TEN
TOWARD AN ADEQUATE MARXIST MORA L AND SOCIAL THEORY

As outlined in the Introduction to this work, an adequate Marxist moral and social theory must have certain features. First, it must be based on a moral theory that is in wide reflective equilibrium with our considered moral judgments. Second, it must be informed by a correct set of empirical, social-scientific views. Third, it must account for the Marxist’s basic normative political positions that (1) socialism is morally preferable to any form of capitalism (as well as to any other type of society possible under the historical conditions of moderate scarcity and moderate egoism), and (2) social and/or political revolution, if necessary (and sufficient) to effect the appropriate transformations, is prima facie morally justified.

That an adequate Marxist moral and social theory be in accord with Marx’s implicit moral theory is another constraint we might be tempted to add, but this, I think, would be a mistake. First, while I believe my reconstruction of this theory in chapter 3 to be essentially correct, there is still considerable debate over the correct explication and interpretation of Marx’s implicit moral theory. Second, and more importantly, whatever interpretation we give to Marx’s theory, it may turn out that we find ourselves disagreeing with his implicit moral theory even though we are in agreement with his normative political positions. (As noted in chapter 7, however, most moral theories will lead to the acceptance of these positions once a number of Marx’s empirical assumptions are accepted.) Even if my interpretation of Marx as a mixed deontologist most concerned with an equal distribution of freedom is correct, this is no reason for a Marxist with utilitarian intuitions to accept being in accord with such a theory as a criterion of adequacy for a Marxist moral and social theory. In the same vein, if a utilitarian interpretation of Marx’s implicit moral theory were correct, this would not automatically count as a reason for someone with nonutilitarian convictions accepting being in accord with utilitarianism as a constraint on the construction of an adequate Marxist moral and social theory. For the same reasons I shall not count being in accord with Marx’s principles of distribution as expressed in “Critique of the Gotha Program” as a constraint on the development of an adequate Marxist theory of social justice.

Nevertheless, it should be clear by now that I believe Marx’s implicit moral theory to be essentially on the right track. On my reconstruction of this theory, you will recall, Marx espouses the principle of maximum equal freedom (both negative and positive), which, in turn, can be explicated as the following set of principles:

There is to be a maximum equal system of:
1. negative freedom (i.e., freedom from the undue interference of others), and
2. positive freedom (i.e., the opportunity to determine one’s own life), including:
   a. the right to equal participation in social decision-making processes and
   b. the right of equal access to the means of self-realization, which entails:
      i. the right to an equal opportunity to attain social offices and positions, and
      ii. the right to an equal opportunity to acquire other social primary goods (income, wealth, leisure time, etc.).

Many of us, perhaps, will find that these principles come rather close to being in wide reflective equilibrium with our considered moral judgments. Thus it is arguable that they (or something very much like them) would be chosen by free and equal moral persons in the original position. But this theory (i.e., this set of moral principles concerning social arrangements), as it stands, is simply too general and vague to be considered an adequate moral theory as opposed to the bare outlines of one. Even if it is generally in accord with our considered moral judgments, it needs to be tightened up: the various terms (“interference,” “access,” “opportunity,” etc.) need to be given more precise definitions; the notion of a “maximum equal system” needs to be clarified; decisions need to be made on what priority rules (if any) are to be established,
etc. Although, on this reconstruction, Marx’s moral theory has already been rendered as a theory of social justice since its principles govern the distribution of the most important social primary goods, it seems to me that a clearer and more adequate theory of social justice can be constructed by starting with John Rawls’ theory and modifying it where necessary.

A Theory of Social Justice

Taking into consideration the modifications to Rawls’ theory as put forward in the previous chapter, I propose that the following principles—listed in order of lexical priority—make for an adequate, or at least more adequate, theory of social justice:

1. Everyone’s security rights and subsistence rights shall be respected.

2. There is to be a maximum system of equal basic liberties, including freedom of speech and assembly; liberty of conscience and freedom of thought; freedom of the person along with the right to hold (personal) property; and freedom from arbitrary arrest and seizure as defined by the concept of the rule of law.

3. There is to be (a) a right to an equal opportunity to attain social positions and offices and (b) an equal right to participate in all social decision-making processes within institutions of which one is a part.

4. Social and economic inequalities are justified if, and only if, they benefit the least advantaged, consistent with the just savings principle, but are not to exceed levels that will seriously undermine equal worth of liberty or the good of self-respect.

To better judge the adequacy of this theory, let us briefly compare it to the theories of Marx, Rawls, and Nielsen.

I contend that my theory entails Marx’s principles but is more complete and, therefore, more adequate. On my reconstruction, Marx’s first (negative freedom) principle is covered by my second principle. His principles 2a (the right to equal participation in social decision-making processes) and 2bi (the right to an equal opportunity to attain social offices and positions) are combined in my third (equal opportunity) principle. Since 2 and 2b are included for purposes of explication, this leaves only his principle 2bii (the right to an equal opportunity to acquire other social primary goods such as income, wealth, leisure time, etc.). This principle is inadequate, however, since it does not—in and of itself—demand a minimum floor of well-being nor does it give us explicit criteria by which to decide whether inequalities in material wealth are allowable and, if they are, to what degree. Neither does it explicitly demand that the social bases of self-respect as well as material wealth be taken into consideration, although it is arguable that this is Marx’s intent. His theory must therefore be supplemented by my first and fourth principles. Finally, Marx’s theory (or my reconstruction of it, at any rate) does not include the necessary priority rules, while my proposed theory does.

Rawls’ special conception or theory of justice consists of the following two principles listed in order of lexical priority:

First Principle
Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all.

Second Principle
Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both:

a. to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged, consistent with the just savings principle, and
b. attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity.¹

Although we have already spent considerable time discussing Rawls’ theory, a brief comparison in order. Recall first that the four modifications of Rawls’ substantive moral theory argued for in the previous chapter are:

1. There must be a minimum floor of well-being below which persons are not allowed to fall, and this principle must take precedence over any other principle of social justice.

2. There must be at least approximate equality in the worth of liberty as well as strict equality of liberty per se.

3. The Difference Principle must take the social bases of self-respect—as well as material wealth—as a good to be maximized for the least advantaged.

¹ Rawls, A Theory of Justice, p. 302.
4. Democracy must not be limited to the political realm but must be implemented in the social and economic realms as well, most especially in the workplace.

The first principle of the theory of social justice I have proposed—the Basic Rights Principle—incorporates the first modification mentioned above. As explained previously, the minimum floor of well-being must be taken to include people's security rights as well as their subsistence rights. Security rights are the rights not to be tortured, executed, raped, brutally assaulted, etc. Subsistence rights are the rights to food, drinkable water, shelter, clothing, basic medical care, a livable environment, etc. Individuals in the original position would undoubtedly want to ensure that both of these kinds of rights are protected against the standard threats that undermine them or cause them to be violated, and would take this principle to have lexical priority over any other. Following Henry Shue, I shall refer to these as basic rights, both because they are intrinsically the most important rights we have and because, as Shue argues, their fulfillment is a necessary condition for the enjoyment of any other right. Also following Shue, I shall take these rights to entail three correlative duties: (1) the duty to avoid harming or depriving, (2) the duty to protect from harm or deprivation, and (3) the duty to aid the harmed or deprived.²

Although neither security nor subsistence rights are mentioned as liberties in Rawls' Maximum Equal Liberty Principle, it can be argued that these rights exist at least implicitly in Rawls' theory of natural duties, which espouses, among others, "the duty of helping another when he is in need or jeopardy provided that one can do so without excessive risk or loss to oneself; the duty not to harm or injure another; and the duty not to cause unnecessary suffering."³ Although Rawls prefers to use the concept of coercible duties (i.e., duties which people justifiably can be coerced to fulfill) rather than the concept of rights to express these views, the end result is the same. It may not matter in the final analysis which terminology we use here, but it seems quite natural to include the right to life in a theory of social justice. The main difference between my theory and the traditional (e.g., Lockean) lists of rights is that I take the right to life to be both a negative and a positive right and, thus, to entail subsistence as well as security rights.

It may be objected that including a Basic Rights Principle or Rawls' coercible duties in the theory of social justice should be avoided since—on Rawls' definition, at any rate—theories of social justice have to do with the benefits and burdens of social cooperation, whereas these principles are usually taken to be applicable even outside the context of such institutions. The answer to this, I think, is first that, given the economic interdependence of today's world, the distinction between moral principles requiring and those not requiring institutions of social cooperation is probably moot. (As argued previously, this economic interdependence, itself, establishes the existence of social cooperation in the relevant sense.) Second, if we don't explicitly make these principles part of our theories of social justice, there is a tendency for people to overlook them or downgrade their importance when, in fact, they are arguably the most important principles of all. For these reasons I shall include the Basic Rights Principle in my theory of social justice.

The second principle of my theory is simply Rawls' Maximum Equal Liberty Principle minus the "political liberties," which are included in my third (equal opportunity) principle. It seems perspicacious to separate our negative liberties from our political liberties since—even on Rawls' theory—it is agreed that the former are both different in kind and stronger than the latter. In addition to the traditional political liberties such as the rights to vote and to run for and hold political office, the third principle includes the right to participate in decisions within all social and economic institutions of which one is a part. As required by the fourth modification of Rawls' theory listed above, the term "social," as used in my third principle, is to be taken to refer to political, social, and economic positions and decision-making processes. It should be noted, however, that although I do not follow Rawls' wording of "fair equality of opportunity" in framing my Equal Opportunity Principle, I agree with him that it is neither possible nor desirable to demand a precisely equal opportunity even for persons of equal talent, skill, and motivation. The most we can reasonably demand, it seems, is that such persons have an approximately equal opportunity. Two minimal conditions that seemingly must be fulfilled in order to accomplish this are (1) providing everyone with a quality education from early childhood on, and (2) eliminating discrimination in all of its guises.

