

## Chapter 1 : philosophy - How compatible are Buddhism and Communism? - Buddhism Stack Exchange

*Marxism in a Buddhist Perspective by Victor Gunasekara 1. Introduction. Of all the thinkers of the nineteenth century it is Karl Marx who has most influenced the events of the twentieth.*

Religion in the Soviet Union The Soviet Union was an atheist state [11] [12] [13] in which religion was largely discouraged and at times heavily persecuted. Christians belonged to various churches: Orthodox , which had the largest number of followers; Catholic ; and Baptist and other Protestant denominations. The majority of the Islamic faithful were Sunni while Judaism also had many followers. Other religions, which were practiced by a relatively small number of believers, included Buddhism and Shamanism. However it should be noted that after in the stalin era , religious persecution was greatly reduced. To gather support from the masses during WW2 , the stalin government re-opened thousands of temples and extinguished the league of militant atheists. Atheist propaganda returned to a lesser extent during the Khrushchev government, and continued in a less strict way during the Breszhnev years. The role of religion in the daily lives of Soviet citizens varied greatly, but two-thirds of the Soviet population were irreligious. About half the people, including members of the ruling Communist Party and high-level government officials, professed atheism. For the majority of Soviet citizens, religion seemed irrelevant. Prior to its collapse in late , official figures on religion in the Soviet Union were not available. State atheism in the Soviet Union was known as gosateizm. During the late 19th century and also when Albania became a state, religions were suppressed in order to better unify Albanians. This nationalism was also used to justify the communist stance of state atheism between and Houses of worship, including temples, mosques and churches, were converted into non-religious buildings for secular use. However, this attitude relaxed considerably in the late s with the end of the Cultural Revolution. Since the mids, there has been a massive program to rebuild Buddhist and Taoist temples that were destroyed in the Cultural Revolution. The Christian and Muslim communities were among the most persecuted as well. The Roman Catholic cathedral of Phnom Penh was razed. The Khmer Rouge forced Muslims to eat pork, which they regard as an abomination. Many of those who refused were killed. Christian clergy and Muslim imams were executed. Religion in Laos[ edit ] In contrast with the brutal repression of the sangha undertaken in Cambodia , the Communist government of Laos has not sought to oppose or suppress Buddhism in Laos to any great degree, rather since the early days of the Pathet Lao communist officials have sought to use the influence and respect afforded to Buddhist clergy to achieve political goals while discouraging religious practices seen as detrimental to Marxist aims. Such elements include, for example, no clergy and themes that relate to mutualism , libertarian socialism and democratic confederalism. Communism and Christianity[ edit ] Main article: Christian communism Nothing is easier than to give Christian asceticism a Socialist tinge. Has not Christianity declaimed against private property, against marriage, against the State? Has it not preached in place of these, charity and poverty, celibacy and mortification of the flesh, monastic life and Mother Church? Christian Socialism is but the holy water with which the priest consecrates the heart-burnings of the aristocrat. It is a theological and political theory based upon the view that the teachings of Jesus Christ compel Christians to support communism as the ideal social system. As such, many advocates of Christian communism argue that it was taught by Jesus and practiced by the Apostles themselves. Utopian and Scientific , Friedrich Engels draws a certain analogy between the sort of utopian communalism of some of the early Christian communities and the modern-day communist movement, the scientific communist movement representing the proletariat in this era and its world historic transformation of society. Engels noted both certain similarities and certain contrasts. Consisting of a synthesis of Christian theology and Marxist socioeconomic analyses, liberation theology stresses social concern for the poor and advocates for liberation for oppressed peoples. In addition to being a theological matter, liberation theology was often tied to concrete political practice. Communism and Islam[ edit ] Main articles: Socialism and Islam and Anarchism and Islam From the s through the s, communists and Islamists sometimes joined forces in opposing colonialism and seeking national independence. Examples include Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag , an outspoken libertarian communist , Russian revolutionary and territorialist leader Isaac Steinberg and Rabbi Abraham Bik, an American

communist activist. Buddhist socialism Buddhism has been said to be compatible with communism given that both can be interpreted as atheistic and arguably share some similarities regarding their views of the world of nature and the relationship between matter and mind. Religious criticism of communism[ edit ] Because of the perceived atheistic nature of communism, some have accused communism of persecuting religion. Communism and atheism Throughout the Second Red Scare , the fear of the "Godless communist" rooted itself as an epithet and a warning to the United States in a changing global environment. As the perceived threat of the "Godless communist" and materialism to the American way of life grew, "the choice between Americanism and Communism was vital, without room for compromise".

## Chapter 2 : Marxism & Buddhism – NewBuddhist

*Buddhist socialism is a political ideology which advocates socialism based on the principles of Buddhism. Both Buddhism and socialism seek to provide an end to suffering by analyzing its conditions and removing its main causes through praxis.*

