

A Chaos
Marxism
Primer

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Manifesto v. 0.9 vel Liber MCMXVII

Chaos Marxism is an anticapitalist memetic-combat current.

We see dialectical materialism (and its physical manifestation, revolutionary socialism / classical Marxism) as close akin to other projects and techniques of consciousness change such as public relations, psychology, and "magic(k)!)" or however it's being spelled this week.

Global corporate rule is a reality on the material and on all ideological planes. You can only defeat an enemy by becoming symmetrical-but-opposite to it. The symmetrical opponent to global corporates will be a global organisation of the industrial and service-industry workers, whose psychic energy and surplus value is the nourishment of the corporate entities which determine our current consensus reality.

Capitalism is a vampire and we are the Slayers. We seek the coming to full consciousness of the majority of the world's population. This will take the form of the transformation of the worldwide proletariat into a "class for itself" - or to put it another way, the manifestation of a collective world thoughtform which can kick the corporate egregore where it really hurts. This might well happen by organising a collective of what Paul Slazinger calls Mind Opening Specialists. A cadre party of the Leninist type, properly understood, is a magical order. We must remember Lenin's magical motto - "patiently explain".

We are the bastard children of Aleister Crowley and Rosa Luxemburg. Trotsky built our hotrod and Robert Anton Wilson souped it up. We declare eternal war on all cliques and shibboleths. We are prepared to chase this thing through all the words in the world. What we do is the only important thing.

Magick is *serious business*. Therefore, we are prohibited from ever taking ourselves too seriously. We are not interested in wasting time explaining to vulgar materialists why magic is neither a fraud nor useless, any more than we are interested in explaining to mealy-mouthed liberals why dialectical materialism is not responsible for the horrors and crimes of Stalin, Pol Pot etc. We see no reason why fascist filth should enjoy such apparent street-cred among metaprogrammers, when the project of October 1917 had the potential to be fundamentally world-changing than anything that the goosestepping jackasses of the 1930's could have imagined.

Anyone who endorses these ideas and is actually prepared to do something about them is **one of us** and is invited to become one of the writers of this blog. This manifesto is subject to radical change without notice.

The One Key and Nine Commitments of Chaos Marxism

We can sum up in one word the core of the Chaos Marxist approach. *Mindfulness*. Or, if you prefer, *consciousness*, or even Gramsci's *good sense*. Or Gurdjieff's "Remember yourself". The Sufi tradition, Buddhism and modern cognitive-behavioural therapy agree - being able to step back from compulsive thoughts and the compulsive feelings they evoke, to recognize them as not real, is the essence of psychic health and enlightenment. And Marxist theories of ideology insist that the way our rulers impose their control over us is by reification - mistaking illusion for reality, social relations for concrete things, narratives or memes for actual laws of existence. You can't live without an ego any more than you can live without money, but you must remember that *it's not real*, it's a convention, it only exists if you and others believe in it, and that it's a great servant but a hideous master.

On the micro-level, Chaos Marxism stands for the ruthless "obedience training" of the ego. Imagine that your ego is a badly trained dog - it barks when not necessary, it requires far more attention than it really needs, it humps your leg or otherwise annoys you when you're trying to do something. But you don't need to take it out and shoot it, you just need to teach it that its **perceptions are not reality** and it should submit to rationality and discipline. You'll all be happier that way. Indeed, your ego is the way it is because it evolved to help you survive in capitalism as it is; and one of the main ways that capitalism makes money in this day and age (and fosters obedience) is by selling pre-fab ego-identities to people. The ego cannot change "what is" because it has adapted to work with "what is". The "Greater Work" of Chaos Marxism, therefore, consists of the following commitments:

1. to learn how your ego works, and how it fits in with the broader culture, the media-industrial complex, the "identity industry" and mechanisms of social control;
2. to discover what your own physical, mental and spiritual needs and joys are, independent of the ego's needs, and to learn to provide for those needs;
3. to commit yourself to the service of Something Greater than your ego - humanity, the biosphere, God however defined, etc.
4. to bring the ego to the service of this Something Greater by discipline and rationality, rejecting all irrational beliefs, compulsions and pre-packaged identities as a snare and a delusion for the ego;
5. to "tune up" the ego so that the needs of Something Greater and your own personal needs can both be served. (If they appear to conflict, then you have misconceived one or both of them.)

On the macro-level, Chaos Marxism acknowledges that capitalism pollutes the cultural/information space, and therefore the psyche of all those subject to it, just as badly as it poisons the ecosphere and thus our physical health. Therefore, we encourage any and all social or political activity which *increases consciousness of objective reality and dispels illusions*. We suggest that would-be social activists combine their activism with the work of disciplining their own ego. Only that way can you get actual real objective knowledge of the World-As-Is, and what needs to be done, rather than prejudices reflected back off the inside of your skull. And also, only that way can you teach people by example that their own egos are part of the problem rather than part of the solution. This "Lesser Work" consists of a commitment to:

6. serving the Something Greater, as above, by concrete action for a better world where it will be easier for everyone to live free of illusion and slavery, physical, mental and spiritual;
7. practicing compassion for all living things, including yourself, by helping whoever wants to be helped in whatever way you can;
8. putting the lessons learned in the Greater Work into practice, by creating propaganda, art, and magick however defined that calls to awaken the "good sense" of the broad mass of people over the top of the "common sense" of ego and the cultural-ideological apparatus of oppression;
9. keeping the ego out of this Lesser Work by refusing the role of "guru", "leader", or in any other way trying to submit other wills to your own rather than liberate them on their own path to Something Greater.

I'm no guru or shaikh. I can't claim to be doing any of the above with anything other than fitful success. This is a path that I hope might be useful as a framework to others, but it's something I'm struggling with myself. For example, I will know that I have humbled my own ego when I feel free to use my real name on this blog, i.e. when I am no longer afraid of ridicule or abuse. So please, your comments and criticisms, please. This only becomes real when it's real for someone else but me.

Chaos Marxist Aphorisms

Let's attempt to sum up what we've learned so far. The Chaos Marxist Aphorisms (I stole the idea from Guitar Craft) are the 127 (number subject to change) sentences I've picked out of the past 13 month's entries which might give the newbie an idea of where I'm going - or even form the outline for the Big Book of Cultural Witchcraft. Note that in their current form they only make a very vague form of coherent unity. I welcome suggestions for refinement or expansion.

(NOTE: these aphorisms are not all original, though they are all appropriate. I have stolen from Lawrence Miles, V. I. Lenin, Terry Pratchett, Bobby Sands, Andrew Eldritch, Tony Cliff, the Redskins, Slavoj Zizek, Robert Fripp, and perhaps some others that I can't remember.)

CHAOS MARXIST APHORISMS

BASIC CONCEPTS

1. YOU ARE WHAT YOU DO. If you want to be something else, do something else.
2. Belief follows action.
3. You are NOT a Beautiful and Unique Snowflake. Nor are you the Chosen One.
4. Just because a friendly voice is muttering in your head that You Are The Chosen One does not mean it's telling the truth.
5. Nothing is more fatal to magickal success than a magical worldview.
6. Politics, magick, psychology, advertising, propaganda are ALL THE SAME THING – attempts to describe and alter consciousness.
7. The only true witch or Magus is she who realises that there are no cosmic forces.
8. To be a witch or Magus, you've got to learn three things – what's real, what's not real, and what's the difference.
9. There are no mistakes except one – the failure to learn from a mistake.
10. Destroy your own icons and enabling narratives. They will keep you safe and neutered. Most people would rather destroy life, limb or property than do this.
11. The world doesn't owe you jack, no matter how brilliant or unique you are.
12. History will prove you right.
13. There is no Big Other. Once you have figured this out you have grasped the central point of all revolutionary politics and magick.

THE GOALS OF CHAOS MARXISM

14. Marxist revolutionary politics seek the coming to consciousness of the vast majority of people in the world – the goal of magick, the tools of politics.
15. In this sense, the Leninist cadre party is – ideally - a magical order of adepts.
16. The central goal of Chaos Marxism is to integrate chaos magick and dialectical materialism.
17. You may have a wrong idea of what being a Marxist is about from the idiots who try to sell you badly-xeroxed newspapers. Being a “revolutionary” is, in most cases, a mass-produced consumer product, just like any other lifestyle. People can talk all kinds of revolution and yet still be completely harmless.
18. The way you can tell a revolutionary from a political lifestyler is – are they trying to figure out how to engage the masses? Or are they just interested in recruiting to their cult?
19. For both the Leninist party and the disciplined magickal order, by making yourself available to it you are also used by it. If this offends your notion of yourself as a Beautiful and Unique Snowflake, then you are in the wrong game.

THE ENEMY IS LIFESTYLISM

20. Chances are, the "tribe" you cling to is a mass-produced consumer product.
21. If you're entirely hung up on your own "lifestyle", so determined to surround yourself with a fortress of The Right Kind of Stuff that you're incapable of thinking beyond your own self-image, then you're part of the problem.
22. Consumer culture is the opium of the 21st century masses.
23. "I am the Chosen One" is the opium of 21st century niche markets.
24. A lifestyle or a subculture is neither politics nor magick. It is a religion.
25. People will believe any insanity if it allows them to belong to a real or imagined community.
26. The logic of the “in-crowd” or the “enlightened few” is precisely what we are trying to destroy.
27. Civilization isn't about sealing yourself off from the rest of the world and your responsibility to it, and you don't get bonus marks just for being a nice or politically correct person.
28. The only antidote to mass-produced identities is an Identity of Opposition which is combined with a practice of effective opposition.
29. “The proletariat” is not a mass-produced consumer product. It is more like a kind of industrial waste. No-one wants to be a wage-slave. But in wage-slavery there is the potential of power.
30. The Real World of Horrible Jobs is everything that the Corporate Egreore sees as “chthonic” or even the Qlippoth. It's the dirty underside

which you're not even supposed to look at. Here lies power, for those brave enough to grab it - but only collectively, not individually.