² See Shue, Basic Rights, pp. 52-53.
MARXISM AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

My fourth principle is, obviously, Rawls’ Difference Principle after the incorporation of the second and third modifications listed above. Although I have not previously spoken of the Just Savings Principle, following Rawls I include it here. Since persons behind the veil of ignorance must not be biased in any way, they do not know at what point in history they actually exist. It is therefore reasonable for them to agree to a Just Savings Principle to ensure that the generation to which they belong will not inherit a completely impoverished and/or polluted environment. Although there is considerable controversy over the issue of justice between generations, I shall accept Rawls’ analysis as being essentially correct.¹

Kai Nielsen’s radical egalitarian theory of social justice (which he calls “justice as equality”) is:

1. Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties and opportunities (including equal opportunities for meaningful work, for self-determination and political and economic participation) compatible with a similar treatment of all. (This principle gives expression to a commitment to attain and/or sustain equal moral autonomy and equal self-respect.)

2. After provisions are made for common social (community) values, for capital overhead to preserve the society’s productive capacity, allowances made for differing unmanipulated needs and preferences, and due weight is given to the just entitlement of individuals, the income and wealth (the common stock of means) is to be so dis-

¹ Actually, as Schweickart points out, the way Rawls formulates this principle in terms of savings does not do justice to his underlying concern of conserving the natural as well as the social and cultural environment. “Rawls’s concern is misplaced. He worries about insufficient savings—but the tendency of capitalism, especially Keynesian capitalism, is toward a high rate of savings. The tendency is for savings to outstrip investment, and this (as Keynes showed) causes the economy to contract—unless the government intervenes. Capitalism—especially Keynesian capitalism—is structured to save, to invest and to grow. But it is precisely this growth that poses the threat to future generations, not the lack of saving. Capitalist saving, when balanced by investment, involves a channeling of workers and resources into activities that promise increased consumption later. ‘Saving’ does not involve a saving of resources or a reduction of the strain placed on the environment. This latter sort of ‘saving’ occurs when consumption is traded for leisure, or perhaps for less ‘efficient’ but more ecologically sound techniques, not for more consumption later. But . . . it is worker control and not capitalism that allows society to decide consciously the rate and structure of its investment, and on its labor-leisure tradeoff” (Schweickart, Capitalism or Worker Control? pp. 188–189). See also Weisskopf, “The Irrationality of Capitalist Economic Growth.”

TOWARD A MORAL AND SOCIAL THEORY

vided that each person will have a right to an equal share. The necessary burdens requisite to enhance human well-being are also to be equally shared, subject, of course, to limitations by differing abilities and differing situations. (Here I refer to different natural environments and the like and not to class position and the like.)²

Nielsen’s theory, like my proposed theory of social justice, originated as a critique of Rawls’ theory of justice as fairness. Our theories are also similar in that they both strive to be more consistently egalitarian than Rawls’ theory; in fact, Nielsen’s theory—in one way or another—seems to incorporate the four modifications of Rawls’ theory previously suggested. The demand for a minimum floor of well-being, below which individuals are not allowed to fall, seems covered by that part of Nielsen’s second principle demanding that “allowances be made for differing unmanipulated needs and preferences.” The demand for approximate equality in worth of liberty is presumably entailed by the fact that Nielsen’s first principle demands the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties and opportunities (including equal opportunities for meaningful work, for self-determination and political and economic participation). The fact that self-determination and political and economic participation are mentioned here also takes care of my demand for social and economic (as well as political) democracy. Finally, the demand that we take the social bases of self-respect as a good to be maximized seems to be covered by Nielsen’s first principle, since he states that it is supposed to give “expression to a commitment to attain and/or sustain equal moral autonomy and equal self-respect.”

There are, however, some significant differences between Nielsen’s theory and mine. Although his first principle is basically a combination of my second and third principles, my theory does not assert an equal right to equal opportunities for meaningful work. One problem with such a demand is that what constitutes meaningful work may vary to some extent among individuals; in any case, the concept is not very precise. Presumably, however, there is a correlation between meaningful work and (a) how creative the work is, (b) how much autonomy the worker has in the work process, including the extent to which he or she can participate in decisions made in the workplace, and (c) the extent to which the worker identifies with and supports the society in which he or she

² Nielsen, Equality and Liberty, pp. 48–49.
lives and thus sees his or her activity as socially useful and valuable. Although all three conditions may very well be better met in a genuinely socialist society than in contemporary societies, it would seem almost impossible to provide everyone with equally meaningful work or even to guarantee everyone an equal opportunity for meaningful work. (This is especially true if Nielsen is demanding a precisely as opposed to only an approximately equal opportunity for meaningful work.)

Meaningful work is to be counted as a positive good on any Marxist or egalitarian view; and—subject to the demands of my Modified Difference Principle—greater equality in life prospects (including the prospect for meaningful work) is always to be preferred to less. However, it seems unnecessary (if not impossible) to guarantee a precisely equal opportunity to acquire this good, especially if we have in mind a substantively equal—as opposed to a merely formally equal—opportunity. (If we have in mind merely formal equality of opportunity this can be achieved simply by preventing discrimination; surely Nielsen has in mind a stronger form than this.) Perhaps the strongest form of substantive opportunity for equal work (or anything else) would be to distribute the opportunities by lottery. But considerations of both desert and efficiency weigh strongly against this solution. In fact, if we have any interest in efficiency at all we probably will not want to go beyond Rawls’ interpretation of fair equality of opportunity as providing persons of approximately equal talents and abilities approximately equal chances of acquiring desired positions and offices: in this case, jobs or occupations that are viewed by individuals as meaningful (or at least more meaningful than most jobs or occupations). This does not mean, however, that society should not compensate persons who end up with the less meaningful or satisfying work or should not take measures to ensure diversity within jobs or mobility within the job market. Perhaps, as J. S. Mill suggests, those having less desirable jobs ought to be paid more than those having more desirable positions. Although this would not make such jobs any more meaningful, it might be demanded even by Rawls’ Difference Principle if we were to specify that meaningful work or job satisfaction is a social primary good (which is not, it seems, a totally implausible suggestion).

Nielsen’s second principle says that after certain antecedent conditions are met, income and wealth is to be so divided that each person is to have a right to an equal share. These conditions are that society provide for:

- Common social (community) values,
- Capital overhead to preserve the society’s productive capacity,
- Differing unmanipulated needs and preferences, and
- The just entitlement of individuals.

While provisos a and b would seem to be entailed as empirical necessities by my first and fourth (i.e., my Basic Rights and Modified Difference) Principles, there seems no reason to list them as basic moral principles. That part of proviso c concerning providing for people’s needs would also seem to be entailed by my Basic Rights Principle. The part of this proviso about providing for people’s unmanipulated preferences seems a bit mysterious, however, since it is not clear how this is to be integrated with the primary claim of his second principle, which he puts forward after listing these provisos, namely, the claim that “the income and wealth (the common stock of means) is to be so divided that each person will have a right to an equal share.” If all the (unmanipulated) preferences of all persons are to be taken care of before the principle of strict equality of distribution goes into effect, what sense does it make even to have such a principle? Under conditions of moderate scarcity, of course, not all the preferences of all persons can be met. But if this is so, what set of criteria is to be used in deciding which preferences will be met? If we say “strict equality,” then we are invoking the main principle on which the proviso we are now discussing is supposed to be a condition.6

There is a similar difficulty with proviso d, which concerns taking account of people’s just entitlements. Since this proviso is a

6 In his article “Liberal and Socialist Egalitarianism”—part of which is based on his “Reply to Rodney Peffer” (Canadian Philosophical Association, Windsor, Ontario, May 31, 1988)—Nielsen responds to this point as follows: “Peffer rightly finds fault with my proviso that our unmanipulated preferences be first taken into account before we make an equal division of resources. What, he quite properly asks, is left of strict equality of distribution if these differing preferences must be met before the rule of equal distribution goes into effect? The same applies for just individual entitlements. It is better to proceed, as I did in the last chapter of Equality and Liberty and writings subsequent to it, by a principle which prescribes that we are to first provide institutional conditions for the meeting of basic needs, where everyone’s needs are to have equal consideration, then when that provision has been made, we are to move to a similar consideration of non-basic needs and finally, when provision for the meeting of non-basic needs has been made, we should move to a similar consideration of preferences (particularly preferences that adequate information would not extinguish). A roughly equal division of resources is meant to be a way of furthering that” (“Liberal and Socialist Egalitarianism,” forthcoming).
condition of the main principle of strict equality in the distribution of income and wealth, there must be a set of criteria for just entitlements other than the economic distribution resulting from the application of the principle of strict equality. But so far as I can ascertain at any rate, Nielsen offers no such set of criteria. Nor could he offer such a set of criteria for ascertaining just entitlements without bringing in his main principle of distribution of income and wealth because what is considered a just entitlement will be whatever is gained within the rules of the game without the use of force, theft, or fraud. While Nozick can get away with not offering such a set of criteria because he denies that there are any other rules of the game than not to use force, theft, or fraud, neither Rawls nor Nielsen nor anyone else who accepts "patterned" or "end-state" principles of distributive justice can do so. While one may have a prima facie entitlement to all that one can get without the use of force, theft, or fraud, within societies governed by Rawls' or Nielsen's principles of distributive justice, one will not necessarily have an all-things-considered entitlement to that entire portion because some of it may be needed to ensure that the principles of social justice are met. (This is the justification for taxation and other procedures society uses to direct social wealth toward the accomplishment of social purposes.)