Michael Slott Both Buddhism and Marxism have strengths and weaknesses in helping us to understand human experiences and social problems. Rather than trying to create a synthesis of the two perspectives, I attempt to discern the elements in each which can help us experience better lives and be more effective political activists. Buddhism identifies those understandings and practices which lead to greater happiness and less suffering in response to existential challenges that we all must face as mortal human beings, irrespective of the particular family, society, or historical era that we live in. But while Buddhism captures certain basic aspects of universal human experience, it does not take account of the interaction or dialectic between humans qua social beings and the relatively permanent social structures that humans both reinforce and challenge in the course of history. The latter is the province of a radical social theory, such as Marxism. At the same time, however, Marxism does not address the ways in which, at an experiential level, life causes suffering and anguish irrespective of the social context. I How can I have a fulfilling, reasonably happy life? As I get older, how do I come to terms with my mortality? How is it possible to participate in creating a decent, just society in which my happiness and fulfilment are inextricably linked with the happiness and fulfilment of my loved ones, my neighbours, and all human beings? These basic existential and political concerns frame the purpose of this essay. In what follows I will explore the relationship of Buddhism and Marxism, focusing on their respective limitations and value in answering the above questions. I should say at the outset that I do not believe in several key tenets common to the main traditions of Buddhism, including the notion of karma linked to rebirth and the existence of transcendent beings. Following Stephen Batchelor ; , I would characterize myself as a secular Buddhist who believes that the Buddhist view of human experience and the practice of meditation are essential in helping us to live ethically, while facing the vicissitudes of life that cause us anguish and suffering. At the same time, I do not consider myself an orthodox Marxist. There are core elements of a Marxist view that still make a lot of Contemporary Buddhism, Vol. However, even though Marxism needs to be supplemented and complemented by other perspectives, we still need a radical social theory that grasps both the potential for progressive change, as well as the human and social-structural obstacles to the qualitative transformation of our world. Before proceeding further, it is important that I provide some personal context, as well as clarify what I mean by Buddhism and Marxism. Readers of this journal will likely be very familiar with the various traditions and philosophical perspectives of Buddhism. I have recently encountered Buddhism and engaged in a regular practice of meditation while I have, for many years, been a progressive activist in the labour movement and seriously grappled with Marxist theory and practice. Therefore, I approach this issue as someone who, having recognized the limitations of radical politics in both the personal and social dimensions of life, has come to see certain Buddhist ideas and practices as vital in each of these areas. In his view, that core is composed of the following elements: However, when I refer to a particular trend or view within Buddhism, I will note that this trend or view is not shared by all Buddhists. Marxism, too, is a complex and diverse body of thought and practice. First, Marxists believe that the production and reproduction of our material existence is both the basis for and the key although not the only factor in structuring society. In the context of this notion – often referred to as the theory of historical materialism – Marxists further argue that historical development is significantly shaped by the conflict between social groups or classes over the ownership and control of the means of production and reproduction. Third, because of class conflict and other internal contradictions within a particular mode of production, Marxists assert that socioeconomic formations inevitably become unstable and incapable of being fixed or reformed. Fourth, capitalism, the dominant socioeconomic formation for the past several hundred years, is prone to crises due to tendencies inherent in the nature of profit-driven competition between businesses, as well as conflict between the two most significant social groups: Finally, Marxists believe that progress in history, whether it be within the realm of technology,

culture, economics or politics, is based on our inherent and distinctive capacity for creative, purposive labour—what Marx called praxis. Ultimately, change is only possible because of this unique human capacity. Given my motivational and practice-based starting point, I am not examining the relationship of Marxism and Buddhism in order to compare and contrast their fundamental or core propositions, nor am I seeking to develop some new synthesis—Buddhist Marxism or Marxist Buddhism. Several writers Brien ; Gunasekara ; Puligandia and Puhakka ; Shackley ; Titmuss have already addressed these issues and identified some common elements in Buddhism and Marxism. Both perspectives stress the primacy of change and process in reality, as opposed to permanent essences and substances. They also share similar humanistic goals: Finally, they reject otherworldly Absolutes and dualisms. At the same time, they diverge in important respects, the most crucial of which is the emphasis in Buddhism on individual change versus the centrality of social conflict in Marxism. While recognizing their commonalities and differences, my goal in this essay is not to find some way to integrate the two perspectives, as it is to discern the elements in each which can help us experience better lives and be more effective political activists. The basic argument in this essay is that both Buddhism and Marxism have strengths and weaknesses when helping us to understand human experience and social problems. Buddhism provides us with profound insights about the human condition. Based on these understandings, Buddhism identifies those practices which lead to greater happiness and less suffering in response to existential challenges that we all must face as mortal human beings, irrespective of the particular family, society, or historical era that we live in. Yet while Buddhism captures certain basic aspects of universal human experience, it does not take account of the interaction or dialectic between humans qua social beings and the social structures and processes that humans both reinforce and challenge in the course of history. The latter is the province of a radical social theory. II The limitations and value of both can be shown by considering what life would be like under ideal conditions envisaged by each perspective. Among Marxists, the ideal society has been referred to in various ways, reflecting the various trends within the Marxist tradition: Whatever the particular appellation, such a society has certain core characteristics. In the first place, it is a society in which human beings have the opportunity to develop their full human potential for intelligent, purposive, and creative activity. Further, natural, socio-economic, and cultural resources are used for the benefit of all of the people, not for the profit of a few. Every human being is guaranteed the material necessities of life, an adequate income, health security, and the opportunity to gain education and training. Exploitative and oppressive social relationships are eliminated, allowing human beings to interact with each other on the basis of mutual respect and justice. To the extent that such a complex society requires policies to be chosen, planning to occur, and the administration and regulation of human activities, it is not a bureaucracy or an elite group that is in charge. Instead, working people, through their participation and control of various democratic social institutions unions, planning boards, representative assemblies make the key decisions in society. In short, this ideal society is a substantive democracy whose resources are owned, controlled, and utilized by and for working people. Put aside the question of whether such a society, or even some relatively close approximation, can actually be established sometime in the future. Certainly, many of the problems that make our current life so difficult would no longer play a significant role. Insecurity would be diminished as people are guaranteed the basic necessities of life. Competition and striving for advantage over others would also be less prominent in a world in which everyone experiences nurture and support for their human potential. The horrors of war, famine, and environmental devastation would disappear, allowing us to lead lives marked by peace, comfort and security. Technology and automation would be used to free human beings from uncreative, physically difficult labour while reducing the total amount of time needed to work. We would have more time to spend with our families and friends, as well as to develop our talents and interests in a variety of areas. Marx envisaged the full development of human potential in this context in these terms: Marx , A wonderful world and surely anyone would wish to be part of it. So, would we be happy and content? Certainly, happier than now—and that is, of course, no minor accomplishment. However, there would still be aspects of life that would cause us anguish and suffering, in spite of these optimal conditions for social interaction and the development of our potential. This is the point at which Marxism reaches its limit. We are mortal beings. We are going to die and virtually all of us—unless condemned to death at a particular date and

