

# A Brief History of Cultural Marxism and Political Correctness

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## PART 1

*“There is a revolution coming.  
It will not be like revolutions in the past.  
It will originate with the individual  
and the culture, and it will change the  
political structure as its final act.  
It will not require violence to succeed,  
and it cannot be successfully resisted by  
violence. This is the revolution of the  
New Generation.” – Charles Reich,  
The Greening of America (1970)*



### Introduction

In his book on the American Civil Liberties Union, Alan Sears of the Alliance Defense Fund writes that one of the great myths of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is that the ACLU started out as a good, patriotic, pro-liberty organization that somehow strayed off-course. The truth, however, is that when we look at its history, the evidence shows something quite different. From the beginning, the ACLU had a definite agenda: to undermine the foundations of traditional American culture through the manipulation and exploitation of our legal system.

Likewise, a similar case can be made regarding the origins and the agenda of Political Correctness. For many Americans, Political Correctness is a merely a vague term used to characterize a variety of random ideas and causes with no particular unifying features other than the fact that they are “liberal” and “new.” Or as Dinesh D’Souza has noted, PC ideas and causes often seem “scattered” and “unconnected.” Otherwise, the assumption is that these ideas and causes are well-intentioned if sometimes a bit extreme, hyper-sensitive or even silly. But a closer look at the history of Political Correctness reveals something quite different. Although sometimes referred to as “cultural liberalism,” it is more accurately an expression of “cultural Marxism.”

Far from being just a random collection of

idealistic notions, Political Correctness is nothing less than an orchestrated attack on Western civilization. Its primary targets include (1) the Christian faith and moral values, which cultural liberals believe perpetuate repression, intolerance and arrogant exclusivity; and (2) non-liberal white people – particularly white males – whom they believe to be the source of most of the world’s exploitation and violence.

For critics of Political Correctness, it is a pejorative term used to describe ideas, words, policies and behavior that are considered offensive and inappropriate by the liberal cultural elites who dominate the education institutions, the media establishments, and much of popular culture in contemporary American life. For PC advocates, labeling certain thoughts, speech and actions

“politically incorrect” is an effective way to censor dissenting views or prohibit anything that they consider...

- Out-dated or too traditional;
- Insensitive or discriminatory toward certain minorities the requires special protection – usually defined as blacks, Hispanics, feminist women, homosexuals, and non-Christians (hence, the emphasis on left-wing indoctrination programs such as “diversity training workshops”); or
- “Unprogressive” (i.e., non-liberal) – either politically, socially, or religiously.

The PC obsession with group identity and its efforts to grant special protection status to certain kinds of people is the basis for the recent trend in “hate crimes” legislation whereby perpetrators are punished for their motives (i.e., their attitudes toward their victims) rather than simply for what they have done. Violating the Constitutional guarantee of equal justice under the law, “hate crimes” legislation imposes stiffer punishments for crimes committed against certain preferred social groups, which is a form of discriminatory injustice that is unprecedented in American history. Furthermore, the simple act of criticizing someone who belongs to one of these specially protected groups is sometimes deemed a “hate crime.” As William Lind has noted...

For the first time in our history, Americans have to be fearful of what they say, of what they write, and of what they think. They have to be afraid of using the wrong word, a word [considered] offensive or insensitive, or racist, sexist, or homophobic....

[Unless it is defeated, Political Correctness] will eventually destroy... everything that we have ever defined as our freedom and our culture. [William S. Lind, “The Origins of Political Correctness.” [Www.academia.org/lectures.](http://www.academia.org/lectures)]

## The Evolution of a Term

The term “politically correct” has been around for a while, but its meaning has changed over times. It was first used in an early Supreme Court case, *Chisholm v. State of Georgia* (1793), in which the Court declared that references to “the United States” rather than “the People of the United States” was “not politically correct.” In this sense, the Court was simply declaring that “the United States” as a legal entity was technically improper

– the inference being that the federal government was merely the agent of the states and of the American people.

In modern use, scholars trace the term to Mao Zedong’s *Little Red Book* [See Ruth Perry, “A Short History of the Term ‘Politically Correct’ in Patricia Aufderheide, *Beyond PC: Toward a Politics of Understanding* (1992).] Prior to Mao, the concept of Political Correctness was used by Bolsheviks to suppress all opposing speech and actions that strayed from the official Communist Party line. Since the Party supposedly represented “the people,” anything that dissented from Communist orthodoxy was “counter-revolutionary,” politically incorrect, and therefore intolerable.

In the 1960s the term was adopted by the radical New Left to silence its critics. According to New Left ideology, traditional conservative beliefs and practices were innately “authoritarian,” “repressive,” “unprogressive,” and therefore unworthy of toleration. In a 1970 essay, *The Black Woman*, Toni Cade Bambara declared that “a man cannot be politically correct and a [male] chauvinist too.” The concept of Political Correctness was also used to shield certain minority groups from unfair stereotyping or insensitive labeling. For example, in the 1960s the traditional terms “colored people” and “Negroes” were phased out in favor of “blacks” and then “Afro-Americans,” which later was amended to “African-Americans” or even “people of color.”

In the 1990s, due to its association with radical left-wing ideas, the term “political correctness” was used pejoratively by conservatives and moderates in response to radical left-wing efforts to suppress free speech and conduct. In a 1991 commencement speech at the University of Michigan, President George H. W. Bush noted the growing movement on campuses to “declare certain topics... expressions... [and] even certain gestures off-limits.” Similarly, in *The Death of the West*, conservative commentator Pat Buchanan wrote that “Political Correctness is cultural Marxism, a regime to punish dissent and to stigmatize social heresy as the Inquisition punished religious heresy. Its trademark is intolerance.”

Even liberal *Newsweek* magazine, in a 1990 cover story on the new “Thought Police,” noted the Marxist roots of Political Correctness:

PC is, strictly speaking, a totalitarian philosophy....

Politically, PC is Marxist in origin....

There are... some who recognize the tyranny of PC but see it only as a transitional phase, which will no longer be necessary once the virtues of tolerance are internalized. Does that sound familiar? It's the dictatorship of the proletariat. ["Taking Offense." *Newsweek* (Dec. 24, 1990), p. 51, 53, 54]

## PC Ideology

### Ten Foundational Principles

There are ten principles that essentially define Political Correctness. [NOTE: Some of these principles are obviously contradictory, but that's not a problem for radical leftists who dismiss logic as "Western thinking."]

**1. Liberal Exclusivism.** The only social and political ideas and practices that have any legitimacy are those of modern cultural liberalism. As social theorist Theodor Adorno argued in *The Authoritarian Personality* (1948), only the true liberal is mentally healthy and socially well-adjusted. According to Adorno, conservatives and traditionalists are innately fascist, which renders them mentally and/or morally inferior. Conservatives are not simply wrong: they are demented, perverted, and dangerous. Therefore, their ideas are not even worthy of consideration.

**2. An Evolutionary View of Society and Culture.** Along with human biological evolution, human societies and institutions are also evolving toward greater heights of awareness and understanding. What might have been "true" or "reasonable" in the past is often outdated in the present.

**3. Moral Relativism.** As an extrapolation of #2 above, there are no moral absolutes. All standards, including all laws, are conditional, situational, and subjective. [NOTE: Postmodernists would add that all laws are impositions by the powerful on the weak.]

Every person's opinions and moral values are of equal value and worth, and no one should be allowed to impose his/her own beliefs on others. However, because the beliefs and practices of social conservatives are often outdated, politically incorrect and inferior, they need to be limited to the private sphere and banned from the public square.

**4. Skepticism.** There is no objective reality. Everything is subjective and based on one's own cultural heritage, race, class, sex, sexual orientation, life experiences, and lifestyle.