There is, however, an even more fundamental objection to his second principle. Even after taking his provisos into account, his main claim calling for strict equality in the distribution of income and wealth is untenable. There are, it seems to me, cogent objections to that part of Nielsen's second principle reading "income and wealth (the common stock of means) is to be so divided that each person will have a right to an equal share," that parallel some of Marx's objections (in "Critique of the Gotha Program") to LaSalle's claim that "the proceeds of labor belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society." To this, Marx replies:

"To all members of society"? To those who do not work as well? What remains then of the "undiminished proceeds of labour"? Only to those members who work? What remains of the "equal right" of all members of society?  

7 To this criticism Nielsen responds: "There should be, as Peffer rightly argues, criteria for individual just entitlements which are not determined by a principle of strict equality. But that is exactly what I argue. Prima facie, I argue if someone acquires something, say a family farm or family restaurant, without force, theft or fraud she has a just entitlement to it; this entitlement is strengthened by desert."  


Nielsen's phrasing of this part of his second principle has the unfortunate consequence of divorcing such factors as effort and contribution from the actual distribution of social primary goods or the "common stock of means." He attempts to get around this difficulty with his proviso concerning giving due weight to the just entitlements of individuals, but, as we have just seen, this does not seem to work.

Furthermore, as Marx notes in his criticisms of LaSalle, to speak of a right to an equal distributive share in this context seems rather bizarre. How are we to measure equal amounts of both income and wealth so we can make sure everyone gets a precisely equal share, especially in contemporary societies where much "wealth" comes in the form of public goods? It is especially troublesome to speak of a right to an equal (i.e., a precisely equal) share, for to say that someone has a right to something is to say that the state or society must protect him or her in the possession of it or make sure the person receives it. Thus to speak of a right in this context is to give people grounds for legitimate claims that the state or society may well find impossible to fulfill.

Actually Nielsen anticipates and attempts to answer this objection when, in reference to the proviso of his second principle concerning fulfilling people's unmanipulated needs and preferences, he states that "the differing preferences and needs should, as far as possible, have equal satisfaction, though what is involved in the rider 'as far as possible' is not altogether evident." He also states:

My second principle of justice is not the same as a principle which directs that a pie be equally divided, though it is like it in its underlying intent, namely that fairness starts with a presumption of equality and only modifies a strict equal division of whatever is to be divided in order to remain faithful to the underlying intent of equal treatment.

But Nielsen compounds this problem when he endorses the interpretation of his second principle on which people do not merely have a right to an equal share of social primary goods or an equal share of the total overall wealth of society but actually and literally have a right to an equal share of each and every type of good in the entire world.

9 Nielsen, Equality and Liberty, p. 54.

10 Ibid., pp. 54-55.
People, if they are rational, will exercise their rights to shares in what Rawls calls the primary goods, since having them is necessary to achieving anything else they want, but they will not necessarily demand equal shares and they will surely be very unlikely to demand equal shares of all the goodies of the world. People's wants and needs are simply too different for that. I have, or rather should have, an equal right to have fish pudding or a share in the world's stock of jelly beans. *Ceteris paribus*, I have an equal right to as much of either as anyone else, but, not wanting or liking either, I will not demand my equal share.¹¹

Since it is impossible for society or the state to guarantee everyone a precisely equal share of the total social wealth, it is certainly impossible to guarantee everyone an equal share—even an approximately equal share—of any particular good, let alone all types of goods in the world. And if this is so, then it is absurd to say that people *have a right* to an equal share—or even an approximately equal share—of any particular good or of all goods in the world. By definition, no one can have a right to something that it is impossible—under any realistic set of circumstances—to guarantee them. The most they can have is permission to attain those goods if they can do so within the rules of the social game.

All in all, it seems much more perspicuous *not* to speak of rights to equal distributive shares of particular goods nor even of income and wealth, as opposed to speaking of society being structured so that certain sorts of overall divisions of income and wealth can or cannot result from the activities of individuals. It is much better, it seems to me, to demand that persons have *equal access* to social primary goods or an *equal opportunity*—but a substantively and not merely formally equal opportunity—to attain social primary goods. And this, I think, is what Nielsen is really concerned about, and properly so.¹²

¹¹ Ibid., p. 55.
¹² Nielsen's response to this is: "I take Peiffer's point about the mistake of saying that people should have precisely equal shares. What this would be we often cannot ascertain; moreover, a good bit of our wealth comes in public goods which cannot be so parcelled out. What I would argue is that in a society of abundance, where differing needs have been met, just entitlements honored as described above, [and] contribution and desert accounted for, those benefits and burdens [that are] not so hedged in [and, thus, that are capable of being] divided should be divided equally. Equal division is a deep underlying value rooted in our sense of fairness. Where we do not know anything about the individuals in question our sense of what is to be done is to make an equal division but where the differences that I have specified come under our cognizance we also recognize the rights in certain circumstances of departing from an equal division. This, however, is not a departure from the structure of argument in *Equality and Liberty*, but a restatement of it.

"Egalitarians want a society of equals; they want a world in which, as far as this is possible, people will have the same life-prospects and have abundant life-prospects. They do not want a Spartan world where we share out the misery equally. They want a world in which people receive equal treatment though what this comes to is plainly a very contested matter. But I think it should entail that *ab initio* I have no greater or less right to one of the spare kidneys that just happen to be around than you do or anyone else do [does]. In this way it seems to me each has a right—a *prima facie* right—to an equal share of each and every type of good (where it is feasible that they could be so distributed) in the entire world and that a just society, where it can, will protect that right" (*Liberal and Socialist Egalitarianism*, forthcoming).

Thus, while Nielsen concedes some of my points, he is still unwilling to give up his claim that we have a right to an equal share of every type of good in the entire world. Notice, however, that the way he describes the right to spare kidneys makes it sound more like a permission-right than a claim-right. I am arguing only that we do not have claim-rights of this sort; that we have (*prima facie*) permission-rights to acquire by legitimate means any of the world's goods is uncontroversial.
basis of self-respect" into the actual capability to have self-respect (taking note of variation of personal characteristics). 13

However, the most important difference between Nielsen's theory and mine has yet to be addressed. It is that his theory does not accept the Difference Principle in any form and thus would choose a situation of substantially less overall wealth so long as the wealth is divided more nearly equally, even if a feasible alternative distribution having much more overall wealth would not violate constraints concerning self-respect and equal worth of liberty.

Consider Table I: four distributions of a society of 100 families of four, where 95 percent of the families receive a relatively low yearly income and 5 percent receive a relatively high income as indicated. Now make the following assumptions: (1) $20,000 is the minimally decent income level for a family of four in this society; (2) the self-respect of individuals and equal worth of liberty start to be undermined only when income differentials exceed a 1:2 ratio; and (3) there are no other noneconomic differences—such as one distributional state resulting in the society having greater liberty—which are relevant to deciding between them.


Given these assumptions, it seems clear that an unreconstructed version of Rawls' theory—as well as most utilitarian theories—will choose distribution A since it maximizes wealth and (presumably) preference satisfaction while meeting Rawls' Difference Principle. My theory will choose distribution B since it creates the most overall wealth while conforming to the Difference Principle modified to ensure that the values of self-respect and (approximate) equal worth of liberty are not undermined.

Now let us consider which distribution Nielsen's theory would choose. For our purposes let us assume that each distribution meets all of the other provisions of his theory. Let us first consider only the first three distributions. Nielsen's theory would presumably choose C because it most closely approximates strict equality (of the first three, that is). But this, it seems to me, is unreasonable since (based on our assumptions) distribution B creates more overall wealth and presumably preference satisfaction without undermining people's self-respect or the principle of (approximately) equal worth of liberty. Why should we choose less rather than more social wealth when it will not violate these constraints? Even more telling against this part of Nielsen's theory, however, is that when all four distributions are considered, his theory will choose distribution D even though everyone is worse off under this distribution.

The first line of defense Nielsen could raise here is that in comparison to D, the other distributional states allow for unjustifiable differentials of power. Since such power differentials are a bad thing from an egalitarian point of view, the argument would go, we must choose D. While I agree that the existence of significant power differentials among people is a bad thing and to be avoided, I do not think that this, in and of itself, weighs in favor of choosing distribution D (or even C) over B in this hypothetical scenario, or that it weighs in favor of choosing Nielsen's theory over mine. As
to the scenario, it is specified that there are no noneconomic differences relevant to deciding between the distributions so, by hypothesis, there are no (significant) differentials of power. More importantly, it is specified that distribution B has not equaled the 1:2 differential in income (and wealth) required for self-respect or equal worth of liberty to be seriously undermined. Since these goods—especially the good of equal worth of liberty—are undermined when there are significant differences in power, the scenario has been set up to show that no significant differences in power exist in any distribution but A. (However, we should keep in mind that it is only reasonable to require approximate as opposed to strict equality in the worth of liberty.)

In general, it seems to me that my theory is at least as effective as Nielsen’s in terms of not allowing significant differentials of power. The demand for (approximately) equal worth of liberty and the demand that the good of self-respect not be seriously undermined already go a long way toward disallowing significant power differentials. In addition, my Substantive Equal Opportunity Principle—especially the part demanding social and economic as well as political democracy—also obviates the possibility of significant differentials of power.

