



Revolution Within A Warped Reality

I

*The rule which I dare to enact and declare,
Is that all shall be equal and equally share
All wealth and enjoyments, nor longer endure
That one should be rich, and another poor,
That one should have acres, far-stretching and wide,
And another not even enough to provide
Himself with a grave: That this at his call
Should have hundreds of servants, and that none at all.
All this I intend to correct and amend:
Now of all blessings shall freely partake,
One life and one system for all men I make.*

Here we have Praxagora announcing her program from a comedy, Ecclesiazusae, or the Assembly of Women, in a form so thoroughly sanitized as to be barely recognizable by its author, Aristophanes. Yet it retains a sense of the ancient world that moderns can easily connect with. Aristophanes even includes his version of Modern Monetary Theory. A neighbor objects to depositing his money in the Central Fund. Why should he do it? Here is Praxagora's reply in a translation closer to the author's style:

*Because there will be no one working because he's forced by poverty.
None of us will be lacking in anything. We'll have bread, salt, fish
fillets, cloaks to wear, wine to drink, garlands, chick peas, the lot. So
what's the point in not depositing their coins? Let me know if you can
see it.*

But the neighbor is not convinced:

*Ha! Me? No way! I'd never deposit my possession to the common
coffers. I'd be an idiot to do so and a bit screwed in the head, I think!
By Poseidon, never! Not before I scrutinise the situation over and
over again and think about it for a very long time. I'm not going to
throw away the fruit of my labour and all those careful savings, just*

like that, thoughtlessly. I'd need to be convinced first about how the whole thing will turn out.

Today and 2400 years ago, the same concerns about inequality, fairness, and with similar proposed solutions. We even see the same unwillingness to take a risk without proof of its advantages.

Aristophanes, like modern professional intellectuals, was careful not to go too far and be perceived as a serious threat because, though cloaked in humor, advocacy of a future egalitarian society may exclude one from retaining a mortal existence in the ordered reality they now have.

II

Capitalism offers the convenience of the system itself instantaneously streaming its latest depredations from around the globe. That display of liberal honesty confuses those demanding reforms into believing the system can be fixed, but from the standpoint of the ruling class it is a threat to home grown rebels of what they may also have in store for them.

As I write, the recession that followed the short-lived depression of the 2008 financial collapse, is for a third time (2012 and 2016) in danger of another downturn that fits the accepted definition of recession. Each time these occur it gets more difficult to convince people there will ever be a real recovery. It is like raising a heavy load with a hot air balloon. In our social world that *air* must be accepted in order to generate belief. Evidence that it is not explains widespread popular uprisings in which many participants bravely risk injury and death in a fruitless fight for a better life.

People living in overt dictatorships cannot publicly reveal and act upon what they feel and think. In our officially proclaimed free society there are everyday occurrences of people who have rejected the prescriptions of the social order suffering the consequences. Others take pride in thinking they are free while more or less unconsciously limiting their thoughts and actions to the accepted boundaries. The outcome of this is submission to dictates of authority in much the same manner as those in defined dictatorships. Fear is a pervasive emotion that inhibits our capacity to freely think and act. Thus the great significance of popular uprisings even if unsuccessful.

The first thing we can learn from these great sudden outbursts is that distortions of false consciousness only serve as a comforting justification for the socially coerced restraint. Embedded somewhere in deep consciousness is a nagging ardent desire for the freedom to control one's own destiny. The appearance of popular uprisings, often simultaneously occurring around the world, cannot be because, at the same moment, the masses gained knowledge of their real social conditions and suddenly decided to act upon them.

Universal events touched off these local spontaneous occurrences which are, as described by Rosa Luxemburg, not something from nothing but uprisings for the purpose of pushing back the power of their oppressors. Except for union organizing or strike action, most begin unguided and may only attain a definite goal on the fly. If any agreement is made it will inevitably fail because of inadequate understanding of the nature of their oppressor's rule. Our plan here is to create a popular movement that will lead to, or join, spontaneous uprisings with a knowledgeable guidance towards a defined goal in place.

The proposals in a previous article -- institutionalizing real political democracy by subverting the despised system we now have in place, and bringing about divisions in the loyalty of the forces of order -- were devised as instruments of a kind of naive realism, or gaming, of the enemy's powers to rule. Tools that will be perceived by that enemy as a threat while at the same time something that cannot be forcefully condemned or suppressed without validating the cause and energizing those who oppose their rule.