timeâ€”do not know when we will die. This is an inescapable fact of life, an existential certainty regardless of the society that we live in. For most of us, the inevitability of our death is a source of suffering and anguish. The thought of our death is frightening. Worse, we know that death is not, for most people, some pleasant slide to oblivion. Many of us will undergo physical and mental pain before we die. For the lucky few, the process of dying may be relatively quick, following a long period of creative activity, loving relationships, and meaningful social contributions. Unfortunately, the vast majority of human beings face a fairly protracted period in which our body and perhaps our mind as well loses its ability to function in ways that are both painful and sometimes degrading. It is not just our mortality, our impermanence, that is troubling to us. Even when we are relatively physically and mentally fit, we suffer daily. As human beings, we have needs and desires that are not met. We experience fears and aversions for objects, peoples, and events. We are often restless and bored. In short, in a multitude of ways throughout our existence, life is not what we wish it to be. The things and people we have and we wanted, suddenly change and we no longer want them. We lose the things and people that we have and we wanted. We learn that what we wanted and got is no good for us. Lacking an understanding of the cause of such illusions, we will experience loss and pain. Now, of course, we also have many moments of happiness in our life as well. Buddhists understand perfectly well the experience of happiness, but they also know that happiness is impermanent, as is everything else. It is that impermanence of events, objects, and people that is difficult for us to understand and embrace. As beings who must survive in the world, we have a naturally strong tendency to hold on to what makes us feel good and to recoil from what we experience as bad. What is, in one respect, an essential survival mechanism for a biological being living in an uncertain, perilous world, is also that which makes human life, in any kind of society, difficult, sometimes almost unbearable. So how do we resolve this conundrum? The Buddhist view is that suffering can be ended when we are no longer attached to or recoil from objects, events and people. To be free of attachment and aversion, one must understand the true nature of realityâ€”its impermanence, insubstantiality, and interconnectednessâ€”and engage in certain practices, including meditation and acts of loving kindness, that facilitate our path to a state of non-attachment and non-aversion, that is enlightenment. While Buddhists have different views about how and when enlightenment can be achieved, as well as its exact meaning, they believe that there is a way out of suffering. My own view, which is consistent with my secular Buddhist orientation, is that suffering can be lessened, but not ended. Although I am ultimately an agnostic on this issue, I do not think it is reasonable to believe that human beings can achieve a state of absolute non-attachment and non-aversion. What we can do is learn how to experience and view our attachments and aversions in a more open, curious, and compassionate manner. According to Salzberg , through insight meditation, we can come to experience attachments and aversions as inevitable but impermanent aspects of our lives. They are part of us, but they are not us, for they come and go, come and go. They are part of the stream of life, of which we are also an impermanent part. It is not a matter of one gaining a sense of peace and calm, a purity of mind, in order to edify the individual soul.

**Chapter 3 : Buddhism and Marxism | Uglytruth-Thailand**

*As is Buddhism, Marxism is imbued with compassion. If their compatibility is to be considered the appropriate focus should be on their fundamental understandings of life and reality, i.e. philosophy. Many thanks, ABP, I would be delighted to discuss by email or Skype if that would be of interest to you.*

Marxism in a Buddhist Perspective by Victor Gunasekara 1. Introduction Of all the thinkers of the nineteenth century it is Karl Marx who has most influenced the events of the twentieth. He has been adored by those who see in him the champion of the causes they espouse, and derided by others for whom he is the very epitome of everything that is evil and destructive. It is thus not surprising that objective evaluations of his theories are rare. Marx has also suffered the fate of many original thinkers whose ideas have been modified, elaborated, and transformed to the extent that they have departed considerably from their original meaning. It will be recalled that the same fate has befallen the teachings of the Buddha, which have been subjected to a much greater process of transformation, sometimes to the extent of transmuting their very essence. But in the case of Marx, because of the proximity of his times, we have a complete record of his writings. In spite of this various interpretations; purporting to represent what Marx "really meant" began to appear even in his own lifetime leading Marx to deny that he as a Marxist cf. In this article by "Marxism" we shall mean the theories advanced by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels who was the alter ego of Marx and co-founder of his system, rather than the later elaborations based on their theories. A great deal has been written on Marx who was one of the most eminent of Western thinkers. But hardly any of this is from the Buddhist standpoint. Modern Buddhists are not noted for their critical examination of Western philosophical and religious theories, and their attitude to Marx has been no different. But if Buddhism is to be better known in the West an examination of its relationship to Western ideas, of which Marxism is one, is necessary. This essay is a modest step in that direction. Marx wrote extensively on religion but not on Buddhism which he did not really encounter. But if Buddhism did not come to the attention of Marx, Marxism came to the Buddhists of Asia in altogether different and unfortunate circumstances. They encountered two diametrically opposed views on Marxism. One was from the apologists of colonialism who wanted to paint Marx in the worst possible light; the other was from "Marxist" revolutionaries who had seized power in various parts of Asia where a Buddhist presence had existed for several centuries Both versions were distortions - the colonialists had an interest in promoting the emergence of right-wing regimes, and the revolutionaries advanced versions of Marxism that had gone through the distorting prisms of national revolutionaries like Lenin, Stalin or Mao-tse-Tung. Both sides uncritically used the strictures that Marx had made against "religion" to represent him as an opponent of Buddhism. This revealed an ignorance not only of Buddhism but also of Marxism on the part of both sides. There has therefore been no real encounter between the ideas of Marx and those of the Buddha. Marx on Religion and Buddhism Marx wrote extensively on religion and philosophy, especially in his early years when these subjects were his major concern. His most authoritative writings on these subjects were completed in the s. It is only recently that interest has turned to the writings of the young Marx, many of which were published only in the last 50 years. During these early years Marx was completely unaware that a Buddha had existed in far-away India some 24 centuries before his time. It was only after he was appointed the European correspondent to the New York Daily Tribune in that Marx began to follow events in Asia. The first direct reference to Buddhism occurs, as far as I can ascertain, in a despatch in March Referring to Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia he wrote: Now on both sides of the Himalayas Buddhism is confessed and as England cannot but support the new Chinese dynasty, the Czar is sure to side with the Tartar tribes, put them in motion against England and awake religious revolts in Nepal itself. The first reference to Buddhist doctrines occurs in an article on Burma written by Engels for the New American Cyclopaedia in Toward the close of the last century, the Burmese state religion was divided by 2 sects, or offshoots froe the ancient faith. The first of these entertained a belief similar in some respects to pantheism believing that the godhead is diffused over and through all the world and its creatures, but that it appears in its highest stages of development in the Buddhists themselves. The other rejects entirely the doctrine of metempsychosis, and the picture worship and cloister system of the Buddhists;

