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CULTURAL MARXISM

DANGERS OF A GODLESS SOCIETY

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If someone were to search Google for a definition of “Cultural Marxism,” they would find top results describing it as a politically-charged, anti-semitic conspiracy theory. For instance, as of 2024, Wikipedia [defines](#) “Cultural Marxism” as a “far-right *antisemitic* conspiracy theory which misrepresents the Frankfurt School as being responsible for modern progressive movements, identity politics, and political correctness.” Among the voices responsible for propagating this allegedly antisemitic conspiracy theory is, according to Wikipedia, Ben Shapiro – an Orthodox Jew who co-founded the conservative news outlet Daily Wire.

One might understandably ask how it's possible for a conservative Orthodox Jew to be a leading cultural advocate for an antisemitic conspiracy theory, but they would not be met with a reasonable answer. In fact, modern, [left-wing](#) definitions of “Cultural Marxism” are often devoid of critical thought. Nevertheless, it is the task of Christians to engage lovingly in dialogue with others who have been misled about the theory of cultural Marxism.

Many people recognize the term “Marxism” for its name; it is a philosophy created by German writer Karl Marx and associated with his book [The Communist Manifesto](#), co-authored with Friedrich Engels. In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx [posits](#) that history is driven by revolutionary economic change. According to Marx, economic tension [“class struggle”] between two classes of people, an oppressor and oppressed, fuels historical change. Societies move from ancient forms of economy to feudalism, from feudalism to capitalism, and then from capitalism to communism. When a society evolves to communism, history theoretically ends.

It would be a mistake, however, to characterize Marx’s theory of history as merely descriptive or an empirical prediction. It is deeply philosophical, rooted in his personal upbringing and views on religion and culture. In fact, one could also argue that Marx’s philosophy was predicted by [Aristotle](#): “Revolutions in democracies are generally caused by the intemperance of demagogues, who either in their private capacity lay information against rich men until they compel them to combine (for a common danger unites even the bitterest enemies), or coming forward in public stir up the people against them.”

Marx’s father, Heinrich (who changed his name from Hirschel), was a German Jew who converted to Lutheranism in order to [advance](#) his legal career. Heinrich had Karl [baptized](#) in the Lutheran Evangelical Church when he was six years old, a faith the young Marx ostensibly possessed during his teenage years. When he was only 17, Karl Marx wrote an [essay](#) called “*On the Union of the Faithful with Christ according to John XV.*” In that essay, Marx wrote that humanity’s “heart, reason, intelligence, history all summon us with loud and convincing voice to the knowledge that union with [Christ] is absolutely necessary, that without Him we would be unable to fulfill our purpose, that without Him we would be rejected by God, and that only He can redeem us.”

Marx, however, was simultaneously eager to cut ties with his roots. Consider a [New York Times review](#) of British journalist Francis Wheen’s biography of Marx, *Karl Marx, A Life*: “[Heinrich Marx] treated his brilliant, self-confident son as an intellectual equal. By the time Marx was a 19-year-old, beer-swilling, dueling university student and spendthrift, his father, then dying of tuberculosis, admitted: ‘I can only propose, advise. You have outgrown me.’ *Marx returned the*



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compliment by skipping his father's funeral a year later." Eventually, Marx went on to study philosophy at the University of Berlin, where he was profoundly influenced by the thinking of two philosophers: [G.W.L. Hegel](#) and [Ludwig Feuerbach](#).

Hegel worked as the University of Berlin chair of philosophy years before Marx's attendance, establishing a legacy as a revered philosopher among students. The philosophical core of these students, who called themselves "Young Hegelians," was Hegel's framework for understanding history: [the dialectic](#). The dialectic rejects traditional logical formulas like Aristotle's law of [non-contradiction](#), which holds that something cannot simultaneously be two things if those things are opposites. If something is bad, it cannot be good. If something is wrong, it cannot be right. If something is temporary, it cannot be forever.

Hegel believed that human history could be understood as a desire to resolve the tension between opposites. In Hegel's view, freedom was history's purpose or "end." To achieve this end, history reconciled the tension between opposite ideas manifesting on the State level. Once history witnesses complete and total freedom, the dialectic of ideas will cease, and history will "end." In 2024 (at the time of this publication), one can't help but be reminded of the last line of Thanos in the film *Avengers Endgame*: "I am inevitable."

Feuerbach accepted his teacher's dialectical view of history but expressly rejected any future wherein humans worshiped the Christian God. To the Christian, Feuerbach's worldview can be fairly understood as Satanic Hegelianism.