CHAOS MARXISM IS MATERIALIST

31. The idea that "ideas shape the world" could only have been invented by people who earn a good living from creating ideas.
32. If you believe in ideas as the highest good, you will find yourself incapable of effectively fighting actual material evildoing.
33. Middle-class intellectuals fall harder for propaganda than anyone else - because their entire lives are based on propaganda.
34. You can stay in your ivory tower and change your own reality infinitely. Until, of course, you need to go to work or deal with anyone but your immediate friends. That's the point where nasty reality cuts in. And nasty reality cuts in more and more the less money and internet access you have.
35. Blind materialism always has a dirty idealist secret in the background - and vice versa.
36. Dialectical materialism is the process of seeing which futures are possible, based on the contradictions of the present, and what kind of pressure on what kind of points right now will bring about which future.
37. There are not two worlds with a bridge between. There is only one world.
38. Meaning is material.
39. Ideas are material.
40. Ideas become real forces when they seize the masses.
41. Chaos Marxism is interested in practicality above all.
42. Your power lies in how much external reality you influence, not in how doctrinally pure you are.
43. Where is the money and the surplus labour going? Who pays and who benefits? Those are the questions you have to ask in every situation
44. There is no place for democracy and collective reality-tunnel-formation except in a materialist thought-system.

CHAOS MARXISM IS COLLECTIVIST

45. The "individuality" you are so proud of is also a mass-produced consumer product.
46. Once you accept that reality is individual rather than collective, you will never be a threat to the system.
47. The more I looked at the mystics and the psychonauts, the more I realised that for them "Question everything" meant "Question everything except the idea that individual consciousness is a thing unto itself which can be worked on in isolation".
48. If you start saying that people are not individuals - that they are created by their upbringing and the role they play in real, nasty, going-to-work-in-traffic society - then you open the door to the idea that only a social revolution can actually solve the real problems with humanity.

49. Everyone has their own part to play, no matter who or where they are.
50. No-one will ever be sane and healthy until we are all sane and healthy.
51. If the subconscious, unseen and cultural levels of the world are the ocean, then magick is all about being able to dive, swim, and get back on dry land safely. Eventually, we should be able to become psychic and cultural surf-lifesavers – a role that will be integral to a new society.

THE NECESSITY OF ACTION

52. Technology will not solve your problems for you.
53. The Apocalypse will not solve your problems for you. Global civilization will not collapse in a friendly manner so as to leave you and your buddies unscathed.
54. Since you are what you do, you will have to DO to BE. There is no substitute for doing.
55. There is no place to run, and no place to hide. So you will have to fight.
56. Socialism doesn't fall from the sky. Nothing does, except rain, snow, meteorites, and airplane toilet droppings.
57. Any course of action which can be summed up in the words "Wait and see" is the wrong one.
58. As far as religion or magick goes, ANYTHING works if you do it enough. It might not work as advertised, though.
59. Success breeds daring and failure breeds passivity.
60. The proper stance for a revolutionary is: pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will. To know which is the winning side, and still join the other.
61. To use Situationist jargon, détournement which remains on the symbolic can always be recuperated. The only thing which really can dissolve all magic spells whatsoever is the self-activity of the masses.
62. A Marxist might call a picket line or a militant demonstration "an altered state of consciousness", since it takes place in an area not acknowledged to exist by the dominant paradigm of reality.
63. This side of the revolution, the revolutionaries are a minority.
64. Success comes to the strong. The struggle is hard and the struggle's long.

THE PAINKILLER OF THE MASSES

65. Religion, like any other painkiller or hallucinogenic, can be used for good or evil purposes. It can encourage you to lie around and stare at the ceiling, or kill your family, or it might take the edge off enough to allow you to accomplish something in the real world.
66. The way cults operate is just a boiled down and spiced-up version of the way in which all authoritarian society operates.
67. Some of the nastiest religions preach atheism and rationalism.

68. Judge every school of politics or magick, every religion or subculture, as to whether it enhances and promotes conscious, rational thought and ability to shape the world, or the opposite.
69. Most people do not base their actions on rational thought related to material reality. They base their action on stories which they partly pick up from their culture and partly make up themselves.
70. People who base their lives in images and narratives expect those images or narratives to be “morally true” – or “truthy” - not physically true or even logical.
71. Even if I know on an intellectual level that X is bullshit, if I act like it's real it becomes real for me at least.
72. People will happily swallow lies if it enables them to maintain the narratives that they live by.
73. Addictions, whether to chemicals or to abusive personal relationships or whatever - are a natural reaction to the World-As-Is.
74. Basing your life on images and narratives rather than the hard facts of material existence is much, much, much easier. And it will virtually ensure that you don't ever change anything.

CULTURAL REVOLUTION – A DO IT YOURSELF GUIDE

75. To put it in magical jargon, we start with the memes and thoughtforms which arise spontaneously from anti-corporate activity, transmute them magically to give them the best chance of survival and replication, and then release them back into the infosphere of the activity where they were born.
76. Metaphorical, narrative language can help people understand real although intangible forces better than intellectual jargon.
77. An effective political or advertising slogan has all the same characteristics of a meditative mantra.
78. The most effective advertising does not say "Brand X has qualities Y and Z"; instead, it presents a meme which associates X with Y and Z and leaves it up to the recipients to connect the dots. All the most virally infective memes require that the readers/viewers/listeners do some work to make some sense of what they are given – they are “pull” rather than “push” marketing.
79. Make your memes open-ended in possible meaning.
80. If you're not being misunderstood, you haven't been properly understood.
81. If you're not being attacked, you won't be supported.
82. Leave it noncommercial for as long as possible.
83. If you don't have a party, a mystic order or a scene, you have to start one.
84. A meme will spread if it fills a niche in the materially existing noosphere.
85. A successful memetic operation will work backwards in time - in other words, pick a possible future, and attempt to make it a real present.

86. Invoke often.

HACK YOUR OWN PERSONALITY

87. The rationality you were taught to survive in this world is often diametrically opposed to the rationality you will need to change it. Drugs or religion may create the “altered state” necessary to build an alternative rationality. Or they may screw you up.
88. Engaging in hostile banter is not politics or magick. It’s a kind of sado-masochism.
89. Keep your recreational activities separate from your work, or one will begin to substitute for the other and both will suffer.
90. If you're not hated by a large group of people when you die, you didn't do it right.
91. Seek out mystical enlightenment, then subject it to the most merciless skeptical examination.
92. Arguments over what is ‘good’ rest on arguments about reality, even if they seem not too. ‘Ought’ does rely on arguments about what ‘is’.

THE WORLD AS IS

93. The Devil (however defined) owns this world. It's his. You can either sell your soul, fight the power, or be irrelevant.
94. Propaganda and consumer culture fills the gap left by the decline of traditional forms of religion in modern society.
95. Capitalism destroyed all the old myths, but then had to create new myths to continually expand consumption and win our consent to the system.
96. An egregore is a magickal term for an ideological construct with a will of its own. We can see corporate capitalism in these terms.
97. It's no accident that psychology was born at the same time as mass consumer society and universal suffrage.
98. Corporate Psychology wants to make us functional, not to make us well.
99. The corporate egregore creates the needs it survives by supplying – including the need for meaning.
100. Our culture promotes isolation, alienation and paranoia as not only an ideal, but the highest ideal.
101. The “Green Zone” in Baghdad is the most effective microcosm of the World-As-Is.
102. Less bread means more circuses – the less food and shiny consumer items there are to hand out, the more lies and spectacles must be provided.
103. Corporate politics and management are memetics combined with brute force. Memetics are generally cheaper and have less unpleasant side effects than brute force, but need to be continually updated to remain effective.
104. Corporate (or Black, or brute-force) Memetics works through a barrage of constant mutually reinforcing impressions.

105. When corporate capitalism had succeeded in fulfilling the basic physical needs of its workforce, it then had to create new needs and desires in order to perpetuate itself.
106. The corporate egregore will stop existing the instant that the masses stop believing in it. That will only happen once the alternative begins to make sense to them. Your work is judged on how successful you are at making an alternative to the World As Is a real thing to real numbers of people.
107. Diversion of consciousness into impractical reality tunnels is one of the prime means by which the Corporate Egregore maintains its power.
108. Sometimes in the World-As-Is, you've got to shake the hand that feeds you. There is no virtue in starving. If you have a job, then you are at a point in the belly of the beast where it is possible to wound it – with help.
109. There is change in the World-As-Is, once you accept that the World-As-Is exists.

DON'T CONFUSE THE LEVELS

110. The struggle has to be carried on on three levels at once: industrial, political and ideological. Don't confuse these.
111. The map is not the territory - that symbols are only useful in so far as they serve the actual purpose on the ground. Ideology is an imaginary solution to a real problem – an attempt to “live in the map”.
112. If you try to live in the metaphor you constructed, rather than using it as a guide to action, you will at best create just another religion, and at worst, create an internet subculture that people will laugh at.
113. The most powerful magic of all is what causes change on the level of the subconscious mind; on the level of Industry; on the level of the reality which doesn't go away when we stop believing in it.

THE FUTURE

114. The main indication that the future will be different from the present is that the present is different from the past.
115. Believing that there is change, that the future will be more than the present with faster cars and smellier air, is in fact a revolutionary act in itself.
116. Will the corporations collectivise humanity? Or will humanity collectivise the corporates?
117. Revolutions are not predictable. People don't wear nice colour coded symbols in a real revolution. They get drunk and smash shit up and in all other ways go over the top.
118. We adopt a reality-view that maximises our effectiveness in causing change-in-accordance-with-will in the real, physical, material world.

119. The revolutionary organisation must organise counter-hegemonic cultural movements.
120. We are not initiators of the New Culture - we can only hope to be its midwives.
121. Culture-from-below is always free, and often illegal – mainly because it subverts the intellectual property laws. The new world will have different definitions of property and reward.
122. Revolutionary commercial culture is ideally a kind of virus in the system, but sustained on the same logic as the system itself – the ideas contradict the commodity format.
123. Don't blame the media - become the media. Turn readers into writers, consumers into producers, buyers into sellers.
124. Propaganda and agitation are transitory, art is eternal – but they can have the same effect.
125. There is no future for small, independent capitalism. The only way to defeat the corporates is to go through them.
126. To defeat an enemy you must become symmetrical to it - then we need some kind of "egregore" (or cultural metaphor for struggle) equally strong on our side.
127. We will make sure the Ghost Point never happens. The 21st century is where it all starts – or stops.