considers death as the portal to an everlasting happiness or misery. There does not seem to be any other direct discussion of Buddhism in the writings of Marx and Engels. Even though Burnouf and Marx were both active in the Paris of the mids there is no evidence that either was aware of the interests of the other. In this early period Marx was aware of some aspects of Hinduism. In the German Ideology he wrote: And later in Marx described what he calls the "religion of Hindustan" as follows: However apposite these remarks may be of Hinduism they seem to imply that Marx was unaware that the Buddha had advanced a critique of the caste system, and shown the Middle Way between the two extremes of Hinduism. The immediate and most important single source was Friedrich Hegel, the German philosopher of Absolutist Idealism. Both Marx and his father had been converted from Judaism to Christianity. Marx was to rebel against both. He initially joined the "left Hegelians" like Ludwig Feuerbach, Bruno Bauer and Max Stirner, but was soon to break with this group and carry their anti- Hegelian and "anti-Christian" critique to its logical conclusion. But in the process Marx absorbed some of the very principles that he was criticising , and he remained a Hegelian in his thinking only, as he put it, he sought to stand Hegel "upside down". Schopenhauer was the European philosopher who had most absorbed "Indian" philosophical ideas such as was then known in Europe. Schopenhauer s major work *The World as Will and Idea* was published in , and at this time only Hindu works like the *Bhagavadgita* had been translated into Western languages. The first Buddhist work to be translated, the *Dhammapada*, appeared only in But this is incorrect because the Dhamma is not pessimistic. It is best to begin with a consideration of what Marx understood by "religion", and whether this definition would encompass Buddhism. In view of frequent misquotations from this source it is worth quoting the passage at some length: But man is no abstract being encamped outside the world. Man is the world of man, the state and society. This state, this society, produce religion, an inverted world-consciousness, because they are an inverted world. Religion is the general theory of that world, its encyclopaedic compendium, its logic in a popular form, its spiritualistic point d honneur, its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn complement, its universal source of consolation and justification. It is the fantastic realisation of the human essence because the human essence has no true reality. The struggle against religion is therefore indirectly a fight against the world of which religion is the spiritual aroma. Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress, and the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. The purpose of religion is primarily to conceal reality in a veil of delusion. Both are illusions, precisely in the same way that Freud, much later, was to consider religion an "illusion". Thus when Marx describes religion as the opiate of deluded people, this description cannot apply to the Dhamma which is not concerned with creating illusions, but with the analysis of reality. In fact Marx observes elsewhere that "Christianity is the religion par excellence" V. Engels unmasks the true nature of theistic religion in even more forthright and forceful language. Commenting on a book by Carlyle which itself had been critical of religion Engels writes: This hypocrisy is traced back by us to religion, the first word of which is a lie - or does religion not begin by showing us something human and claiming it something superhuman, something divine? But because we know that all this lying and immorality follows from religion, that religious hypocrisy, theology, is the archetype of all other lies and hyporisy, we are justified in extending the term "theology" to the whole untruth and hypocrisy of the present, as was originally done by Feuerbach and Bruno Bauer. But how did he arrive at his atheistic standpoint? Hegel a Lutheran had considered Christianity the most absolute and perfect" religion, but his literal interpretation of the Bible was questioned by D. Strauss in his book *Das Leben Jesu* Marx not only agreed with philosophers like Kant in rejecting the traditional arguments, but also rejected the "new" ones proposed by Kant. In fact he went further and showed that the so-called proofs for the existence of God were really proofs for his or her or its non-existence: They are refutations of all concepts of a God. The true proofs should have the opposite character: But what does that say, except that, for whom the world appears without reason, hence who is without reason himself, for him God exists? Or lack of reason is the existence of God". Appendix to Doctoral Dissertation, V. Furthermore it is one of the arguments adduced by the Buddha for the same purpose. There are several places in the Pali Cannon where such arguments occur. It is difficult to agree vith this Interpretation. Marx and Buddha on the Three Signata When we leave the critique of religion and God, where

Buddhism and Marxism have something in common, and consider other aspects, the differences in the two systems begin to emerge. These differences exist and are real; but they should neither be exaggerated nor minimised. The three fundamental laws discovered by the Buddha are that all phenomena are characterised by Impermanence *anicca*, unsatisfactoriness *dukkha* and insubstantiality *anatta*. The proximity of any philosophical system to Buddhism could be gauged by the extent to which it affirms the existence of these three *signata* in phenomena. To apply this test to Marxism we have to identify the basic categories which Marxism uses in the analysis of phenomena, and see how far they are related to the *signata* of Buddhism. Now Marx frequently uses certain concepts, which he borrowed from Hegel but gave them his own interpretation, in the analysis of phenomena. How far are these basic Marxian categories related to the Buddhist *signata*? The dialectic has been defined as "the pattern or mechanism of development through inner conflict". A dialectical viewpoint considers motion and movement, and therefore change and impermanence, as central. Admittedly he applied this only to history and social phenomena. Engels in his *Dialectics of Nature* attempted to extend its area of applicability further. Here we have a similarity with *anicca*. However to Marx, as to Hegel, the dialectic was a progressive movement "upwards", always toward some form of perfection. In *anicca* the emphasis is on the dissolution of phenomena, and there is no necessary implication of movement in any specific direction. The Buddhist law of *anicca* asserts that no such "promised land" could be found within conditioned existence. When we come to consider how much of the fact of *dukkha* was recognized by Marx, we have to distinguish between two meanings of *dukkha* - its common meaning as empirical "suffering", and the more fundamental philosophical one "unsatisfactoriness" even of things which on the experiential level may. There is plenty of evidence of the recognition of the former by Marx, especially when he describes graphically the conflict and suffering caused by the working of the dialectical process in history. In the *Communist Manifesto* we read: What we see here is suffering on the social scale not the individual suffering emphasised by the Buddha, a suffering which Marx thought he could alleviate but which he.

### Chapter 4 : Buddhist Forum - Marxism and Buddhism

*Though Buddhism as a religious movement far predates the sociopolitical force known as Marxism, a few factors have led to their conjunction in scholarship. The first factor is certain seeming affinities between the two systems of thought. For instance, according to many of the sources recounting his.*

