

Review: Leon Trotsky, *Their Morals and Ours: The Marxist View of Morality*, Resistance Books, Sydney, NSW, 2000

Pages: 101

Infernal Beliefs of Atheists

Taken from the enforcers of Communism, this gives a clear and frank definition of their morality; there can be none, other than what serves the revolution and the Party at any one point in time.

A most interesting fact is their appeal to the religion of Darwin and its Deep Time, that there can be no eternal moral truths since claimed ape-like ancestors knew none. Also, in the mythical Communist Utopia where stealing would be pointless, the Eight Commandment becomes null and void. The Communist equips himself with a valid argument which is 100% false, and so unsound.

If any one thing can be used to invalidate Communism, it is its immorality in the light of God's commandments. This is proven by its fruits; misery, poverty, and total destruction of human rights wherever it takes hold.

Introduction (pp. 7-10)

Marxism teaches there is no absolute morality.

Trotsky: "Civilisation can be saved only by the socialist revolution ... the proletariat need all its ... ruthlessness. Above all, it must be completely free from the fictions of religion, "democracy" and transcendental morality ... The welfare of the revolution ... that is the supreme law." p8]

In Spain, 1936, election of the Popular Front led to Franco's military putsch.

I) Their Morals and Ours (pp. 11-39)

“Eternal moral truths ... should have existed not only before the appearance of half-monkey-half-man upon earth but before the evolution of the solar system, Whence then did they arise?” [p13]

“Heaven remains the only fortified position for military operations against the dialectic materialism ... but having turned itself from heaven, moral philosophy had to find earthly roots. ... one of the tasks of materialism. After Shaftsbury came Darwin, after Hegel .. Marx.” [p14]

Utilitarianism and Jesuitism agree, since both believe in “the end justifies the means”.

Herbert Spencer held evolution proceeds from “sensation” to “ideas”.

“The highest form of the class struggle is civil war.”

Trotskyism is revolutionary romanticism; Stalinism – practical politics.

“Every dictatorship contains seeds of its own destruction.”

Without lies war would be as unimaginable as a machine without oil.

Idealist morality is counterrevolutionary.

Marx defended execution of hostages.

Lenin taught Communists could resort to all sorts of devices, manoeuvres and subterfuge.

Moral philosophers claim to do their research independently of authority, tradition, and revelation, especially in order to penetrate into the trade unions, to remain in them, and to carry on communist work in them at all costs.

The party is everything to the Bolshevik.

The Marxist has no contradiction between person and party, since the latter embodies the highest ideals.

Marxist ends are justified when they lead to an increased power over humanity and abolishing power of one individual over another.

II) The Moralists and Sycophants Against Marxism (pp. 40-50)

III) Means and Ends (John Dewey) (pp. 51-55)

IV) Liberal Morality (George Novak) (pp. 56-71)

“The pragmatists ... Moral theory is ... their substitute for conventional religion ... [they] do not lean upon any ‘eternal verities’ ... They understand that these have been irretrievably battered down by the theory of evolution and acquisition of modern knowledge.” [p60]

The highest aim of the humanist is self-realisation.

Societal laws are both relative and absolute! [p69]

Capitalist rulers respond with military dictatorship when confronted with mass revolutionary action.

Appendix I: From Anti-Duhring (Frederick Engels) (pp. 72-74)

Men derive ethics from their class position.

“ ‘Thou shalt not steal’, Does this injunction thereby become an eternal moral injunction? By no means. In a society in which all motives for stealing have been done away with ... how the preacher of morals would be laughed at.” [p73]

Appendix II: The Tasks of the Youth Leaders (V. I. Lenin) (pp. 75-88)

Only by radically remoulding the teaching, organisation and training of the youth shall we be able to ensure ... creation of a society that will be unlike the old ... the creation of a communist society.” [p76]

“In what sense do we reject ethics, reject morality? In the sense given to it by the bourgeoisie, who based ethics on God’s commandments. On this point we, of course, say that we do not believe in God.” [p81]

“We say that to us there is no such thing as morality that stands outside human society; that is a fraud.” [p82]

If the peasant appropriates his surplus grain .. the peasant becomes an exploiter (“the more they starve, the dear I can sell this grain”).

“Communist morality is that which serves this struggle and unites the working people”. [p83]

“*Communis* is the Latin for ‘common’ .. the land, the factories – are owned in common and the people work in common. That is communism.” [p85]

Glossary (pp. 89-55)

Anthony Shaftesbury (1671-1713): English philosopher and student of Locke; postulated a ‘moral sense’ to reconcile individual happiness with general welfare.

Thermidor: month in the new calendar proclaimed by the French bourgeoisie revolution.