

Marxism and Human Nature

by Phillip W. Weiss

Dialectal materialism, based on the premise that changes in material conditions produce changes in human social development is formalistic and without foundation. Its most well-known derivative, Marxism, is equally groundless. It represents an a priori conclusion to a theory presumed to be true. There is no way that human personality development is a function of material conditions. Changes in technology do not produce changes in human personality. To believe otherwise is to deny facts. Gerhard Lenski proposed that there are several different kinds of societies, each one representing a certain level of technological development.¹ Yet Lenski was critical of the Marxist model of society.²

Technological development is not the basis for a dialectical process nor is it the prime shaper of social systems. Rather, technology is the means by which humans can increase their productive capacity – period. The essential way that people relate to each other remains unchanged. That is because the human condition is a function of human nature, which remains a fixed constant. Humans are no different today than they were in the past. Whether the source of energy is human, animal or fuel, the human being is still a human being with a human nature that shapes the structure of social relations.

¹ “Gerhard Lenski's Theories of Sociocultural Evolution, Social Stratification & Technology.” *Study.com* – online

² Gerhard Lenski. “Marxist Experiments in Destratification: An Appraisal.” *Social Forces*, Volume 57, No. 2, pp. 364-383

Emotions are intrinsic, not extrinsic. Power relationships exist in all kinds of societies. Social classes have always existed and there has always been those who labor while others rule. Technology only changes the trappings of the relationship, not its essence, which is part of human nature. The Marxist wants us to believe that material conditions alter people and shape social and personal relationships. Taken to its logical conclusion the Marxist model of social development will produce humans who are products of material forces that render the human mindless. That is a fallacy. The human psyche is the source of all human development, including material. It is not the other way around. Scientific research has proven beyond all doubt that human personality development is a complex process that begins from birth and that socialization is something that is learned from other humans whose material circumstances may change but whose human nature remains a constant.

Changing a person's material circumstances does not alter that person's personality. All it does is provide different choices. Geography does matter. So does social class, but in no way does that produce a new person, only new circumstances. The hierarchal nature of society remains the core feature of social development. That has nothing to do with material conditions. Rulers use concepts such as divine right and popular legitimacy to rationalize their power, which also shapes technology. Technological change does not alter the fundamental pattern of social organizations. There is the ruler and the ruled. There is the elite and the commoners, the chief and the warriors, the general and

the privates, the boss and the workers, etc. Depending on material circumstances, the form of these relationships may change but the structure remains inviolate.

Injustice is not a product of class conflict. Throughout history, people have rebelled. Mistreatment produces discord, which has nothing to do with social class. Some people, regardless of their material circumstances, are abusive to others. A king could be kindly and his subjects vicious and cruel, and vice-versa. The utopian vision of a society without social classes is a dream, and defies the very essence of human nature. A baseball team has a manager; remove the manager and another will take his place. Russia removed their czar and another despot took his place, who wielded even more power. The United States ejected their British masters and replaced them with a system of government that allowed the Americans to become the rulers. No matter the ideology, the fundamental principle of ruler and ruled remains intact. The Egyptians had their pharaohs, Romans their Caesars, the Catholic Church their popes, the Nazis their Fuhrer, the Bolsheviks their commissars, the Fascists their Duce, democracies their presidents and prime ministers, all of which are products of human nature that creates social systems, the shape of that system determined by psychological factors inherent in the human brain.

This is not to suggest that changes in material circumstances do not alter social conditions. The United States of 1850 is not the same as the United States of today. New industries have brought dramatic changes to the composition of the work force. This change is a dynamic process which is to be expected in

something as organic as society. Societies change. Nations collapse; new nations emerge. Weak nations become strong and strong nations weak. Capital flows to where it can make the most profit. People migrate. Technological changes have social consequences. Yet the fundamental structure of social relations that underpins every society remains impervious to change. Everyone answers to authority. Even a king must answer to a higher power.

The distribution of power changes, but the nature of power remains fixed. The bourgeois may yield power to the workers, but that only changes the flow of power, not its application. The dialectical materialism produces new social hybrids. Society evolves. Yet concepts of power and authority do not become obsolete. Just the opposite. They remain entrenched. Technology has nothing to do with that process. Whether power is shared or restricted, technology becomes a tool through which power can be more widely and efficiently applied. It is easy to attribute injustice to material forces, that injustice is a functional quantity that disappears once social relations change. But injustice is not quantifiable. Nor is it extrinsic to humans. It comes from within the mind. Social conditions may shape our understanding of the principle but the principle itself is a constant.