Thus it is the natural order of things for there to be rich and poor, rulers and the ruled and those in power are appointed from heaven. An idea that change is natural can be interpreted in a revolutionary manner. Change also takes place in steps, from quantity to quality. When a qualitative change takes place, society changes fundamentally. But such changes are never ending with new contradictions arising all the time. If we look at capitalist society there are many contradiction which help bring about change. Capitalism has an internal contradiction which constantly causes economic crises. Capitalist ruling classes are in contradiction with each other, causing wars and imperialism. Finally, and most importantly for the liberation of humanity, there is a fundamental contradiction between workers and capitalists in capitalist society and this is class struggle. Class struggle determines the degree of freedom and equality in society. For Marxism, class struggle is what leads to changes in human society through the ages. But there is nothing automatic about this. Change takes place because humans struggle collectively for such a change. However, they do not have the luxury of choosing the circumstances in which they fight. That is determined by the history that came before and the level of material development of production or the practical way in which humans are able to survive and support themselves. Therefore Marxists believe that change is a synthesis of human agency, human ideas, collective struggle and the real material circumstances of the world. Marxism is the practice of human liberation. Buddhism may talk about constant and natural change, but this is not aimed at challenging the social order. We can only learn to accept it and reduce the suffering that we experience from the real world. This is an inward-looking and individual philosophy. It is not a philosophy of collective struggle to change the world. It is a philosophy of how an individual might try to cope with the horrors of the world. The practice of making merit, the belief in Karma and the practice of entering into monkhood are also individual acts which are inward-looking. Some utopians might say that if we all changed ourselves for the better and stopped oppressing others and causing their suffering, according to Buddhist teachings, the world would be a better place. But this is the kind of wishful thinking common to all religions. It ignores power inequality within class society and has never been known to bring about social change. There are many instances where progressive Buddhist monks have been known to join the struggle for democracy and social equality. Burma, the Thai red shirt monks and the left-wing monks in Lao during the American war are good examples. But it is hard to see how these progressive struggles rely on the philosophy of Buddhism. What it does show, however, is that people often hold many ideas and philosophies in their heads and that Buddhism does not have to be an obstacle to progressive struggle. Yet reactionary and racist movements of Buddhist monks also exist. The best examples are in Burma and Sri Lanka. Buddhism offers no solutions to changing society. That is probably why the Dalai Lama, while claiming to be a Marxist, also denies that he is a Leninist. In this denial he is turning his back on the need for collective political organisation in order to overthrow the status quo.

**Chapter 5 : Marxism and religion - Wikipedia**

*Giles Ji Ungpakorn. Given the recent comments by the Dalai Lama that he is a "Marxist", it is worth comparing Buddhism and Marxism. Both Buddhist and Marxist philosophy have parts of an ancient ancestry from the Greek and ancient Indian civilisations, especially the branch of philosophy from that era which emphasises "the natural state of change".*

Her intention, rather, is to illustrate how certain tenets of Buddhism and Marxism are complementary, and translatable into action that can end the suffering prevalent on our planet. A professor of political science at Cape Breton University in Nova Scotia, Gibbs proceeds to lay out her argument in the defensive tone of an academic shadowboxing with an ever-sceptical reader. While Gibbs is emphatic about the urgent need to respond to our various global crises – and the utility of Buddhist and Marxist principles in guiding this response – I found myself somewhat frustrated by her impulse to continually justify rather than simply explore this proposition, even if to an uncertain end. Buddhists offer transformation from the inside-out, advising introspective contemplation on the nature of the mind in order to free oneself from false views for the ultimate benefit of society; socialists call for change from the outside-in, a reformation of if no longer overt revolution against the capitalist order to usher in system that would ordain more equitable distributions of wealth and resources. Nonetheless, Gibbs makes cogent comparisons between Buddhist and Marxist tenets, discussing their overlap and potential for transformative social change at individual and structural levels. Gibbs frames this alienation in a Buddhist lens, writing that it is akin to the isolation of individuals in egocentric shells, unable because of their deluded attachments to realize the true nature of their interdependence with all living beings and the earth. False consciousness is a distorted filter or screen that, say, causes someone who is anorexic see an overweight figure in her reflection, an advertisement-fueled dysmorphia reinforced by the similar delusions of her peers. The capitalist system itself, for Gibbs, is a form of samsara: If we could all just gain the requisite clarity, hopefully with the aid of Buddhist principles and practices, argues Gibbs, then we would certainly take a more equitable approach to collectively organizing our socioeconomic affairs. The failure to recognize our interdependence, according to Gibbs, is at the root of suffering under capitalism. If each of us truly understood our fundamental connectedness, she says, we could not condone the reduction of people into mere objects of labor. She discusses, for example, how the ethics of the wealth generated by multinational corporations often headquartered in the Global North is rarely considered when some fraction of it is diverted to philanthropic purposes in the Global South. This will only come about if we as a society account for, as Gibbs puts it, the bodies in the basement – in other words, if we arrive at a full understanding of the consequences of our actions, and continually take action in the present to create a new reality: That said, one of the core delusions that a practitioner of Buddhism must renounce, as I understand it, is the belief that there is any external source of peace – the delusion that you must rearrange external circumstances in order to be happy. If that is the case, what is a capitalist system – or any system for that matter – other than an external circumstance? The gist is that if every single person adopted a zen-like approach to life, then structural reforms would be unnecessary, as we humans would carefully tend to each other and the environment without recourse to the force of law. For the most part, she alternates between defending Buddhist principles to godless socialists and explaining structural inequality to Buddhist practitioners supposedly untethered from material concerns. In positioning herself as a mediator between supposedly feuding factions, Gibbs presents a primer on Buddhism and socialism without delving too deeply into either, missing an opportunity to more fully explore the limitations of integrating – and thereby hopefully working to close the gap between – the two lines of thought in service of a more just world. Gibbs did not have to frame this subject matter as a sermon in search of a choir. Hawa Allan writes cultural criticism, fiction and poetry. This review originally appeared in review31 , and is reprinted by permission.

**Chapter 6 : Marx and Buddhism | Dharma Cowgirl**

*The 19th century German philosopher Karl Marx, the founder and primary theorist of Marxism, had an antithetical and complex attitude to religion, viewing it primarily as "the soul of soulless conditions", the "opium of the people" that had been useful to the ruling classes since it gave the working classes false hope for millennia.*