**5. Five Sacred Values.** There are five values that should govern all thinking and social interaction in a free and democratic society.

- **Tolerance.** Tolerance is an absolute virtue. We should accept every person, group, and culture non-judgmentally, and no one has a right to judge any person, group, or culture as being inferior or wrong.
- **Egalitarianism.** The only legitimate form of government is democracy. There should be no restrictions on voting and office-holding based on race, sex, education, or moral factors (except perhaps in the case of certain types of felons).

Like the Communist pigs in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, cultural liberals believe that "Everyone is equal – but some people are more equal than others." Those who are "more equal" are the liberal cultural elites and those who follow them.

- **Multi-culturalism.** All societies and cultures are morally equivalent and equally legitimate. Likewise, all cultural heritages and traditions are morally equivalent. Therefore, Christianity and Western culture are no better than any other religion or cultural heritage, and to think otherwise is to be ethnocentric and judgmental.

"Multi-culturalism" is the basis for the PC veneration of "diversity," which cultural liberals believe is innately good.

[NOTE: It is important to distinguish between the *sociology* of multi-culturalism and the *ideology* of multi-culturalism. Multi-cultural sociology is simply a description and an analysis of various cultures, their distinctive traits, unique histories and traditions, etc. This is useful (or even necessary) information given the realities of our pluralistic contemporary global society, and it is relatively non-controversial.

The ideology of multi-culturalism, however, is something altogether different. Derived from a secular humanistic worldview and based on relativistic presuppositions, it blurs the qualitative distinctions between various cultures just as religious pluralism seeks to render all religions essentially the same. But the

reality is that cultures – like religions, political systems and individual human beings – are all different, and some are obviously better than others. The ideology of multi-culturalism, however, promotes a left-wing socio/political agenda that denigrates the uniqueness of Western civilization and the Judeo-Christian heritage in order to pave the way for a radically new kind of society and culture based on secular humanistic values.]

- **Inclusion.** No individual or group has a right to discriminate against anyone else for any reason. However, in order to rectify past injustices, cultural liberals sometimes find it expedient to curtail the civil liberties of traditionalists and cultural conservatives – such as in the case of “hate speech,” for example.
- **Religious pluralism.** All religions are manmade, and to the extent that there is any truth or value in any them, all religions are (more or less) equally valid (or invalid).

**6. Education and Social Transformation.** The primary purpose of education is not to accumulate knowledge and acquire skills but to become a useful and productive citizen.

The key to social and political transformation is through Politically Correct education, a form of indoctrination that frees people from traditional prejudices so as to create a new kind of society. If properly educated [actually, indoctrinated], citizens today can be more enlightened and socially-conscious than people in the past.

**7. The Educated Liberal Elite.** Those who have been properly educated in the values of cultural liberalism are the intellectual elite and the natural leaders in society. This is the elite class that dominates politics, the legal system, education, the media, social services, the entertainment industry, and religious higher education. Although committed to tolerance and egalitarian democracy, the liberal elite have the right and the responsibility to lead others into correct paths of thinking and living.

**8. Social Consciousness.** Individualism is bad, and people should think and act in the interests of the commonweal (the common good of society). However, no one should impose his/her moral values on others – except for the liberal elite class which has the responsibility to

protect the victims of social injustice from those who would exploit them.

### **9. The Sociological Orientation.**

Individualism is a threat to social harmony. Politics is about group identity, and people are defined primarily by their race, ethnicity, class, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.

**10. (All cultures may be equally valid, but...)** **Western civilization sucks.** Throughout history, Western civilization and culture have been marked by racism, sexism, homophobia, conquest, violence, cultural imperialism, oppression, exploitation, religious bigotry, etc. Capitalism, which is based on greed and exploitation, is unjust and unfair. Traditional Christianity has been exclusive, intolerant, repressive and oppressive.

## **A Marxist Dialectic**

Contemporary Political Correctness is a form of cultural Marxism that is derivative of a naturalistic (atheistic) worldview and a Secular Humanistic philosophy. As discussed below, Political Correctness follows the Marxist dialectic in terms of its views on history, society, authoritarianism, expropriation and the redistribution of wealth, tolerance, and sexual politics.

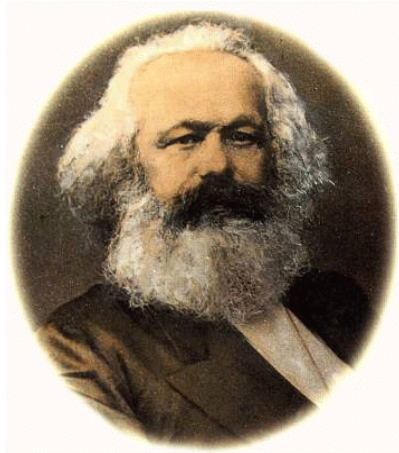
**Secular Humanism.** As an atheist with a naturalistic worldview, Karl Marx was contemptuous of religion in general and Christianity in particular. In this regard he was influenced particularly by the writings of Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-72), who in *The Essence of Christianity* (1841) put forth the theory that religion is a purely human invention and a generally negative influence because it distracts man from what is real by focusing his attention on an imaginary afterlife. In the *Communist Manifesto* (1848), Marx echoed these sentiments with comments such as “Religion is the opiate of the people” and “Man is the supreme being for man.”

As a militant atheist, Marx failed to appreciate that religion (or more correctly, the yearning for transcendence) is a basic human need. Intrinsically, we want to know where we came from, why we’re here, and what becomes of us when we die – questions for which naturalism has no answers. Furthermore, religion provides a basis for morality and social concern by challenging us to go above and beyond our own personal interests.



This is why, in general, people of faith are the most charitable and benevolent people in the world. In addition, numerous studies confirm that religious people are generally more happy, well-adjusted, and emotionally stable than non-believers.

Marx's utopian Communistic society was in some respects a secularized version of the Kingdom of God – a harmonious and cooperative community but without God. Blinded by his prejudices, Marx omitted the one factor and the one power that could actually transcend human selfishness, egoism and conflict, which is why Communistic societies have been among the most tyrannical and brutal in all of human history.



Marx held a cynical and unbalanced view of Christianity and Christian history that distorted reality. While he was correct in observing that religion (including nominal Christianity) has often been used by the rich and the powerful to serve their own interests and preserve the status quo, he failed to appreciate that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a message of liberation. When clearly and honestly proclaimed, it actually confronts and condemns the forces of exploitation and oppression that have plagued all societies and cultures throughout time.

Secular Humanism as a man-centered philosophy that derives from a naturalistic worldview. Historically, it dates back to classical Greece – in particular, to the Sophist philosophers who replaced the traditional pantheistic/pagan worldview with an anti-religious one. Sophism was best summarized by Protagoras in his famous dictum, “Man is the measure of all things” (in contrast to the gods being the measure of all things).

One of the first references to the term “humanism” was in Renaissance era, and as originally used it had no anti-religious intentions. Essentially, Renaissance humanism honored the dignity and the sacredness of human life, although

it did tend to shift the focus of life somewhat from a God-centered perspective to one that celebrated human creativity, human needs, and human self-fulfillment. But for the next several centuries it was a generally innocuous term, and many of the great scholars and intellectuals of the late-medieval and early-modern eras described themselves as Christian humanists.