Classes of society exist; their respective interests vary. Struggles for power happen. People get hurt. There are winners and losers. Some rise to dominance and others descend into subjugation. Crime becomes rampant. Laws are made and broken, re-written and then broken again. It is all part of the

struggle for power. People are abused. Real miscarriages of justice occur. Tempers flare and wars rage. Technology changes, and still the struggle for power continues unabated. Nothing stops it.

Social development is a riddle. There is no one pat explanation for how society evolves. There are too many variables, most important of all the human variable, the only independent variable. Technology is dependent on the human, not the other way around. Humans shape material change, not the other way around. Material is inorganic inanimate matter; its intrinsic value is zero. It acquires value only when humans decide that it is useful. An automobile is a hunk of metal until a human decides to drive it. Then it acquires value. The automobile does not transfer value to the human. The same principle applies to any means of production. Machinery is merely a tool to increase productivity, not alter human nature.

Workers who operate machines are part of a social system designed to manufacture and distribute a product. The workers get paid a wage; the owners reap the profits. Nothing new there. Two classes emerge, each with their own interests. Now, remove the machinery and technology and what remains are the people. They remain a constant. Their material conditions change but their personalities remain unaltered. New power relationships emerge based not on technology but on intrinsic psychological factors impervious to alteration. Factory or no factory, the hierarchal social structure remains intact.

Three fundamental tenets govern human conduct. They are brotherly love, relief, and truth. Four cardinal virtues make us better human beings. They are

fortitude, prudence, temperance and justice. These principles, the roots of which go back to the beginning of civilization, apply to all human beings and transcend all material conditions. Without them, civilization is not possible. When these principles are abandoned, social discourse ceases and societies fail. From the ruins, new societies emerge and the cycle repeats itself. Material conditions change but the human factor remains constant.

Karl Marx is a great historical figure. He experienced privations. He was a victim of injustice, forced to flee his home and settle in a foreign land. He outlived three of his children. He sacrificed everything to promote his theories. He believed he had found the answer to the most baffling questions regarding the human condition. He championed the oppressed and instilled hope for a better future. He meticulously revealed the inner workings of complex economic processes and their relation to social development. His brilliance is undeniable, but he was chasing a dream of a utopian society founded on falsehoods. That dream became a battle cry for clever and unscrupulous demagogues who used it to grab power and justify the most egregious excesses, all in the name of Marx. His name became synonymous with oppression, terror and death.

Marxism tantalizes but does not produce the desired result. It incites passions but offers no relief. It conceptualizes human development in terms that deny our essential humanity. It denies the principle of free will which is inherent in all human beings. It links morality with social class and supports a political philosophy that is undemocratic. It replaces the despotism of the king with the despotism of a social class. It promotes and incites conflict. It divides peoples.

It denies the legitimacy of the nation-state and wherever it takes root, it does so through force and subterfuge. Its premises shaky and its message bleak, Marxism can never succeed. It is a rejection of humanity itself.

Human beings make history, not the other way around. Humans create communities, not the other way around. Humans are agents of change, not the other way around. You can no more compare society to an organism than compare the human body to a motor. The individual is not a product of history; the individual makes history.

Labor is the source of wealth, but the market place determines price. Money is the measure of value and workers are paid what the market will bear. A worker is a human being; his or her labor is a commodity, like any other, and can be traded like any other commodity. The market place drives the economy, which includes capital formation. A worker is free to sell his or her labor to the highest bidder. Remove the market place and economic growth stops. The dichotomy of labor and capital is natural to the human species. Some work, others profit.

Every person has a right to invest. The market place is open to everyone, and so are the risks. Everyone has a right to be a boss. Economies are in a constant state of flux; however, the human being is a constant. The ability to invent is a human trait. The term “new human being” is a fiction. The human species evolves according to the laws of evolution, which are natural laws, not technological.³

³ Introduction to Human Evolution. National Museum of History. *humanorigins.si.edu*. May 24, 2017

Everyone wants more money. Value is measured through money. The more expensive a product the greater its value. More money means more buying power. More buying power means more advantage. More advantage means change in social status, which is a function of money. The drive to accrue money produces alienation from the means of production, not from the money. No one is alienated from money. Money inspires, and destroys. Money heals and corrupts. Money drives humans to do the most fantastic and repulsive things.

