

## Are you a Real Marxist?

Do you consider yourself a real Marxist?

By this I do not mean, “Are you a socialist or communist who is politically active?”

Though a vastly diminished breed these days, of the majority of those activists remaining, some might even deny that any of those remaining, are real Marxists!

So, what do I mean by the term?

I mean “Are you a practising Dialectical Materialist? Are you a philosopher in the Marx, Engels and Lenin tradition? Could you explain the philosophical basis of Marxism? By this, I don’t mean can you describe its history and origins, but exactly how Marxism can and should be used. And further, I am not referring to how you might do this in political arguments “on the stump” or even in internal meetings and discussions, but rather in ANY particular serious discipline of Mankind – from Evolution to Physics - from Art to Pedagogy – indeed, any serious category of human thought?

What we do have are activists (admittedly never enough, I admit, but certainly purely activists) – committed people with an objective – the Establishment of Socialism. But what we haven’t got are Marxists - philosophers who can use their superior World View, philosophical position and consequent methodology in any serious area of study. I can only describe this as being that we perhaps have the requisite constructors, fitters and mechanics, but literally NO tool-makers.

Why do you think it was a philosopher who led the first-ever World Movement of the Working Class, and inspired and equipped the creators of the first Workers State in the World? Was the answer not the profound contributions of himself and Engels over a vast range of areas? Why was Engels with his “*The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man*” over a century ahead of the specialists in that field? Could it be because he was a Marxist philosopher?

In my youth I read “*Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*” by Robert Pirsig, and was enthralled. Why?

It was because he insisted that philosophy was essential in day-to-day living. His actual philosophical position was merely the consensus positivist one, ubiquitous in the West, but he considered himself a radical because of his USE of philosophy. In his journey across America with his son, and his everyday problems, he struggled with developing and using a World View that *mattered* in all these things.

That is what philosophy should be. We should never allow its area of applicability to be defined by bourgeois academics. As Marx clearly indicated, the job of philosophers in the past was to interpret history, our job is to change it. How can we do that if we don’t even know what the philosophy of Marxism consists of, AND, just as important, how it should guide not only all our political activities but also enable our conquering of all necessary areas of study.

The academic exercise, wherein the ideas of the geniuses of the past are continually reinterpreted for entirely personal motives CANNOT be our way.

After all these experts have been rejecting or resurrecting the Paradoxes of Zeno for over 2,500 years, successively removing the ideas of this remarkable thinker further and further away from the considerations of ordinary people. Yet Zeno was perhaps the earliest clear precursor of Hegel and Marx.

And the perambulations of the academics had never got close to understanding Zeno. He is now covered with so many “labels” that you can scarcely see who the man beneath really was.

Zeno’s Paradoxes have been criticised roundly throughout this very long period of time. I have just finished reading a compendium of the many thoughts on this subject by the “best” minds of the last 100 years, but they don’t even get close.

Zeno’s Paradoxes revealed the inadequacy of BOTH the available assumptions about the nature of Reality – those of **Continuity** and **Discreteness** – the world is either infinitely divisible – consisting of perfectly smooth and continuous things, or it can be divided until we reach discrete, immutable and indivisible basic

units. Zeno's Paradoxes **proved** that both assumptions led to contradiction. Neither one nor the other was correct!

But have these difficulties been removed? Was the disputes between Newton and Hooke in Physics, between Kroenocker and Cantor in Mathematics and between the Copenhagen School and the Classicists in Sub-atomic Physics resolved one way or the other? It was not! And yet first Hegel, and then the Marxists addressed these questions and their contributions were steadfastly ignored.

The answers to such questions can only be found in Dialectical Materialist methods.

WE should be addressing these and other such questions.

Consider the currently impending Slump.

The problems resulting in this cataclysm cannot be dealt with by any of the academic disciplines. Indeed, I am at the presant time writing a series of papers debunking the current fashion to attribute such things to Mathematical Chaos.

Shouldn't YOU be doing such things?

Is not Marxism a weapon in the hands of the Working Class, not only to guide political action, but to enable the penetration of contradictions which bourgeois philosophers and economists can NEVER even touch.

Do you honestly believe that activism ALONE will be sufficient? Why did Marx spend years in the Library of the British Museum writing philosophy? Marxists are equipped, **if**, and only if, they are really Marxists, and not just activists, to tackle problems in **every** sphere. If they are not doing this, it tells us something profoundly important about the health of today's Marxism.

Is it not time you insisted on a thorough-going education in Marxism AS A METHOD, a tool with which to first understand, and then CHANGE the World?

And it is clear to me where modern day Marxists should start. It surely must be with explaining the key Events now known as Emergences, which include vital phenomena from the Origin of Life on Earth to the trajectories of the key Social Revolutions, including the English, American, French and the Russian.

While the leaders of bourgeois academicism flounder about getting nowhere in this crucial and defining area, where are the Marxists?

**Jim Schofield October 2008**

(1,025 words)