Chaos Marxist Aphorisms - Volume II

BASIC CONCEPTS

1. Chaos Marxism is a practice meant to give an intellectual framework to the processes needed to become a revolutionary Magus.
2. Like every healthy form of Magick, it self-destructs on completion - in other words, all these mental processes by which we learn to be leaders of the class struggle will hopefully self-destruct if we ever get into a classless society.
3. "Marxism" is the combination of the theory of dialectical materialism and the practice of revolutionary socialism.
4. Matter comes first. Then comes life. Then comes social consciousness. Then comes individual consciousness.
5. Material and social reality determines consciousness. The only real way to improve one's psychic health is to clean out the psychic toxic waste dump which passes for the mass media and popular culture under capitalism.
6. You don't have to believe in Marxism to be a Chaos Marxist. In fact, it's better that you don't.
7. Properly understood, Marxism (as in the reality-tunnel elaborated by Karl Marx, not his dodgy "acolytes" and "followers") is a cure for all forms of dogmatism and regimentation.
8. Human society and culture can be studied scientifically.
9. Knowledge is power - to be able to control what's real you need a damn firm grasp of what is real and what is the "common sense" of your personal and social reality-tunnel. That's the basis of the scientific method.
10. On all issues of the macrostructures of nature and the cosmos, Chaos Marxism is totally agnostic. All issues of contention should be appeals to scientific experiment - that is, if you do this, do predictable consequences ensue? That is our only yardstick for the usefulness or otherwise of particular reality models.
11. "Science" pretty much means being able to create predictable, reproducible results. This is distinct from "religion" or "ideology", which pretty much means giving comforting justifications for what people had decided to do anyway.
12. Chaos theory confirms dialectical materialism (classical Marxism) at the same time it consigns mechanical materialism (Newtonian physics and Stalinism) to the trash-can.
13. Chaos Marxism is not "luddite" in the pejorative sense, or indeed puritan. We don't oppose the technology of provoking pleasure or pain via media, in fact, we think it's pretty damn neat, but only when under the control of mass, grassroots democracy - like governmental power itself.

14. A Stalinist is someone who has turned Marxism into a dogma and used it as an excuse for acting just like the more ruthless variety of capitalist.
15. Stages theories don't work.

THE GOALS OF CHAOS MARXISM

16. The Chaos Marxist practice is:
 - a. to learn to distinguish objective reality (matter, physical energy, political economy, brute force and social practices) from subjective reality (the social myths which grow up around objective reality);
 - b. to recognize the consciousness or personality of both herself and others as "interpellated" (derived from the biological individual's attempts to fit in with the prevailing social practices, rather than essential to the individual) and therefore as subjective rather than objective reality;
 - c. to re-organise the individual consciousness to something which is more capable of being able to provoke change in objective reality, as a vanguard of a liberatory "current" of the oppressed and exploited. By recognizing that our "self" was constructed to fit in with capitalism, not to challenge it, we challenge ourselves to surpass the imposed boundaries of the self. In other traditions, I believe they call this "ego loss".
17. The masses will awaken precisely at that point where they find a reality tunnel which enables them to make their lives physically, practically better.
18. Only the conscious mass action of the huge worldwide majority will change anything. Not a secret elite of memetic superheroes. We can't make that happen by hiding and manipulating. Nor can we do that by clowning and phrasemongering, by going on demos just for the sake of going on demos - that's just another fake identity.
19. The goal of Chaos Marxism is to use the insights into mass hypnosis and cultural theory which have been brought to a high level of pragmatic perfection by the management and marketing gurus, and turn them around to create techniques which can be used for mass-market from-below political activism, cultural illumination, and just plain lulz.
20. Our aim is social revolution in the real sense, in the sense of the world turned upside down, of the corporate Kings kneeling as their kingdoms rise, like the French, American and Russian revolutions before.
21. Chaos Marxism is about mass dehypnotisation, much like mass immunization. Remember that bit in Illuminatus! where our heroes covertly dose the unwashed masses with a drug that turns them from neophobes into neophiles? Yeah, sort of like that, on the cultural-political-psychological-magickal level.
22. The aim is twofold: (a) to build unity between the workers in language and information, and the workers in physical production and services; (b) to learn the skills of the media priesthood to create our own

- "worker's symbolic universe" or "proletarian noosphere", independent from bourgeois culture (but not rejecting it - instead, building something better on its foundation).
23. Chaos Marxists hold that holding a Belief-System based on Marxism enables the elaboration of plans for changing the rules of the social game - which is, we hold, the only way to enable enlightenment on a planetary scale. (We may be wrong.)
 24. Chaos Marxism calls for a firm commitment to what both Marx and Crowley would have recognized as science - dismissal of all myths, firm concentration on what forms of belief and systems of knowledge enable you to measurably and predictably cause changes in material and objective reality. Everything has to begin and end in the \$2.99 material world (what the Maatians call "Level 10"), and if you're not doing that, you're not doing real magick, you're just astrally wanking.
 25. The task for organic intellectuals / cultural-political magi / revolutionary witches / whateverthehell can't just be coming up with the ideology needed for our side to win. We need to come up with an entire culture, and by extension, an entire identity - or at least a framework in which new and better identities of opposition can grow. If we don't do that, people have no choice but to continue to believe that they are who the TV, the teacher, the boss and the priest tell them they are. We don't just need our own academy - we need our own entertainment, we need our own mythology, until the day we break through and can just be human.

THE ENEMY IS THE MARKET (or: the occultism of small businessmen)

26. Fuck Ayn Rand - a starving man is not free, and neither is a woman up to her arse in muddy water because the Arctic just melted.
27. It is increasingly impossible for an individual to maintain biological integrity (be able to feed oneself and family) without playing the capitalist game. I don't care how "enlightened" you are - in 99% and growing of the world today, either you participate successfully in the market economy or you're subsidised by people who do so. In the latter case you're probably going to be in the position of "guru" or "court jester" - giving the successful marketeers a Belief-System which justifies their own privilege. On your deathbed you will say "Oh, how I have wasted my life."
28. What are the social characteristics of a successful small businessman? They are determined, comrades and friends, by what they need to do to survive - sell their goods successfully in a monopolistically competitive market.
29. It's funny that the people who will advise you that all human reality is a chemically-induced illusion tend to take the question of \$\$\$ extremely seriously... as if it were real.
30. The wage labourer is only more obviously a slave to the boss - the small businessman is a slave to the almighty dollar and "market forces".
31. Only Marxism continuously reminds you that your boss and your media and your government never, ever have your interests at heart.

32. For small businessmen, collective action is ridiculous and counterproductive. Which is why the occultism of small businessmen lends itself to individualism, solipsism, fragmentation and powerless, with all the significance in the Real World of Horrible Jobs as a good hand-job. That's the "freedom" of the small businessman - freedom to be an isolated individual, playing your own preferred game in the little enclosure that you can buy with all that glorious money. Congratulations, you managed to paint the walls of your prison cell in psychedelic colours.
33. The reality-tunnels of middle-class Westerners who can afford to patronise occult bookstores are not the measure of success, but the thousands of millions of people living in poverty and oppression on this planet, and the ecological sustainability of human civilisation itself.
34. The middle-class radical mind can't conceive of a mass collective consciousness as anything other than threatening brain death. They say idiotic things like "without private property there is no private life" and never stop to realise that this is a simple tautology, while paradoxically at the same time start rambling on about the wonders of ego loss!
35. It's funny that the middle-class radical's utopia is generally anarcho-capitalism, because that's possibly the only political system which is in itself an oxymoron.
36. While some push polyarchy cynically as a stick to beat democratic reformists with in places like Venezuela, others (typically members of the ideological priesthood) seem to really believe in it, and think that fragmentation and dispersal, can destroy the centralised capitalist-state system of this world, rather than it being just what that system wants its enemies to do. That's right, workers and ordinary people worldwide will simply walk out of the corporate machine and join your organic yoghurt-knitting commune en masse. Right.
37. By demanding a choice between 'thought' and 'action,' the various groups and individuals infected with swamp fever are promoting a false dichotomy. Clearly, the material unfolding of the class struggle leads the proletariat to self-consciousness, and therefore to a unity of theory and practice, something swamp inhabitants rail against precisely because they don't operate from a proletarian perspective.

THE ENEMY IS LIFESTYLISM

38. Kill sectarianism with fire.
39. Identity politics = voluntary ghettoisation = the cultural logic of consumerism in late capitalism.
40. A lifestyle is a commodity sold to you to keep you quiet.
41. Most modern Western occultists seem to have given up the search for "what is real" and confined themselves to looking for a new and more fun religion. Well, to hell with that.
42. Those who buy such an identity will not only buy the appropriate clothes, books, memorabilia etc to make sure no-one forgets their Special Unique identity for a moment. They will also hide in their little

- communes or staff common rooms or book circles or other voluntary ghettos, and never venture out to bother the real world again.
43. What do you want - to change material reality or just give yourself a new identity, a new lifestyle, a new religion which says it's not a religion?
 44. Both New Age claptrap and mechanical materialism - both ideologies common among the corporate culture and the various subcultures which have sprung up as an "opiate" to it - are designed to render you powerless.
 45. Most Marxist and anarchist sects use ritualised and useless forms of "political activism" as attempts to shore up their self-image and give them acceptable social and leisure opportunities, rather than actually trying to change the world, i.e. change mass consciousness.)
 46. It's tempting to locate the social origin of cults in clever kids with a middle-class education who dream of their internal world of ideas being, not only accepted, but dominating others in the way that they feel that the existing ideas dominate them.
 47. Too many people who think they're socialists or revolutionaries or anarchists or whatever are too busy "arguing about dead Russians" (or Germans, or Spaniards, or Americans for that matter) to get out there and start spreading memes which will lead to mass illumination around a practical social-political project.
 48. The pretend-Marxist cults, although holding to materialism as a dogma, by that very act betray Marxism - any dogmas, any ideas which are untouchable and unamendable, and the associated belief that those who hold the "correct" ideas are the elite, are against anything that Marx or indeed Lenin would have recognized.
 49. It's not an antidote to apathy, it's a set of ideas which will make you feel justified in smug apathy, in working the system for whatever material privileges you can get, and then getting together with your cool buddies on evenings and weekends to be cowboys, anarchists, Zen archers, whatever.
 50. Certain vulgar "illuminates" will tell that that that's as may be for the common herd (i.e. the people who empty their garbage, not the people who write the books they like to read), but the true homo superior are those who have evolved past such conditioned responses. If you believe that, just say the word "Marxism" to 99% of the Cosmik Consciousness Warriors based in the USA and listen to the drearily predictable responses you'll get.
 51. Anyone who claims that they're so enlightened as to be "above politics" - who sneers at mere questions of who has to work for whom and who gets the rewards thereof, in favour of talk about spiritual, genetic or subatomic reality - clearly doesn't have to worry about their own biological survival in a capitalist economy and thus is speaking from a position of privilege.
 52. The three main dangers of modern occultism are immorality, drugs, and the bamboozling of silly women. Very little has changed, although of course silly men are equally ripe to get bamboozled up.

