

AP04: THE MARXIAN ALTERNATIVE TO THE VOEGELINIAN MYTH VERSUS THE SCHOECK-SERVICE VARIANT ON THE VOEGELINIAN MYTH (4/89, 11/89, 12/90; 1/95, 9/96)

A. The Marxian Myth of State Origins

4a. *What are the main differences between the Marxian myth of the origins of the state and the Confucian myth and any of the possible Voegelinian variants? How well does the Marxian myth "save the phenomena" of Chinese prehistory?*

1. Engels and Marx

Having covered Eric Voegelin's explanation for the religious origins of the state and civilization, we must now turn to what is still the Voegelinian explanation's most politically (if no longer intellectually) important rival: the Marxist explanation for the origins of the state.

Though its roots go back to the Enlightenment and perhaps to the Reformation, the Marxian myth only began to become effectively available, particularly to readers of English, during the 20th century. The key text, Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, was only published in 1891, and only became available in English a half-century later, about the time it became widely available in Chinese.

Many of the fancier academic Marxists like to disparage Engels as merely the proponent of "vulgar" Marxism. He is too literal-minded, they say, too much the popularizer. He lacks Marx's sophistication and philosophical subtlety. For the last generation or so they have been recommending instead the writings of Marx while he was still a student revolutionary Hegelian, before he started his collaboration with Engels.

It is true that Engels was at heart little better than a journalist. He was also "in trade," working off and on in his family's textile trading firm. Marx never did an honest day's work in his life, except as a journalist, if you consider journalism honest labor. Maybe even most journalists wouldn't consider the kind of journalism Marx did honest labor, because it was highly partisan political

journalism of the mid-19th century sort. It makes Evans and Novak or *Mother Jones* look like paragons of diligent journalistic objectivity by contrast. Some of Marx's journalism was actually ghost-written for him by Engels.

Engels work as a businessman in his father's and uncle's textile firm, both in North Germany and in Manchester, England. He supported Marx during most of the years of Marx's exile in London. Engels even supported Marx's bastard son, whom Marx had fathered on Mrs. Marx's long-serving maid-servant. All in all, Engels seems to be much the nicer and more hardworking of the two, as well as the real author of some of the more lucid of the pair's writings.

The problem faced by academic Marxists and their fellow travelers as the 20th century draws to a close is that the Marxist economic and political theories have long since been intellectually demolished by alternative sets of ideas which hang together more lucidly. In empirical terms both political and economic Marxism have been falsified by the actual flow of history. Marxists have been trying desperately to save at least the label "Marxism" by finding other content to fill it. All they have been able to find are the *Philosophical Letters*, containing some of Marx's own pre-Marxist Hegelian musings as an overgrown schoolboy. These were composed before he had quite finished turning himself into the first Marxist.

Ah, the academics say, that is the true Marx! These are the sophisticated Marxist writings, which eschew the vulgar, literally material-determinist Marxism that has been exploded by both ideas and events. Absent is the vulgar Marxism which takes literally the labor theory of value. (In the 1840s Marx hadn't yet even read anything much about that theory, propounded by Adam Smith.) Nor is this the Marx who talks of un-get-aroundable stages of historical development. This is the sophisticated Marx who is still the disciple of Hegel even while beginning to transcend him. (This is also the Marx who puts everybody to sleep who tries to read him.)

Of course this early 1840s Marx is a red herring. That isn't the Marx whose red banner has marched around the world in the course of the next century. It is the vulgar Marx that has done that, the Marx interpreted and made interesting by Engels. The real Marx is Engels's Marx. The fact is, when real Marxists are in power and establish and act on their orthodox myth on the origins of the state, it is not Marx's *Philosophical Letters* that they draw from, but Engels's *Origin of the Family* book. And it is Engels's ideas that the Marxist intellectuals also follow. So after all the only authentic Marxism is vulgar Marxism. If that is vulgar, then Marxism is

vulgar; if that is wrong, then Marxism is wrong.

Before you accept the above conclusion, you might want to see what this Engelsian Marxian myth of the origins of the state is.

