

# A critical reappraisal of the 1848 Communist Manifesto

[Kant](#) was 23 when he wrote his 1755 [Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose](#). In that and all his subsequent writings, he contended that [Newton's](#) 1687 [Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica](#) resolved all disputes about the finite nature of our planet's existence, and that university professors who fail to use Newton's proof to repudiate all theological orthodoxy about the method of the original creation and recreation of heterogeneous species on our limited-life planet are misusing the social advantage of their university scholarship. Most of his peers ignored his contention because they were intent on using their university scholarship to their selfish advantage.

In his 1781 [Critique of Pure Reason](#) Kant argued that the natural purpose of all reason in the seemingly 'idiotic' course of 'things human' is learning how to enjoy cosmopolitan life on the only planet known to exist which is known to be capable of sustaining it so far. His peers dismissed his scientific critique of their use of mercenary armies to overthrow all religious authorities to their mercenary advantage as 'abstract' and 'idealist'.

So in his 1783 [Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Present Itself as a Science](#), Kant explicitly addressed "*teachers of metaphysics to whom the existence of this book might not yet be known*". He warned them that Newton's 'metaphysical' prognosis of the 'mechanical' destruction of our planet will only be finally accepted as a 'scientific' basis for enjoying convivial human life on it throughout its finite existence when the universal processes which originally created it from our solar system have unconsciously created sufficient teachers on it who are conscious of the need to collaborate without prejudice to prevent its premature end.

In his 1784 [Answering the Question: What Is Enlightenment?](#) Kant equated our scientific enlightenment to adolescence — the moment in the life of every young person when it becomes conscious of its natural end.

In his 1785 [Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals](#), Kant defined the "[categorical imperative](#)" as the impulse to "*Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never merely as a means to an end, but always at the same time as an end.*" He forecast there will be no peace anywhere on earth until every teacher on it teaches every student that the *a priori* pre-condition for the *a posteriori* recreation of cosmopolitan populations on it until their natural predictable unpreventable extinction is their collaboration without prejudice.

Kant published his *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* in 1795, during the chaotic [Reign of Terror](#) following the recent [French revolution](#). In it, he explicitly repudiated wars on any pretext:

1. [No secret treaty of peace shall be held valid in which there is tacitly reserved matter for a future war](#)
2. [No independent states, large or small, shall come under the dominion of another state by inheritance, exchange, purchase, or donation](#)
3. [Standing armies shall in time be totally abolished](#)
4. [No national debts shall be contracted in connection with the external affairs of the state](#)
5. [No state shall use armed force to interfere with the constitution or government of another state](#)
6. [No state shall, during war, permit such acts of hostility which would make mutual confidence in the subsequent peace impossible.](#)

Like Kant, his university educated German peer [Hegel](#) recognised that Christianity is an unscientific ideology which alienates mankind from the sole means of its physical recreation on earth by teaching children that their creation involved a supernatural endlessly-existing metaphysical omnipotent patriarch, and by coercing their uncritical obedience to his physical representatives by threatening the disobedient with an endlessly tortured metaphysical afterlife. Unlike Kant who used scientific reason to repudiate all threats of actual physical and imaginary metaphysical torture, Hegel used the [scientific method](#) to justify the use of mercenary armies to overthrow all medieval Christian empires in the [enlightened self-interest](#) of the modern [liberal German state](#).

In his 1841 [The Essence of Christianity](#), German professor Feuerbach argued that Christian teaching is based on cherishing all God's creatures in his eternal earthly paradise with minimum cruelty. In his 1843 [Principles of Philosophy of the Future](#), Feuerbach argued that if German scholars use the scientific method to justify the cruelties of war, there will be no peace or justice anywhere until a future generation of teachers recognises the need for a world-wide scientifically-enlightened system of education based on the same dogma as Christianity — cherishing all intelligent creatures on earth without fear or favour.

As Feuerbach feared, German scholars overwhelmingly justified wars to assert the superiority of their liberal education system, just as successive generations of their peers at the world's oldest universities elsewhere have uncritically justified their national education system 'in the national interest' ever since. Although Hegel's original 'young Hegelian' critic Feuerbach has slipped into historical obscurity, two of his young followers have become the most renowned critics of all orthodoxy proved by history and science to be unjustifiable.