53. Subculturalism - the belief that you and your buddies (or people who share your reality tunnel) can survive comfortably on your own, abstracted from the social network of people you don't get on with - is the same thing. The irony is that capitalism (which sells you these elitist dreams of social fragmentation, to keep you docile) has created a single, networked global economy which means that everyone on the planet (more or less) is now interconnected, and has essentially made it impossible for you to "escape the planet of the apes".
54. Letting the ideal be the enemy of the possible is a sure road to impotence - and as for the attitude that anything that ordinary people can do is ipso facto a useless waste of time, well, I don't think I need to even comment further.
55. People who "believe" in Marxism are not Marxist or even political, they are religious dogmatists with all the emotional damage, political uselessness and inability to deal with life outside a small group that that entails.
56. In internet-consumer culture, games and similar commodities substitute for unbearable reality. Chaos Marxism plays games as well, but as training for reality.
57. The essential principle of a cult is an unchallengeable ideology and an unchallengeable leadership who "bear" or "preserve" the ideology.
58. The basis of a cult: idealism + elitism + thoughtreform.
59. Cults believe in the idea of "evil" - that ideas can be wrong in themselves - and generally lump oppositionists in that bracket. A defining feature of every cult is personal attacks against adversaries and internal critics.
60. "Cult" is not an absolute term. But the more a group is idealist, elitist and obsessed with purifying its own dogma, the more "cultish" it is.
61. A protest movement is NOT a community - when it becomes a "community", with its own "permanent" power structures and ethos, you're in the realms of small-group psychosis and you by Goddess should be looking to bust out.
62. Those political or magickal groups which attempt to "insulate" their cadre from the Real World of Horrible Jobs, rather than preaching a deep involvement in them, are not only make sure their cadre will never become real leaders/Magi, but ensuring that they will just get wrapped up with another false personality, another, smaller world with the same (perhaps even nastier) games as the real world.

CHAOS MARXISM IS MATERIALIST

63. "Common sense" of modern society - including the crude and warped caricature of Marxism known as Stalinism - sees the material world and the world of ideas as distinct and independent. This is one of the reasons why hypocrisy and lies are such a defining feature of modern ruling classes. Some subsets of the infosphere, on the other hand, assert that material nature is subservient to the idealist, narrative or spiritual

- realms. Out of this comes all manner of religions, from Scientology to neoconservatism.
64. The essence and the genius of the materialist dialectic is that at the same time it points out that all forms and concepts and words and labels are provisional and inessential; and insists on the primacy of our nature as higher primates seeking to survive on this small Spaceship Earth.
65. All social structures are traceable back to human biological imperatives which in some cases predate our acquisition of consciousness, and the whole purpose of Chaos Marxist work is to create harmony between our essential animal nature and a technological civilisation which could enable us to transcend, rather than repress, that nature.
66. Because humans are higher primates and therefore troop animals, socio-economics are fundamental to our ability to survive. As Marx pointed out long ago, the "Robinson Crusoe" story is simple nonsense. We are not cats, capable of surviving all on our own - how resources and labour are distributed within our primate troop networks is primary to our survival as "individuals".
67. The socio-political-territorial-economic games of those higher primates called humans are predictable enough that, given proper scientific examination, the rules can be worked out. It is the contention of Marxism that the necessity of following those rules to survive overrides all considerations in the human consciousness, and thus nothing can fundamentally change on the planetary scale until those rules change at the macro-social level. We aim to work out strategies to do that and to promote them to a mass audience, which will be the only real testing ground.
68. A real political party - or any social or cultural change organisation - values the test of practice - what people actually do - above all else.
69. R. A. Wilson distinguished emic reality (what is really REALLY REALLY real under everything) and etic reality (what we can know through language), and pointed out that they don't really have much to do with each other. Chaos Marxism further subdivides the latter into social etic (or "consensus") reality, and personal etic reality, and furthermore insists that the closest we can get to emic reality is the need for biological survival of the primate which has these concepts. (We are of course agnostic on non-corporeal intelligence.)
70. Since the ecological question came up in pressing fashion, the hard core "there is no significant objective reality" crowd seem to have shut up a bit. Nothing is designed to ensure your belief in gravity more than falling out of a plane.
71. Marx said "Capital is a social relation" - R. A. Wilson would have said "Capitalism is a reality-tunnel". Same difference - capital and capitalism are not real, are constructs in a particular game. But inherent to this game is that the game must continually expand - to take in more and more players and resources.

72. The revolutionary class is the only class with an interest in actually understanding how reality works. If our rulers allowed themselves to see outside their specially constructed reality tunnels, they'd probably go mad and/or kill themselves. Conversely, we need to see how things really work if we are to change the rules of the game.
73. Much of reality is created collectively and can only be changed collectively.
74. For those who want a new and better game to play, we need all the reality we can get.
75. I still like Marx's original vision that socialism would mean a higher material quality of life for the vast majority.
76. If you hold an idealist view of reality, you are ipso facto not entirely sane. Unless, of course, your ability to cause change in reality outstrips that of we materialists. Then we're the crazy ones. Go on. I dares ya.

CHAOS MARXISM IS COLLECTIVIST

77. Individual consciousness is not individual. Given the existence of a single globalised capitalist economy, Individualism - the belief that you can survive comfortably on your own, abstracted from any social network - is a lie, a Tar-Baby, something sold to you by the capitalist egregore to buy your allegiance.
78. The individual is something which is a result of the world we live in, not a cause. Slightly more than an illusion, but not really fundamentally "emic"-real.
79. Individual consciousness can be "in control" over small areas of matter, but can only affect social consciousness in proportion to common understanding and action with other social consciousnesses. Only widespread agreement within the social consciousness can be "at cause" over large areas and systems of matter.
80. Wage-workers are the revolutionary class precisely because their mutual interests lie in co-operation rather than competition.
81. The process of decision-making is less vital than ensuring the total freedom of each individual consciousness to have opinions different from the group ideas, and to have real opportunities to change the group's ideas.
82. Requiring unity in action is not cultish - requiring unity in thought is.
83. A true collective consciousness (aka "culture") can only arise where every member of the culture gets to transmit as well as receive. A cult is closed - a culture is open. A cult is simply the prejudices and personality problems of a leadership group written large - a culture might be less of a "strike force", but it will be more flexible, more healthy, and more likely to perpetuate itself.

84. Whether you like it or not, the unwashed, reality-TV watching, football-loving masses do the work which make it possible for you to eat. Unless you want a life of monastic poverty on a self-sufficient allotment, your only choices are to live off the proceeds of a system which requires that the vast majority of humanity be psychically and socially oppressed - or join with them on a mission of mutual enlightenment.
85. Biological survival in all primate civilisations entails conforming to consensus, social reality in some sense. Starhawk's gym teacher said: "Reality is when you jump off a roof, you break your leg." Chaos Marxism adds: "... and also that, when you don't have an income and no-one feeds you, you starve and die."
86. Seeking individual illumination in 21st century capitalism is like trying to live a healthy lifestyle living on a toxic waste dump which is sinking into the ground.
87. Virtually every American heterodox thinker got wet and gooeey when Stalinism fell over because "their side" had won in the Cold War. Fish can't really help feeling horny when the water temperature goes up.
88. Crowley/Wilson modern occultism contains some hints towards how our goals might be accomplished, but it needs to be generalised from the individual to the social.
89. Groups with no ideology will eventually be forced to adopt one under pressure. Groups with no leader will eventually be forced to adopt one under pressure.
90. Every mass movement must have leadership otherwise nothing will ever happen. But the movement creates the leadership, not the other way around.
91. Factions and faction-fighting will always exist. The question is how to deal with factions - the belief in the "self-regulating hivemind" is revealed as the utopian/anarchoid dreaming it always was.
92. The middle-class radical can't conceive of a real collective, so their models of organisation are the "affinity group", the commune, the monastery... and, yes, eventually, the cult.
93. The idea is that human individuality will become possible for the first time after capitalism.

THE NECESSITY OF ACTION

94. There is an "arms race" going on in current culture between the brainwashing / black magic skills of the ruling class and their ideological apparatus, and the objective despair, alienation and anger at the grassroots of society.
95. The biggest failure of Marxists in particular and "the left" in general is that they have lost the ability at least since the 1930s to speak in language that ordinary working people can understand.
96. The technologies of promoting "common sense" have leapt ahead since Gramsci's day, with the powers of mass-media marketing and psychology. We need to make that quantum leap ourselves, or keep talking to ourselves forever.

97. If capitalism isn't stopped, we're going all the way towards a mediaeval-style Inquisition and the scholasticism and mental stasis that goes with it.
98. You will never illuminate humanity as a whole until you shut down the dark satanic mills which befoul the infosphere, and that will only happen when the masses start taking up practical activities which act as a countervirus to corporate ideology, at the same time the people who power the mills of cultural pollution go on strike.
99. The Belief-Systems that will enable the changing of the rules of the social game - a revolution, in other words - will have to deal with issues of socio-political economy as fundamental to issues of personal enlightenment and/or planetary survival and/or the future of the human species. Individual enlightenment takes too long, and read the climate news to know that the clock is ticking here.
100. You can, in fact, change others. It's called brainwashing and hypnotism. On the other hand, you can persuade others that changing themselves - via becoming part of a mass movement to change the world - is a good idea. But you have to get close enough to the unwashed reality-TV watching masses that you can actually learn what a realistic first step towards this might be.

THE PAINKILLER OF THE MASSES

101. Consciousness and personality are performative rather than essential.
102. In the modern era, in the countries rich in capital and information, the biggest and most effective weapon in the armoury of social reaction is persuading the oppressed to culturally identify with their oppressors, and to experience other oppressed groups as culturally alien, incomprehensible and threatening. This is most effectively done through mass media which encourages the masses to experience the world around them from the point of view of the ruling classes - or, more precisely, from the point of view of the cultural-professional middle classes who work for the ruling classes (analagous to how the priest in the middle ages worked in the interests of the local lord, while of course having their own identity and interests).
103. The masses are asleep because it is a rational survival strategy, given their powerlessness in modern globalised capitalism, and given the vast resources of the powerful devoted to the means of mass hypnosis.
104. Popular media culture is the unifying and justifying narrative of world imperialism today, just like Christianity was in the 19th century. The TVs are the churches of the 21st century in the "opiate of the masses" sense, and idiots who think that harrassing Muslims is somehow "progressive" should realise that they're facing the wrong enemy.
105. Subcultures as lobster-traps for the inquiring mind existed long before the internet, it's just now it's far easy for weirdos to form cliques and for those cliques to become "target demographics".