The goal of production is to meet needs. Profit is the measure by which need is satisfied. If a product sells, then a need is being met and a profit made. If a product does not sell, then there is no need for that product and no profit. Profit is measured by money. Without money, all economic activity ceases. Without money, there is no social development. Without money, commerce ceases. In the natural world, the human being subsists. However, the human condition demands more than just subsistence. Hence, humans create things to produce more things, all of which have value as measured by money. All goods and services are subject to market forces. Need produces want which produces demand, which produces products, which meet the demand and satisfy the need. When demand is high and money sound economies flourish. When demand is low, and money unsound economies decline.

Labor is a commodity, the value of which is set by the marketplace. When demand for labor is high, wages are high; when demand for labor is low, wages are low. Marx writes:

A use value, or useful article, therefore, has value only because human labor in the abstract has been embodied or materialized in it. How, then, is the magnitude of this value to be measured? Plainly, by the quantity of the value-creating substance, the labor, contained in the article.⁴

Marx is wrong. Value, as measured by price, is determined by the marketplace.

Marx writes, “The utility of a thing makes it a use value.”⁵ This statement is a tautology which proves nothing. Marx writes: “Price is the money-name of the labor realized in a commodity.”⁶ Again Marx is wrong. Price is the amount of money given or set as consideration for the sale of a specified thing.⁷

Labor produces a commodity but its price is set by the marketplace. Marx writes:

It is not money that renders commodities commensurable. Just the contrary. It is because all commodities, as values, are realized human labor, and therefore commensurable, that their values can be measured by one and the same special commodity, and the latter be converted into the common measure of values, i.e., into money.⁸

Marx could not be more wrong. In the marketplace, and even Marx concedes that economic activity occurs in the marketplace, money and money alone is the medium through which value is measured, and that the value of a commodity, be it use value or exchange value, is determined by

⁴ Karl Marx. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. Volume 1, Book 1. English translation, Progress Publishers: Moscow. marxists.org, p. 29 – online

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 70

⁷ Merriam-Webster Dictionary

⁸ Marx, p. 67

the marketplace. An expensive commodity has more value than a cheap commodity. In 2013, the T206 Honus Wagner baseball card sold for \$2.1 million.⁹ The card's intrinsic or use value is zero (it is just a small piece of thin cardboard with a picture of Wagner printed on one side of it.) However, its exchange value is immense, and that is due entirely to market forces that have nothing to do with labor. The United States built the Saturn 5B rocket to send men to the moon. Today it is a museum piece, its use value zero. But when it was in operation, it allowed the United States to launch twelve astronauts to the moon. It was critical to the success of the American space program. Its use value was beyond measure; its exchange value incalculable since there was no other rocket with which to compare it. To build the rocket required an immense amount of labor, but in no way did that account for the rocket's value to the American people, to science and to posterity.¹⁰ To substantiate his theories, Marx made up his own laws of economics.

Except insofar as it is an expense, labor bears no relationship to profit. Profit is the difference between the cost of producing a product and the price it fetches on the market. Consider this equation:

$$P - C = Z$$

P = price C = costs Z= profit

Example: One light bulb cost ten cents to produce, C= 10 cents. The same light bulb is sold on the market for 11 cents, P = 11. The difference between C and P is 1 cent. Z equals 1 cent. Cost of production includes labor. The owner pays the

⁹ Darren Rovell. "Honus Wagner card sells for \$2.1M." ESPN. *espn.com*, April 6, 2013.

¹⁰ "What was the Saturn V?" NASA. *nasa.gov*, September 17, 2010 – online

worker for a fixed number of hours of work, no more and no less. This work has a price, calculated per the following equation:

$$P = H \times R$$

P = price of labor H = hours of work R = rate of pay

A business owner hires a worker to provide labor eight hours per day at ten dollars per hour. The owner sets the hours of work and rate of pay and the worker accepts those terms. The value of the worker's labor is eighty dollars (8 hours x 10 dollars per hour). On the balance sheet the P is an expense. However, Marxism rejects that formulation. P is not an expense; it is a measure of value, and further that the P is equal to more than eighty dollars. The equation is not $P = H \times R$ but

$$P = H \times R + S$$

S represents surplus value, which is the difference between what the worker is paid and the actual worth of the labor. Yet, like a mysterious apparition, this S goes unnoticed by the owner and the worker. It appears nowhere on the ledger sheet or on the financial statement. Only the Marxist knows that it exists. In our example, the owner pays the worker for eight hours of labor, no more and no less. In return, the worker provides eight hours of labor. Period. There is no S. It does not exist.