Nielsen may reply that we must choose D because not to do so is to undermine equal moral autonomy. But it is not clear what this notion of moral autonomy comes to. It is clear that Nielsen is not referring to the Kantian notion of moral autonomy having to do with the distinction between the autonomy and the heteronomy of the will. It is also clear that Nielsen’s notion is not identical to the idea of participatory autonomy (or freedom as self-determination), i.e., the idea of having control of one’s life in the sense of having a say in social decisions that affect one’s life. Nielsen’s notion of moral autonomy—with its allied talk of one’s moral person being assaulted when it is not observed—is obviously closely tied to the notions of self-respect and the social basis of self-respect, but it is not clear (to me, at any rate) whether this is all his notion of moral autonomy comes to. If it is, then Nielsen and I would not seem to have a substantive disagreement, and it would seem that both our theories will choose distribution B. In other words, to the extent that his notion of moral autonomy has to do with the notion of self-respect, my theory already provides for it; to the extent that

his notion goes beyond the notion of self-respect, I see no reason to accept his demand for more material equality than is necessary to ensure that self-respect (and approximately equal worth of liberty) not be undermined by social conditions.

One final difficulty with Nielsen’s theory is that he refuses to arrange his principles in order of lexical priority. But it seems quite plausible that persons—within or without the original position—will be more concerned to assure themselves that their basic security and subsistence rights will be respected than with any other value and will prefer the value of negative liberty over that of participatory autonomy. Finally, it seems to me that they will hold all of these values more dear than that of equality as expressed in a Difference or Modified Difference Principle of distributive justice.

Although I have (naturally) concentrated on what I take to be the objectionable features of Nielsen’s theory, I would like to stress the fact that our theories are more in agreement than not. Nielsen and I also agree that an egalitarian or even moderately egalitarian theory of social justice will choose socialism (i.e., a democratic, self-managing form of socialism) over any other form of society possible under historical conditions of moderate scarcity. It is, in fact, my view that socialism is preferable on this or any other egalitarian (or nearly egalitarian) theory of social justice, given the truth of only a minimal set of Marxist empirical theses. It is to this issue that we now turn.

Social Justice and Marxist Empirical Theory

It is obvious that the theory of social justice I am here putting forward is not a specifically Marxist moral theory. This should not be surprising. Not even Marx’s implicit moral theory per se is a specifically Marxist theory. There is, in fact, no such thing as a specifically Marxist moral theory. There is, however, such a thing as a specifically Marxist moral and social theory, i.e., a theory which combines a moral theory with a set of empirical, social-scientific theses in order to judge alternative sets of social arrangements, pro

---

14 See Nielsen, Equality and Liberty, pp. 84, 88-92, and “Radically Egalitarian Justice.”

15 The position I am criticizing here is the one taken by Nielsen in his book Equality and Liberty. In some of his more recent writings he has modified his theory in ways that meet these objections or at least come close to meeting them. In the passage from his more recent “Liberal and Socialist Egalitarianism” (already quoted in n. 12) he claims that egalitarians “do not want a Spartan world where we share in the misery equally.” However, a recent restatement of his principles of social justice, in his article “Autonomy and Justice,” would still seem at least to allow (and possibly demand) the choice of distributions C and D over B.
grams, and policies. In fact, any moral and social theory that utilizes a recognizably Marxist set of empirical, social-scientific theses and supports a recognizably Marxist set of normative political positions qualifies as a Marxist moral and social theory.

Since there is no uniquely Marxist moral theory and no reason Marxists automatically ought to accept Marx's implicit moral theory as either definitive or correct, there will be as many different Marxist moral and social theories as there are moral theories that Marxists wish to combine with their empirical assumptions. Furthermore, there may be a considerable divergence among Marxists as to which empirical, social-scientific theses within the Marxist tradition are both relevant and true. But the real goal, of course, is not simply to develop a Marxist moral and social theory but to develop an adequate moral and social theory, i.e., one based on an adequate moral theory, on the one hand, and a true set of social-scientific theories, on the other. (Naturally, Marxists believe that the set of true social-scientific theories will be drawn largely from the Marxist tradition.)

If there is no set of Marxist empirical theses that meets these conditions, then, of course, the project of developing an adequate Marxist moral and social theory is doomed. The truly monumental political questions of the day, it seems to me, turn on the truth or falsity of the Marxist's analysis of capitalism and the present world situation. If this analysis is essentially correct, then the Marxist's basic normative political positions will be justified; if it is essentially incorrect, then in all probability these normative political positions will not be justified. These positions, you will recall, are that (1) socialism (i.e., democratic, self-managing socialism) is morally preferable to any feasible form of capitalism and to any other form of society possible in the present historical epoch (e.g., bureaucratic state-socialism), and (2) socialist revolution—if necessary and sufficient to effect the appropriate transformations—is prima facie morally justified. (Although there exist many kinds of capitalist society in terms of the type of government that prevails and there might be different types of state-socialist societies, at least in the sense that some of them will be more bureaucratic and/or repressive than others, I take these three forms of society—capitalism, state-socialism, and democratic, self-managing socialism—to be exhaustive of the basic types of society possible in this historical epoch.)

In what follows I shall first defend these normative political positions and then attempt to comment briefly on the empirical theses I have utilized in doing so. (That is, I shall delimit the minimal set of Marxist empirical assumptions of which I have previously spoken.) I shall not try to prove that these Marxist empirical theses are correct. Rather, I shall attempt to show which of them must be essentially correct in order for the Marxist's basic normative political positions to be justified. At this point I shall be painting a picture in fairly broad strokes: I shall not argue for the truth of the empirical theses put forward, nor shall I argue for the pedigree of the theses or the normative political positions I take them to support. Although it seems to me that they flow from the Classical Marxist tradition, I shall not argue the point here.16

Determining whether the first normative position is justified is simply a matter of determining whether democratic, self-managing socialism meets the four principles espoused by our theory of social justice better than any feasible form of capitalism or any form of state-socialism. One of the most important Marxist empirical theses I will be utilizing is precisely that a democratic, self-managing socialist society is a real historical possibility. However, since many will deny this, another important question is whether capitalism is morally preferable to state-socialism if these are the only real choices open to us. A further complication is that our judgments may vary depending on whether we are speaking of an advanced, industrialized society or a developing society. Therefore, in reference to advanced, industrialized societies I shall consider (A) the choice between democratic, self-managing socialism and capitalism; (B) the choice between democratic, self-managing socialism and state-socialism; and (C) the choice between capital-

16 As noted in the introduction, I take the major figures of the Classical Marxist tradition to be Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg, Trotsky, and Gramsci. Contemporary Marxist political theorists whom I believe to be representative of the Classical Marxist tradition, and whom I believe would agree with much of what I say in this chapter, include Ernest Mandel, Ralph Miliband, Perry Anderson, Mihailo Marković, Svetozar Stojanović, and Roy Medvedev. (See references in the bibliography.) Although Alasdair MacIntyre probably never accepted enough of Marxist empirical theory to be classified as a Marxist, some of his early works are clearly sympathetic to the normative political positions of Classical Marxism. See Marxism and Christianity, and his essays on politics and political philosophy in part one of Against the Self-Image of the Age.

I suspect that Noam Chomsky also would agree with most of the basic normative political positions for which I argue in this chapter, even though he is a self-proclaimed libertarian (i.e., left-wing) anarchist and, as such, is opposed in principle to certain Marxist claims having to do with the long-term legitimacy of a socialist state (since the state, for anarchists, is inherently evil) and the justifiability of a democratic-centralist—in short, Marxist-Leninist—political party. (Anarchists are highly critical of any form of centralized power, even one that proclaims itself to be both democratic and temporary.) But see the references to Chomsky's works below, all of which provide unrelenting critiques of both contemporary capitalist and contemporary state-socialist societies.
ism and state-socialism. With reference to the developing nations, I shall consider (D) the choice between revolutionary, post-capitalist societies (such as the People’s Republic of China, Cuba, and—potentially—Nicaragua) and capitalism.

These issues cannot be intelligently decided, of course, unless we specify what sort of capitalist society we have in mind, as well as the severity of the violation of civil liberties and political rights in the state-socialist society we have in mind. Obviously, our choice will differ depending on whether we accept fascist Germany or contemporary Sweden as our model of capitalism, as well as on whether we accept Stalinist Russia of the 1930s or, say, contemporary Hungary as our model of state-socialism. In addition, these issues cannot be fully joined unless we bring both diachronic and international factors into consideration. Therefore, we shall have to consider variations of such societies along two parameters: (1) the tendencies of each of these types of society to change in certain ways over time, and (2) the relations of these types of societies to other societies that may exist (in particular, the developing societies of the Third World).

In attempting to come to terms with these issues within the framework of Classical Marxism, we will do well to keep in mind its claim that communism—or, for our purposes, democratic, self-managing socialism—can exist as a stable and continuing structure only on a worldwide scale, i.e., only in the absence of major capitalist powers that otherwise will attempt to undermine it economically and/or militarily. Thus the ultimate normative political position of Classical Marxism would seem to be that we are obligated to work toward the creation of a worldwide federation of democratic, self-managing socialist societies. After all, if democratic, self-managing socialism is to be preferred within an individual society then—barring any ill effects of their amalgamation—a worldwide system of such societies is to be preferred to any other historically possible world scenario. And far from having ill effects, Marxists maintain that a worldwide system of such societies will be the only insurance the world has against incessant war, international distributive injustices, the lack of cooperation in solving environmental and demographic problems, etc.