2. The Marxian Myth of State Origins

a. Marxian "Original Sin"

The Marxian myth is as much of a myth as is the Confucian one. It too imposes a metaphysical structure on an incompletely known historical reality. If anything, it is even more arbitrary than the Confucian myth since it does not grow organically out of the religious traditions of the civilization that produced it. Instead, it represents a sharp rejection of that tradition during an age of crisis of that tradition's second stage of high civilization. The Confucian myths revolve around acts of virtue in the everyday sense of that term. The Marxian myth has the state start with acts of vice.

Confucian myth's Sages are the discoverers of Heaven. Once having discovered Heaven, the Confucian Sages of antiquity, starting with Fuxi and Shennong, bring to Earth all of the techniques they have derived from Heaven, and put them to use for man's benefit. These techniques include the most precious technique of all—government. That makes government inherently good. The Sages' nature is good. The state that they create is, therefore, also good and does good things for men who have an inner bent toward the good (Though the passionate aspects of men's nature can lead them to evil, most Confucians emphasize the bent toward good.)

The Marxist myth is much darker. It even incorporates a secularized version of Christian Original Sin. Like Saint Augustine's version of Original Sin, the Marxist variant incorporates sex. Marxism's aboriginal Man starts out in an Eden-like utopia, the utopia of Primitive Communism, where everybody is the same as everyone else and nobody exploits anyone else. All live in small, isolated communities that have no links to each other.

How then could these communities exploit each other? Everybody does essentially the same sorts of things. All grow basically the same crops. They all do a bit of animal herding. A little of this, a little of that. If you don't have quite enough, your neighbor (who is likely your uncle or cousin) gives you some of what he has, but you will surely be obliged to return the favor a little bit later. There is perfect equality, and hence no reason for exploitation within each isolated community.

There is only one occasion when these

happy people have to have something to do with other people. That is when they marry. The impulse toward exogamy, as opposed to endogamy—the impulse to breed outside rather than inside the residence group—introduces potential problems. How do these paragons find their wives? They could stroll down to the next village, introduce themselves, and swap mates. That's what happened some of the time.

But for one reason or another, a few evil men decided not to practice exogamy on a voluntary basis. For one thing, voluntary exogamy permitted women to retain far too much power for the taste of these primitive male chauvinists.

Women were indeed very important in this Primitive Communist stage. Through plant-gathering and early forms of agriculture they produced as much if not more food than men did by hunting. If there was to arise any unequal division of power then, more of it might be grasped in the hands of women.

But these few wicked guys decided they did not want to live this way. They did not want to continue to be wimps. (Note that I am updating Engels's vocabulary. This is justified because he and the gaggle of mid-19th century Owenite feminist socialists who influenced him are also amongst the main intellectual ancestors of contemporary radical feminism.)

So these aboriginal m.c.p.s and some like-minded married friends would sneak out one night and steal themselves some wives. The Roman myth of the rape of the Sabines in Latin legend is taken by Engels as a literal proto-historical description of how mankind began to break loose from Primitive Communism.

b. Marxian original sin & the state

Before long, these wicked fellows were not just stealing wives. Having stolen their wives, they respected them less, made them work even harder in the fields, and put them in a somewhat more subordinate position in the home.

After a while of experiencing its benefits, they concluded that this people-stealing was not bad work, if they could get more of it. One night's worth of wife-stealing yielded a lifetime of extra labor. Since guys are even stronger than girls, they decided to go out, and not just steal themselves wives but some female concubines and a larger number of outright female slaves.

Success with female slaves suggested expansion into catching male slaves, and that in turn inspired warfare. The slave-stealing warriors achieved a defacto monopoly of force within their communities, eventually hoked up a religion whose principles justified that monopoly and thereby transformed

themselves into the first ruling class. They eventually reduced many of their former neighbors within the community to slave status as well.

Civilization had been born out of violence and inequality and the inducing of a false consciousness amongst the enslaved masses to justify the power of the rulers. of the first evil Slave Society.

Thus was Original Sin made overt. Sin started in sex. It is in this sense that Engels is a kind of Augustinian. But, in Engels's secularized version of Augustine, sexual subordination very rapidly gets generalized into enslavement. The new ruling class that comes into existence for the first time is a ruling class of male slave stealers and slave keepers. They establish a Slave Society which differs fundamentally from Primitive Communism in that there is now class stratification. There are now two classes: the class of slave takers and the class of slaves or potential slaves.

It is, however, plausible to ask how many slaves it takes to constitute a Slave Society? Various Marxist historians will quibble over this. They will postulate an "early" Slave Society and a "mature" Slave Society: A few slaves, and then lots of slaves.