Ambedkar saw a very few similarities between Marxism and Buddhism. Dr Victor Gunasekara in his scientific article *Marxism in a Buddhist Perspective* states that Marx wrote extensively on religion but not on Buddhism which he did not really encounter. These differences exist and are real; but they should neither be exaggerated nor minimized. The three fundamental laws discovered by the Buddha are that all phenomena are characterized by Impermanence *anicca*, unsatisfactoriness *dukkha* and insubstantiality *anatta*. To apply this test to Marxism we have to identify the basic categories which Marxism uses in the analysis of phenomena, and see how far they are related to the signata of Buddhism. Victor Gunasekara points out both Marxism and Buddhism are humanistic philosophies. Both Marxism and Buddhism are philosophies of action. Because of their different perspectives on humanism the action which Marx recommended is social and political action. Now while the Buddha does not necessarily decry this kind of action where it leads to human betterment, the Buddha points to a higher ideal, and to a more fundamental kind of happiness. Karl Marx and His View on Religion Karl Marx wrote the Communist Manifesto in explained how religion affected the society and how it was an institution that was not actually necessary to exist. Marx thought that religion was contagious on society. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were able to gather diminutive information about Buddhism via some articles which were published by Nietzsche and Arthur Schopenhauer. Marx considered Buddhism as a philosophy rather than a religion. Engels unmasks the true nature of theistic religion in an outspoken and forceful language. Marx was an atheist. Similarly the Buddha did not lay the foundation of his religion either on god, or on soul, or anything supernatural. Karl Marx, was an influential socialist thinker to emerge in the 19th century. *Das Kapital* is his major work on political conomy, capital, property, the state, wage labor, foreign trade and the world market. He described the economic law of motion of modern society. *Das Kapital* is a critical analysis of capitalism and its practical economic application. The central driving force of capitalism, according to Marx, was in the exploitation and alienation of labour. Human society The world passes through alternating cycles of evolution and dissolution. According to Buddhism everything changes in nature and nothing remains static so as the society. Max Weber says that all communities are arranged in a manner that goods, tangible and intangible, symbolic and material are distributed. Such a distribution is always unequal and necessarily involves power. Marx had a special interest in philosophy of history and the social sciences. He showed how economic factor affect the society. Buddhism is a democratic system. Buddha admired the democratic and the republican of Government of Vajis in the state of Kuru. Buddha further mentioned that until Vajis were following their system, they would not be conquered. Capitalistic Economy and Karl Marx Capitalism generally refers to an economic system in which the means of production are privately owned and operated for profit and in which investments, distribution, income, production and pricing of goods and services are determined through the operation of a free market f. The defining characteristic of capitalism is its usage of capital. Capitalist democracy divides the population into two or three classes. The highest social class consists of the fewest people. The lowest social class consists of the most people. Sometimes there is also a middle class. Karl Marx considered capitalism to be a historically specific mode of production in which capital has become the dominant mode of production. For Marx, the use of labor power had itself become a commodity under capitalism; the exchange value of labor power, as reflected in the wage, is less than the value it produces for the capitalist. This difference in values, he argues, constitutes surplus value which the capitalists extract and accumulate. Buddhism and economic aspect of life Buddhism explains human society like any other phenomenon that changes constantly. The economic aspect of a community profoundly affects its other aspects. In a Buddhist economic system the people deliberately use the state power to maximize welfare, both economic and social, from a given national income while enhancing the spiritual dimensions. The Buddha mentioned the economic aspect of life, such as: From a Buddhist economic

perspective, work is regarded as pure mindful activity which brings economic advancement and social harmony. From a Buddhist economic perspective, human beings should be skilled, efficient, courageous, honest and energetic in their work that brings battement to the society. Buddhist economics regards human work in terms of human fulfillment both in material and spiritual. The Buddha views life in terms of cause and effect. Buddhism gives appropriate guidance to combine personal progress in worldly matters with moral principles. Human equality Marx believed in human equality. The Buddha was one of the first thinkers in history to teach the doctrine of human equality. Buddhism stands for a society of equals where democracy prevails. Buddha believed in a classless society. In his community the Page 4 Sangha has no class system. For the Buddha, all men are one in that they belong to one species. Social classes and castes are nothing but functional or occupational groupings. Buddha and Marx on poverty Poverty is not a virtue. Buddha in Cakkavattisihanada Sutta states that poverty is the cause of immoral behavior, such as theft, falsehood, violence, hatred and cruelty, behavior which often results in crime. Modern world suffer from over production, over consumption an eventually global pollution. Buddha encouraged the use of goods and services to satisfy the desire for true well-being. Buddhism offers man a simple moderate lifestyle avoiding both extremes of self- deprivation and self-indulgence. Buddhism emphasize that it is the duty of the government to see to the needs of the people and to strive to liquidate poverty. Buddhism is not opposed to the accumulation of wealth " which in is earned in an honest way. Anguttara Nikaya In Marx on Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts writes that oneThe worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces, the more his production increases in power and range. The worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates. With the increasing value of the world of things proceeds in direct proportion to the devaluation of the world of men. Labour produces not only commodities; it produces itself and the worker as a commodity " and does so in the proportion in which it produces commodities generally. Utopia Utopia is place that does not exist. It is a fictional island with a perfect social, legal, and political system written by Thomas More. In the Utopia the evils of society, eg: People live in total hapiness. Some believe that the Utopia is the answer to human suffering. The Socialists are under the view that the Communist society can eradicate human suffering. Human suffering As Marx explained global capitalism has brought great wealth for a few and misery for the vast majority and it has generated inhuman living conditions for most people. He articulated economic disparity is the main reason for human suffering. But Marx was unable to show the practical way to liberate human free will. Lenin who was a Page 5 revolutionary thinker masterminded the Bolshevik take-over of power in Russia in Based on Marxist philosophy Lenin created the first socialist state in the history. But after 70 years it was proved that the Soviet Union was unable to answer major economic problems which were existed for long years. Eventually the Soviet Union was collapsed. In Marx wrote -Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. Marx emphasized mainly on the economic aspects. Hence he missed an important dimension of human existence which is the spiritual aspect. The lord Buddha commented on every human aspects. Over 2, years ago, the Buddha articulated ideals of human suffering which has a universal meaning. The Buddha answered the central problem of human suffering and its ending where Marx addressed a limited area of human suffering which is mainly the mundane life. He missed the spiritual dimension of the human. Buddha explained about human suffering thus 1. All human life is suffering 2 Suffering is caused by human desire, particularly the desire that impermanent things be permanent 3 Human suffering can be ended by ending human desire. The nature of suffering is thus described by the Buddha. The eightfold path leads to the extinction of suffering. We are independent and non-profit.