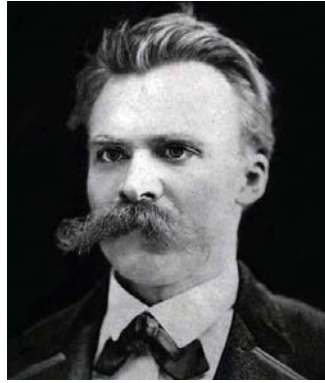
During the period of the Enlightenment, however, the concept of humanism took a decidedly secular turn. Enlightenment *philosophes* tended to look to pre-Christian classical culture for intellectual inspiration and their model of the ideal society, and for many of these thinkers Christianity represented institutionalized religious repression, theological dogmatism, and antiquated superstition. Unfortunately, traditional status quo Christianity was not up to the intellectual challenges of the day, and as Os Guinness has noted in *The Dust of Death*, “As the 18<sup>th</sup> century came to a close, all the wisdom and all the wit apparently lay on the side of the Enlightenment.”

A half-century later, in the mid-1800s, science also appeared to turn against traditional Biblical faith. The old geocentric theory of the universe had already been refuted for nearly 300 years in the work of Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler and others, and now, with Darwin, biology also appeared to turn against the belief that humanity is a special creation of God. Instead, “evolution” – i.e., “nature” – was thought to replace God as the explanatory cause of all that exists. Furthermore, it didn't help that the new social sciences of historical and textual criticism appeared to cast serious doubts on the divine inspiration of the Bible. As a result, many Christians, not wanting to be left behind, abandoned traditional Biblical beliefs for modern theories and philosophies more compatible with “science” and modern thought.

Since the dawn of Christianity, but especially in modern times under the influence of Feuerbach, Darwin, Marx and Freud, there has always been within naturalism a special hostility toward the Christian faith. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century this antipathy was most explicitly expressed by Friedrich Nietzsche in works such as *The Anti-Christ*, in which he railed:

I condemn Christianity: I bring against the Christian Church the most terrible of all the accusations that an accuser has ever had in his mouth. It is, to me, the greatest of all imaginable corruptions; it seeks to work

the ultimate corruption, the worst possible corruption. The Christian Church has left nothing untouched by its depravity; it has turned every value into worthlessness, and every truth into a lie, and every integrity into baseness of soul.



Friedrich Nietzsche

With the coming of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of the secularistic forces and influences that had been at work in American society since the time of the Enlightenment coalesced to spawn new movements and organizations. Not coincidentally, Secular Humanism as a defined philosophy emerged in full force just after World War I, just as the Neo-Marxist scholars of the Frankfurt School in Germany were working out their theories and setting their agenda. [NOTE: See the following section on the historical origins of Neo-Marxism and the Frankfurt School.]

From an organizational standpoint, several notable events occurred in America in the 1920s and '30s that advanced a Secular Humanistic agenda. In 1920 a coalition of liberal lawyers founded the American Civil Liberties Union, and the ACLU has functioned ever since as a powerful legal arm for liberal activism. It has also been in the forefront of the contemporary culture war, waging aggressive campaigns against Christianity in American public life.

In 1929 Charles Potter, a former Baptist preacher turned Unitarian, founded the First Humanist Society of New York, and the following year he wrote an influential book entitled *Humanism: A New Religion*. Three years later a group of 34 lawyers, scholars, educators, and other professionals organized the American Humanist Association and drafted *The Humanist Manifesto*. Based on Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, *The Humanist Manifesto* provided a philosophical platform for the humanist movement and put forth a radical secular vision for America. Also noteworthy was the formation in 1961 of the Unitarian/Universalist Church, a merger of the two most prominent groups associated with religious humanism in America.

Over the past 40 years the Secular Humanist alliance has been in the forefront of America's culture war, aggressively and relentlessly promoting various left-wing causes from abortion-on-demand to amnesty for illegal aliens. They have steadily gained momentum over time, and since the 1980s their agenda has been advanced through several well-financed and influential organizations including...

- The American Freethought Society, along with its publishing arm, Prometheus Books;
- People for the American Way, founded by the TV producer, Norman Lear;
- Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, a high-profile advocacy group led by Barry Lynn; and
- A variety of Political Action Committees (PACs) such as MoveOn.Org, which is financed by the billionaire George Soros. (Soros is as strident as he is rich. In 2002 he was quoted as saying, "The separation of church and state, the bedrock of our democracy, is clearly undermined by having a born-again President [i.e., George W. Bush]." Soros would apparently prefer to have someone who is fair and objective on matters related to church and state, such as an atheist like himself.)

Likewise, two influential publications should be mentioned in passing that have contributed significantly to promoting Secular Humanism in American public life: *Playboy*, founded in 1950, and *The Skeptic*, founded in 1992.

[NOTE: As Charles Potter and many others have recognized, Secular Humanism is not a neutral philosophy but a godless religion. In 1961, in the case of *Torcaso v. Watkins*, the U. S. Supreme Court acknowledged this reality when it declared: "Among religions in this country which do not teach... a belief in the existence of God, are Buddhism, Taoism... Secular Humanism and others."]

**Theory of History.** Classical Marxism was based on the theory of economic determinism, class warfare, and the struggle for control of the means of production. In the opening lines of the *Communist Manifesto* Marx wrote, "The history of all hitherto existing society is a history of class struggles." According to him, societies progressed through various set stages of development until they reached the level of capitalism. Inevitably, the exploited working classes would rise up,

overthrow their capitalistic oppressors, and establish a pure communistic (classless) society based on the egalitarian principle, “From each according to his ability to each according to his need.”

However, the transition from competitive capitalism to cooperative communism wouldn’t occur overnight, as human beings have been conditioned historically to think and act individually rather than cooperatively. The evolution toward a pure classless society must be guided by a “dictatorship of the proletariat,” an elite class of enlightened intellectuals (such as Marx, for instance) who would socially engineer the process.

Anticipating postmodernism, Politically Correct Neo-Marxism is predicated on the belief that all history is driven by power relationships. Certain groups – defined by race, religion, sex and class – dominate others that are the victims of oppression and injustice. In order to create an equal and just society, the liberal elite class – in particular, politicians, judges, educators, entertainers, and the media – must mold public opinion and promote legislation and values that moves society toward the liberal utopian ideal.

**Social Theory.** Sociologically-based stereotyping, social polarization and class conflict (and even class warfare) are integral aspects of classical Marxist social theory. Classical Marxism divided society into “good” and “bad” people along broad socio/economic lines. The “good” were the “productive” classes – i.e., the proletariat class of common laborers, factory workers, artisans, farmers and peasants who worked with their hands. The “bad” were the predatory exploiters – the bourgeoisie class, the capitalists, industrialists, bankers, managers, landlords, clergy, etc.

In contemporary Neo-Marxist thought, this kind of simplistic social stereotyping is perpetuated, except that now the “good” are the victimized minorities – feminist women, blacks, Hispanics, homosexuals, etc. – and the “bad” are white males, non-feminist white females and Christians.

The division of humanity along broad sociological lines rather than according to individual character has been a recurring theme since ancient times, but it usually has been cast in economic terms. Racial and sexual politics is a uniquely 20<sup>th</sup> century concept. But long before Marx, notable Americans commented on the age-

old problem of class envy and class conflict:

- John Adams: “In every society where property exists there will ever be a struggle between rich and poor.”
- James Madison, writing in *The Federalist*: “The most common... source of [conflict] has been the various and unequal distribution of property.”
- Abraham Lincoln, writing in 1837: “These capitalists generally act harmoniously, and in concert, to fleece the people.”

Of course, the massive social and economic upheavals brought on by the emergence of modern capitalism and Industrial Revolution only exacerbated classist biases and tensions, as Marx correctly noted in the *Communist Manifesto*:

Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.

A decade before Marx, the platform of the Working Men’s Republican Political Association of Penn Township, Pennsylvania stated the same theme:

There appear to exist two distinct classes, the rich and the poor; the oppressed and the oppressor; those that live by their own labor and they that live by the labor of others; the aristocratic and the democratic; the despotic and the republican, who are in direct opposition to one another in their objects and pursuits.