106. People who hang around on the internet are not the primary interest of Chaos Marxism, but they are a pretty good "petri dish", since they embody facets of the concrete global society "speeded up".

CULTURAL REVOLUTION – A DO IT YOURSELF GUIDE

107. Against this religious belief that somehow if we're good enough - "good" defined as adherence to the religious maxims dictated by our enemies - our enemies will simply be swept aside by good fairies, Chaos Marxism counterposes the idea that to defeat an enemy you must be symmetrical to it.
108. And much like we need to learn from the industrial workers how best to make the revolution in the factories, we need to learn from the cyberworkers and the internet nerds how to build the revolution in the mediasphere.
109. We haven't yet begun to plumb the depths of what the self-organisation of internet nerds is capable of. There must be cross-fertilisation with the "Traditional" workers' movement, especially for those of us seeking to organise the cybertariat of the 21st century.
110. "We are the tiny enlightened elite who are going to save the world, by hiding and doing our superhero stuff behind the scenes, by manipulating the structures of oppression rather than trying to throw them down." What, really, is the difference between this and getting a job in academia, advertising or the entertainment multinationals - i.e giving up altogether?
111. Every taboo needs its relaxation. Every cultural construct needs a "joker in the pack", someone who is going to break all the rules for the hell of it.
112. The idea that some taboos can never, ever be relaxed is born out of the hubris of the cultural-administrator class that they can control everyone's thoughts all the time. If it worked, it would lead to totalitarianism, aka cultural stasis, the "Ghost Point". Thankfully it doesn't work.
113. To imagine that social revolution is conceivable... without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie WITH ALL ITS PREJUDICES [*italics in original*], without a movement of the politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression ... --to imagine all this is to REPUDIATE SOCIAL REVOLUTION.
114. Your only possible usefulness is as being the yeast that makes the bread rise, and please note that the yeast gets no special privileges or leadership roles for this.
115. An actual revolutionary vanguard can't afford to have secrets or hidden agendas.
116. A "leaderless group" in fact means "a group where leadership is secret or not acknowledged".
117. You don't need a formal leader to be a cult. All you need is sufficient peer pressure to "maintain the consensus".

118. Make yourself relevant. Don't lecture, but learn as well as teach. You are only worth anything in your self-proclaimed leadership if you can actually win the trust and confidence of the masses - you don't earn it by being "orthodox", by spouting the right memes. Memes are in fact irrelevant except insofar as they directly influence action.
119. The player who has the best, most unobstructed view of the field of play is the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper, of course, has only a very limited ability to affect the actual course of the game, and has to rely on his ability to yell his insights as loud as possible to the rest of the team. So it is for the organic intellectual or Mage in the modern era.
120. Small groups can't do shit except to the extent that they influence large groups.
121. The mass demonstration is the only actual real political/memetic activism that your average working stiff has any chance to get involved with. It's not as useful as the mass strike, but it's something rather than nothing.

HACK YOUR OWN PERSONALITY

122. You are what you are - I am sorry to say - because of how your personality evolved to enable you to survive under capitalism. (And if it failed to do so, I'm glad to see that they allow you to read my blog in the mental hospital or prison.)
123. Lose your ego - your image of "yourself" and where "you" fit into your social setting, and your obsession with defending it - and you can become one with a current or force which can actually shape material reality.
124. Sanity = a correct perception of where an individual or group has power and where they do not. Happiness = perception of relative power. Unhappiness = perception of relative powerlessness.
125. Some crazy people are happy as hell, but we don't want to be crazy because it would mean total powerlessness.
126. "Self-help" therapy usually embodies pre-existing social norms that the individual is finally and totally responsible for their personal reality, which I see as oppressive and an ideological tool of those who hold power
127. Institutional psychology, on the other hand, seems to embody the idea that "sanity" means adapting smoothly to existing reality rather than an increased ability to affect it in accordance with desire - also an ideological tool of that which holds power.
128. If you accept that personal change is far more important than political change, and also accept that some people have achieved Superhumanity in their own life time, then surely your rule from that point onwards it to shut up and listen. And donate. And sell the paper.
129. The prejudices which underly our own treasured place in the world are the hardest to see through, even if you think you've progressed mostly past Cosmic Schmuckhood -

130. You'd better either think of some way of getting past your monadic, bourgeois, individualist identity - or just give up and find a good drug/religion/sports team to follow.
131. This side of the revolution, the successful revolutionary will have to learn to simulate a personality which operates on the basis of "common sense" in order to survive, while also developing a personality which operates on the basis of "good sense" in order to be effective in the struggle. "Good sense" will get you fired - "common sense" will ensure that you never actually change anything - so best to be able to pick "horses for courses".
132. Even after ego loss, there is much chopping of wood, carrying of water and posting on blogs.
133. Is martyrdom all bad, anyway? Jesus was nailed up, yes, Ché was pumped full of bullets and displayed, but they are now bad-ass memes of various levels of immortality, and you won't be if you stay in hiding.
134. Being a vessel for the Chaos Marxist Current does not mean that the demands of holding down a job, having friends, looking after your physical needs and communicating with people who're not part of your crusade will go away. Forget this, and you my friend are lost in the Abyss and need to be saved.
135. An effective Chaos Marxist must be willing to ditch even their most cherished personality if it becomes counterproductive - and this includes the personality of "member of the revolutionary party / Magickal Order that will save the world". You may have to destroy everything you love in order to do what is necessary.
136. You have to have the right kind of boundaries between yourself and the mass movement, once you're in there. No boundaries and you might as well not exist. Firm, steel-hard boundaries and you'll be incapable of actually leading - your comrades will distrust you at best and hate you at worst.

THE WORLD AS IS

137. The novelty in the current epoch of history is that the egregore of capitalism (generalised commodity production and wage labour) now dominates the majority of all human experience, and its sphere of domination inexorably expands in the absence of successful class struggle.
138. Capitalism head-fixing technology smashes all previous forms of family and social life, and incorporates and commodifies any new social movements which do not base themselves on a clearly defined anti-capitalist political praxis.
139. Superstition, fanatical religion, fanatical religion disguised as politics, mind-control cults and cargo cults flourish in an era of social defeat.
140. In virtually every advanced capitalist country in the world today the ruling class thinks of itself as junior partners of the Yankee capitalist class.

141. As actual capitalist production shifts out of the advanced First World, and the local economies are bound up increasingly with administration, media production and servicing the consumption needs of the elite... virtually all "First World" countries will be controlled by rentiers, living off the profits of their investments in China, India, wherever.
142. When media commentators talk about the underclass, they are not necessarily talking about an objective economic differentiation (since in many cases the physical-labour workers are better off financially than those in call centres and the like). They are talking about the gap between those fluent in the language, verbal and symbolic, of the oppressor classes, and those who aren't.
143. Virtually any "radical cultural product" in this day and age is generally spot on about the problem, but falls down on the solutions.
144. 90% of what passes for "social science" under capitalism (and an increasing percentage of physical science) is on an intellectual par with astrology or mediaeval Scholasticism, in that it primarily consists of "Just So" stories about why whatever happens in the World-As-Is is As It Should Be.
145. "Polyarchy" is simply the system of organisation natural to capitalism - hundreds of different and competing systems of power, all dictatorial within their own little fields, but engaging in anarchic and destructive competition with each other.
146. Democracy, as we would understand it, is certainly dictatorship - seen from their point of view, since they recognize the authority of only the government which deflects and makes harmless actual democracy, and actively attempts to fragment and atomise human consciousness.
147. To survive as a "stand-up guru" full-time you have to enter a Small Businessman's Reality Tunnel, from which of course Marxist ideas look like inhuman blasphemy
148. The small businessman is an endangered species tending towards extinction.
149. There's no profit in space. To have the kind of money that you'd need to put into Space Migration etc., you'd have to be in the kind of reality tunnel where such fantasies would seem pointless and laughable.
150. Cult methods of organisation are nothing more than boiled-down and spiced-up versions of accepted behaviour-control and thought-reform methods used commonly against children and "deviants" in late capitalist society. Nothing that Scientology or the Moonies or the Sparts do is really dissimilar in kind from what ordinary mums and dads, schoolteachers, psychiatric nurses and prison guards are encouraged to do every day - only in degree, and in target.
151. Capitalism head-fixing technology smashes all previous forms of family and social life, and incorporates and commodifies any new social movements which do not base themselves on a clearly defined anti-capitalist political praxis. Corporate Memetics have worked out the basic rules of "predictable human behaviour" and use them daily to keep the poor shuffling proles working like dogs 8 hours or more a day and

- consuming like Hungry Hungry Hippos for the remainder of their waking hours.
152. Constant competition for the advertising dollar has had the same effect as constant competition for market share - the means of production of memes are becoming ever more efficient, and yet their equivalent of the "rate of profit" (the rate of effectiveness?) tends to ever diminish.
153. The media priesthood have perfected memetics to the point where they can actually bypass the rational brain altogether and provoke, literally and directly, "gut reactions" (or groin reactions, for that matter). HOLY SHIT if we do not learn to do this ourselves and socialise the means of production and distribution of media signals (exchange will not mean anything in a post-intellectual property era), they may well perfect the means to control us with pleasure rather than pain and the species will be doomed.
154. The bone-level anger and hatred, evoked in working people by the grimness of life as disposable labour in 21st century capitalism, expresses itself in a continuous "slow motion" riot. Working people take it out on themselves and occasionally random members of the bourgeoisie, in the shape of violence, drug abuse, sexual abuse, and property damage. Our rulers attempt to channel this continually welling hatred into mindless patriotism, hatred of religious, political or ethnic outsiders, and compulsion to buy whatever commodities will engender the illusion of being a valued part of a community for about ten minutes.
155. The cultural technician class (99% of the people you'll see writing blogs or websites, in other words) overwhelmingly make their living by using memetic tools to spread someone else's toxic ideology. It's precisely because of that that your bus driver is far, FAR more likely to make an effective revolutionary memetician and political activist than the cool guy you met on the internet who reads all the same cool books as you do.
156. RAW suggested that primate social reality was mainly based on simian territorial/dominance games. Chaos Marxism thinks that's a bit simplistic. For the last 200 years, the laws of market forces have taken more and more of a primary role, and we think that the cash nexus works on a different logic than primate dominance rules - which is why capitalism is much more progressive than any previous socio-economic system, and also much more destructive.