Engels began his political career by writing critical articles for the radical newspaper [Rheinische Zeitung](#) before his factory-owning father sent him to Britain to study cotton manufacture in 1842. On his way, he visited its new editor in Paris, Marx. (Marx was 24, Engels was 22; [they were not initially impressed with each other](#).)

Marx's [Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte aus dem Jahre 1844](#) was his first critique of the phenomenon commonly called [capitalism](#). He analysed the irreconcilable nature of the needs of mercenary land and factory owners, and the welfare of the many workers they employ mass producing socially necessary commodities that the land and factory owners legally expropriate from the workers that produced them as their private property, and then sell back to property-less families for maximum profit. He concluded that working class families will never enjoy life without the social strife inherent to capitalism unless they use their legal majority to outlaw all profiteering and all private hoarding of socially necessary resources such as land and accumulated capital throughout the world. (His *Manuscript* was only translated into other languages in 1932.)

Engels first published his [Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England](#) in 1845, as an academic analysis of the immiserating impact of the mechanised system of mass production being developed in England for other German speaking radicals to critique. His analysis of how mercenary mill-owners were mercilessly exploiting the families of mill workers with legal immunity was based on his own first-hand observations and his detailed study of official records and contemporary newspaper reports he compiled during his first 2-year sojourn in urban. (Engels only published it in other languages in 1885 when he was in dispute with other workers' leaders claiming to be followers of Marx.)

In their 1846 [Die deutsche Ideologie](#), Marx and Engels reflected on Feuerbach's thesis that there will be no peace or justice anywhere until a future generation of teachers recognises the need for a world-wide scientifically-enlightened system of education based on cherishing all intelligent creatures on earth without fear or favour. (This too was only translated into other languages in 1932.)

The essential difference between Kant's 1755 *Idea* and their 1848 *Manifesto* is that by 1848, Marx and Engels could see that almost all university professors and their protégés were determined to continue exploiting the social advantage of their superior intelligence to their selfish advantage, and organising scientifically unjustifiable wars 'in the national interest', just as almost all of their peers throughout the world today still do.

In 1859 Darwin published his [On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life](#). Its thesis — the conservation of human life on earth until its natural end is predicated on racial wars rather than cosmopolitan compassion — is the antithesis of Kant's thesis.

Two years later, white settlers and slave-traders in north America began a [civil war](#) to defend their right to legally exploit and trade in non-white people with the same racism that university educated white people have used to justify the mercenary [genocide of 100 million indigenous non-white Americans](#) and millions and millions of non-white people by [carpet-baggers](#) and [crusading Christians](#) throughout history with impunity.

In 1864 Marx and Engels founded the [International Workingmen's Association](#) (commonly known as the First International) with a group of cosmopolitan trade unionists in London who considered that:

- *The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves, that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule;*
- *The economical subjection of the man of labour to the monopoliser of the means of labour – that is, the source of life – lies at the bottom of servitude in all its forms, of all social misery, mental degradation, and mutual dependence;*
- *the economical emancipation of the working classes is therefore the great end to which every mutual movement ought to be subordinate as a means;*
- *That all efforts aiming at the great end hitherto failed from the want of solidarity between the manifold divisions of labour in each country, and from the absence of a fraternal bond of union between the working classes of different countries;*
- *The emancipation of labour is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem, embracing all countries in which modern society exists, and depending for its solution on the concurrence, practical and theoretical, of the most advanced countries;*
- *The present revival of the working classes in the most industrious countries of Europe, while it raises a new hope, gives solemn warning against a relapse into the old errors, and calls for the immediate combination of the still disconnected movements.*

Its purpose was teaching the working classes in all countries that, since the university educated classes in all countries had proved determined to exploit the social advantage of their superior intelligence to their selfish advantage, there will be no peace or justice for workers anywhere until they use their majority to outlaw all mercenary hoarding of socially necessary resources such as land and capital throughout the world.

The first attempt to end capitalism was the [Paris Commune](#) in 1871. It failed to win national support and was brutally crushed — parliamentary militias indiscriminately slaughtered 20,000 men, women and children with impunity. In its bitter aftermath, [Bakunin](#) persuaded most First International delegates to support workers' use of armed force against parliamentary militias. Marx argued that the Communards failed to win national support because most of the population of France dreaded another reign of terror by parliamentary militias. In 1876 he disbanded the First International rather than leave it to Bakunin and his [philosophically impoverished](#) followers.