Likewise, consider the Populist Manifesto of 1892:

On the one side are the allied hosts of the monopolies, the money power, great trusts and railroad corporations, who seek the enactment of laws to benefit them and impoverish the people; on the other are the farmers, laborers, merchants, and all other people who produce wealth and bear the burdens of taxation....

Throughout his extended political career, William Jennings Bryan often echoed these same sentiments:

On the one side stand the corporate interests of the U.S., the moneyed interests, aggregated wealth and capital, imperious, arrogant, compassionless....

Like Bryan, Mary Lease was another Populist firebrand orator in the 1890s:

Wall Street owns the country. It is no longer a government of the people, by the people and for the people, but a government of Wall Street, by Wall Street and for Wall Street.



The turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a time of great reform movements as both the Populists and the Progressives challenged the traditional socio/economic status quo. Although their emphases were different, the Populist/Progressive coalition pushed a broad-based agenda calling for cleaner government and less political corruption; female suffrage and a more democratic political system; governmental regulation of trusts and corporations; a healthier and safer work environment; better pay and shorter hours for workers; consumer protection legislation; disability insurance and pension plans for workers; women and child labor laws; and laws to limit the workday to 10 hours. As one reformer put it, “The real heart of the movement is to use the government as an agency of human welfare.”

Many of the most outstanding Americans of the era were caught up in the great humanitarian and reform causes of the day, and bourgeois progressives such as Helen Keller often sounded as radical as the socialists:

This country is governed for the richest, for the corporations, the bankers, the land speculators, and for the exploiters of labor.... There is a natural competition and conflict between these competing groups that can only be resolved by a survival of the fittest.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the main difference between middle-class reformers such as Jane Addams or Helen Keller and socialists such as Eugene Debs was a matter of degree, not kind. But although their rhetoric often sounded alike, there was at least one fundamental philosophical difference between them. Many Progressive humanitarians believed capitalism could be reformed and made humane under proper government regulation, unionization, and new technological innovations. Furthermore, they did not believe, as did the socialists and Marxists, that there is an inevitable and unreconcilable conflict of interests between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat classes. In time, of course, this proved to be generally true as decade-by-decade the working conditions, incomes, and standard-of-living for the working classes gradually improved.

Social and economic progress is not a zero-sum game in which someone must lose whenever someone else wins. In an equal opportunity society in which all race- and gender-based legal restrictions have been eliminated, it is possible (so far as any manmade system allows) to have a truly trans-racial and trans-gender society wherein people succeed or fail according to the quality of

their character. This should be the ideal, but it would hinder the goals of the cultural Marxists who want to radically change American society and culture through persistent agitation. A key tactic in their assault on traditional American values and institutions is the perpetuation of racial and sexual politics.

**Authoritarianism.** Theoretically, the ultimate goal of Marxism has always been a classless (or communistic) society in which everyone is equal. Since this goal defies the realities of human nature, it takes a special class of people in society with the power to impose egalitarianism on everyone else. In Marx’s writings, he called this interim phase between the fall of capitalism and the dawn of communism the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Naturally, he inferred that this was a benevolent dictatorship (at least, benevolent after all the “counter-revolutionaries” in society had been liquidated), but for the hundreds of millions who have had to endure Communist Dictatorships of the Proletariat in places like the Soviet Union, China, Eastern Europe, Cuba, North Korea and elsewhere, it has been anything but benevolent.

Like their patriarch Marx, Neo-Marxists are convinced that those who oppose their agenda are witless traditionalists with no social consciousness and no regard for social justice. Therefore, the cultural elite class has a moral responsibility to protect the victims of social injustice – the poor, racial and ethnic minorities, feminists, homosexuals, radical left-wing political ideologues, *et al.* – from the bigotry and exploitation of troglodyte conservatives.

Furthermore, because their cause is so righteous, the cultural elite is justified in using any means necessary to suppress dissent and control society and culture for the common good of “the people.” Therefore, a certain amount of censorship is necessary in order to suppress “politically incorrect” opinions in the interest of a more fair, just and harmonious society – as defined by the cultural elite, of course.

**Theory of Expropriation and the Redistribution of Wealth.** Classical Marxism taught that following the revolution, the proletariat had the right to expropriate the land, factories, and other property of the bourgeoisie. Of course, in the initial stages all land had to be expropriated by the state and “the People’s Party” (i.e., the Communist Party) until the Dictatorship of the Proletariat had prepared the masses to



transition into a pure communist society. But at least theoretically, an essential component of the theory of expropriation was the redistribution of wealth and power in order to punish the rich for their sins and reward the victims of social injustice. To rally support among the working classes for a Communist revolution, Marx called for “a heavy progressive or graduated income tax” along with the “abolition of all rights of inheritance,” but ultimately his aim was to confiscate the wealth of the capitalists and the bourgeoisie and redistribute it to the common folks, as he wrote in the *Communist Manifesto*:

The distinguishing feature of Communism is... the abolition of bourgeois property.... Modern bourgeois private property is the final and most complete expression of the system of producing and appropriating products, that is based on class antagonisms, on the exploitation of the many by the few.

The expropriation and redistribution of wealth is perennially popular since it exploits the class envy that is present in virtually all societies throughout history. Among the poor and the working classes, there has always been the tendency to view the rich and the powerful with fear and loathing. In some societies, of course, the class antagonism is considerably more justified, but even in the most free and open societies it will always be a source of contention. Consider the following comments by the Populist organizer Ignatius Donnelly in 1894:

This government was founded by plain men, not millionaires. But we now have two parties arrayed against each other, Aristocracy against Commonality. Thirty thousand families own one half of the wealth of this country, and they have no part in producing it. They have stolen it from the labor and toil that has produced the nation.

Similarly, the American socialist Eugene Debs was passionate in decrying the vast disparity between the incomes and lifestyles of the rich and poor:

I am opposing a social order in which it is possible for one man who does absolutely nothing that is useful to amass a fortune of millions of dollars – while million of men and women who work all the days of their lives secure barely enough for a wretched existence.

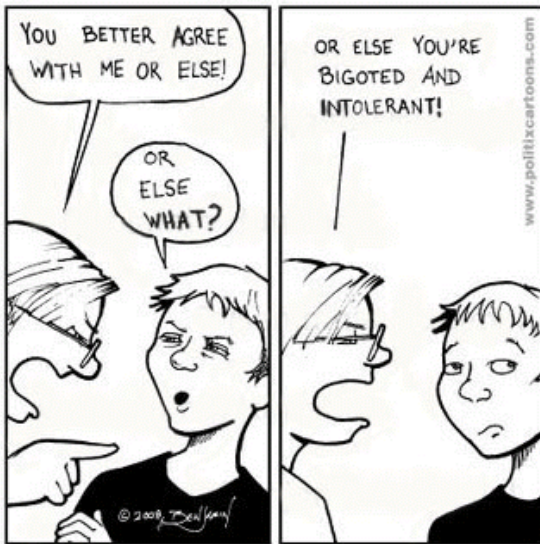
Furthermore, it wasn't just radical reformers and socialists who expressed outrage over the disparity between the privileged elite and the common working classes. In 1886 the writer and social commentator, Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) wrote...

Who are the oppressors? The few: the king, the capitalist and a handful of other overseers and superintendents. Who are the oppressed? The many: the nations of the earth; the valuable persons; the workers; they that make the bread that the soft-handed and idle eat. Why is it right that there is not a fairer division of the [resources] all around? Because laws and constitutions have ordered otherwise. Then it follows that laws and constitutions should change and say there shall be a more nearly equal division.