A state of nominal innocence will encompass the pre-revolutionary proposals: Why shouldn't all citizens in a democracy have equal, direct, representation? What is wrong with those forces ostensibly created for our protection swearing their primary loyalty directly to the people rather than the nation state? They will be working within the system while at the same time undermining dictatorial elements of the system. Should electoral reform attain sufficient popular support (there is already much advocacy of a proportional electoral system) their demands will be strongly opposed by the capitalist state. Our rulers will stall the constitutional process and that will create a basis for support of a shadow constitutional convention as an alternative.

But any widespread effort to undermine the capitalist state's control of the forces of order will never be acceptable in any form.

III

Should the preliminary demands gain traction they will continue to be pursued while a broader revolution oriented organization is developed. We believe that a political movement roughly modeled on the First International is a good fit for the political orientations of our time. Like Marx and Engels going back to the basics after the failure of the late 1840's uprisings and the demise of the Communist League, we must move past the failure of the Bolshevik Revolution to complete the creation and development of a Marxist communist society in one country, let alone the world, and the failures of the 2nd and 3rd International along with the ineffectiveness of the 4th.

Like the First International the agreed upon basis for admission is simple and straightforward: capitalism cannot possibly be reformed into something acceptable without ceasing to be capitalism. Therefore the minimum goal of all will be a revolutionary struggle for the removal of capitalism without a detailed description of the form its socialist replacement will take. Members will change their minds about principles or methods, and leave individually or in groups, and possibly rejoin likewise. It is senseless and damaging to the cause to organize in such a way that the main concern is to keep the organization intact. Lenin's lethal error in modeling the party on a top down bureaucracy worked very well in sustaining its existence and program until it made a revolution, only to then continue on to the destruction of that revolution.

We may support specific actions of other organizations working for social change as long as we retain our independent identity. Under no circumstances will the movement petition existing authority, run candidates, or lose focus by absorbing every evil of the moment into its political program. This is a transitional *program*; it does not make transitional demands except as tactical actions that are negations of oppressive elements within the existing social structure.

IV

Most organizations created for social change advocate a specific alteration of the existing system, like abortion rights for women or the

elimination of discriminatory policies. Others are broad-based protests against actions taken by their ruling class: wars, police brutality, corruption, etc., or all-inclusive concern about negative conditions like global warming. Historically the most significant of these reformist actions was the fight for working class unions. They were initiated by workers, with political radicals among them, who would no longer accept enriching their parasitic bosses while they, the productive class, lived at the edge of survival. When strikes were successful and unions formed, the workers achieved a higher standard of living, and the political radicals thought they could use the slight weakening of capitalist power as a launching point for a gradual removal of the rotten system.

Nothing of the sort happened. The ruling class used the pause in what they deemed a localized threat to marshal their draconian powers and root out the radicals by anti-communist purges, deportation, imprisonment, and murder. Workers then had no one but vetted class collaborationists to select as their union lackeys because they did not have sufficient political class consciousness to develop a revolutionary leadership that would broaden their demands beyond work related issues.

The demoralizing result of the failure of lasting success led to a passive state that many think a permanent condition. But struggle and failure is a learning experience; the enemy as benign poseur had dropped its mask to reveal the beast beneath. No worker in a wage labor exchange value system can fail to understand that the boss 'earns' his wealth from their unpaid labor. Submission due to prevailing social conditions does not signify acceptance. Workers out of necessity are practical people. Their direct interface with the oppressor class, along with the concentration required for the performance of their duties as laborers, has taught them to control their actions and emotions. It takes a fissure in the fabric of capitalist domination to release the rage within now imbued with a revolutionary class consciousness because what created the opening also possessed the appropriate political orientation.

True revolutions are deemed anomalies because of their rarity. But rare though they be there cannot be any doubt as to their truth and reality when we recall that the foundation of the human species was the result of a revolutionary act which was followed by the historical development of the species due to critical revolutionary leaps along

the way. What is true and unique about our age is that the next revolution will complete what, looking backwards, is the pre-history of mankind.

V

Engels:

"What gives the leap its characteristic nature is this break with the normal continuity of development, and not whether the rise of the new form of being is sudden rather than gradual."