In his 1880 [Socialism: Utopian and Scientific](#), Engels reflected on events since the recent liberal revolutions. He noted "But the new order of things, rational enough as compared with earlier conditions, turned out to be by no means absolutely rational. The state based upon reason completely collapsed. . . . The promised eternal peace was turned into an endless war of conquest."

In 1881 [Kautsky](#) convened a meeting of communist workers' leaders in Belgium which neither Marx nor Engels attended. The meeting agreed to form the [Socialist International](#), now more commonly known as the [Second International](#). By the time the European [Scramble for Africa](#) culminated in the 1884 [Berlin conference](#), almost all communist leaders were colluding in wars of conquest. [Lenin](#), [Luxemburg](#) and [Liebknecht](#) were the only Second International leaders to repudiate communist leaders' collusion in wars of conquest.

Also in 1884, drawing on Marx's unpublished manuscripts, Engels explained in [The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State](#) how the university educated classes perpetuate religiously-institutionalised scientifically unjustifiable patriarchal and national prejudices for their own mercenary purposes.

Marx and Engels did not join the Second International. After Marx's death in 1883, Engels collaborated with his youngest daughter [Eleanor](#) and Karl Liebknecht's exiled father [Wilhelm Liebknecht](#) on championing the scientific critique of capitalism, and founding the 1885 internationalist [Socialist League](#) with [William Morris](#) and Eleanor's partner [Edward Aveling](#). Engels, Eleanor and Aveling criticised Morris for failing to recognise that a secular system of global governance without social strife is not an abstract ideal but the human pre-condition for the convivial recreation of intelligent species on earth until its natural predictable unpreventable destruction.

In his 1886 [Ludwig Feuerbach und der Ausgang der klassischen deutschen Philosophie](#), Engels reiterated Marx's critique of the [Übermensch](#) ideology advocated by Hegel. (It was only translated into English in 1903.) By then, *pax Christiana* had been succeeded by *nil pax*, not *pax populi*, as Feuerbach had anticipated

By 1914, most European leaders accepted the need for 'a war to end all wars'. In cynical defiance of all moral philosophy, rational reason and scientific justification, university educated people claiming to be Christians, communists and liberals all claimed that since 'right' was on 'their' side, the indiscriminate mechanised slaughter of people on the 'other' side was justified 'in the national interest', and therefore necessary.

["The total number of military and civilian casualties in World War I was about 40 million: estimates range from around 15 to 22 million deaths<sup>\[1\]</sup> and about 23 million wounded military personnel, ranking it among the deadliest conflicts in human "](#)

In 1917 the Bolsheviks ended the Tsar's autocratic rule over a tenth of the world's population, and sued for peace. The only Second International leaders outside the fledgling USSR who defended its right to exist and repudiated military action against it were Luxemburg and Liebknecht. They helped organise the 1919 revolt against the victors' vindictive victimisation of German people following the 1918 [collapse of the German Imperial Army](#), but they were both assassinated by parliamentary militias in the chaotic aftermath.

Because all Second International leaders and most university educated people outside the newly federated union of soviet socialist republics denied its right to exist and supported military action and international economic sanctions to destroy it, [Lenin](#) formed the 1919 Comintern (now commonly known as the [Third International](#)) to foster workers' self-emancipation from capitalism beyond USSR borders. The 1920 [League of Nations](#) was formed to entrench what Lenin defined in 1917 as [Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism](#) and destroy the USSR, with the overwhelming support of university educated people in League of Nations countries, and all Second International leaders outside the USSR.

Lenin denounced it as a ["thieves' kitchen"](#) because it reassigned African colonies assigned to [Bismarck's Junkers](#) in 1884 amongst the 1918 victors as war bounty, and imposed international borders and trade and currency exchange protocols intended to facilitate the imperialist exploitation by the newly-federated bloc of exclusively white League nations of all the other unallied nations in the world, and to destroy the USSR bloc.

The vindictive sanctions imposed by the exclusively white League bloc on men, women and children in Germany and the USSR, compounded by [Stalin's](#) failure to prevent corruption in the cosmopolitan USSR, and his failure to foster workers' self-emancipation from their exploitation in unallied colonies and nations, and the failure of Hitler's opponents to collaborate, enabled the National Socialist Party to gain power in Germany and begin killing people they judged to be non-German with legal immunity.