[Feuerbach believed](#) philosophers must elevate the "sole sovereignty of reason" in the "Kingdom of the Idea" above the Christian God and His Kingdom. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy summarizes Feuerbachianism as follows:

"the individual thinker, in the act of thinking, transcends his individuality and functions as an instrument or organ through which the Idea actualizes one of its moments, which is later reproduced in the consciousness of the historian of philosophy... In producing itself, the Idea does not pass from nonbeing into being, but rather from one state of being (being in itself) to another (being for itself). The Idea produces itself by determining itself, and human consciousness is the medium of its self-actualization."

Reason is not man's ability to comprehend God's created order. Rather, it is the means by which humans may transcend their mortal shells to indwell a form of the "Idea," an abstract spirit that exists independent of our reason. The "tension" that reason must overcome, according to Feuerbach, was the notion that the Christian God created us in His image and promised to redeem us and save us from death. To Feuerbach, the "Idea" in man created God in man's image through the person of Jesus, the incarnate God.

In his work [Essence of Christianity](#), Feuerbach summarizes the lesson of John 3:16 as follows:

"Love determined God to the renunciation of his divinity... Love conquers God. It was love to which God sacrificed his divine majesty. And what sort of love was that? another than ours? than that to which we sacrifice life and fortune? Was it the love of himself? of



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himself as God? No! it was love to man...Who then is our Saviour and Redeemer? God or Love? Love; for God as God has not saved us, but Love, which transcends the difference between the divine and human personality. *As God has renounced himself out of love, so we, out of love, should renounce God; for if we do not sacrifice God to love, we sacrifice love to God, and, in spite of the predicate of love, we have the God – the evil being – of religious fanaticism.*

In more ways than one, Feuerbach attacks a false understanding of the Christian God and distorts fundamental Christian doctrine to accommodate his pantheistic, pagan theory. Nevertheless, he maintains that human “reason” is “sovereign,” and the “Idea” is sovereign above us; because we created God, we can destroy him as an obstacle to history’s purpose of total enlightenment. **Christians can recognize this theory for what it is: a repackaged version of Satan’s offer to Christ in Matthew 4: 8-9, “Finally, the devil took Jesus to a very high mountain. He showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ‘If you bow down and worship me,’ he said, ‘I will give you all this.’”**

In this context, Marxism was born. Karl Marx combined Hegel’s dialectical view of history (history progresses through the synthesis, or reconciliation, of two opposites) and Feuerbach’s desire to invert the biblical created order. In his writing *A Contribution to the [Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right](#)*, Marx says as follows:

“The foundation of irreligious criticism is: *Man makes religion, religion does not make man.* Religion is, indeed, the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man who has either not yet won through to himself, or has already lost himself again. But *man* is no abstract being squatting outside the world. Man is the *world of man* – state, society. This state and this society produce religion, which is an *inverted consciousness of the world*, because they are an inverted world. Religion is the general theory of this world, its encyclopaedic compendium, its logic in popular form, its spiritual point d’honneur, its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn complement, and its universal basis of consolation and justification. It is the fantastic realization of the human essence since the human essence has not acquired any true reality. The struggle against religion is, therefore, indirectly the struggle against that world whose spiritual aroma is religion. *Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness.*”

To Marx, God does not exist outside the mind of man. Rather, “God’ is a man-made construct built to dull mankind’s true sufferings. In order to achieve true happiness, man must collectively forget their belief in God in order to be cognizant of the true source of suffering – economic conflict fueled by private property ownership.

Entire books have been written on the *many* fatal flaws of classical Marxism. Indeed, according to the [research of scholars](#) studying the historical consequences of communism, the legacy of Marx’s philosophy is a death toll of approximately 100 million lives. One would be hard-pressed to identify a philosophy responsible for as much human misery, bloodshed, and death as Karl Marx’s brainchild. But, just as the philosophers Hegel and Feuerbach inspired Marxism, Marxism inspired others, including a philosophy widely known today as “*Cultural Marxism*.”



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In 1914, twenty years after Marx died, [Goethe University](#) was founded in Frankfurt, Germany. A few years later, the University opened a new Institute dedicated to preserving Marx's legacy—The Institute for Social Research. Goethe University itself [describes](#) the Institute as follows:

Founded in 1923 with funds from patrons Hermann and Felix Weil as an institute for academic Marxism, with Max Horkheimer the IfS became the central research centre for critical theory. In the spring of 1933, the institute was closed by the Gestapo because of 'subversive activities'. Via circuitous routes, it managed to move to Columbia University in New York and continue its work in exile. After the war, the institute's closest circle – Adorno, Horkheimer and Pollock – returned to Frankfurt, and in 1951 the IfS was re-established at its present location.

