientific connotation. Preaching the goal would have been ineffectual; analyzing a social process would have interested only a few hundred specialists. But **preaching in the garb of analysis and analyzing with a view to heartfelt needs**, this is what conquered passionate allegiance and gave to the Marxist that supreme boon which consists in the conviction that what one is and stands for can never be defeated but must conquer victoriously in the end.

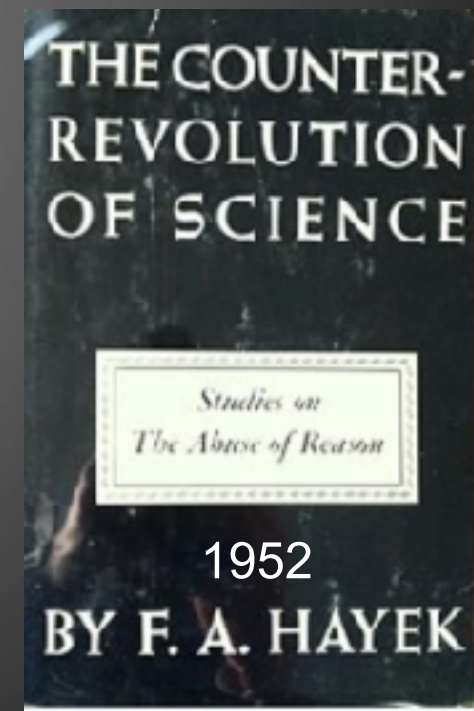
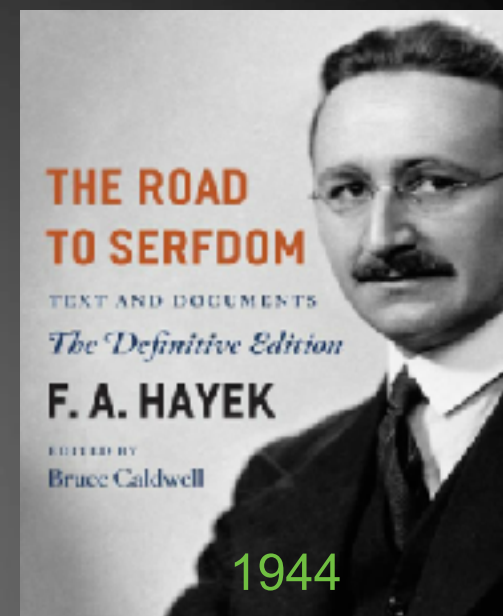


# 1883-1950



“Freedom, he [Waddington] explains, “is a very troublesome concept for the scientist to discuss, partly because he is not convinced that, in the last analysis, there is such a thing.”” ...

“Robert A. Brady, in his study of *The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism* (London, 1937), concludes his detailed account of the development in the German academic world with the statement that “the scientist, ... perhaps, is the most easily used and ‘coordinated’ of all the especially trained people in modern society. The Nazis, to be true, fired a good many University professors, and dismissed a good many scientists from research laboratories. But the professors were primarily among the social sciences where there was more common awareness of and a more persistent criticism of the Nazi programs, and not among the natural sciences where thinking is supposed to be most rigorous. Those dismissed in this latter field were primarily Jewish or exceptions to the generalisations made above, because of the equally uncritical acceptance of beliefs running contrary to Nazi views.— Consequently the Nazis were able to ‘coordinate’ scholars and scientists with relative ease, and hence to throw behind their elaborate propaganda the seeming weight of the bulk of German learned opinion and support.””



“The tragedy of collectivist thought is that, while it starts out to make reason supreme, it ends by destroying reason because it **misconceives the process on which the growth of reason depends**. It may indeed be said that it is the paradox of all collectivist doctrine and its demand for “conscious” control or “conscious” planning that they necessarily lead to the demand that the mind of some individual should rule supreme—while only the individualist approach to social phenomena makes us recognize the superindividual forces which guide the growth of reason. Individualism is thus an attitude of humility before this social process and of tolerance to other opinions and is the exact opposite of that intellectual hubris which is at the root of the demand for comprehensive direction of the social process.”