**Chapter 7 : Marxism and Buddhism – Sri Lanka Guardian**

*Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.*

Marxism and Buddhism By Dr. Ambedkar saw a very few similarities between Marxism and Buddhism. Dr Victor Gunasekara in his scientific article Marxism in a Buddhist Perspective states that Marx wrote extensively on religion but not on Buddhism which he did not really encounter. These differences exist and are real; but they should neither be exaggerated nor minimized. The three fundamental laws discovered by the Buddha are that all phenomena are characterized by Impermanence *anicca*, unsatisfactoriness *dukkha* and insubstantiality *anatta*. The proximity of any philosophical system to Buddhism could be gauged by the extent to which it affirms the existence of these three "signata" in phenomena. To apply this test to Marxism we have to identify the basic categories which Marxism uses in the analysis of phenomena, and see how far they are related to the signata of Buddhism. Victor Gunasekara points out both Marxism and Buddhism are humanistic philosophies. Both Marxism and Buddhism are philosophies of action. Because of their different perspectives on humanism the action which Marx recommended is social and political action. Now while the Buddha does not necessarily decry this kind of action where it leads to human betterment, the Buddha points to a higher ideal, and to a more fundamental kind of happiness. Karl Marx and His View on Religion Karl Marx wrote the Communist Manifesto in explained how religion affected the society and how it was an institution that was not actually necessary to exist. Marx thought that religion was contagious on society. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were able to gather diminutive information about Buddhism via some articles which were published by Nietzsche and Arthur Schopenhauer. Marx considered Buddhism as a philosophy rather than a religion. Engels unmasks the true nature of theistic religion in an outspoken and forceful language. Marx was an atheist. Similarly the Buddha did not lay the foundation of his religion either on god, or on soul, or anything supernatural. Karl Marx, was an influential socialist thinker to emerge in the 19th century. *Das Kapital* is his major work on political economy, capital, property, the state, wage labor, foreign trade and the world market. He described the economic law of motion of modern society. *Das Kapital* is a critical analysis of capitalism and its practical economic application. The central driving force of capitalism, according to Marx, was in the exploitation and alienation of labour. Human society The world passes through alternating cycles of evolution and dissolution. According to Buddhism everything changes in nature and nothing remains static so as the society. Max Weber says that all communities are arranged in a manner that goods, tangible and intangible, symbolic and material are distributed. Such a distribution is always unequal and necessarily involves power. Marx had a special interest in philosophy of history and the social sciences. He showed how economic factor affect the society. Buddhism is a democratic system. Buddha admired the democratic and the republican of Government of Vajis in the state of Kuru. Buddha further mentioned that until Vajis were following their system, they would not be conquered. Capitalistic Economy and Karl Marx Capitalism generally refers to an economic system in which the means of production are privately owned and operated for profit and in which investments, distribution, income, production and pricing of goods and services are determined through the operation of a free market. It is usually considered to involve the right of individuals and groups of individuals acting as "legal persons" or corporations to trade capital goods, labor, land and money. The defining characteristic of capitalism is its usage of capital. Capitalist democracy divides the population into two or three classes. The highest social class consists of the fewest people. The lowest social class consists of the most people. Sometimes there is also a middle class. Karl Marx considered capitalism to be a historically specific mode of production in which capital has become the dominant mode of production. The capitalist stage of development or "bourgeois society," for Marx, represented the most advanced form of social organization to date Capital according to Marx is created with the purchase of commodities for the purpose of creating new commodities with an exchange value higher than the sum of the original purchases. For Marx, the use of labor power had itself become a commodity under capitalism; the exchange value of labor power, as

reflected in the wage, is less than the value it produces for the capitalist. This difference in values, he argues, constitutes surplus value which the capitalists extract and accumulate. Buddhism and economic aspect of life Buddhism explains human society like any other phenomenon that changes constantly. The economic aspect of a community profoundly affects its other aspects. In a Buddhist economic system the people deliberately use the state power to maximize welfare, both economic and social, from a given national income while enhancing the spiritual dimensions. The Buddha mentioned the economic aspect of life, such as: From a Buddhist economic perspective, work is regarded as pure mindful activity which brings economic advancement and social harmony. From a Buddhist economic perspective, human beings should be skilled, efficient, courageous, honest and energetic in their work that brings battement to the society. 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Buddha. The eightfold path leads to the extinction of suffering.

Chapter 8 : Can You Be a Buddhist and a Marxist? | Mike Slott - racedaydvl.com

*Marxism and Buddhism By Dr. Ruwan M Jayatunge, Sri Lanka Guardian, March 16, Colombo, Sri Lanka-- The two scholars who wrote on the comparisons between Marxism and Buddhism were Dr. Ambedkar and Dr Victor Gunasekara of Queensland University Australia.*

Tibet This must be a momentous occasion. First we must ask questions about Buddhism itself. Is Buddhism a single religion, or even a religion? Would the two main streams constitute a schism? The Dalai Lama is the largely undisputed global figurehead of Mahayana Buddhism. There is no equivalent figurehead in the other dominant stream, Theravada, which stretches from South Asia to South-East Asia. Theravada has also many local customs and practices in countries where it is practised, and both streams have rituals, incense burning, prayer and chanting. In both traditions, most leading monks would agree that such practices are mumbo jumbo, and of little or no value other than to bring money into the temples and monastic order. Many lay Buddhists also shun such irrelevant practices so that meditation, a sophisticated approach to human psychology, and intellectual understanding remain the main instruments of the widespread Buddhist cognoscenti. After years, one would expect there to be some mystical, exaggerated and fantastic additions to the original belief, and perhaps even deliberate distortions. It is still very clear that what Buddha established is a rich philosophical tradition and an outstanding philosophical contribution. From a Marxist viewpoint, Buddha was an early materialist who touched on dialectics. Whereas Hinduism embraced the absolute, the rebellious Buddha taught about the relative world, the real world. His teachings are anchored in everyday life and all living things. His primary polemic or treatise was: 1. There is suffering, 2. Suffering has a cause, 3. That cause can be eliminated, and 4. This is the path to defeat it the eightfold path. This puts him squarely in the modern dialectical materialist camp. Another years of philosophical debate would have been of assistance to him then. Pleasingly, caste-ism, poly theism, and the soul are trashed along the way, implicitly if not explicitly. Buddha eventually did admit women into the monkhood, but they faced additional requirements, so we are yet to see a satisfactory outcome. In my 40 years on the left, having attended numerous political classes delivered by Marxist parties, I have never attended, or been aware of, a single class explaining dialectical materialism – the philosophical foundation of Marxist theory. Historical materialism classes, by comparison, are a dime a dozen. Buddhism and other philosophical systems scarcely touch the horizon of the organised left. Ok, Dalai Lama, out with it: I welcome your reply.