The Institute [describes](#) its "interdisciplinary program" as the "Frankfurt School," which "evolved away from orthodox Marxism toward social criticism grounded in social philosophy." Although the [Frankfurt School](#), as well as other neo-Marxist European institutions, were somewhat ideologically stratified, the term "Cultural Marxism" is *not* contrived by the theory's opponents.

For instance, one of the current leading scholars on cultural Marxism today is UCLA Professor Douglas Kellner, [acclaimed](#) for his research in [critical theory](#). In his essay *Cultural Marxism and Cultural Studies*, Kellner chronicles Marx's significant influence on Neo-Marxist scholars through the twentieth century. University of Arizona historian [Dennis Dworkin](#), who specializes in neo-Marxist cultural theory, published an entire [book](#) entitled "Cultural Marxism in Postwar Britain." The synopsis of Dworkin's book argues that the postwar history of Britain is "one of a coherent intellectual tradition, a tradition that represents an implicit and explicit theoretical effort to resolve the crisis of the postwar British Left."

Cultural Marxism is *an umbrella term* for a philosophy that is just as Godless and anti-human as classical Marxism, its predecessor. For instance, [Antonio Gramsci](#), an Italian neo-Marxist, developed a theory of "hegemony," a word that derives from the Greek word "[hegemon](#)," meaning "sovereign." Like Marx, Gramsci accepted history as a class struggle between an oppressor and an oppressed. However, Gramsci diverged from Marx's call for violent revolution because of its inefficacy. Gramsci argued that neo-Marxists must first occupy major cultural institutions through a "[war of position](#)" to defeat the influence of capitalism and religion. In a 1916 article entitled [Audacia E Fede](#) for a socialist newspaper, Gramsci made clear that socialism must wage cultural war against its opposite, Christianity:

...socialism is precisely the religion that must kill Christianity. Religion in the sense that it too is a faith, that it has its mystics and its practitioners; religion, because it replaced the transcendent God of the Catholics in our consciences with the trust in man and his best efforts as the only spiritual reality. *Our gospel is a modern philosophy, dear friends of Savonarola, one that dispenses with the hypothesis of God in the vision of the universe, one that lays its foundations only in history, a history in which we are the creatures of the past and the creators of the future... Ours is not a doctrine of slaves in revolt, it is a doctrine of rulers who, in their daily toil, prepare their weapons for domination of the world.*



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Some Cultural Marxists attacked Western civilization as “tyrannical” for its historical Christian and capitalist societal features. For example, Theodor Adorno, who is [described](#) as “one of the foremost continental philosophers of the twentieth century” by the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, blended Marxist historical theory with Freudian psychology. In his prominent book *The Authoritarian Personality*, Adorno argued that typical characteristics of tyrants include those who are capitalist, Christian, and conservative. Adorno also argued that tyrannical personalities are most frequently observed in societies that promote a traditional family structure, which he called “patriarchal,” and discourage licentiousness, which he called “sexual repression.”

A common principle later adopted by [Cultural Marxists](#) includes postmodernism, the denial of *absolute, objective truth*, such as the idea that “Jesus is King over Heaven and Earth.” For example, the French neo-Marxist philosopher Michel Foucault [believed](#) that claims of absolute truth were merely a pretext for tyrants to claim power. Eventually, the rejection of absolute, metaphysical truth laid the intellectual foundations for current cultural issues facing America, including debates over critical race theory and queer theory. Just as Gramsci hoped, Marx’s ideological progeny has, as of now, captured the apex of American culture.

Marxism was the proximate philosophical cause for insurrection, famine, persecution, and even the threat of nuclear war during the twentieth century. Its consequences were so disastrous that some Christian leaders rightly observed it as a form of spiritual warfare. The late evangelical pastor Billy Graham [called](#) the conflict a “battle to the death,” where either Christianity or Marxism would die. “The name of this present-day religion is Communism... The Devil is their god, Marx their prophet, Lenin their saint and Malenkov their high priest. Denying their faith in all ideologies, except their religion of revolution, these diabolically-inspired men seek in devious and various ways to convert a peaceful world to their doctrine of death and destruction.”

If Pastor Graham was correct about the spiritual reality of Marxism, then the stage for the next spiritual battle lies in the Western World, namely America. **If the American Church truly faces the threat of a newly awakened ideological leviathan, then it must revive its cultural opposition to Marxism and its progeny.**