Indeed, the Marxist formulas C-M-C and M-C-M confirm the primacy of the market place as the source of profit. The former shows how a commodity yields profit and the latter how money itself, as a commodity, yields profit. Marx wrote, "But money itself is a commodity, an external object, capable of becoming

private property of any individual.”¹¹ Exchange occurs not in a vacuum but in the market place, in which there is a BUYER and a SELLER. That principle also applies to money. This economic operation is so fundamental and pervasive that its existence is self-evident.

Marx asserts that the value of a commodity is a function of the labor required to produce that product. He offers this example:

Coats and linen, however, are not merely values, but values of definite magnitude, and according to our assumption, the coat is worth twice as much as ten yards of linen. Whence the difference in their values? It is owing to the fact that the linen contains only half as much labor as the coat, and consequently, that in the production of the latter, labor power must have been expended during twice the time necessary for the production of the former.¹²

The coat and the linen have value. The source of that value is labor. Marx calls this labor productive labor because it produces something useful. Marx then goes on to discuss the relationship between the quantity of labor needed to produce a commodity and the value of that commodity, and how the value of a commodity is relative to the value of other commodities. Marx calls this the equivalent form of value. This equivalent form of value accounts for the fluctuation in the values of commodities.

So far so good. Where Marx’s theory goes awry is in his misconstruing of the term value. Marx asserts that value is a function of labor. While labor is an important component of the production process, it adds nothing to the value of a commodity. Instead, labor adds to the cost of production. Labor is an expense,

¹¹ Marx, p. 86

¹² Ibid., p. 32

not an asset. It is a commodity that provides a service needed to produce a product. Like any other commodity, it is used, and once used it is gone.

If possible, the owner of capital would dispense with the use of labor altogether.

The basis of value is not labor but worth. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary offers four definitions of the word value.

1. the monetary worth of something.
2. a fair return or equivalent in goods, services, or money for something exchanged.
3. relative worth, utility, or importance.
4. something (such as a principle or quality) intrinsically valuable or desirable¹³

These definitions contain no reference to labor. Other factors – monetary worth, fair return, utility and importance, desirability – determine value. This does not mean that labor is superfluous. Obviously it is needed to produce a commodity. Indeed, as Abraham Lincoln said, labor is the source for all capital.¹⁴ However, that does not make labor any less of an expense. Under the Marxist formula, labor's demand for compensation would be insatiable. If possible, a machine would replace every worker.

Marxism is debunked.¹⁵ In *Karl Marx's Economics: Critical Assessments*, John Cunningham Woods writes,

¹³ Merriam-Webster Dictionary – online

¹⁴ Abraham Lincoln. First Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1861.

¹⁵ Howard Baetjer. "Why your boss isn't ripping you off. Marxism 101 debunked." Learn Liberty. learnliberty.org, 6/27/17

A. P. Lerner was one of the first to attack Samuelson's paper, claiming that Samuelson made unwarranted concessions to the "over-thoroughly" demolished labor theory of value.¹⁶

Economist A. P. Lerner writes,

The labor theory of value, diluted or undiluted, while of interest for the history of economic thought, has no place in today's economic analysis.¹⁷

Marxism is a continuation of the anti-capitalist romantic tradition that predated Marx by at least fifty years.¹⁸ It is flighty; it appeals to emotion. It belongs alongside the other once popular but now discredited ideas, such as the theories of phlogiston¹⁹, alchemy²⁰ and bloodletting²¹.

There is a belief that genius is often tinged with a bit of madness. Inside the genius's mind, teeming with a myriad of complex thoughts and abstract concerns, intellectual preoccupations so overwhelmingly dominate the psyche that they distort and diminish the more mundane mental and social operations.