A. Democratic, Self-Managing Socialism vs. Capitalism

Given the theory of social justice advanced in the present chapter, it seems quite clear that a truly democratic, self-managing socialist society will be preferable to any historically possible form of capitalist society, even a capitalist society such as Sweden, which most of us, I think, will agree meets the principles of our theory of social justice as well or better than any capitalist society now extant and perhaps as well as any capitalist society can be expected to meet them. In brief, the reason a democratic, self-managing socialist society would be judged morally preferable is that while both sorts of society would meet the first two principles (the protection of basic rights to well-being and maximum equal liberty), a socialist society would quite probably better meet principles three and four. In reference to the third (equal opportunity) principle, though Swedish government-owned corporations like Volvo have introduced a certain amount of worker participation into the labor process, even these industries do not allow for genuine workers’ democracy or, arguably, even as much of it as currently exists in many self-managed enterprises in Yugoslavia. Since a genuinely democratic, self-managing socialist society presumably will have a much greater degree of workers’ self-management than present-day Yugoslavia, it would seem, based on this criterion, superior to Sweden or any “Swedishized” capitalist society.

As to the fourth principle, it must be kept in mind that while income differentials will exist in a socialist society, such a society—by hypothesis—will not be one in which systems of bureaucratic privilege exist. Since property is socially owned, neither will there exist the great differences in investment wealth (and income) that exist in capitalist societies. Although Sweden probably meets principle four as well or better than any other capitalist society, due to its extremely progressive taxation scheme and extensive welfare transfer programs, the investment wealth and, to a lesser extent, income are still severely skewed toward the Swedish capitalist class and, in particular, the famous “fifteen families.”

17 For some relevant data and analyses concerning contemporary Sweden on this point, as well as the degree of social and economic democracy existing there, see the articles collected in Limits of the Welfare State: Critical Views on Post-War Sweden (J. A. Fry, ed.). According to the endnotes of Lennart Bernsten’s “Post-War Swedish Capitalism,” in recent years, “The accumulation and concentration of wealth in the hands of Sweden’s top fifteen families has continued and with government approval and support the number of annual mergers has increased. The position of finance capital in the Swedish economy has always been strong with the fifteen leading families clustered around three major banks [two of which have recently merged]. During recent years these financial institutions have extended their control over the more expansive sectors of industry both in monopoly and non-monopoly . . . controlled branches” (Limits of the Welfare State, p. 87). According to Stig Larsson and Kurt Sjöström in “The Welfare Myth in Class Society,” “In general, no . . . income levelling [between social classes] has occurred in Sweden (with the exception of temporary phenomena). Even those who earlier tried to conceal class cleavages have been forced to concede their continued exis-
**TOtWARD A MORAL AND SOCIAL THEORY**

capitalist society such as the U.S.A. would be incontrovertible only if we failed to take diachronic and international factors into consideration. (This issue is discussed later in this chapter.)

B. Democratic, Self-Managing Socialism vs. State-Socialism

Democratic, self-managing socialism is also quite obviously morally preferable to state-socialism. Even if they both were to meet the first principle concerning the protection of basic rights to well-being, a democratic, self-managing socialist society would almost undoubtedly better meet principles two, three, and four. By definition, democratic, self-managing socialist societies protect civil liberties and instantiate not only political but also social and economic democracy; by definition, state-socialist societies do not. Thus the former will better meet principles two and three. Furthermore, while the former, by hypothesis, will not have a privileged bureaucracy, the latter—as a matter of both definition and empirical fact—do. Thus democratic, self-managing socialism will probably better meet principle four as well.

**M A R X I S M A N D S O C I A L J U S T I C E**

Since such a democratic, self-managing socialist society meets the first two principles as well as the best capitalist societies and meets the last two principles better, it must be judged morally superior. It does not, however, immediately follow that socialist revolution would be justified to transform a capitalist society like Sweden into a democratic, self-managing socialist society since, presumably, revolutions are justified only if the injustices of a society surpass certain limits (more on this presently). We should also keep in mind, of course, that the Swedish capitalist economy is part and parcel of the international capitalist economy and, as such, participates in the super-exploitation of the Third World.18

But even if a democratic, self-managing socialist society is morally preferable to any form of capitalism, the choice, many will maintain, is between such historically existing societies as the United States and the Soviet Union, and—it is argued—we must decide in favor of democratic capitalism over "totalitarian communism." The answer to this, it seems to me, is (1) this is not the choice facing us; (2) even if it were, the choice of a democratic cap-


Although this phenomenon is most well studied and well documented with respect to the Soviet Union and other Eastern European post-capitalist societies, it is clear that such privileged bureaucracies also exist (to one degree or another) in the People's Republic of China and other Third World post-capitalist societies. Cuba and Nicaragua, however, may be the least bureaucratized of all presently existing post-capitalist societies. One reason for this might be that they are among the most recently created post-capitalist societies. Perhaps an even more important reason, however, is that their anti-capitalist revolutions were not led by (already) Stalinized Communist Parties but by indigenous revolutionary socialist parties that either absorbed the smaller Communist Party after the revolution (as in the case of Castro's July 26th Movement in Cuba) or simply ignored it (as in the case of the Sandinista Party in Nicaragua). (These factors also may help account for the fact that both the leadership and the general population of these societies seem to exhibit the highest degree of revolutionary fervor to be found among presently existing post-capitalist societies. This, in turn, may account for the U.S. government's special antipathy toward them.)

The more interesting question concerns the view that the Classical Marxist tradition would (or should) take of presently existing post-capitalist societies. This is certainly one of the most controversial and divisive issues within the Marxist tradition as a whole. As pointed out previously, various Marxists describe these societies as communist (i.e., the higher stage of communism), as socialist (having reached the first stage of communism), as bureaucratic-centralist, as state-capitalist, and as state-socialist. As expressed throughout this work, it is my contention that these societies should be described as "state-socialist." Such societies are quite obviously not stateless, coercionless societies based on material superabundance. Therefore, they are not communist societies. Neither are they democratic enough to be classified as socialist societies (or, in Marx's words, as the first stage of communism). It would be in specious to classify them as "state-capitalist" societies because they do not have classes of capitalists who can transfer investment wealth to their descendants, nor do such societies operate according to capitalist economic law of motion (i.e., according to the law of the maximization of exchange value). Finally, it would be misleading to classify them (along with fascist societies like Nazi Germany) as "bureaucratic-centralist" societies because this description ignores the fact that—unlike fascist societies—they have abolished capitalist production relations and successfully substituted the maximization of use value for the maximization of exchange value as the dominant economic law of motion.

More important than the label we attach to such societies are the normative political positions that seem to flow from the above descriptions. If the Marxist tradition is correct in its assertions that (1) capitalism is the chief cause of the world's social and economic problems and thus that capitalism must be eliminated on a worldwide scale in order to solve these problems and (2) the USSR and other so-called "communist countries" have eliminated capitalism,

Actually, since the process of socializing large-scale productive property has not to date been completed in Nicaragua, it is not quite accurate to classify it as a post-capitalist society. But it seems clear that barring the success of the U.S. policy of overthrowing the Sandinista government or completely bankrupting the Nicaraguan economy in order to ferment massive popular discontent and, thus, an internal revolt against the Sandinistas, Nicaragua eventually will complete the process of socialization of large-scale productive property and, thus, become a full-fledged post-capitalist society. (This does not mean that the Sandinista government will not let some productive enterprises remain in private hands or that they will not continue to rely on market mechanisms to some extent but, as argued in the Introduction to this work, this would not necessarily count against classifying such a society as post-capitalist or even socialist.)

TOWARD A MORAL AND SOCIAL THEORY

then whatever their drawbacks might be it would seem likely that a reversion to capitalism within such societies would be a major blow to the goal of developing a worldwide federation of democratic, self-managing socialist societies. Hence, it would seem that even though proponents of the tradition of Classical Marxism ought consistently to explain that state-socialist societies are not yet truly socialist and ought to call for implementation of democratic political, social, and economic institutions in such societies by evolutionary or, if necessary, revolutionary means, they ought also consistently to explain why such post-capitalist societies must be defended against the ideological, political, economic, and military attacks of the capitalist world. (Note that the revolutions in question would change the political and other decision-making superstructures rather than production relations—i.e., the economic substructure—and thus are classified by the Classical Marxist tradition as political rather than social revolutions.)

At the present time, as I am going over the copy edited version of this work, the student-led movement for greater freedom and democracy and less corruption on part of the privileged bureaucracy in China has just been brutally suppressed by the Chinese government. UPI has reported that the Red Cross in China estimated that 1400 people were killed and thousands wounded when the 27th Army cleared Tiananmen Square of demonstrators and restored order, which had effectively been under the control of the students and the local population, who had surrounded and convinced numerous army units not to participate in the suppression in the previous days. (Other estimates in the Western press range from 400 to 3,000 deaths.) Presently hundreds of students and workers who had supported them are being rounded up, imprisoned, beaten, forced to recant, and—in some cases—executed. There are reports that at least two generals and fifty officers from other army units that refused to participate in the bloody crackdown have also been executed.

Chinese government officials are now attempting to convince their own citizens (and anyone in the outside world willing to listen to them) that this mass movement on the part of students and workers was, in fact, a counterrevolutionary movement aimed at the overthrow of both the Communist Party and socialist property relations. The evidence, however, shows rather convincingly that this movement was not aimed at a social revolution to change property relations—i.e., at a reversion to capitalism—but, rather, at a political revolution to establish socialist democracy. (Actually, it is probably somewhat misleading to say that it was aimed at any sort of revolution, since the movement demanded only a dialogue with top government officials, publication of government leaders' assets and salaries, greater freedom of the press and other democratic rights, and price controls on consumer goods in the face of high inflation.) Assuming this analysis is basically correct, this is precisely the type of movement that Marxists and all those in favor of democratic socialism ought to advocate and support.