1899-1992

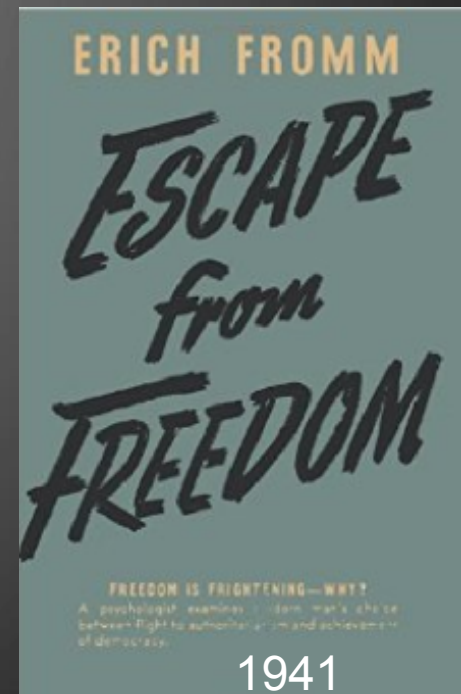
“This lack of relatedness to values, symbols, patterns, we may call **moral aloneness** and state that moral aloneness is as intolerable as the physical aloneness, or rather that physical aloneness becomes unbearable only if it implies also moral aloneness... Religion and nationalism, as well as any custom and any belief however absurd and degrading, if it only connects the individual with others, are refuges from what man most dreads: isolation.

The principal social avenues of escape in our time are the submission to a leader, as has happened in Fascist countries, and the compulsive conforming as is prevalent in our own democracy.

... to quote a telling description of Dostoevski, in *The Brothers Karamazov*, the individual has “no more pressing need than the one to find somebody to whom he can surrender, as quickly as possible, that gift of freedom which he, the unfortunate creature, was born with.” The frightened individual seeks for somebody or something to tie his self to; he cannot bear to be his own individual self any longer, and he tries frantically to get rid of it and to feel security again by the elimination of this burden: the self.”



1900-1980



1941

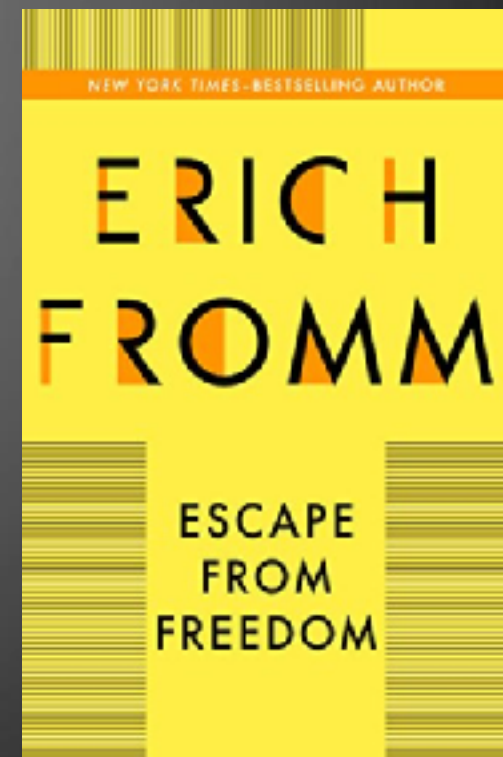


People do not die quietly from physical starvation; **they do not die quietly from psychic starvation either**. If we look only at the economic needs as far as the “normal” person is concerned, if we do not see the unconscious suffering of the average automatized person, then we fail to see the danger that threatens our culture from its human basis: the readiness to accept any ideology and any leader, if only he promises excitement and offers a political structure and symbols which **allegedly give meaning and order to an individual's life**. The despair of the human automaton is fertile soil for the political purposes of Fascism.

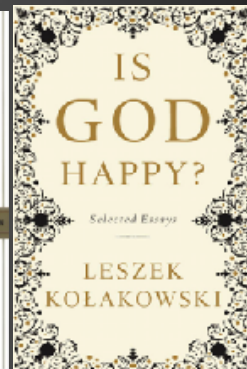
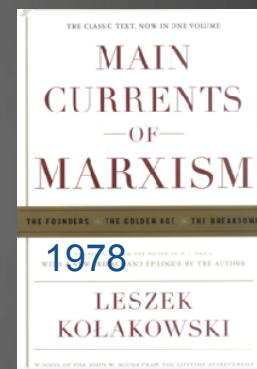
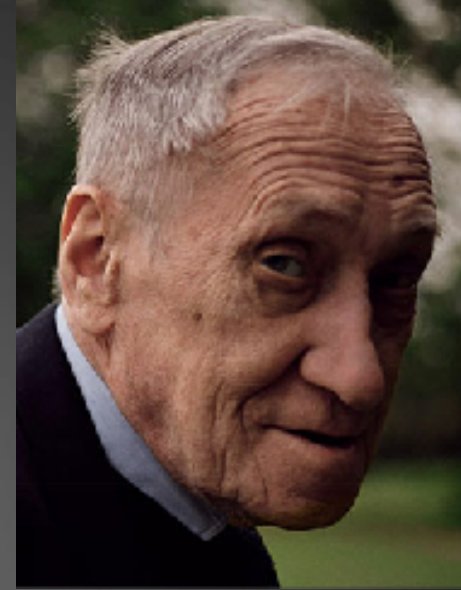
There is no reason to wonder why the record of history shows so much cruelty and destructiveness. If there is anything to be surprised at— and encouraged by— I believe it is the fact that the human race, in spite of all that has happened to men, has retained— and actually developed— such qualities of dignity, courage, decency, and kindness as we find them throughout history and in countless individuals today.