In our day, the enforcers of Political Correctness have taken the classical Marxist theme of expropriation and redistribution of wealth and turned it into a racial (and sometimes gender-based) spoils system in education, government and major corporations. Once PC zealots are entrenched in a university, a government bureaucracy or a corporation, they often implement an expropriation program under the guise of “diversity” and enforce it through Affirmative Action quotas. When initiated in the 1970s, the concept of Affirmative Action was promoted as a way to compensate for past injustices. In some cases there was some merit in this attempt to “level the playing field,” but as time goes on such programs merely perpetuate a racial (or gender-based) spoils systems. Rather than individual merit and competence being the decisive factors in admissions, hiring and promotions, race, ethnicity or gender (or in some cases, sexual preference) now becomes the primary criterion.

**Selective Tolerance.** In classical Marxism, the bourgeoisie were castigated as “counter-revolutionaries” and “enemies of the people.” As vile exploiters, they were entitled to no rights. Today, PC Marxists promote racial- and gender-based cultural diversity as a method by which they can break the social and economic domination of white males.

As mentioned previously, the left poses as the champions of tolerance, but in reality they are only selectively tolerant when it comes to real diversity. They have no interest in ideological diversity if it includes Christians, social conservatives or moral traditionalists.



They justify their bigotry and intolerance the same way Marxists have always done. Just as Communist parties, posing as the official voice of “the people,” outlawed all opposition (“counter-revolutionary”) parties, cultural Marxists believe they have a responsibility to eradicate the last vestiges of Christian influence and white male dominance in America’s cultural institutions.

This explains why so many traditionally conservative institutions eventually become liberal over time. Most reasonable conservatives understand that, due to the fallibility of mankind, traditional values and practices are imperfect, so they tend to tolerate people whose views are more liberal or relativistic. Similarly, in their skepticism toward traditional values, liberals tend to tolerate those who are more radical and than themselves. Hard-core radicals, however, are left-wing fundamentalist ideologues. Unlike moderates and most conservatives, they understand the principle of culture war. They realize that what is at stake is a struggle between two incompatible and irreconcilable worldviews. This is why they are resolute and implacably hostile toward anyone more traditional or conservative than themselves.

**Sexual Politics.** In modern times, one of the strongest appeals of radical left-wing ideology has been its promotion of sexual liberation. This was an underlying theme in the French Revolution, and it was featured prominently in the writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Both of them advocated the abolition of the traditional family, and in Marx’s *The German Ideology* (1845) and Engels’ *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884) they argued that traditional male patriarchy oppressed females by holding

them as property of their fathers and husbands. In the *Communist Manifesto* Marx also called for the abolition of marriage and the open “community of women” (i.e., free sex).

As stated previously, Political Correctness is essentially cultural Marxism, and as an ideology it derives from a naturalistic worldview and a secular humanistic philosophy. As Dinesh D’Souza notes in his book, *What’s So Great About Christianity* (2007), one of the greatest attractions of naturalism is its sexual implications. Secularists and left-wing ideologues in particular have always known this, and D’Souza quotes one as saying, “Against the power of religion we employ an equal if not greater power – the power of the hormones.”

Ever since the 1920s Neo-Marxists have emphasized the ‘X’ factor as part of their strategy for cultural subversion. Like other social radicals before them, they argue that traditional and conventional sexuality is repressive, and that there should be no limits on sexual experimentation and expression. A key component of cultural Marxism – and a clever strategy on their part – has been the integration of Marxism and Freudianism. Like the Freudians, they believe traditional Biblically-based sexual morality is a repressive force that hinders societal evolution.

Freudian psychology, the Sexual Revolution of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and *Playboy*-style hedonism are rooted in a naturalistic worldview that considers men and women to be highly-evolved animals. This makes any appeal to “morality” problematical, as “morality” becomes whatever the individual feels is “natural” or society deems acceptable. In the past, most societies repressed sexual libertinism because it was considered irresponsible and resulted in negative social consequences. But in the 20<sup>th</sup> century sex propagandists have argued that repression of the sexual libido is psychologically unhealthy and therefore worse than sexual libertinism. For human beings prone to egoism and driven by base impulses, this is a nearly irresistible temptation, and it has been exploited magnificently by cultural radicals who use sexual politics to undermine the moral integrity of our society and advance their ultimate agenda.

### Post-Script: Truth and Consequences

Regarding the ideology of Political Correctness, it is helpful to keep two points in mind:

(1) The PC mentality tends to assign value to people according to their identification with broad sociological categories as defined by race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.; and

(2) PC controversies often revolve around the suppression of truth. For left-wing ideologues, certain truths must be censored and suppressed because they are “insensitive” and hurt people’s feelings. According to this mentality, certain protected groups – for instance, racial minorities, homosexuals, non-Christians, and feminist women – must be accorded special exemption status from any criticism.

Now in the first place, lumping these groups together is illogical, unwarranted, and even insulting. Blacks are a race, feminism is an ideology, and homosexuality is a moral issue or perhaps a lifestyle. It is illogical and unwarranted to criticize people because of their race or gender for the simple reason that race and gender have nothing to do with their beliefs, values, character or lifestyle. On the other hand, feminism is an ideology, and it is fair game for criticism, as is homosexuality, atheism, liberalism, conservatism, or any number of other belief-based ideologies.

But under the type of speech codes that PC advocates seek to impose, any criticisms of any of these special status groups is potentially a form of “hate speech.” Even worse is the tendency to apply this kind of fascist censorship on the individual level. Not only are certain *groups* out of bounds for criticism, but even *individuals* within these groups are untouchable. Conversely, of course, there is a deplorably hypocritical double standard at work as “hate speech” codes ignore criticisms and attacks on white people in general and white men in particular, heterosexuals, and Christians.

Political Correctness is tyrannical, hypocritical, self-righteous, hyper-sensitive and humorless. Furthermore, it is anti-individual and irrational. According to the PC rules of engagement, it is insufficient to value human beings according to the content of their character; people must be accepted (or rejected) on the basis of what sociological category they fit into.

### Cultural Marxism: The Historical Origins The Greatest Threat

In the late 1980s many culture watchers were alarmed by the emergence of “Political Correctness” in higher education – a form of left-wing cultural imperialism that was adamantly doctrinaire and implacably intolerant of all opposing views. The irony was that the same radical left-wing ideologues who sparked the Free-Speech Movement in Berkeley in 1964 and rebelled against “conformity” in American society and the lack of intellectual diversity in higher education were now trying to restrict free speech and control the behavior of a new generation of students.

The irony is striking, to say the least. Consider the following excerpt from a famous speech by Mario Savio, a UC-Berkeley student activist who was rallying his fellow students to enter Sproul Hall and begin their sit-in demonstration:

We have an autocracy which runs this university. It’s managed [like a corporation]. Now, I ask you to consider: If this is [an industry], and if the Board of Regents are the board of directors, if President [Clark] Kerr is the manager, then I’ll tell you something: the faculty are a bunch of employees, and we’re the raw material! But we’re a bunch of raw material[s] that don’t mean to have any process upon us, don’t mean to be made into any product, don’t mean to end up being bought by some clients of the University, be they the government, be they industry, be they organized labor, be they anyone! We’re human beings!

There is a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can’t take part; you can’t even passively take part, and you’ve got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you’ve got to make it stop. And you’ve got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it, that unless you’re free, the machine will be prevented from working at all!

Now, no more talking. We’re going to march in singing, “We Shall Overcome.” Slowly, there are a lot of us. Up here to the left... I didn’t mean that as a pun....