DON'T CONFUSE THE LEVELS

157. Many of the great leaders of history got there by trial and error without the benefit of "system". In a sense, this is just a way of explaining to my people - over-educated young Westerners in the internet age - what is necessary.
158. Just because you're Illuminated doesn't mean you're right about anything in particular.
159. "Sane" doesn't mean "good".
160. You can only be a vanguard if (a) you are actually, demonstrably out in front, (b) you've got a large number of people following you.

161. Some of the worst Stalinists are in fact Trotskyists. To put it another way - having a more correct abstract theory in no way insulates yourself from dogmatism and small-group psychosis.
162. The masculine pronoun is used for poetic effect. Women are just as bad.
163. Whether Marxists should have their own party, and how it should be organised, depend on the concrete conditions in which they face themselves. To say that we should always organise as "toy Bolsheviks" is like saying that all Thelemites must get together a hierarchically structured Order like the OTO or the A.A. Mistaking the map for the territory in a big way.
164. Just because people follow some weird and offensive memes doesn't mean they're not potent allies.

THE FUTURE

165. Che Guevara said "if you are a revolutionary, make a revolution." Similarly: if you are a Renaissance man, start a Renaissance.
166. If you choose not to decide, you still have made a choice.
167. ye Illuminated Ones, make ye a choice right now - are you going to hypnotise yourself into being happy living on a quickly collapsing toxic waste dump, or are you going to hypnotise yourself into waking everyone up so we can clean the dump up together? Are you going to visualise yourself levitating over the bars of the prison, or are you going to lead a prison riot, take the place over and then figure out how to get everyone out?
168. Pick the world you want to create - a world of isolation and solipsism, or a world of shared, collectively-created reality? Chaos Marxism opts for the latter.
169. We are splashing psychic liberation right across the planet - and we'd die to do it.
170. A revolution will mean the people who don't have to lie to make their living taking over
171. To lead you have to learn as well as teach.
172. I'm not sure whether I'm thrilled or terrified by the idea that the central secret of consciousness is "I did it for the lulz".

Marxism 101 For Occultists, part 1

Marxism is a materialist philosophy - the starting and ending point of our ideas is the actual, physical, real, dirty world. We use this world in contradistinction to "idealism" - the concept that ideas are the fundamental building blocks of reality. *But the essence of Marxist materialism is that the real world and the "sphere of ideas" are intimately connected.* "Vulgar materialism" - that is, the hard-core sceptic view of reality - carries on Descartes' hard-and-fast dividing line between physical reality and ideas. This concept that ideas are totally independent of reality is in fact another, stupider, kind of idealism, in which ideas just kind of float around in a disembodied state and operate by their own laws.

As Lenin said, "intelligent idealism" - accepting that ideas shape reality - is closer to Marxism than the "vulgar materialism" which, as we've shown above, is actually a vulgar kind of idealism under an assumed name. Marxists accept that material reality shapes the ideas in people's heads. But that *when people act according to different ideas, then they can change material reality.* The connection between matter and ideas is **action**.

Marxists are *dialectical* materialists. The "dialectic" can be summed up in a single idea: that everything is in a continual process of flux and change, that everything contains within it the seeds of its own destruction and evolution into something different. Opposed to the vulgar materialist worldview in which the world contains a number of fixed, isolated objects, for the Marxist the world is made up of processes whereby things evolve over time and relations between things. A Marxist is more interested in the direction in which something is going than where it is at any given moment - Trotsky noted that in this, dialectical logic is different from formal logic in the same way that calculus is different from arithmetic. Marx got this idea from the German idealist philosopher Hegel, who seems to have picked it up from the Greek Heraclitus - it's a surprisingly common idea in even Western philosophy, let alone the rest of the world. See for example the extract from Crowley's translation of the *Tao Te Ching*, a few posts down from here.

The basis of Marxist philosophy can be summed up thus: the whole world and everything in that world is in a continuous process of change and flux. But human consciousness was born in the struggle to change the world according to our will. Marx, writing at the time when industrial capitalism was booming all over the world, saw this as the first time when a truly global human civilisation, which could not only gain control over the physical world but over its own evolution, was possible. But he also saw that capitalism - while smashing the old, static feudal and traditional civilisations - was a "Sorcerer's Apprentice" that couldn't control the powers that it had summoned up.

Marx saw that the division between mind and matter in the philosophy of the rulers of his era was echoed in the division between the capitalist class - who directed production for their own private benefit - and the working class, who actually carried production out. Consciousness belonged to one group of society

- the power to actually do things to a completely different group. Thus, the very basis of capitalist society at the same time summoned up great powers and made it impossible for humanity or even individual humans to have any control over these powers.

Only when the industrial working class - who actually with their physical labour *changed* the world on a daily basis - became *fully conscious* of what they were doing, and took over control of the way in which they created the wealth of the world, could this contradiction be solved. The ascension of the working class to the leadership of society would be at the same time the solution of the split between theory and practice, mind and matter, consciousness and physical reality. It was necessary for the real history of humanity to begin - a history when a self-conscious species would take over responsibility for its own future and the future of the planet and perhaps the universe. The sole important amendment that modern Marxists would make to this is to make it clear that low-paid white-collar workers - who shift information rather than steel for a living - are also going to have to be part of this process.

In summary, then: Marxism is the philosophy and science of the human race coming to full self-consciousness and responsibility. Against us stands the self-interest of the ruling classes of the world, who have massive power over other humans but no real power over the world they live in. These people, for example, couldn't solve global warming if they wanted to, because the measures they'd be forced to take would *destroy their own self-identity as rulers of the world*. Marx didn't foresee the possibility of ecological collapse, but he certainly had in mind "civilisational collapse" of the kind that happened to ancient Rome. Only a self-conscious world working class could save humanity from such a fate - precisely because, as he famously said, it had "nothing to lose but its chains".

So what stops the workers of the world from achieving this? On one hand, the rulers are not ashamed to torture, destroy, kill, imprison and use any and all kinds of violence to protect their power. But in the advanced Western countries right now, the control of the rulers of the world is imposed by *ideology*. And this is where Marxism and occultism really begin to share a frame of reference.

Marxism 101 for Occultists, part 2

To recap and expand upon the previous post on the basis of "dialectical materialism":

The material world and everything in it is in a conscious state of flux and change, because of its own internal contradictions. The birth of human consciousness offers the possibility of this "dialectical" process being directed by will.

However, the division of human society into rulers and ruled, the partly-conscious and the forcibly-unconscious, hampers and frustrates this possibility. In the capitalist era, it has allowed humanity to call up vast, potentially world-changing powers, but to not have any control over them.

This contradiction can only be solved by those who actually, physically, create and change the world in the modern era - those who work with muscle or brain - becoming conscious and taking control over human society.

Because the world socio-economy is now so vast and complicated, this can only be done on a collective basis from the ground up, with interdependent individuals acting democratically to direct the productive tools at the disposal of the human species. It will also require the forcible removal from power of the capitalist class and the state apparatuses they have set up to protect their privileges.

Now read on...

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Why hasn't this happened yet? As we said before, because the other side has all the nuclear bombs and prisons and most of the guns. But that's only part of the question. Most people in a modern capitalist society don't need an armed guard standing over them to keep them in line - they allow themselves to be exploited and obey the irrational laws because they accept that this is the right way to behave. (As an aside, this is the real reason that slavery was abolished - the wage-labour system is a much more effective form of social control, because the man with the gun is usually invisible.)

One of Marx's most vital comments is that *the ideology of the ruling class is the ideology of society*. Let's use a metaphor of a society having an "infosphere", like a planet has an atmosphere. Every member of a society is constantly and invisibly surrounded by the ideas evolved by that society's rulers to make their own continued rule look not only justified, but the only possible option. Partly this is accomplished deliberately through ideological institutions. In previous eras this was done by churches or other mass organisations - nowadays in advanced capitalist countries, it is done more and more via the mass media.

But it's also because *the way the world works makes the lies seem like truth*. Because virtually everyone works for some boss in return for wages or salary, it makes sense that that is the natural way to earn a living. Because the system is based on competition and competitive accumulation of wealth, it makes sense that people should have to struggle against each other to survive. Because most people don't have a guy with a gun standing over them to obey the law and behave like good employees, it makes sense that people are doing so out of their own freely arrived at decisions.

When that anonymous Bush Administration staffer made that snide comment about "the reality-based community", this is what he meant. Because ideas come from experience as well as from the TV or from the preacher, **whatever they succeed in imposing on us will look not only rational, but natural**. People will end up justifying it to themselves just because no credible alternative is presented. In this case, existing reality shapes ideas - but, since in the modern era so much is potentially under human control - the ideas in people's heads determine how much existing reality can be changed.

The Italian revolutionary Antonio Gramsci spent 15 years in Mussolini's jails. At this time, he made the most intelligent comments so far in the Marxist tradition as to how to fight the war for human liberation on the domain of ideology.

Gramsci suggested that everyone's consciousness contains two contradictory elements. Firstly, "common sense" - the ideas they pick up from the "infosphere" of the society around them. Secondly, "good sense" - the ideas that they come to for themselves from their own personal experience. The experience of workers in struggle - that the wagelabour relation is exploitative, that only collective action with other workers can improve their own situation, that - is more sharply counterposed to the "official infosphere" than anyone else's.

Lenin, summing up the insights of dialectical materialism, said "ideas become real forces when they seize the masses". But Gramsci made it clear that the official ideas are "short-circuited" most effectively when proved wrong in practice - that is, in struggle against the ruling power. There's an old joke that embodies this insight: "a radical is a liberal who's been beaten up by a cop".