Engels departs from both the Augustinian and the ancient Hebraic view. These slave-stealers officially announce that God Himself has told them to steal the slaves. God, they announce, instituted a social order wherein there should be slave takers and slaves. This sin at the heart of the origins of civilization implies, Engels and Marx believed, that the very structure of the cosmos is at least amoral, and perhaps downright immoral.

Eric Voegelin suggests that even for Marx and Engels this prospect would have been alarming and that only some form of the Gnostic heresy could handle, or even clearly conceptualize, such a cosmos. Gnosticism does so by postulating a principle of evil in the cosmos which is at war with a co-equal principle of good. These two principles chase each other from Heaven to Earth and back again. During some stages of history, the good is limited to Earth and the evil is in control of Heaven; during other stages the reverse is the case.

The possibility that even Heaven can be evil turned Gnosticism radically heretical. In late ancient times. For example, the Gnostics made the snake in the Garden the repository of good. In late modern times their Marxist intellectual descendants made each successive ruling class on Earth the temporary repository of what limited good (an ever more sophisticated civilization) their sin of exploitation of their fellow human creatures permitted.

Notice also that each new stage of history is inherently evil in a way that Eric Voegel-

in's version of Original Sin is not. The creation of civilization and each new stage of it, Eric Voegelin says, inevitably leads to alienation, the increasing separation of man from God. That is something like Original Sin too, but defines it as more tragic than sinful. When you are alienated you are not necessarily wicked. You may just become more nervous. You can become wicked during one of those periods when you drift away from Heaven into crisis of civilization, but can turn virtuous again when you discover a new aspect of Heaven which you can re-present into a new Earthly order.

So, though for the Voegelinian, to be civilized is to be alienated, to be alienated is not necessarily to be wicked, though it sets things up for people, the rulers especially, to become wicked at certain times. The Marxist rulers, by contrast, are wicked from the beginning, and the rulers of each new stage of human history become more wicked as their power increases. History must somehow be ended for the consequences of this original wickedness to be transcended.

3. The Marxist Stages of Human History

To avoid the pitfalls of Gnosticism, the Marxist stages of human history are interpreted by some 20th century Marxists, like the Belgian, Eric Mandel, in purely economic terms, even in terms of the rhetoric (if not the substance) of post-classical economic theory. Primitive Communism is the stage of general abundance, except for people, and people are initially and for a long time so scarce that they clump together in small, isolated communities, and so lack any opportunity and hence any temptation toward exploiting each other.

Slave Society is eventually created by a few wise guys noticing that while still quite scarce, and indeed always remaining the scarcest of all the components of production, labor has become just abundant enough and the clumps of labor have edged close enough to each other to make people-stealing worth doing. The very virtues of Primitive Communism have brought man to the edge of vice.

Feudal Society represents the next stage of development, when some of the rulers notice that under Slave Society the number of slaves, and hence people, has multiplied. The slave takers have taken care to increase their scarcest resource. Therefore, relative to other resources, improved land is beginning to become scarce. And so a new ruling class of land engrossers comes into being and creates Feudal Society.

This means there must be some sort of a

feudal process as a universal stage of political development through which all human societies must pass. As we'll see, this is one of the claims that upends the Marxist myth in the end, because it turns out that some people pass through a feudal political process but that most others do not. Even those who do pass through it, do so at different stages of their material development, which makes the whole idea of Marxism come unglued for those orthodox Marxists who still feel obliged to tie political changes to particular stages of material development.

Eventually the third of the three main factors of production—Capital—becomes scarce relative to now abundant Labor and Land. This, sure enough, eventually produces a capitalist state and society with a ruling class of capitalists. These fellows are engrossers of capital. Capitalist Society succeeds Feudal Society.

As we will see in the Chinese case, this rather strict sequence of stages would seem to require the essentially post-feudal Eastern Zhou period of Chinese history to be characterizable as Capitalist. That is implausible enough to have required Chinese Marxists to have reduced Capitalism as well as Feudalism to arbitrary mental constructs bearing little resemblance to any historical reality in either the West or China.

Each in turn of the three main factors of production—Labor, Land and Capital—have been engrossed as each successive new ruling class embraces its predecessors. The Capitalists engross not only Land, but even Labor indirectly. Laborers are reduced to "wage slaves" in Capitalist Society. The capitalists have engrossed everything that can be engrossed.