Not surprisingly, many capitalist politicians and ideologues in the West have hypocritically shed crocodile tears over Tiananmen Square while simultaneously supporting such brutally repressive, anti-democratic governments as those in Taiwan, South Korea, Chile, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. These figures, together with much of the bourgeois media in the West, have also trumpeted these
MARISSM AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

In light of these considerations, it seems necessary to add two further positions to our list of the Classical Marxist's basic normative political positions, namely, that (3) political revolutions are justified in contemporary post-capitalist societies if, and only if, they are both necessary and sufficient to achieve genuinely democratic forms of socialism in those societies, and (4) contemporary post-capitalist societies—even though they, by no stretch of the imagination, meet the criteria of the Classical Marxists for being socialist societies in that they lack democratic institutions of workers' self-management—must be supported and defended in their struggles with capitalist and especially imperialist powers—except perhaps under extremely unusual circumstances.

C. State-Socialism vs. Capitalism

To decide between a capitalist and a state-socialist society we must specify what form of capitalism we have in mind as well as the degree of repression that exists in the state-socialist society. While this may seem to beg the question against state-socialist societies on the issue of the existence of repression, it is merely a definitional point: if a post-capitalist society is neither undemocratic nor repressive, then it is a genuinely socialist rather than a state-socialist society.

Since choosing between the worst-known form of capitalism events as signaling the "revolt against communism" and the "demise of socialism" rather than describing them as attempts to establish a more democratic and, therefore, more viable form of socialism. (That most of these individuals would not support pro-democracy movements in state-socialist societies if they really thought they would succeed can presumably be deduced from the fact that if such movements did succeed in transforming state-socialist societies into democratic, self-managing socialist societies, then these capitalist politicians and ideologues would lose their main argument for the superiority of capitalism—namely, that socialist property relations are incompatible with freedom and democracy—as well as their main rationale for savagely repressing anti-capitalist movements and/or installing pro-capitalist dictatorships around the world.) I would argue that while there is no evidence for the view that these events forebode a return to capitalism, they do seem to confirm the hypothesis that the entrenched bureaucracies in most state-socialist societies are not about to give up their privileges and their monopolies on political power without a serious struggle. (For an analysis of the political bureaucracy in China, see P'eng Shu-te, "The Chinese Communist Party in Power," Pathfinder Press, N.Y., 1980; Tom Kerry, The Mao Myth and the Legacy of Stalinism in China, Pathfinder Press, N.Y., 1977; and Leslie Evans, China After Mao, Pathfinder Press, N.Y., 1978. For a brief analysis of the recent events in China from the perspective of those Marxists in favor of democratic socialism, see Cliff DuRand, "Only through Socialism Can Full Democracy Be Realized: China's Socialists Have One Last Chance," The Guardian [N.Y.], June 21, 1989.)

TOWARD A MORAL AND SOCIAL THEORY

(say, Nazi Germany of the 1930s and 1940s) and the worst form of state-socialism (say, Stalinist Russia of the late 1920s and the 1930s) is neither palatable nor enlightening. I shall for the present limit my discussion to presently existing forms of capitalism and state-socialism (both of which, I will assume, meet the first principle). It seems clear that so long as this choice is made in isolation from diachronic and international factors, a Swedenized form of advanced, industrialized capitalism is morally preferable to a state-socialist society because it better meets the second (maximum equal liberty) principle and at least the second part of the third principle, i.e., the part calling for political democracy. Similarly, in a decision between less egalitarian democratic capitalist societies (e.g., the contemporary U.S.A.) and state-socialist societies (e.g., the contemporary USSR), one would have to choose the former on precisely the same grounds—again, so long as the decision is made in isolation from diachronic and international considerations.

Attending to such diachronic and international considerations will quite probably not substantially weaken the case for preferring Sweden to state-socialist societies. Even though Swedish capital is, in part, international capital, Sweden has a relatively nonaggressive, egalitarian, and humanitarian foreign policy. However, attending to these factors will almost undoubtedly weaken the case for preferring such capitalist societies as the United States to state-socialist societies. Any such decision would also, of course, be contingent upon an analysis of the international and diachronic dimensions of contemporary state-socialist societies, in particular, their relations with other countries and their own potential for change toward a democratic form of socialism.

As to the first (diachronic) factor, it is an assumption of the Classical Marxist tradition that class struggle in capitalist societies is inevitable (or at least highly likely) and that capitalist societies such as the United States may well degenerate into dictatorial forms of government during the future course of this struggle. Although the claim that even hitherto stable capitalist democracies will quite possibly become authoritarian may at first seem outlandish, the historical evidence concerning the rise of fascism—as analyzed by Trotsky and others—points in another direction.21

21 See Trotsky's The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany and The Spanish Revolution (1931–39); Daniel Guerin, Fascism and Big Business, Pathfinder Press, N.Y., 1973; Poulettzaas, Fascism and Dictatorship; Rupert Palme Dutt, Fascism and Social Revolution, Proletarian Press, N.Y., 1936; Franz Neumann, Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism (1933–1944), Harper & Row, N.Y., 1944; and David
M ARXISM AND S OCIAL J USTICE

In fact, the Marxist assessment of fascism as the ultimate defense of capitalism is an important empirical thesis in Marxism's defense of its normative political positions. Although this analysis is much disputed, it seems quite plausible that at least certain components of the capitalist class and the power elite that serves its interests will fight fervently for such a “solution” (i.e., a military dictatorship or fascist regime) if a revolutionary workers’ movement actually begins to develop into a significant ‘threat.’ And Marxists—as opposed to some other sorts of socialists—are generally in agreement that not even the most prosperous and/or powerful capitalist society can keep the lid on the class struggle indefinitely. The logic of capitalism, so it is argued, will eventually lead to the capitalist class attempting to drive down the relative (and perhaps absolute) proportion of the surplus social product consumed by the working class and other subordinate classes, and this—conjoined with all of the other economic, social, and political crises of capitalism—will eventually lead to the radicalization of at least significant parts of these subordinate classes.

Furthermore, as pointed out in the previous discussion of the choice between democratic, self-managing socialism and state-socialism, another thesis of the Classical Marxist tradition is that there can be a democratic, self-managing form of socialism. A correlative thesis is that presently existing state-socialist societies—as well as presently existing capitalist societies—can by either evolutionary or revolutionary means be transformed into democratic, self-managing socialist societies. On this analysis, post-capitalist societies can, in the long run, also be expected to meet the second and third principles better than capitalist systems. Thus our theory of social justice will choose them as morally preferable. Ultimately, of course, the Marxist tradition demands that any real comparison be made on a world scale since it is assumed that capitalist and post-capitalist societies are incompatible and cannot indefinitely coexist. But if the above analysis is correct, the choice facing the human species is not between bourgeois parliamentary democracy and “totalitarian communism,” as many bourgeois polemics and ideologues maintain, but—in the final analysis—between some form (perhaps, in time, an extremely democratic form) of socialism and some form (perhaps an extremely undemocratic or even a totalitarian form) of capitalism.

ties—and especially a global post-capitalist society—will violate more basic rights to well-being than their capitalist counterparts due to torture, executions, and slave-labor camps. If this were true, then capitalism would be morally preferable to such post-capitalist societies. Abuses often cited are from 1930s Stalinist Russia: the massacre of millions of rich peasants and forced collectivization of the peasantry, the ruthless elimination of all political opposition both inside and outside the Communist Party, the Gulag Archipelago, etc. Although it is beyond the purview of this work to attempt a systematic assessment of the development of the Soviet Union and other post-capitalist societies, some relatively plausible assertions made by non-Stalinist Marxists are: (1) such policies have no basis within the tradition of Classical Marxism, and it is of the utmost importance to distinguish Stalin and Stalinism from Marx and Marxism;23 (2) the grain strike against the state, which led to Stalin’s “liquidation” of the kulaks in the early 1930s, could in all probability have been avoided if the left opposition’s program of gradual, voluntary collectivization and the prevention of the formation and solidification of a class of rich peasants had been accepted in the 1920s; (3) the abhorrent policies of the Soviet Union and other post-capitalist societies have largely resulted from the process of modernization and industrialization, which economically advanced capitalist societies had already undergone over a longer period of time, though not necessarily at less expense in terms of human misery;24 (4) it was precisely the economic and political backwardness of the Soviet Union that resulted in its eventual degeneration into a totalitarian society; and (5) despite continued violation of civil rights and lack of democracy in the Soviet Union and other (now industrialized and modernized) post-capitalist societies, the past practices of mass executions, torture, and slave-labor camps have either been eliminated or severely curtailed.25 Furthermore, it is arguable that capitalist rather than post-capitalist societies are today the worst violators of human rights.26 Thus, rather than “communism” or Marxism being the primary cause of human-rights violations, as is often claimed, a strong case can be made for the view that today capitalism is the primary cause (more on this presently).

Although there is much talk of the “imperialism” of post-capitalist societies (as in “Soviet-socialist imperialism”), it is arguable that whatever state-socialist societies do to further their geopolitical interests, these interests are qualitatively different from those of capitalist societies. The geopolitical interests of capitalist powers like the United States (or, more precisely, the interests of the ruling classes and their allies within such societies) lie in maintaining what Noam Chomsky and others describe as a “favorable investment climate.” This is because the laws of motion of capitalism demand an ever-expanding increase of capitalist investment and thus an ever-increasing penetration of the developing countries. Post-capitalist societies, however, are not subject to the same economic law of motion (namely, that of the maximization of exchange value or, more loosely, profit) and do not have the same...