The problem is that the official structures which systematically pollute the infosphere are getting stronger as more people's experience brings them into conflict with the lies. Our rulers won't use bribery, they prefer not to use force, so lies upon lies are becoming their central weapon. Their technology in this area is approaching a high degree of perfection - anyone who watches Fox News or has read something on "neurolinguistic programming" (aka corporate magic) will understand this. So the central question for Marxists and other world-changing radicals is how to tip the balance between "common sense" and "good sense" in favour of the latter in the minds of the majority - the workers who are in a position to reorient the entire creaking superstructure of human society, if they want to. It's at this point that the concerns of Marxists and of the new generation of occultists - in particular, those embodied in the fledgling *Ultraculture* movement - coincide. But that's a topic for another post.

Magic 101 For Marxists

Okay. I think in the last two posts I gave a comprehensible account of how Marxists see the interaction between the "infosphere", people's ideas, and the physical world. Now I'm going to have a go at it from the point of view of occultists, magic(k)ians, "metaprogrammers", or whatever else they might call themselves. I do note for the benefit of all my occultist readers that I am simplifying and generalising to an incredible degree for those who are utter n00bs to the subject - your corrections and additions are welcomed.

Perhaps the central tenet of the magical worldview is the Hermetic formula - as above, so below. To put it another way, the microcosm is the same as the macrocosm; to put it a third way, symbolic changes can cause physical changes, if the symbol is "powerful" enough; or a fourth way, that perception is to a large degree reality. (This last might be recognized as also the central tenet of modern public relations and politics.)

Traditional magic worked with the symbols of the various discarnate entities of the various religions - gods, demons, angels, what-have-you. With the breakdown of the traditional societies in the age of capitalism, the modern occultists such as the Order of the Golden Dawn and the Theosophical Society began piecing together new symbolic systems, usually out of remnants of the old. The infamous Aleister Crowley is perhaps most famous by attempting to apply the methodology of science to the material of magic, creating a new system that would correlate and include all traditional systems of "magick". (The k was added by Crowley himself, to distinguish what he was doing from card tricks, pulling rabbits out of hats etc.)

Since Crowley we have had what you might call post-modern magic. This follows Crowley in attempting to reconcile cutting-edge science and the traditional Hermetic formula. It is also distinguished by an insistence that what is important in an act of magic is reprogramming the psyche - i.e., changing the consciousness of the magician. The "acid missionaries" of the 1960s, who systematically attempted to explore altered states of consciousness via what Frank Zappa called "trendy chemical amusement" are a huge influence. Many occultists also work from modern ideas such as quantum uncertainty, Carl Jung's theory of synchronicity (i.e. when random events are connected by their significance to the observer), and chaos theory - hence "chaos magic".

The neo-pagan witch Starhawk defined magic as "an symbolic act done in an altered state of consciousness to produce a desired effect". Another way of putting this might be "introducing information in a matter which evades the filters erected by the subject's rational mind". For the occultist of today, magic can be boiled down to the following:

- inducing an altered state of consciousness (by mediation, breath control, drugs, a catchy tune in the background, sex, the suspension of disbelief required to enjoy fiction etc) in which the subconscious mind becomes more susceptible

- imagining the desired goal in symbolic form
- investing the symbol with energy; or, to put it another way, fixing the symbol in the subconscious via repetition or association with some kind of intense experience
- "banishing" (dispelling from consciousness) all counteracting symbols.

By this process, the subconscious mind is reprogrammed; and, since "above is below" (perception is reality) so will reality be transformed for the practitioner in accordance with will. Alternatively, some kind of psychic energy will be sent out that will actually rewrite the material world according to desire. Sometimes, both explanations are used. (You could also sum up these steps in the words of the old jingle - "accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative, don't mess with Mr Inbetween".)

In these traditions, the gods and demons of earlier belief are often reinterpreted as manifestations of the individual or collective psyche, Jungian archetypes, discarnate beings alien to this planet or even this plane, or even consciously-constructed figments of the magician's imagination. Often it will be claimed that these distinctions are not important - what is important is how the practitioner behaves in regards to what she perceives in the altered state of consciousness, and what is accordingly imprinted on the subconscious.

Increasingly, complicated traditional tables of magical symbols such as Crowley used are being supplemented or even replaced by images from modern mass media and popular culture, or even ones which the practitioner makes up herself. In the chaos tradition, serious belief itself is seen as counterproductive. The practitioner is encouraged to discover the symbols and the belief systems which are most effective to change her consciousness in the required way, and then "invest them with personal energy". Sexuality is perhaps the most vital source of this energy - deliberate violations of personal taboos are also seen as a "path to power". This is in essence exactly the same process as advertising, psychiatry, brainwashing, rhetoric, Neuro-Linguistic Programming and what those criminals in the "Church" of Scientology do. (L. Ron Hubbard stole most of his good ideas from Crowley.)

The place where this kind of magic comes into contact with Marxist ideas of ideology is the increasing acceptance that corporate capitalism and imperialism are not only destroying the physical world but playing merry havoc with the symbolic realms, with their advertising, propaganda and other mind-control techniques. Also, occult theory follows the insight of Marxism that activity determines consciousness, not whatever the conscious mind happens to believe. A Marxist might call a picket line or a militant demonstration "an altered state of consciousness", since it takes place in an area not acknowledged to exist by the dominant paradigm of reality - an effective political or advertising slogan has all the same characteristics of a meditative mantra.

In general, modern occultists still have faith in the possibility of individual action against this tyranny, as opposed to the Marxist insistence that only collective mass action will be effective. In addition, the Hermetic formula is in

itself a profoundly idealist idea, based on a vision of ideas directly determining physical reality (as opposed to Marxist insistence on **physical action** as the nexus between idea and reality). Chaos magic is often called "materialist" by other occultists. This seems a bit strange, since the famous chaos author Peter Carroll has written a lot specifically attacking the materialist worldview! On the other hand, this tradition's explicit rejection of any permanent or fixed beliefs no doubt seems screwy to more traditional, quasi-religious occultists.

Therefore, the politics of the anti-capitalist occultist current are to a large degree anarchist, liberal or libertarian - precisely the politics of the social group (information professionals) from which they come, as a Marxist analysis would predict. But modern occultists and Marxist revolutionaries share an interest in challenging the thought-forms of modern corporate culture, and combatting them with "memes" and ideas that can lead to real human consciousness and empowerment. It is the purpose of this blog to facilitate discussion and common action between both camps.

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gasps with exhaustion Questions? Comments?

ETA: Just one more thought: the "other side"'s PR/magic works on a "brute force" principle - repetition, repetition, repetition, funded by massive capital expenditure - as well as the principle of mimicking as closely as possible what's already in people's heads. We don't have the budget to replicate this from our side. So whatever memetic action (cultural work, agitprop or magic) we do, it has to beat them for being clever, for being passionate, for speaking to those people who have a vision of a better world and just need a bit of encouragement to start fighting for it.

Narrative

14 August 2010

A childish mind believes that the world acts like a story.

An adult mind knows better, and believes that stories are "just stories".

An enlightened mind knows that stories, narratives and myths don't describe how the world works, but precisely and accurately describe psychological processes - and therefore explain how people work.

The commies out there will have noted that this is a pretty neat Hegelian dialectic, with the last step being the negation of the negation (also in the sense that an enlightened being will have to have both adult and child minds operating in complementary fashion). The story world is a refraction of the Real World of Horrible Jobs. The menu is not just words on paper, even though you can't eat it; if you can use it properly, you can gain delicious things to eat.

Arirang

10 October 2010

Chaos Marxism aims to be a technology of ecstasy - or, more importantly, integration of ecstasy into the Real World of Horrible Jobs, of inner and outer worlds - which has always been the goal of mystical paths and dialectical materialist praxis. Capitalism generalises alienation, in which work is turned against the self; and, in the modern era, a "Chinese Wall" is erected between production and consumption, with the ideological apparatus of society actively encouraging a "split personality" (the dutiful worker always pushing for greater productivity suddenly transforms into a raging, impulse-buying party animal and sexual tyrannosaurus after 5 pm and on weekends).

In this sense, you could even make an argument that the Stalinist and fascist party-states had a slight edge, whereby officially promoted ecstatic states (generally in the form of leader worship, eg North Korean "mass games", or "compulsory social solidarity" events) were closely integrated into the daily grind of routine labour. "It's very chaste, but everyone has a good time," as James Church's Inspector O put it. Recent advances in the "creative workplace" in the capitalist countries are catching up, though - they're trying to integrate fun into work, but in such a way as to subordinate fun to work.

But Stalinist, fascist and capitalist technologies are simply safety valves - imposition of order leads to escalation of chaos, so there are clearly defined limits to "official ecstasy". When Saturnalia is over, the slaves go back to being slaves. So much "revolutionary" practice, unfortunately, fits into this remarkably well - political activism is something you do in your leisure time and lunch breaks, which is 100% compatible with the perpetuation of capitalist normality, as it's just another leisure activity. Assertion of workers' power and self-management on the job breaks the cycle, but of course that can't be done by isolated individuals - it needs social organisation, which capitalist normality does everything in its power to prevent.

So our problem is: how do we achieve ecstasy in a way in which something is disrupted in the system of the Black Iron Prison, rather than just letting off steam? Probably the answer lies in personality integration - that we should strive to become the same person on the job, in the sack, and communing with the Gods, rather than building barriers and compartments between experiences. They actually enforce something like this in Stalinist countries, but in the service of a closed, static, self-perpetuating social order - the people who talk about North Korea as "neo-feudal" are close to the mark, although I'd say it's much more like the Byzantine emperor+bureaucracy system than European feudalism, which if nothing else was radically decentralised.

Reactionary systems: workaday self and ecstatic self merged in a static loop.
 Capitalism: workaday self divorced from ecstatic self.
 Revolutionary systems: workaday self and ecstatic self merged in a dynamic loop.

γνώθι σεαυτόν

20 October 2010

There are two reasons anyone does anything, a good reason and the real reason; or, more precisely, a rationalisation and a subconscious motivation.

You can't stop unnecessary suffering unless you actually understand why you do things - i.e. *what you really want*, what your actual psychology and physiology needs but won't admit, and what prompted you to a course of action that led to suffering. The problem tends to be that if you don't get your subconscious needs met by your actions (and you almost certainly won't because the subconscious doesn't behave rationally), your subconscious will declare that the whole thing was a disaster and make you miserable. In contrast, if you admit to yourself what you were subconsciously trying to do, and that it was never going to work so no point beating yourself up over it, then you can actually rationally estimate the concrete advantages and the disadvantages of the action, and then try to turn the disadvantages to your advantage (even if the advantage is "now I know not to do that again").