League bloc leaders ignored the legal racist slaughter and racketeering in Germany and the US. They expected Hitler would order the German army to invade and break up the USSR. Instead, he ordered the invasion of Poland. Leaders who had planned and organised the slaughter of millions in the 'war to end all wars' responded by planning and organising the industrial annihilation of millions and millions of their children, again overwhelmingly supported by overwhelmingly white male university educated people in predominantly white League bloc countries, and almost all predominantly white leaders of all communist bloc republics.

["Over 60 million people were killed in World War II, which was about 3% of the 1940 world population."](#)

After Lenin's death in 1924, [Trotsky](#) became the world's leading critic of all corrupt use of scholarship. He founded the [Fourth International](#) in 1938 with a few supporters drawn from countries throughout the world under the most difficult circumstances imaginable since by then [Stalin](#)'s apparatchiks were assassinating his followers throughout the world with impunity. After many attempts, one succeeded in Mexico in 1940. Trotsky's followers continued to risk physical attack by people claiming to be Marxists throughout the world long after Stalin's appeasing [dissolution of the Third International](#) in 1943 and his death in 1953. The disintegration of the USSR into mutually-antagonistic republics, and the continuing failure of leaders of the inexplicably unallied 'communist' states to collaboratively encourage workers' self-emancipation from imperialism vindicate Trotsky's criticism of Stalin's corrupt leadership.

As [Trotsky confidently expected](#), history has provided another opportunity for his followers to resolve what he called the [historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat](#) without fear of physical attack by people calling themselves Marxists. However, his followers have proved to be no more capable of providing the scientifically enlightened historically necessary leadership than the leaders of the Second and Third Internationals.

The British royal family and other ancestral inheritors of land and private capital in Britain (and elsewhere) continue to claim the 'freedom' use military force to enjoy life at the expense of the plebeian majority over 600 years after the [Levellers](#) first repudiated it in Britain. Farm labourers first formed trade unions in Britain to defend their mutual interests by linking arms against those who took up arms against them long before Marx and Engels arrived from Germany and began teaching their peers throughout the world that humankind's existence on earth until its natural end is predicated on their conscious development of their scientifically enlightened world-wide unarmed unity.

According to their manifesto *"The essential condition for the existence, and for the sway of the bourgeois class, is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labour. Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of modern industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable."* Although the development of modern industry continues to reproduce an endless supply of capitalism's grave-diggers, the victory that Marx and Engels contended was inevitable is still pending because universities throughout the world continue to delude their students into believing they are free to exploit their superior scholarship to their selfish advantage with impunity, and because 'communist' leaders have failed to collaborate.

Like [Greta Thunberg](#), [Jeremy Corbyn](#) is not a university graduate and does not claim to be a Marxist; each campaigns independently to prevent human suffering anywhere on earth without prejudice. Unlike student Greta, sage Corbyn does not make clear that the convivial recreation of intelligent species on our planet until its natural destruction is predicated on the joint success of their campaigns, as Kant first forecast, and Marx and Engels reiterated in their manifesto for a later readership, and frequently and vigorously reasserted.

The refusal of anti-Tories to unite behind Corbyn's *For the many, not the few* manifesto enabled the Tories to increase their majority, just as similar lack of unity enabled tyrants like Stalin, Hitler and Trump to gain power.

Britain now has a proto-fascist government of proven crooks and liars. Their well-documented [social murder](#) of the poor, the frail, the sick and the non-British is unrepudiated by the professors and protégés of Britain's oldest universities because, as Kant first recognised, these citadels of stupefying patriarchal patrician self-righteousness have always misled their students into believing that medieval monarchs may use military force to defend their pretentious entitlement to enjoy their lives at the expense of the plebeian majority with impunity.

Whether a critical mass of students and workers in Britain and elsewhere can develop the world-wide solidarity necessary to prevent humankind's premature extinction remains unclear, but what is crystal clear is that leaders who claim to be followers of Marx can be just as stupefyingly self-righteous as those who claim to be following churchmen, Churchill or the first man on the moon, and that time is running out.

**Students and workers of the world unite — *there is no planet B!***