1900-1980



“...in contrast to Nazism, Stalinism was all **façade**. It exploited – quite successfully – all the ideological instruments of the socialist, humanist, internationalist, universalist tradition. It never preached conquest, only liberation from oppression; it never extolled the state as a value in itself, only stressed the necessity of reinforcing the state as an indispensable lever to destroy the enemies of freedom; and it promised, in conformity with Marxist doctrine, the abolition of the state in the perfect world of communism. It preached equality, democracy, self-determination for all nations, brotherhood and peace. The presence or the absence of a powerful ideological façade may have been responsible for both the strengths and the weaknesses of each of these two orders. The fact that Stalinism was able to present itself as the legitimate heir of socialist dreams and values, as the embodiment of the old revolutionary humanism, was clearly its strength. Thanks to the skillful manipulation of words it was able – even when its oppressive and terrorist aspects were at their peak – to attract a large number of intellectuals and thus to enhance its worldwide influence. The fact that thousands of outstanding minds fell prey to Stalinist delusions and joined the cause of communism in good faith (whether briefly or for a long time) cannot be dismissed with melancholy comments on human naïveté; it deserves attention as the most striking example of the power of ideology in our century. But that same power was vulnerable to internal dangers which were bound to become manifest in due course. ... Time and again, in people’s minds, the façade tore itself away from the reality, took on a sort of autonomous life and was turned against the reality. Time and again, communists used communist phraseology to attack the communist system. So it might be said that the ideology, deceitful though it was, carried the germs of its own self-destruction, and that communism, thanks to its ideological contradictions, was capable of producing its own critics.”



1927-2009

# MEANING OF LIFE

Schumpeter pointed to a problem of meaning of life (MoL) as a key to understand the attractiveness of Marxism.

This problem has a huge inspirational and destructive potential.

MoL cannot be obtained by a simple suggestion, or self-suggestion.

MoL is dramatically challenged by seeming absurdities of life, meaningless suffering and moral aloneness.

MoL cannot be found and established by a common sense or scientifically.

MoL can only be obtained as an award for permanent efforts toward goals having atemporal values. Such goals and values are formulated and can be formulated only by religions.

Language of these formulations is mythopoetic, and it cannot be otherwise.

Religions give values for common sense and science; thus, they are more fundamental than common sense and science.

Religions do have their special criterium of truth: **By their fruits you will know them.**

# MYTHEME, MYTH, MYTHOS



# MARXIAN MYTHOS

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God,” answered the Savior to the spirit that tempted him. But if man is deaf to the Heavens, what is he to do? What if the entire epoch is deaf? A soul destitute of religion is likened by Schumpeter to a masterless dog; Marx attracted masses of unhappy strays, whom he fed with the recipe they craved.

What was specifically attractive in that substance?

# MYTHEME OF THE FINAL JUDGEMENT

Heavy would be the thought that evil triumphant in life will remain unpunished in death. Villains and scoundrels must get their due. This is the timeless idea, the archetype, the **mytheme of the final judgement**. The Biblical God forbade revenge, taking it upon Himself to be the Highest Judge—He will repay. But what possible power can this promise hold for those to whom the scriptures are but a collection of Jewish fairy tales? How are *they* to deal with the fire of justice, the thirst to recompense the malefactors?

It is precisely this vengeance that Marx's idea promises through its merciless, all-destroying dictatorship of the proletariat, the thought of which must make the ruling classes shudder. There is a certain logic here: since individuals do not really exist in the Marxian world, evil is perpetrated by classes and the recompense is doled out to them likewise.

# MYTHEME OF SALVATION

Bitter would be the thought that the tear of the innocent will never be wiped away, unbearable is the thought of infinite, inescapable suffering of mankind, for which a life in harmony is but a pipe dream, and no less unbearable is the thought of the fall into nothingness not only of myself and those close to me but of all of humanity itself. Out of this comes the *mytheme of salvation*, the possibility of a blessed life to come, Eden, paradise. Marx's Eden is the bright future, the kingdom of freedom and fraternity, for which humanity is bound by the unshakable laws of history.

# MEANING OF LIFE AND FUNDAMENTAL UNDERSTANDING

It is hard for a person to live in the consciousness of his own futility, lost among the myriad of particles and meaningless circumstances. Meaning to elevate above all that is required. The *mytheme of the meaning of life* is what supplies for that demand. Marx realizes it as a dialectic union of an individual fate with necessities of history, leading to the bright future. The road to it unavoidably and freely at the same time is paved by the proletariat, enlightened by Marx's teaching.