In this way, you can minimise unnecessary suffering, to leave more time, space, energy and resources for *necessary* suffering. (Because, as the Buddha correctly said, life in this world is suffering, you might as well pick the most effective and useful form of suffering.) And part of that wisdom is learning that *real fulfilment means acting in accordance with your own inner nature, and can't be found in any possession or symbolic capital*. Aleister Crowley said "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law"; Karl Marx said that the essential nature of humanity was in labour (i.e. productive, creative work) rather than consumption.

The important point...

27 October 2010

... is that people are not monadic subjects. Your average human being consists of:

- a physical body;
- a consciousness (or awareness);
- various instinctual drives arising from the intersection of that body and consciousness;
- various subconscious "programmes" arising from the intersection of the instinctual drives and the Real World of Physical Laws and Other Humans;
- a rational mind;
- a self-image (created by the rational mind from on the basis of the subconscious processes - the purpose of this is to allow the individual to survive in the World-As-Is, and is the ego or at least what the individual thinks he or she is);
- and, in potential but only if worked on, a will capable of independent action, produced by the rational mind by the application of consciousness, which is capable of standing apart from all the above mental processes and making decisions based on principle.

Above that there's probably a Higher Self / True Will / Soul / God, accessible if all the above are working in co-operation, but about this it is not permissible to speak (because anything I could say would be asinine at best).

The essential crime of capitalism is that its ideology is based on the idea that the individual is nothing but a rational mind and instinctual drives (ignoring the deep interface between the two); and keeping the individual docile by deliberately trying to induce a gap between them. Capitalism and Schizophrenia, indeed.

The essential failure of leftist ideology is to believe that you can change this solely by an appeal to the rational mind. When rationality comes up against tasty treats offered to the animal brain, in all but those cases where an independent will has been developed, the rational mind loses every time.

Political radicalism must truly understand cultural theory, psychology, memetics, magick and mysticism if it has a chance of defeating the status quo this side of a total collapse of human civilisation. Because our enemies get it. They've turned it into an art, if not quite a science.

Negativity is a buzz

Adrenaline/endorphins are a buzz. You can get that buzz from exercising your animal spirits (exercise, sex, good food, fighting, BDSM, deliberate exposure to danger). You can get it in a less stable sense from trendy chemical amusement; in a more stable sense from mindfulness/mind-calming practices, both which shut down the "Circuit III" babbling that runs around and around your head on a continuous loop for a little while. The thing about the healthier ways of getting the buzz is *that they also put you into The Zone* - i.e. enable a brief moment of unfiltered awareness, of just being and therefore being able to **do** according to the needs of the moment, not according to your automatic reflexes/"monkey mind".

On the other hand, a cheap and nasty way to get the buzz is to be **negative about everything**. Because if you live in a world full of mean and nasty people who are out to get you and everything's shitty and everyone's doing it wrong except for you and we're all doomed, then you get a nasty, low-grade boost of adrenaline. And it's easier than doing it the good way, which takes effort. Which is enough for many of us to develop an addiction to it. I know I have. Negativity is a habit-forming drug just like booze or smokes or white powders, and *everyone* is in danger of succumbing to it.

This is of course supremely applicable to politics. Addiction to conspiracy theory is one example of compulsive negativity. A brief tangent: by "conspiracy theory" I don't mean the belief that our rulers are lying to us, which isn't a theory, it's a pretty safe assumption. By "conspiracy theory" I mean a moralistic/idealistic discourse which puts the blame for the way the world is in the deliberate machinations of a hidden clique who made it all shitty like this on purpose. That's not politics, it's religion in the bad sense, because it's a good-evil narrative - the narrative that the only problem with the Machine of domination and oppression is that "lizard people" are in control of it. It also suggests that, in RAW's terms, "everything is under control" - control by the bad guys, but that's still more comforting than suggesting that *the bad guys are not in control*, that the more they try to exert control the worst it gets for them as for the rest of us, that things are getting worse because people make continuous choices to carry out the logic of the insane system because it's easier / it's of short-term benefit / it's what they've always done.

A materialistic explanation, which suggests that the system of generalised community production and capital accumulation itself creates incentives and externalities which *inevitably* create evil, conflict, waste, etc. not only avoids moralism, but also avoids determinism. I've always found ridiculous, for example, the idea that the Lizard People have a systematic programme to rape children to brainwash them into being mindless zombies. **Just living in a capitalist system and being exposed to capitalist incentives does that already**. It also encourages the kind of world in which we can tell ourselves that it's acceptable to rape children. The Machine doesn't require conscious evil as fuel - it feeds on its own waste products of alienation, reification and egotism.

Another way that politics becomes an addiction to negativity is simply the luxury of permanent opposition. Picking fights with The Man is a fun lifestyle, but it's not politics. Leisure activities are very rarely disruptive to the system. (Riot! the unbeatable high! tomorrow you're homeless, tonight it's a blast! - Dead Kennedys) The only sustainable disruption to the system is at the point of production. Smashing the windows of a Starbucks is just fucking up some other worker's day. Now organising a sit-down strike in your **own** workplace, that shows a little of what we need. It's also more difficult and places your precious self at risk.

A true revolutionary, like a true mystic, is motivated by great feelings of love, as Ché Guevara and the Sufis agree. Love which transcends the individual, that you are prepared to give up all the nice things that you have for your precious self (that you've found under the rocks and stones of the Fallen World-As-Is) as a sacrifice to the great Love for the World-As-Should Be. If you're motivated by negativity, you've drawn a line between yourself and the rest of the Universe which can only end in a selfish determination to screw the other guy and get what's yours, even though you might couch it in terms of communistic altruism.

You're afraid of us. You're afraid of change.

(reposted from elsewhere)

I was recently privileged to read Iain Banks' *Walking on Glass*. One of the major characters is a paranoid schizophrenic fellow, who believes himself to be a superior being who fell captive in some metagalactic conflict and has been exiled on Earth as a punishment. You find out later that he might actually be right, but that's not the point here - the point is that his beliefs, while they give some structure to his reality, actually totally get in the way of being able to function properly on planet Earth. Basically, since he interprets everyone he comes across as either perpetrators of a giant conspiracy to keep him trapped on Earth, or witless dupes of that conspiracy, he can't have any friends or any honest communication, and his life is in a downward spiral (which of course proves that he's a superior being victimised by a conspiracy).

Which brings me to a criticism of that otherwise impeccable Gnostic-revolutionary film, *The Matrix*. The one thing that always "got" me about that movie was that the people who'd been awakened from the Matrix were licensed to kill as many normal humans as they saw fit (because they might turn into Hugo Weaving at any moment, and really death would be better than their illusory reality while living as batteries). It is said that the nafs (the self-perpetuating ego which has evolved as a defence mechanism to keep you alive and safe in this world but will try to ensure you don't change or grow) will tell you any lie in order to keep you trapped, and "YOU HAVE BEEN ENLIGHTENED, THEREFORE YOU HAVE MORE RIGHTS THAN THE BLINKERED SHEEPLE, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO UNLEASH VIOLENCE ON THOSE WHO GET IN YOUR WAY" is a pretty effective trap.

In contrast, the legitimately enlightened are known for their kindness, forbearance and wicked sense of humour, although occasionally their kindness manifests in being extremely rude to people to wake them up - giving them what they need rather than what they want, in other words.

And who are you? Are you all slaves?

27 December 2010

Soundtrack for this post: "Slave Trade", Sigue Sigue Sputnik

We mentioned before that being negative and mean is a way of getting some kind of "juice" into your life if you can't get the good stuff. Similarly, **narcissism** works well. Let's face it, what better way to pack your life full of lulz and drama than to go around acting like you are the Chosen One and all others exist to serve your whims, or are enemies that need wiping out? Sure you'll be ridiculed and hated, and virtually nothing will actually concretely go right in your life, but at least you'll have a nice narrative frame to package that in. Your life, while unpleasant and pointless, will make **sense**.

Even better, some gormless losers will **believe you**. And why will they do that? Why do people end up in cults? The easiest answer is - that *narcissistic delusions are more fun than stupid reality*. I don't have a reference, but at least one person who followed L. Ron Hubbard around on his nautical adventures in the 60s - looking for gold he buried in the Mediterranean in a previous life, I shit you not - said precisely that. That it didn't matter whether it was actually factually true or not, but living in Ron's private reality was far lulzier than anything else they could think to do with their lives. Dude could always spin a yarn.

Problem is that cults are necessarily self-destructive, because narcissism is an addictive drug, and the sufferer requires **more and more narcissistic supply**. O'Brien in Nineteen Eighty-Four pointed out that the Party had to torture people, because how else could you be sure that you were really imposing your will on them? For this reason, cult leaders **have** to increasingly ramp up the levels of control and abjection of their followers. If they're doing your will, then you have to make your will **more mean and intensive** to test how much they really love you. Eventually you get to purple Flavor-Aid with cyanide in it (Jim Jones) - or declaring the entire executive staff of your organisation to be traitors and locking them up (Joe Stalin and David Miscavige).

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This post is by way of being a bit of a purge and a confessional. I have a "cult leader's personality" - that is, I have suffered from a narcissist streak a mile wide. So I can tell you in plain fact that the belief that YOU ARE THE ONE, THE SON OF MAN, THE KING OF KINGS, THE SHEIKH OF ARABY etc., that you have a destiny and everyone else has to either serve you or get the hell out of your way is a good way to substitute for not actually having a life. I'm trying to get over that, though. To some degree, that disavowed belief sullied the early contributions to this blog. I really thought I was breaking through into a better reality and everything would be better if *everyone would just listen to me*. *sigh* For that reason, it's good for me to study people who got completely lost in that kind of no-ego ego-trip to remind myself of where that road leads.

But google "codex veritas neo" for an example of the syndrome in full flight (yes, I've mentioned this fellow before, but last time he came and whined at me so I'm

not directly linking). For a similar cult based on fiction, check these guys (although I must admit that, unlike these guys, Neo has some very good insights in among the self-aggrandisement and paranoia... but then, the same could be said of Scientology). There's also a lady who goes by the name of Doctress Neutopia who you might be interested in.

Part of having a narcissistic tendency is being fascinated - and just about ready to fall for - other people who do as well. Because don't their private universes look exciting and fun? But examine the cult leaders well. Because none of them are happy. None of them are actually achieving their stated goals. Indeed, the unhappier they are the more delicious, creamy attention they get from their followers. We call this "the downward spiral".