23 The claim that the violence against the Soviet population perpetrated by the Stalinist regime can be laid at the door of Marxist theory or values is debatable, to say the least. The Classical Marxists—including Lenin and Trotsky—never thought that the Soviet Union could, by itself, achieve a lasting democratic form of socialism but, rather, pinned their hopes on the spread of the socialist revolution to the industrialized West, especially to Germany. They neither thought necessary nor advocated the terrorist policies or methods here mentioned. Trotsky puts this in perspective when he writes: “Stalinism . . . is an immense bureaucratic reaction against the proletariat dictatorship in a backward and isolated country. The October Revolution abolished privileges, waged war against social inequality, replaced the bureaucracy with self-government of the toilers, abolished secret diplomacy, strove to render all social relationships completely transparent. Stalinism re-established the most offensive forms of privileges, imbued inequality with a provocative character, strangled mass self-activity under police absolutism, transformed administration into a monopoly of the Kremlin oligarchy and regenerated the leishdom of power in forms that absolute monarchy dared not dream of. Stalinist frame-ups are not a fruit of Bolshevik ‘amoralism’; no, like all important events in history, they are a product of the concrete social struggle, and the most pernicious and severest of all at that: the struggle of a new aristocracy against the masses that raised it to power.”

“Verily boundless intellectual and moral obtuseness is required to identify the reactionary police morality of Stalinism with the revolutionary morality of the Bolsheviks!” (Their Morals and Ours, p. 25).

economic interests or relations with developing countries. Although presently existing post-capitalist societies are interested in striking the best economic deals possible with such countries and often in supporting “friendly regimes,” and—to a limited extent—supporting anti-capitalist movements around the world, they are not forced to maintain a favorable investment climate on an international scale. In short, unlike the imperialist capitalist powers, they are not compelled to undertake the role of maintaining a favorable economic status quo in every far-flung quarter of the world.

In addition, while we in the West (and especially in the United States) are told virtually every day of the “Soviet threat” and “international communist conspiracy,” it is arguably the case that it is the United States that is committed to massive war expenditures and active military intervention around the world in order to protect “American interests” and “American security,” i.e., to protect the right of the Western capitalist economy to have at its disposal favorable investment opportunities. It is also arguably the case that it is not the “international communist conspiracy” but the conditions of abject poverty and permanent misery engendered by capitalism in almost all (capitalist) developing countries that lead to indigenous revolutionary movements. In short, it is arguably capitalism rather than “communism,” and the United States rather than the USSR that is the main instigator of the arms race, the basic cause of revolutionary movements, and the primary aggressor in the world today.27


29 Of course, one can easily be (mis)led to the opposite conclusion. If one reads and/or watched only American mainstream news sources, one might think that the Sandinista government indulges in torture and execution of political opponents on a massive scale, while such U.S.-supported governments as those in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, and U.S.-supported movements like the Contras have a relatively good record in this respect. (After all, President Reagan called the Contras the “moral equivalent of our Founding Fathers,” while Secretary of State George Schultz characterized the Sandinista government as the closest thing to Nazi Germany we now have!) But if one bothers to consult the reports of Amnesty International or any other well-known human rights monitoring group, one will find that the truth is quite the opposite. While there have been a few isolated cases of Sandinista security forces torturing and killing suspected Contra...
powers are willing to take in order to preserve the world capitalist order and a favorable investment climate in the Third World hardly need be mentioned. In addition to direct military intervention, such powers use their control of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to deny offending countries needed loans (and prop up right-wing dictatorships and friendly Third World “democracies”); engage in economic boycotts; give tactical and material support to the military and the secret police (and thus the right-wing death squads) of “loyal” countries; and directly employ their own secret police (e.g., the CIA) to fix elections, undermine economies, assassinate opposing parties, etc.

Thus anti-capitalist revolutions in developing countries may be sympathizers in the war zones and while prisoners are sometimes beaten or isolated in dark cells in present-day Nicaragua, there is no evidence of the systematic use of torture against political prisoners by the Sandinistas. But there is copious evidence of the most brutal forms of torture being systematically utilized against political opponents by the above-named U.S.-backed regimes. Similarly, while these U.S.-backed regimes systematically extrajudicially execute or “disappear” political opponents, the Sandinista government does not. In fact, the Sandinistas abolished the death penalty when they took power and refused to execute even known torturers among Somosa’s national guardsmen whom they took prisoner. The U.S.-backed Somosa dictatorship, which was overthrown by the Sandinistas had, of course, an abysmal record on both scores. Moreover, the torture and extrajudicial executions now reported by human rights groups in Nicaragua are almost exclusively carried out by the Contras rather than the Sandinistas. (Most of the isolated incidents mentioned above have been investigated by the Sandinista government with the result that a number of Sandinista army officers and soldiers have been found guilty in these incidents and are now serving up to thirty years in prison.)


the only effective way to ensure the subsistence rights of all of the people as well as the only way—at least in many cases—to eliminate the wholesale violation of basic security rights. Even among Third World capitalist countries that currently have democratic governments, there is no guarantee that they will remain democratic: if installing right-wing dictatorships comes to be in the interest of the national oligarchy and/or the world capitalist system (and its component capitalist classes and associated power elites), then it is quite likely that such right-wing dictatorships will be installed, or at least that there will be an attempt to install such dictatorships. (Here one need only recall the overthrow of the democratically elected Allende government in Chile and its replacement by the United States-backed Pinochet dictatorship.) Even when civilian governments are formally in power, it is commonly conceded that the military oligarchy holds the real reins of power and that it unflinchingly supports the interests of that society’s capitalist class and landed aristocracy.

If post-capitalist societies are the only type of societies that can guarantee subsistence rights in the Third World and, in many cases, the only way to stop the massive violation of security rights carried out by such right-wing dictatorships, then they are morally preferable to capitalist societies in the Third World. Furthermore, since we are dealing with the basic human rights here, anti-capitalist revolutions are justified in such countries. °

Although some will argue that such post-capitalist societies are not morally preferable because they violate the second (maximum equal liberty) principle and also the second half of the third principle (concerning political democracy), the answer to this is that (1) fulfillment of the first principle takes precedence over any of the other principles; (2) the violations of these principles by revolutionary regimes in the Third World are often overestimated and, in fact, the vast majority of the populations of such Third World

° The only exception might be in a case like the anti-capitalist revolution in Kampuchea, which apparently led to the Pol Pot regime’s direct and indirect killing of a substantial portion of its own populace. It should be noted, however, that some writers claim that the number of Cambodians who died by execution or starvation due to Pol Pot’s policies is substantially less than reported by most Western writers. See Francois Ponchaud, *Cambodia: Year Zero*, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, N.Y., 1978; and Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, *After the Cataclysm* (previously cited). In any event, the crimes of Pol Pot can hardly be laid at the door of Classical Marxism since they were the result of insane (and non-Marxist) policies carried out by a thoroughly Stalinized party in the context of the United States’ massive and prolonged imperialist war, which engulfed and disrupted the entire region of Southeast Asia.
nations as China, Cuba, and Nicaragua now have much more control over their lives than they did when they lived in a capitalist system; (3) as these societies continue to develop, and the military and economic pressure of the imperialist capitalist powers eases, they will probably make even more progress toward democratization; and (4) the only realistic alternatives to such post-capitalist societies in many cases are right-wing regimes whose violation of the second and third principles—not to mention the first—are much worse.

In summary, given the truth of the above empirical views: (1) democratic, self-managing socialism is morally preferable to any form of capitalism and any form of state-socialism, and thus we should strive toward the creation of a worldwide federation of democratic, self-managing socialist societies; (2) although democratic welfare-state capitalist societies are morally preferable to state-socialist societies if the diachronic and international dimensions of the situation are not taken into consideration, once these dimensions are taken into consideration, this is not so clear; (3) although presently existing post-capitalist societies are in need of democratization, their reversion to capitalism would be a horrendous blow to the world socialist revolution, and thus they ought to be defended in face of the aggression of capitalist powers; and (4) anti-capitalist revolutions in the Third World are morally justified even if democratic, self-managing forms of socialism are not historically possible.

Revolution and Marxist Empirical Theory

Before setting out the minimal set of Marxist empirical theses upon which I believe an adequate Marxist moral and social theory should be based, I would like to make a few brief comments concerning the second basic normative political position I have attributed to Classical Marxism, namely, that socialist revolution—if necessary and sufficient to effect the appropriate transformations—is prima facie morally justified. I should make clear from the start that I am

put forward here, because state-socialist societies systematically violate the second and third principles. Those who object to this position may do so because they do not realize that the revolutions (as described) would not change basic production relations or cause a reversion to capitalism but would simply democratize the political and economic institutions of such societies. Or they may do so because they do not believe that such political revolutions are necessary (and/or sufficient) to reach these goals.

If this last claim is true, then of course such revolutions would not be justified. All things being equal, peaceful evolution is always preferable to violent revolution.

Similarly, objections to the Marxist position in favor of socialist revolution in capitalist countries are sometimes based on misinterpretations of what Marxists are advocating. In this connection it is important to realize that for Marx and other Classical Marxists the means that advance socialist revolution are only those that advance the mass movement of the proletariat and its allies. (This is the empirical ground on which all Classical Marxists opposed terrorism as a means of social change.) The Classical Marxist view of revolution is one in which the majority of the population—or at least the majority of the working class and other oppressed segments of the population—is actively committed to radical social change and is forced into the use of violent means to protect themselves and their organizations (e.g., trade unions, workers' parties, and—in revolutionary situations—the popular organs of "dual power" that have begun to function as an alternate government) against the reactionary violence of the official police and military forces and/or fascist gangs or death squads. On this scenario the justification for workers' self-defense of their movements and organizations is essentially of the same sort as the justification that can be given for workers not allowing scabs to cross picket lines during a just labor strike.