"The first consequence of this is that labor becomes the model for any social practice, for in such social practice, no matter how ramified its mediations, teleological positings are realized and ultimately realized materially."

Those who choose to participate in a genuine revolutionary program will have consciously made a theoretical, qualitative, alteration in their social being; a distancing from existing conditions in order to clarify a program for change that will achieve their goal in practice.

In nature the transformation of material is open ended with an infinitude of undesigned possibilities. Reformism followed that pattern in that it perceived the prevailing social system much like nature, as something that can be gradually advanced within itself until either its flaws are corrected or transformed into a state where class conflict and interests have been effectively eliminated. As stated previously, that is a diagram for failure, we say fundamental social change can only be accomplished by removal and replacement.

That goal is a teleological program or positing; a conscious, purposeful, action toward an end: what ought to be. Ought is mediated by value: a better way of life. Value is a complex social relation that encompasses goals, means and the individuals involved. As such it is a manoeuvrable operational unit that develops, directs and alters actions towards its revolutionary goal.

Value is also a term in common use within capitalism; usually expressed in monetary form. Those necessities of life, along with developments that enhance our lives, are transformed under capitalism into commodities for sale. From our perspective of a

socialist society value as a commodity form is rejected and social production is performed because of its usefulness (utility) in the satisfaction of our needs and wants. At the same time utility must not be generalized in such a way that the importance of all that constitutes the qualities of life are determined by their utility. Utility satisfies basic human needs but is not a relevant factor at the broader (higher) cultural level of social being.

Not only is life in a communist society at our stage of historical development radically different than life under capitalism, it would bear little resemblance as to how it is now popularly conceived. Marx wrote little about such a future state; such dreamy, idealist, notions being beyond the purview of scientific analysis. Even his few comments were limited by the state of historical development at his time. But what is crystal clear and to the point in his writings is the ultimate purpose of a fully formed communist society: to create the conditions for the maximum development of the individual.

On the material side communism does not mean reproducing all the junk capitalism had managed to commodify and sell to hapless consumers. That also includes a junk culture that passes for intellectual life under capitalism. With junk and waste removed in a communist society, the material requirements for our physical existence will be satisfied even though the division of labor has been abolished, both between town and country and trades (broadly taken as all types of socially necessary labor). At the same time the secondary form of oppression that dominates private life under capitalism; the vulgar cultural artefacts, many barely disguised as instruments made for the purpose of manufacturing ignorance and subjective oppression, will be replaced by ways of living befitting a society where individuals and groups are truly free to be creative.

For capitalists the elimination of time in the production of commodities maximizes profit. For communists that efficiency of time is critical in satisfying human needs thus leaving free time available for other social purposes. That humanity will have needs secured and free time to fulfil their human potential is a concise description of Marxist communism.

The standard definition of freedom in Marxism is that freedom is the recognition of necessity. Necessity as recognized is *"reality in all its modal categorical forms is correctly known and correctly transformed"*

in practice." Those actions of labor power that made possible homo sapiens were its first free acts. Under capitalism and other parasitic systems the ruling class had its own form of freedom (license) while its subjects could only dream of it.

Our goal is to change that state of affairs by a working class led social movement in which the, prone to theorizing intellectual class, may choose to join. It is led by the working class not only because it is the source of all the necessities of human existence, but also because the self control required in the work experience is also what is necessary to make a revolution.

Marx:

"Besides the exertion of the bodily organs, the process demands that, during the whole operation, the workman's will be steadily in consonance with his purpose. This means close attention. The less he is attracted by the nature of the work, and the mode in which it is carried on, and the less, therefore, he enjoys it as something which gives play to his bodily and mental powers, the more close his attention is forced to be."

That self control of the worker not only includes the object of his labor but the oppressive conditions under which it is undertaken. The former is necessary and acceptable, the latter, which because of the dictates of the exploiter includes emotions such as hatred and fear, is not necessary or acceptable in a free society. Thus when workers gravitate toward a revolutionary consciousness and get on the job of liberating themselves from capitalist oppression they have already freed their emotions for the heroic struggle to remake the world.

Next up will be a look at some current movements for radical social change.

I've written a story in the form of a short play that presents a very simplified view of what the process of social change described in this article might look like. A free pdf can be downloaded [here](#).

January 2020
<http://pocs.us/>
pocs-us@gmx.com