**Chapter 9 : leaves in the hand: occupy buddhism: or why the dalai lama is a marxist**

*The Buddhist - Marxism Alliance was founded by the Oxford Collective on the 20th of July in Oxford, United Kingdom. Its primary mission is to emphasise the similarity and compatibility of the Buddhist teachings with those of Classical Marxism (and Marxist-Leninism-Maoism), and to assert that both systems of thought are motivated by.*

Some are politically engaged, and some of them are Marxists. Regardless of whether a Buddhist is politically engaged or not, they remain committed to the dhamma. That dhamma offers a comprehensive and coherent ontological, epistemological and ethical philosophy that is to be embodied in the daily lives of its practitioners. That practice demands intellectual integrity and a critical attitude that decries ideological dogma. Buddhism also prescribes a logical attitude in argumentation, including when justifying behaviors with reference to the sila of the Eightfold Noble Path. This essay investigates how MEBs might explain and justify political behavior based upon doctrinal, empirical, and logical considerations. It views Marxian analysis as a scientific endeavor, not a political dogma. Finally, it suggests that functional explanation that supplies an explanatory schema that is consistent with the epistemological and moral reasoning characteristic of dhamma. Engaged Buddhism manifests a compassionate social consciousness [1] and remains a rich topic of deliberation and debate. It employs objective observations of personal and social dukkha to determine actions for positive social change. Thich Naht Hanh, who minted the term, [2] describes the genesis of the practice. When I was a novice in Vietnam, we young monks witnessed the suffering caused by the war. So we were very eager to practice Buddhism in such a way that we could bring it into society. That was not easy because the tradition does not directly offer Engaged Buddhism. So we had to do it by ourselves. That was the birth of Engaged Buddhism. Buddhism has to do with your daily life, with your suffering and with the suffering of the people around you. You have to learn how to help a wounded child while still practicing mindful breathing. You should not allow yourself to get lost in action. Action should be meditation at the same time. It is accompanied by suffering, distress, despair, and fever, and it does not lead to disenchantment, dispassion, cessation; to calm, direct knowledge, full Awakening, Unbinding. However, psychological and moralistic explanations do not address the facts of and causal relations among capitalist forces of production, social relations of production and an enabling governmental superstructure that interest MEBs. The world could be empty of greedy people, yet the mechanisms of capitalism, as Marxists identify them, will continue unabated. Many Marxists disapprove of politicians such as Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren just because they refuse to completely oppose capitalism, however compassionately reengineered. How might MEBs confront these three challenges? One way to insure anti-dogmatism is to take Marxian analysis as a methodology for an empirical research program that utilizes teleological explanation common to the social sciences. Modern socialism, on the other hand, is scientific, just as scientists arrive at their generalizations not by mere speculation, but by observing the phenomena of the material world, so are the socialistic and communistic theories not idle schemes [my italics], but generalizations drawn from economic facts. While the scientific status of Marxian analysis has significant critics [4], the work of Henryk Grossman [5], Andrew Kliman [6], Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy [7] continues to be advanced as empirically robust. Growth can be achieved by introducing labor saving technology that increases the efficiency of the productive forces. While productivity grows, an economic dysfunction is introduced. Marx claimed that all profit within capitalism arises from the surplus labor of workers. MEBs can avoid the naturalistic fallacy by providing additional premises in the form of reasons that link facts to conclusions regarding Right Action. The determination of Right Action would result from a deduction from premises including both scientific socialist facts and the sila of the Noble Path. His Holiness the Dalai Lama explains. Of all the modern economic theories, the economic system of Marxism is founded on moral principles, while capitalism is concerned only with gain and profitability. Marxism is concerned with the distribution of wealth on an equal basis and the equitable utilization of the means of production. It is also concerned with the fate of the working classes—that is, the majority—as well as with the fate of those who are underprivileged and in need, and Marxism cares about the victims of minority-imposed exploitation. For those reasons the system appeals to me, and it seems fair. They refer to

states of a system of human consciousness that are either in good working order the enlightened consciousness â€” bodhicitta or not so the suffering consciousness â€” dukkha , as specified in the Abhidhamma. They claim that such end states have causes ascertainable through the functionality of mindfulness. They claim that the need to achieve bodhicitta can be satisfied by removing the causes of dukkha. This state of a consciousness in good working order is manifested by loving kindness metta , compassion karuna , sympathetic joy mudita , and equanimity upekkha ; the Brahma-viharas. For MEBs, the functionality represented by metta, karuna, mudita and upekkha motivate compassionate social action. Thus, the Four Noble Truths thus represent a schema for an objective functional explanation of dukkha and its elimination. Reasons offered by the Noble Path become part of deductive justifications for specific political behaviors, supplying premises needed to avoid the naturalistic fallacy. For MEBs, the functionality of the brahma-viharas motivate not only a concern ameliorating the effects of unemployment on people, but the dysfunctions of the capitalist mode of production that affect society. MEBs might not only wish to propose policies that ameliorate unemployment, but also wish to advocate for remedial changes in how technological innovation is applied to production and how economic growth might be managed in order to mitigate the systemic forces caused by capitalism. The central claim of this essay, surely controversial at best and sketchy at most, is that Marxian Buddhism can provide a basis for objective functional explanations from facts to Right Action. Private property is a functional condition of capitalist production that engenders the dysfunction of unemployment. Thus, private property becomes dukkha. Worker disempowerment is a good functional working order for capital but not for workers. That un-Buddhist inequality is explained through explicit reference to functional systems. MEBs provide explanations involving competing systems capitalism versus human biology , functional and dysfunctional states growing accumulation versus personal and social impoverishment , needs increased productive capacity versus personal economic security , goals maximal accumulation versus enlightened human freedom and functional items technology and labor. Functional explanation, along with corroborating objective evidence, provides MEBs with increasing confidence in their ability to identify causal connections that provide a basis for enlightened political action. Fourteen Guidelines for Engaged Buddhism. Berkeley, California, Parallax Press, A Treatise of Human Nature. We cannot discuss this claim in any detail here. Law of the Accumulation and Breakdown. The Failure of Capitalist Production London: An essay on the American economic and social order New York: Monthly Review Press, Free Press, , About the Author Author Profile J. Richard Marra is a Connecticut-based freelance writer. He received his doctoral degree from Cornell University in , majoring in musical composition and the history of music theory. While a member of the music theory faculty of the Peabody Conservatory of Music, Johns Hopkins University, he served as the coordinator of the Department of Music Theory. During that period, he also completed graduate work in the philosophy of science at Johns Hopkins University under Peter Achinstein. In addition to his published work in music theory, he also writes on socialist and Buddhist topics, with articles appearing on The Socialist, the Secular Buddhist Association, The Hampton Institute, and Everyday Socialism websites.