On this subject, the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer wrote,

Moreover, since in general, the knowledge of persons of genius has to some extent freed itself from the service of the will, they will not in conversation think so much of the person they are addressing as of the thing they are speaking about, which is vividly present to them; and therefore they are likely to judge or narrate things too objectively for their own interests; they will not pass over in silence what would more prudently be concealed,

¹⁶ John Cunningham Woods, ed. "General Commentary." *Karl Marx's Economics: Critical Assessments*. Routledge: New York, NY, 1998, page 2

¹⁷ A. P. Lerner. *Journal of Economic Literature*. Vol 10 (1), March 1972, pages 50-51

¹⁸ Löwy, M. *Theor Soc* (1987) 16: 891. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00138073>

¹⁹ A theory of chemistry based on the belief that all combustible bodies contain a substance phlogiston.

²⁰ A theory of chemistry based on the belief that lead can be transformed into gold.

²¹ A theory of medicine based on the belief that disease can be cured by drawing blood from the body.

and so forth. Finally, they are given to soliloquizing, and in general may exhibit certain weaknesses which are actually akin to madness.²²

Continuing on the same topic, Schopenhauer goes on to write,

Especially instructive in this respect in Goethe's "Torquato Tasso," in which he shows us not only the suffering, the martyrdom of genius as such, but also how it constantly passes into madness. Finally, the fact of the direct connection of genius and madness is established by the biographies of great men of genius, such as Rousseau, Byron, and Alfieri, and by anecdotes from the lives of others.²³

Was Marx insane? Without benefit of reliable clinical information upon which to formulate an opinion, there is no definitive answer to that question. But based on Schopenhauer's comments, the possibility cannot be ruled out.

Marxism claims to be progressive but supports oppression. It claims to offer a pathway to liberation but instead produces walls, barriers, gulags and poverty. Marxism lacks scientific legitimacy. It rejects the concept of the individual. It reduces humans to cogs.

Marxism is a sham. Its goal is to polarize people. Marxism is the progenitor of Fascism and its most lethal iteration, Nazism. Indeed, the Marxist and Nazi ideologies share many features. First, both believe in mass murder as a matter of political necessity. Second, both believe that society is a collective and the individual subordinate to the group. Third, both rely heavily on ideological rationalization to justify the most outrageous crimes. Fourth, both demand absolute conformity to the prevailing ideological line. Fifth, both reject and scorn democratic values. Sixth, both cultivate the cult of leadership. Nazism merely

²² Arthur Schopenhauer. *The Works of Schopenhauer*, abridged. Ed. Will Durant. Simon and Schuster: New York, 1928. P. 112

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 113

replaces the dictatorship of the proletariat with the dictatorship of the leader who supposedly embodies the will of the nation. Stalin colluded with Hitler to crush Poland.

Marxist rhetoric is hysterical, incendiary and frightening. In many respects it is identical to that of the Nazis. From the September 1, 1918 edition of the Bolshevik newspaper *Krasnaya Gazeta*:

We will turn our hearts into steel, which we will temper in the fire of suffering and the blood of fighters for freedom. We will make our hearts cruel, hard, and immovable so that no mercy will enter them, and so that they will not quiver at the sight of a sea of enemy blood. We will let loose the floodgate of that sea. Without mercy, without sparing, we will kill our enemies in scores of hundreds, Let them be thousands; let them drown themselves in their own blood. For the blood of Lenin and Uritsky, Zinoviev and Volodarski, let there be floods of the blood of the bourgeois – more blood, as much as possible.²⁴

In 1918 Vladimir Lenin wrote:

The kulaks are the most brutal, callous and savage exploiters These bloodsuckers have grown rich on the want suffered by the people in the war; they have raked in thousands and hundreds of thousands of rubles by screwing up the prices of grain and other products. These fighters have grown fat at the expense of the peasants who have been ruined by the war, at the expense of the hungry workers. These leeches suck the blood of the toilers and grew richer as the workers in the cities and factories starved. These vampires have been gathering and are gathering the landed estates into their hands; they keep on enslaving the poor peasants.

Ruthless war must be waged on these kulaks! Death to them! Hatred and contempt for the parties which defend them – The Right Socialist Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks, and Left Socialist Revolutionaries! The workers must crush with an iron hand the revolts of the kulaks who are forming an alliance with the

²⁴ World Future Fund. "Lenin and the Use of Terror – Some Important Quotations." www.worldfuturefund.org

foreign capitalists against the toilers of their own country.^{25 26}

The rhetoric is over the top, its purpose obvious: to incite. But that is not surprising. It is fueled by an ideology that extols violence.