Many of the radicals of the 1960s are no less radical today, except that now they held key positions in the higher education establishment as administrators, deans and professors. Many of them are surprisingly candid and about their



agenda, such as Henry Louis Gates, a literature professor at Duke (later, Harvard), who commented in 1991:

Ours was the generation that took over buildings in the late sixties and demanded the creation of black- and women's-studies programs, and now, like the return of the repressed, we have come back to challenge the traditional curriculum. [Quoted in D'Souza, "Illiberal Education. *The Atlantic Monthly* (March 1991), p. 56.]

Expanding on this theme, Gates identified "a rainbow coalition of blacks, leftists, feminists, deconstructionists, and Marxists" who have infiltrated academia and are now "ready to take control." It will not take long, he predicted. "As the old guard retires, we will be in charge. Then, of course, the universities will become more liberal politically." [Ibid., p. 71.]

Here is a similar testimony from Jay Purini, a professor of English at Middlebury College:

After the Vietnam War, a lot of us didn't just crawl back into our library cubicles; we stepped into academic positions. With the war over, our visibility was lost, and it seemed for a while – to the unobservant – that we had disappeared. Now we have tenure, and the hard work of reshaping the universities has begun in earnest. [Ibid., p. 57.]

Academics such as Annette Kolodny, a former Berkeley radical and now the dean of the humanities faculty at the University of Arizona, are often quite open regarding their political agenda. According to Kolodny, "I see my scholarship as an extension of my political activism." Typical of this mentality is Frederick Jameson of Duke, who describes his academic mission as the creation of "a Marxist culture in this country, to make Marxism an unavoidable presence in American social, cultural and intellectual life, in short to form a Marxist intelligentsia for the struggles of the future." The deconstructionist J. Hillis Miller is even more expansive, claiming that his goal is nothing less than "demolishing beyond hope of repair the machine of Western metaphysics."

Thomas Sowell, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution of Stanford University, is convinced that the greatest threat to Western civilization comes not from Communist China or Islamic Jihadism or any other external threat, but from within – specifically, in the elite media and within our own universities. In the following comments, Sowell asks, "Can Western civilization survive its own intellectuals?"

Western civilization has survived the invasions of Genghis Khan from the East, the Ottoman Empire from the South, and two world wars originating from within. But whether it will survive its own intellectuals is much more doubtful.

The battlefield is everywhere, but especially where the young are being taught – from the elementary school to the university. The sins of the human race are being taught to them as the special depravities of the United States or of Western civilization.

Deep thinkers like to talk about such things as the oppression of women in Western society – when in fact women have had a much lower position in Islamic cultures... and girl babies were often routinely killed in parts of Asia. It was a Western nation – Britain – which put an end to the burning of widows alive on their husbands' funeral pyres in India.

Slavery is of course the trump card of critics of Western civilization. But the tragic fact is that this abomination has existed on every continent in inhabited by man. The pyramids were built by slaves.... [and] Slavery existed in both North and South America before the first white man set foot in the Western Hemisphere....

It was precisely in the West – notably in England – that a moral revulsion against slavery and a movement to stamp it out everywhere developed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Gross double standards in judging Western and non-Western cultures have become so commonplace among intellectuals that few seem to notice it anymore....

Those who habitually use such double standards... are some of the most fortunate and pampered people in Western society, including both highly paid media intellectuals and academics with soft schedules and numerous perks. Why these should be among the most venomous critics of the West – and the most blindly one-sided – is no doubt a long and complex story. However, spoiled brats have seldom been noted for their gratitude. ["Will Western Civilization Survive Intellectuals' Attack?" *Marietta Daily Journal* (Oct. 4, 1987), p. 2D.]

## Marxism and the Great War

Karl Marx predicted that when the next great European war erupted, the working classes throughout Europe would rise up and revolt against their capitalist oppressors and the bourgeois politicians who controlled these governments. According to Marx, a general European war was inevitable because capitalist nations are constantly competing for control of vital raw materials and natural resources that feed their industrial factories. He assumed that when war came, the class consciousness of the workers in the various countries would overcome any patriotic sentiments they felt, and that poor, oppressed factory workers in Britain and France would feel a greater sense of solidarity with workers in Germany than with their own upper classes.

The long-anticipated Great War finally broke out in 1914, but to the dismay of Europe's socialists, the masses of workers joined up and fought for their country just as they'd always done in the past. But Marx was right about one thing: just as he had predicted, the war was an unmitigated disaster for European civilization as it destroyed the fragile political, social, and economic stability of the continent.

## Aborted Revolutions in Germany

In the wake of World War I, two independent Communist uprisings in Germany threatened to topple the newly-established Weimar Republic.

In Berlin, the Spartacist Uprising erupted in January 1919, less than three months after the official end of the war. Although the revolt wasn't initially orchestrated by the Communist Party, it quickly became associated with the Spartacist League, a Marxist organization led by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Leibnecht. Luxemburg was a Polish-born Jew and a radical Marxist, and she was a passionate and charismatic activist and organizer. Prior to the war she was imprisoned three times for protesting German militarism and imperialism, and in the midst of the conflict she co-founded the Spartacist League along with Leibnecht. As the



Rosa Luxemburg

war dragged on, the Kaiser's government grew less tolerant of dissidents, and both Luxemburg and Leibnecht were imprisoned for the last 2½ years of the war for treasonous activities.

In January 1919 a general strike by workers flooded the streets of Berlin with protesters, and the demonstrations quickly turned into street battles between militants and the Weimar government. Once the violence erupted and blood was shed, the revolt was joined by various left-wing groups such as the Independent Social Democratic Party (USPD), the Spartacist League, and the Communist Party of Germany (KPD).

The government responded by calling in a crack militia regiment, the *Freikorps*, to quell the uprising, and over a four-day period hundreds of protesters were slaughtered. At some point in the melee, both Luxemburg and Leibnecht were arrested and summarily executed.

Meanwhile, a second revolution was taking place in Bavaria under the direction of the Marxist politician and journalist, Kurt Eisner. Like Luxemburg and Leibnecht, Eisner had been incarcerated during the war for treason. Upon his release from prison near the end of the war, he organized a revolution in Bavaria that overthrew the monarchy, and he and his supporters declared Bavaria a free state. A coalition of Communists and socialists elected Eisner the prime minister of the Bavarian Socialist Republic, but in January 1919 his party was defeated at the polls. A month later, as he was on his way to present his resignation to the Bavarian parliament, Eisner was assassinated.

With the failure of the Spartacist Uprising and the fall of the Bavarian Socialist Republic, Communism failed in its bid to seize political power in Germany. Throughout the 1920s the German Communist Party remained a potent force, but eventually its arch-rival, the National Socialists (or Nazi Party), prevailed as the incompetent and corrupt Weimar Republic finally collapsed in 1933.

## The Soviet Republic of Hungary

The most successful Communist revolution in Europe after World War I occurred in Hungary under the leadership of Bela Kun (1886-1938). Kun was born in Transylvania, which was a province in the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the time. (After the war, Transylvania was incorporated into the new nation of Romania.) His father was a lapsed Jew and the his mother a

lapsed Protestant, and as a young man he identified with the Hungarian Social Democratic Party.

Prior to World War I Kun worked as an investigative journalist, and later fought in the Austro-Hungarian army. Captured by Russian troops in 1916, he converted to Communism in a Russian POW camp. Following the Bolshevik Revolution and the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk that ended Russia's involvement in the war, Kun served in the Red Army during the early months of the Russian Civil War.

When World War I officially ended in November 1918, Kun returned to Hungary along with several hundred other Hungarian Communists. Immediately, he and his comrades founded the Hungarian Communist Party and launched a major propaganda campaign against the government. Like most of Europe, Hungary was economically and socially ravaged after the war. Inflation was out of control, there was massive unemployment, a lack of housing, and food and fuel shortages. Kun, a fiery and intense orator and a gifted organizer, led a series of strikes and protest demonstrations, and in February 1919 he was arrested as a Communist agitator and thrown into prison.