An adequate moral theory will certainly prohibit any violence not absolutely essential to a just struggle and may, besides, prohibit certain forms of violence (e.g., torture) under any circumstances. But the means proposed by the Classical Marxists—demonstrations, strikes, picket lines, the active and direct defense by workers and their allies of their organizations and movements, and (in extreme circumstances) rebellion and war—do not differ from the means most liberals (or most other people, for that matter) find permissible when essential for the successful prosecution of a just war or just struggle against oppression. Although Marxists and non-Marxists may well disagree on the correct set of moral principles and/or the correct set of empirical theses involved in making such decisions, the point is that if a relatively egalitarian moral theory and a minimal set of Marxist empirical theses are essentially correct, then the Marxist position on socialist revolution is justified.

I wish now to discuss the minimal set of Marxist empirical theses I have utilized in justifying the Marxist's basic normative political positions. Previously I described three levels of Marx's empirical theories. In decreasing order of abstraction or generality they are: (1) historical materialism, (2) Marx's theory of classes and class conflict, and (3) Marx's more specific economic and sociological theories, including his analysis of the dysfunctions of capitalism and his projections concerning socialism. The theory of historical materialism seeks to account for epochal social transformations by relating the categories of forces of production, relations of production, and the political-legal-ideological superstructure by means of two laws (or statements of lawlike regularities). The 'law' of technological determinism states that the forces of production in some sense determine the relations of production. The 'law' of economic determinism states that the mode of production (i.e., the forces and relations of production taken together) in some sense determines the political-legal-ideological superstructure.

At the next level of abstraction comes Marx’s theory of classes and class struggle. Some of the more important claims here are that (1) all societies having a significant surplus social product are divided into dominant and subordinate (or ruling and ruled) classes on the basis of how these classes of individuals are related to the means of production, (2) the economic interests of these classes are diametrically opposed to one another, and (3) the political-legal-ideological superstructures of such societies almost always support the interests of the dominant class. At the lowest level of abstraction we find the Marxist analysis of such dysfunctions of capitalism as depression, recession, inflation, imperialist wars, and (today) the problem of pollution and environmental destruction.

It is my contention that although historical materialism and Marx’s theory of classes and class struggle (as applied to all surplus social product societies) can be given quite plausible interpretations, it is his theory of classes and class struggle as specifically applied to capitalism, together with the Marxist’s analysis of the social and economic dysfunctions of capitalism and possibilities for post-capitalist societies, that composes the minimal set of Marxist empirical theses necessary to justify the Marxist’s basic normative political positions. While the acceptance of the more abstract components of Marx’s overall empirical theory may well give us more confidence in the lower-level claims, they are in principle dispensable for the justificatory purpose we have in mind.

Some writers hold that at least the “rational kernel” of historical materialism is relevant to or even necessary for the justification of these normative political positions since, the argument goes, this rational kernel is needed to show that socialism is possible. But...

\[\ldots\]

\[\ldots\]

my answer to this is that (1) historical materialism does not show that socialism is possible (at least if we take “socialism” to mean democratic, self-managing socialism) and thus does not ensure that the Marxist’s basic normative political positions are justified, and (2) since 1917 we haven’t needed the theory of historical materialism to show us that at least some stable, ongoing form of post-capitalist society is possible. The point is that we may well have good reason to believe that post-capitalist societies in general and democratic, self-managing socialist societies in particular are historically possible, whether or not some formulation of historical materialism (or of its rational kernel) is tenable.

Similarly, whether Marx’s theory of classes and class struggle can be successfully applied to all specified societies seems irrelevant for our present justificatory purposes. I would venture the opinion that it may not even matter whether Marx’s structural view or Max Weber’s stratification view of classes (or some combination of the two) is ultimately correct so long as it is admitted that, on either account, it is reasonable to speak of dominant and subordinate classes and, in particular, of a ruling class. In fact, if Richard Miller’s analysis is correct, asking whether there is a ruling class is not so much an abstract theoretical question as a practical and strategic political one. If we answer no, we seem to be implying that the less well-off segments of the population can pursue their interests and garner for themselves a fair share of the social wealth by legal and ‘proper’ means, while if we answer yes we seem to be implying the opposite view.\[36\]

Finally, this minimal set of theses will not include certain parts of Marx’s less abstract economic and sociological theory either because they are demonstrably false or because, though plausible, they are irrelevant. The labor theory of value clearly falls into the first camp, while the thesis that there can be a completely classless...

\[\ldots\]
and stateless society under modern conditions would seem to fall into the latter.

Under present historical circumstances this set of assumptions should, I think, include the following sociological and economic claims:

1. As a result of the logic of the maximization of exchange value, all capitalist societies—developed or developing, partially planned or completely unplanned—exhibit and will continue to exhibit certain economic and social problems (inflation, depression, recession, unemployment, poverty, failure to regulate environmental pollution sufficiently, etc.) that can be solved only by the institution of a planned (but not necessarily command) socialist economy.

2. Even the mixed, welfare-state capitalist societies of advanced, industrialized nations of the West exhibit severe social inequalities and—if sufficiently threatened by mass working-class movements for social equality—will almost undoubtedly exhibit severe repression.

3. The world capitalist system causes in the Third World both extreme inequality and suffering, on the one hand, and (often) extremely repressive regimes, on the other.

4. So long as it is dominant or codominant on an international scale, the capitalist system will not allow the massive transfers of capital, technology, and knowledge necessary to solve the Third World’s major social and economic problems.

5. Such conditions in the Third World make for perpetual social instability since those who are severely oppressed and/or deprived will organize and, if necessary, fight to better their condition or “the condition of their peoples.”

6. The predictable response from the most powerful nations at the capitalist “center” (primarily the United States at this point in history and for the foreseeable future) is first to install and/or aid those Third World regimes or military cliques that can best suppress these mass movements for radical social change and, second, if that strategy fails, to intervene either directly with its own military forces or indirectly through proxy armies and “low-intensity warfare.”

7. However else we may characterize contemporary post-capitalist societies, it seems clear that they are not the primary cause of the many indigenous revolutionary movements in the Third World and do not bear the primary responsibility for the nuclear arms race.

8. The bureaucracies of such post-capitalist societies genuinely want to reduce or eliminate arms expenditures in order to better satisfy the consumer appetites of their own populations.

9. Without the economic, diplomatic, and military pressure of the Western capitalist powers, such post-capitalist societies may well achieve significant democratization (by either evolutionary or revolutionary means).

10. Socialist transformations can occur in the advanced industrialized countries of the West, and such transformations can lead to democratic forms of socialism; thus a worldwide federation of democratic, self-managing, socialist societies is a genuine historical possibility.

I am not saying that all of these claims are necessary for justifying the Marxist’s basic normative political positions, although I would assert—barring extremely implausible counter-assertions—that they are jointly sufficient. I put them forward as examples of the sorts of (seemingly plausible) claims that must be true in order for the Marxist’s positions to be justified on any fairly egalitarian theory of social justice. If the vision of the present world social order expressed by this set of claims is not tenable, then, in all probability, neither are the Marxist’s basic normative political positions.

As to the responsibilities of individuals, I here have very little to say. If both a relatively egalitarian theory of social justice (such as the one put forward here) and a minimal set of Marxist empirical assumptions are essentially correct, then our natural duty to support and promote just social institutions (on both a national and international level) would seem to require us to do our fair share in supporting and promoting various working-class and progressive causes within our own societies and, if possible, on an international scale. (Perhaps the most efficient way to support such causes on an international scale is to monitor and, if necessary, alter our own societies’ foreign policy, investment and aid policies, etc.)

In any case, this would seem to include supporting the struggles
of workers and labor unions, the struggles of poor people (and nations) for a just share of the world’s wealth, the struggles of oppressed minorities, and the struggle for the liberation of women, as well as environmentalist movements, anti-nuclear and anti-interventionist movements, and organizations and movements committed to the protection of human rights. If Marxist political theory is correct, however, the most important sorts of movements and organizations we can (and should) support are political parties explicitly committed to eliminating capitalism and bringing into being a world federation of democratic, self-managing socialist societies.

The simple truth is that if a relatively egalitarian theory of social justice (and human rights) and the Marxist’s vision of contemporary social reality are essentially correct, then the only way we can respect other persons as free and equal moral beings—and, consequently, respect ourselves—is to do our fair share in supporting such movements, organizations, and struggles.

### APPENDIX

**STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARX’S THOUGHT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Works¹</th>
<th>Date Written</th>
<th>Date Published²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rheinische Zeitung articles (1842–1843)</td>
<td>(1842–1843)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Revolutionary Humanism (1843)</td>
<td>Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right (1843)</td>
<td>(1927)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“On the Jewish Question” (1843)</td>
<td>(1844)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: Introduction” (1843)</td>
<td>(1844)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Original Marxism (1844)</td>
<td>Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts (1844)</td>
<td>(1932)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Notebooks (1844–1845)</td>
<td>(1932)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Transitional Works (1844–1847)</td>
<td>The Holy Family (M/E) (1844–1845)</td>
<td>(1845)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Theses on Feuerbach” (1845)</td>
<td>(1888)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The German Ideology (M/E) (1845–1846)</td>
<td>(1926–1932)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Poverty of Philosophy (1847)</td>
<td>(1847)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Works of Maturation (1847–1858)</td>
<td>A. First Formulations of Mature Positions (1847–1850)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ (M/E) means written by both Marx and Engels; (E) means written by Engels. All other works were written by Marx.
² An asterisk (*) after the Date Published indicates that the work was first published in article form.