Under Marxism violence is a positive good. British historian Giles Udy states,

Marxism declares that it is the unquestioned right of the working class to rule over the other classes. Marx and his Leninist followers in Russia believed that class war was not only inevitable but that it was the duty of the proletariat to embrace and, even, to provoke it.²⁷

Marxism understands the world only in terms of class struggle. Simon Tormey, the co-director of the Center for the Study of Social and Global Justice (CSSGJ) at Nottingham University, said

Open and violent struggles are commonplace in much of the world; strikes, lockouts, and beatings of workers in places like China, Indonesia, Mexico, South Africa, and violent peasant conflicts in places like Nandigram, India. Look around: class struggle is everywhere and infects almost every human relation.²⁸

The Marxist solution for violence is more violence.

The comments contained herein are not meant to personally impugn Marx. He acted in good faith. He sincerely and truly wanted to improve the human condition. He opposed the existing feudalistic system that suppressed human potential. He thought in broad sweeping terms. He imagined a world free from

²⁵ Kulaks were peasants in Russia who owned farms and hired laborers. Later the Bolsheviks applied the term to any peasant who resisted collectivization.

²⁶ Lenin. *Selected Works*, Vol. 8, pages 130-131

²⁷ Tony Rennell. "Return of Labour's useful idiots: Many on the Left once turned a blind eye to Soviet Russia's murderous evils... but Corbyn and his comrades are as naive today with their hero worship of Marx." Daily Mail. *dailymail.co.uk*, May 12, 2017

²⁸ "Marx Continues to Influence 125 Years After His Death." DW. *dw.com*, March 14, 2008

injustice. He labored to raise political consciousness. He exposed the imperfections of an emerging capitalist system. He delved into the mysteries of economic forces and brought them, albeit imperfectly, to light. He called attention to the relationship between technological innovation and social change. He championed the rights of those who lacked political power. He shaped popular thought. He became a rallying point for all Progressive-minded persons. Yet, ultimately, his work fails. Its message is bogus, based on an intellectual mirage, and its consequences disastrous. Marxism is not the answer.

Marx was not the first to register outrage against the exploitation of the vulnerable and disadvantaged. The Bible includes this admonition:

Do not take advantage of the widow or the fatherless. If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry. My anger will be aroused, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives will become widows and your children fatherless. If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not treat it like a business deal; charge no interest. If you take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, return it by sunset.²⁹

While the reliability of the Bible as a historical document is open to question, the passage itself is not. It is a demand for justice. Marxism is a reiteration of what was already known long before Karl Marx lived. Marx merely repackaged the biblical message in terms that would make it more palpable to his audience which included those who were seeking an excuse to tear things down, grab political power and terrorize people, all in the name of justice. Whenever and

²⁹ Exodus 22: 20-26

wherever they succeeded, that is exactly what they did. In *The Bolshevik Model of Development*, political historian Frederick Nicholson writes,

Because Lenin visualized the party as a revolutionary elite, its function was to impose a revolutionary consciousness from without and be the spearhead for the overthrow of the old order.³⁰

Lenin's vision put Russia on a track that led to crimes on a scale so vast that it rivaled, and may even have exceeded that perpetrated by the Nazis (if such a thing is possible).

The Communist Manifesto, written by Marx and Frederick Engels, concludes with these words:

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

Working men of all countries unite!³¹

Marx's call for revolution continues to reverberate to this day.

Marx's labor value theory has serious political implications. If valid, it means that the entire economic system is one big sham that is defrauding the vast majority of the human race, and that the human race is stuck in a spiral of ever escalating violence that will end with the destruction of entire social classes. Now Marx would argue just the opposite: that the human race can actually look forward to a glorious future when all private property is gone and

³⁰ Frederick Nicholson. *The Bolshevik Model of Development*. Masters Thesis. Graduate Center: New York, 1983, p. 9

³¹ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. *Communist Manifesto*. Authorized English Translation. Socialist Labor Party of America. www.slp.org, 2006, p. 40

humans are no longer alienated from their work. Yet this utopian vision rings hollow. It offers a promise of something better, but in practice falls far short of the mark. One can argue that social progress is a rocky road and that the final goal is worth the cost. That is easy to say if you are not the one asked or forced to pay the price.

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