In the midst of all this turmoil, the Hungarian army was fighting a Romanian independence movement that was supported by the Western Allies. When the Allies threatened to intervene in Hungary on behalf of the Romanians, the Hungarian Social Democratic government, desperate for potential allies, reached out to the USSR. Since Kun was known to have Lenin's support, the Social Democrats opened negotiations with him even while he was still in prison. The SD's agreed to form a coalition with the Communists, and in a strange turn of events Kun was released from prison and promptly sworn in as the Commissar for Foreign Affairs in the new Soviet Republic of Hungary.

As the dominant official in the government, Kun moved quickly to solidify his power base. In a letter to Lenin, he boasted that "My personal influence in the Revolutionary Governing Council is such that the dictatorship of the proletariat is firmly established, since the masses are backing me." In reality, Kun was even more radical than Lenin and the Bolsheviks, and under his direction the Hungarian Soviet nationalized most private property and converted all agricultural land into collective farms rather than distribute the land to

the peasants. Then, since neither anyone in the government nor the peasants had any expertise in running large farms, they wound up retaining the former estate owners as managers. So in effect, nothing really changed for the rural masses.

The Hungarian government was more doctrinaire than competent, and in short order it drove the economy further into depression. Inflation and unemployment continued to soar while agricultural and industrial production plummeted to new levels. To control dissent, Kun organized a secret police that orchestrated a "Red Terror" campaign.

In Russia, the Bolsheviks were focused on their own internal problems, and they never intervened in Hungary's war with the Romanians. With Western backing, the Romanian military invaded Hungary in the summer of 1919, took Budapest, and forced the Hungarian government to capitulate. Kun's short-lived Communist regime had lasted only 133 days.

[Post-script: Kun's political career didn't end with the fall of the Soviet regime in Hungary. Initially, he fled to Vienna, but was incarcerated by the government for nearly a year before being released in a prisoner exchange with Russia in July 1920. With Lenin's patronage, he became an official in the Communist Party, and while serving in the Crimean he reportedly ordered a mass genocide against thousands of ethnic minorities in the area. In addition, he was responsible for the execution of tens of thousands of White Russian POWs who had been promised amnesty if they surrendered. (Source: Victor, Serge, *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*.)

As a political ally of Zinoviev, Kun became a high official in the Comintern. In 1921 he was sent to Germany as a Soviet diplomat, but he failed in his mission to spark a Communist uprising against the Weimar government. Later, he later worked as a Comintern operative in Austria and Czechoslovakia.

Kun had an abrasive personality, and he constantly feuded with other Communist leaders. During Stalin's purge of the Old Bolsheviks in the late 1930s, Kun was arrested, charged with being a Trotskyite, imprisoned and executed – probably in 1938.



## Bolshevik Russia

Surprisingly, the one place where a Communist revolution actually succeeded long-term was in Russia, a nation that Marx would never have expected. Russia was an unlikely country for a Communist revolution since it was one of the most backward nations in Europe and had hardly even industrialized or transitioned to capitalism. But Lenin and the Bolsheviks seized power in the October Revolution of 1917, and once in power they signed a peace treaty with Germany, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (March 3, 1918), that took Russia out of the war. This allowed the Bolsheviks to consolidate their control over all of Russia.



Vladimir Ilich Lenin

For the next three years there was widespread chaos in the cities and countryside. Tens of thousands of armed peasants, many of whom were war veterans, roamed the countryside, seizing land and killing anyone who stood in their way. To eliminate all opposition, Lenin appointed Leon Trotsky head of the Red Army and commissioned him to break the back of any resistance movements in the country.

For more than three years the Bolsheviks fought several rebel factions. Their main opponents were various “White” armies that were loyal to the tsar and the old regime. Theoretically, the Whites should have been able to defeat the Reds, but internal rivalries within their own ranks weakened their position and they eventually were defeated. A much smaller but tenacious enemy was the Socialist Revolutionaries, a loose coalition of violent anarchists who considered the Bolsheviks too conservative. In their attempt to overthrow the government, the SR’s resorted to terrorism and assassinations, and even managed to shoot Lenin in 1918. In addition, local paramilitary outfits called the “Greens” roamed the countryside, skirmishing with both the Reds and the Whites.

The casualty rate in the Russian Civil War was catastrophic – actually higher than in World War I. Approximately one million were killed in actual battles and skirmishes, nearly three million died of famine, and another six million were

victims of a major cholera epidemic.

In the midst of the Civil War, Russia was invaded by Allied military forces in 1918. Originally, troops from the United States, Great Britain and France landed in Russia to protect Allied weapons that were being stored in Murmansk and Archangel from falling into German hands. Once in Russia, however, the Allies conspired with various White army contingents that were attempting to overthrow the Bolsheviks. In subsequent Communist propaganda, the Allied Intervention was depicted as an act of imperialist aggression and an attempt by the Western Powers to overthrow the “legitimate” government of the USSR. Obviously, the Allies had nothing but contempt for the Bolshevik regime which had unilaterally negotiated with the Germans, pulled out of the war, and broken all the treaties that the Tsar’s government had with the West. The Allies hoped to see the Bolshevik regime collapse and expected that it would be replaced a friendly government, but when the task proved too difficult, support for the Allied Intervention withered and the troops were removed. Thirty years later, Winston Churchill would remark that one of the greatest mistakes of the 20th century was “the failure to strangle Bolshevism in its cradle.”

Once the Bolsheviks had established their control over the major population centers and had either eliminated or at least neutralized their main opposition, Lenin prepared to “export the revolution” by invading Europe. In retrospect, the plan appears absurd, but in the months following the end of World War I much of Europe was in utter chaos. Lenin had always been a bold and audacious strategist, and he reckoned that Europe was ripe for conquest. The plan was to ignite a series of Communist revolutions throughout



Leon Trotsky

Eastern Europe and link up with the Communists in Germany.

As a doctrinaire Marxist, Lenin was convinced that Communism was an inevitable historical process that could not be contained within a single country such as Russia. He believed that eventually it would spread throughout the entire world, and that the survival of Communism in the USSR depended upon the overthrow of unfriendly capitalistic governments. As he put it, "As long as capitalism and socialism exist, we cannot live in peace. In the end one or the other will triumph." He was confident that one Western democracy after another would submit to Communism until finally the United States would drop into their hands "like an over-ripe fruit."

An integral part of the Bolsheviks' strategy was the establishment of the Third Communist International, usually referred to as the Comintern. The Comintern was founded in 1919 as an agency for the exportation of the revolution through the organization of cell groups with the target countries that would operate as a fifth column. The Comintern churned out propaganda for mass distribution along with secret internal memos instructing foreign Communist parties to take their ideology, organization and strategies from the Bolsheviks. Since the Old Europe had collapsed and a variety of left-wing groups were vying for influence and power, much of the Comintern's propaganda was aimed at rival socialist parties. So although in theory an international organization, the Comintern was in fact a propaganda organ of the Bolshevik regime. For Lenin, the first step in exporting the revolution was to conquer Poland, which had recently regained its national independence according to the terms of the treaties that ended World War I. But Poland's eastern boundaries were ill-defined, and Polish and Russian troops had been fighting in the Ukraine since before the end of the war. Lenin considered Poland to be the bridge to Central and Western Europe, and the most direct route to Berlin and Paris ran through Warsaw.

In 1919 Trotsky led the Red Army into Poland but suffered a crushing defeat at the Battle of Warsaw (or the Battle of the Vistula) in August 1920. In the succeeding months, Polish forces drove the retreating Russians farther eastward, securing Poland's independence and stabilizing its eastern borders.