The teaching provides the master key to understanding of history, which without this key appears as a flux of events shrouded in both absurd and mystery. The puzzles and mysteries of history are eliminated by Marx, explained away. Tensions of the incomprehensibilities are replaced by the sure universal knowledge of the essence, gifting the calming right to ignorance. This is the *mytheme of fundamental understanding*.



# SAVIOR AND HIS PEOPLE

Mythemes and the embodying them myths demand unwavering faith; without it they fall through into nothingness, and man, like Schumpeter says, turns into a masterless dog. The myth can be established only by an inerrant in all things superman, whose vision of truth contains no flaw. His revelation of truth saves humanity from the absurd. Here is the *mytheme of a Savior*.

The Savior acts through his enlightened pupils, apostles, servants and special people, inspired by his teaching. Here the *mytheme of the chosen people* is involved.

# METHOD OF CONVINCING

Having decisively rejected God, Marx had no other mythical foundation but his own personality. This foundation is what is established by his science-like, authoritarian poetry, which unfolds his mythological synthesis, his *mythos*.

An important difference between the biblical corpus of texts and the Marxian one consists in that the former explicitly draw their authority from their heavenly source, openly pointing to faith, discussing at length the relationship of it and reason, all the difficult problems on this path and arguments for and against; the latter don't even ask the question of the foundation to their truth, acting on the minds of their readers in the same way as fortune tellers and psychics: by suppressing reflective thought through authoritarian infusion.

# ANTICHRIST

The savior of humanity in Marxian mythology is not at all the proletariat, as some authors assert. The proletariat is no more than a horse of salvation, prepared by history. The horse, however, requires a steady hand of the rider: the proletariat does not know his own true interests. The only carrier of this knowledge is the organization of the followers of Marx, those who learned and believed in his teaching. In the end, the light of the all-powerful truth radiates personally by Marx, the uberman; it is he who is the savior, steadily and inerrantly directing the energy of the proletariat through his apostles and disciples. In this way, Marx, according to the essence of his own teaching, is the one who manifests the universal salvation; he is an antithesis and a forgery of Christ, an antichrist, in the analytically precise meaning of that word.

# PSEUDO-CLERICAL STATE

In light of the richness of the pseudo-religious Marxian mythos, it is not surprising that Marxist parties created pseudo-clerical states.

The cult was expressed in a special, officially controlled, lexicon, Orwellian “newspeak”;

Marxian scripture was complemented by official interpretations;

Pseudo-temples with the pseudo-relic of the pseudo-apostles were erected on the main plaza of the capitals; innumerable and ubiquitous monuments and toponyms of the pseudo-savior were raised and imposed; its pseudo-apostles and pseudo-saints were canonized and glorified;

Pseudo-chapels with pseudo-icons in every official building were furnished; solemn processions to sacred music were regularly organized for special calendar days; pseudo-homilies and pseudo-commandments were pronounced, glorified and propagated;

A pseudo-inquisition with its punishments and executions for deviations, heresies and disbelief was instituted and worked hard. Entire classes and ethnicities were terribly tortured and murdered by those who were freed from the outdated moral limitations.

Missions all over the world were created and generously supported.



ALTHOUGH THESE STATES  
HAD HISTORICALLY SHORT LIVES,  
THEIR HISTORY IS NOT REFLECTED.

WHATEVER IS NOT REFLECTED,  
HAS ALL THE CHANCES  
TO BE BACK.

# FUTURE OF MARXISM

The cause of the enduring attractiveness of Marxism is not in its being scientific or socialist. It is none of those.

The cause is in its uniquely rich mythos, tying together in a godless, science-like synthesis the main mythemes of the religion maternal to our civilization, Christianity. In the 150 years since the publication of *Capital*, humanity has been unable to produce a single atheist teaching comparable with Marxism in its grasp of the fundamental mythemes.

The mythemes are not less eternal than humans. Perhaps, the revolt against God belongs to the same time, or timeless, scale. If so, the archetypal structure of Marxism, with possible changes of names and wordings, should be eternal in the same sense.

The foregoing does not mean, of course, that the embrace of traditional confessions, or some of them, all by itself liberates humanity from hard problems, making the earthly life more like paradise. I do hope, however, that these considerations may give even the non-religious reader grounds to suspect that rejection of God runs along a direct route to hell, and that the more energetic the denial, the surer the descent.



*Thank you all who listened these talks,  
who asked the questions,  
encouraging me to think better  
on this extremely important,  
strange, mad, tragic and revealing subject,  
to obey the command of the Delphic deity:*

*Get to know yourself!*