## Cultural Marxism: The Early Theoreticians A New Focus

In the aftermath of World War I, the great continental-wide revolution that many Marxists expected never materialized. The working classes of Europe never united *en masse* behind the Red banner, and with the failure of Communist revolutions in Germany, the collapse of Bela Kun's regime in Hungary, and the Red Army's defeat in Poland, the Soviet Union was left isolated as the lone Communist state. Classical Marxist theory had proved insufficient in terms of rallying the masses of Europe, and in the midst of the post-war intellectual debates in Communist circles, two theorists redefined Marxism to fit the times: Antonio Gramsci and Georg Lukacs. Rather than focus exclusively on society's economic substructure in keeping with the tenets of classical Marxism, Gramsci and Lukacs turned their attention to the superstructure – the culture. This was a much more comprehensive and ambitious undertaking, but in the long term it would prove to be a brilliant and effective strategy for undermining Western culture.

### Antonio Gramsci

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) was an Italian journalist, philosopher, and a political theorist. He joined the Italian Socialist Party on the eve of World War I, and during the war wrote for several socialist newspapers. After the war ended, Gramsci was instrumental in founding the Italian Communist Party.

Gramsci was among the first to recognize that a Marxist revolution was dependent upon changing the values and culture of Western civilization, which would require a long protracted culture war of attrition. Traveling to the Soviet Union in 1922 as a representative of the Italian Communist Party, he witnessed the brute force and tyranny involved in trying to convert that nation to socialism. His conclusion was that Communism was far too radical and too atheistic to be accepted voluntarily in the West. What was needed was a persistent and prolonged propaganda campaign that would undermine people's confidence in traditional values and religious beliefs, and make them more amenable to radical socialism.

Gramsci worked for the Comintern in Moscow and Vienna, where he was passionately committed to spreading Bolshevism throughout Europe. Returning to Italy, he helped create a



united front of left-wing parties that opposed Mussolini's Fascist dictatorship. From 1924-26 he represented the Communist Party in the Italian legislature, but in 1926 he was arrested in a crackdown against dissidents. In his trial, the prosecutor declared, "For 20 years we must stop this brain from functioning." Apparently, that sounded like a good idea to the judge, and Gramsci was sentenced to 20 years in prison. Eight years later he was released for health reasons, and he died a couple years after that.

While in prison Gramsci wrote *Prison Notebooks*, outlining his views on the culture war. He called his working principle and strategy Critical Theory – a systematic and broad-based assault on Western culture. Gramsci was convinced that the working classes were blind to their class interests due to 2 factors:

(1) Capitalists and social conservatives controlled the major cultural institutions, including the media and the education system. Through constant propaganda, these traditional institutions maintained social control by promoting bourgeois values and creating a consensus culture.



Antonio Gramsci

(2) Christianity was a counter-revolutionary force that continued to exert great influence over Western civilization. In the mind of Gramsci and his comrades, Christian morality and ethics represented bourgeois values and were intrinsically repressive. Christianity kept the masses docile and pacified by promising "pie in the sky" in the afterlife rather than focusing their attention on unjust social and political systems in this world.

Therefore, according to Gramsci, a priority for Marxists should be the formulation and development of a uniquely proletarian culture that would challenge the belief that bourgeois values and morality were natural and normative. Correspondingly, Marxists could change the culture in Europe over time through a process of "cultural hegemony" – i.e., by infiltrating and controlling the cultural institutions that exert the most influence over society. Whereas Marx had

written of the "commanding heights" of the economy – the key industries that essentially controlled the nation's production and distribution – Gramsci's vision was to undermine, and eventually take over, the commanding heights of the culture.

As a classical Marxist, Lenin had considered culture "ancillary" to economics and politics. Gramsci, however, knew otherwise, and argued that the best way to gain political and economic power was through a prolonged process of cultural subversion. As he wrote, "In the new order, Socialism will triumph by first capturing the culture via infiltration of schools, universities, churches and the media by transforming the consciousness of society." [NOTE: Compare this comment to the quote from Charles Reich in *The Greening of America* at the beginning of this chapter.]

Gramsci's *Prison Notebook* and other writings were among the most influential socio/political works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as any scholarly studies in social theory and popular culture would reveal.

## Georg Lukacs

Like Gramsci, the Hungarian Marxist philosopher, Georg Lukacs (1885-1971), focused on the strategic importance of culture in relation to a Marxist takeover of Western civilization. Lukacs grew up in Budapest and was the son of a wealthy Hungarian Jewish banker. A gifted scholar, he received a Ph.D. from the University of Berlin in 1906. He converted to Communism during World War I, and joined the Hungarian Communist Party in 1918.

The following year Lukacs served as People's Commissar for Education and Culture in Bela Kun's Hungarian Soviet Republic, and in this position he launched a campaign of "Cultural Terrorism" – a kind of shock therapy designed to radically change the culture.

One of Kun's priorities was to introduce a comprehensive sex education indoctrination program into the schools. The curriculum promoted sexual experimentation, "free love," premarital sexual relations, and attacks on monogamous marriage and traditional Christian views on sexuality. Children were also encouraged to reject the values of their parents and the authority of the Church. Unfortunately for Lukacs and his Soviet comrades, however, the program was deemed so radical that it alienated the working classes and turned them against "the



people's" government.

When the Hungarian Soviet Republic was overthrown, Lukacs sought sanctuary in Vienna, where he socialized with Gramsci and other Marxist emigres.

For several years he worked as an agent of the Comintern, but he withdrew from active involvement in politics over tactical differences with Lenin and the Russian Bolsheviks. In 1929 he moved to Berlin, but he fled to Moscow in 1933 when Hitler and the Nazis came to power.



Georg Lukacs

He remained in

Moscow until the end of World War II, and somehow managed to survive Stalin's purges even though most foreign Communists such as Bela Kun were executed.

After the war Lukacs returned to Hungary and was involved in the Hungarian Communist Party. In 1956 he became a minister in the short-lived revolutionary government of Imre Nagy until it was crushed by the Soviets. Nearly executed following the collapse of the Hungarian Revolution, he publicly recanted his "revisionist" views and remained a loyal Communist until his death in 1971.

Lukacs was one of the foremost Marxist theoreticians since Karl Marx. In his book, *History and Class Consciousness* (1923), he called for the wholesale destruction of bourgeois capitalistic culture. Employing his favorite slogan, "Who will free us from the yoke of Western Civilization?" he argued adamantly that a socialist revolution could only succeed if it were preceded by a cultural revolution. He wrote, "Such a worldwide overturning of values cannot take place without the annihilation of the old values and the creation of new ones by the revolutionaries."

Lukacs was a militant atheist who understood that the single greatest obstacle to the advance of Marxism was traditional religious-based morality. As a pragmatic moral relativist who believed that the ends justify the means, he contended that morality could not be an inhibiting factor if the revolution were to succeed. To that end, all scruples must be discarded. Unlike the bourgeois

liberals, the Christian humanitarians and the moderate socialists whom he despised, Lukacs understood that the culture is just that – a war. There is no place for compromise, and morality has no place. It is either domination or subjugation. It is a struggle for supremacy and survival of the fittest. Inspired by the Nietzschean glorification of raw power, Lukacs called for the overthrow of Western culture by any means necessary. But first, all vestiges of Christian faith and morality had to be obliterated. In a chilling passage in *History and Class Consciousness*, he wrote:

The abandonment of the soul's uniqueness solves the problem of unleashing the diabolic forces lurking in all the violence which is needed to create revolution....

Any political movement capable of bringing Bolshevism to the West would have to be Demonic.