Logically, at least if you are following the Hegelian "dialectical" style of logic Marxists favor, the only thing left to do is to engross the engrossers. An ultimate contradiction must be wrapped in its own contradiction, and the result is Socialist Society. The hand and brain laborers (the Proletariat, the label used by the ancient Romans for their lowest social stratum, assimilated into Marx's jargon) take over the state from the Capitalists. The resulting "dictatorship of the proletarians" destroys inequality and thereby renders the state superfluous. The state "withers away," to be replaced by a new regime of managers who assure egalitarian abundance, the final stage of human development, Pure Communism.

With this, history comes to an end, and original sin is transcended permanently on Earth, rendering any notion of a separate Heaven redundant. Earth has become Heaven. Matter has overcome Mind and in some weird Hegelian sense has become Mind. The determination of mental states by

their material contexts (each stage of history creating a material context which trips off the next stage) has achieved its ultimate triumph.

4. China's Primitive Communism and Slave Society

a. Primitive Communism

How apply this myth to the Chinese case? As we will see in subsequent chapters, there is a pretty fair amount of evidence for a Chinese Neolithic stage. The Yangshao stage of the Chinese Neolithic looked pretty close to Engels's Primitive Communism, particularly during the decades that the Chinese archeologists who report it to us were operating within a Marxian intellectual framework. You can even find a kind of primeval feminism in the artifacts, if you are looking for it. If you visit the archeological sites around which museums have grown, such as the Banpo Museum near modern Xi'an, Shaanxi province, you will find a good deal of evidence for equality between the sexes.

Each house foundation in early Banpo looks just like the other houses' foundations. Graves appear to be placed within the village. If there is any superiority of one kind of grave over others, it is that graves with women in them sometimes seem to contain a little more and a little fancier grave furniture than do the graves of men. If anything, you might conclude, this was a matriarchy, particularly so since the Chinese use the same word for matriarchy (rule by women) and matrilineality (tracing descent through the female line).

The archeologists also find what they think may be some clan names on Yangshao and later Longshanoid period pottery, and almost invariably, if any meaning significant or classifier is attached to the clan symbol, the female meaning significant is employed rather than the male. For example, the female significant is present in the symbol for the Ji clan on the left side.

You can reach all sorts of conclusions from this Neolithic evidence: It can be interpreted as showing that wife-stealing had not yet become important during the Yangshao stage (c. 6,000-3,000 BC.), and that general enslavement therefore could not have as yet been practiced. (However, the fact that the female significant was retained right down to the end of the mythic period when slavery was being commonly practiced suggests that we cannot use linguistic evidence as a reliable marker for general changes in behavior. To this day the Chinese use an asexual third person pronoun, and yet remain exceedingly sexist.)

These Chinese archeological surmises may or may not be true. A recent book with a

delightfully sexist title which I can't resist working into the conversation for that reason alone is by a City College anthropologist, Steven Goldberg. It is called *The Inevitability of Patriarchy* (NY: Morrow, 1974; a new edition, entitled *Why Men Rule*, appeared in 1993). Under this marvelous title Goldberg investigated all the anthropological literature on matrilineality and supposed female dominance, and all evidence of *matriarchy* turns out to either be inaccurate or to be interpretable as simply dominant males either being worried about the magical power associated with femaleness or not yet having figured out the more complicated rules for a patrilineal descent system.

Priestess-like females may get extra grave goods associated with them or be dressed up fancier in some New Guinea tribe or other, but there is always some dominant male chieftain or war chief who is still running things. All the important positions are held by men, even in matrilineal or even in surviving Upper Paleolithic cultures where we can only just barely tell the difference between the roles of boys and girls, and indeed whose members may not be entirely sure what causes pregnancy. (A graveyard of six foot warrior women in the Caspian region discovery of which was announced in spring 1997 may provide some confirmation of the Greek myth of the Amazons and constitute a possibly significant exception to Goldberg's thesis.)

While considerable hostility has been expressed toward Goldberg and bad motives attributed to him (and there is no question that there is a dark streak of misogyny that one can detect just below the surface of his narrative), nobody has so far been able to challenge his research.

b. transition into Slave Society

By the Late Neolithic, the Longshanoid stage (cf. chapter 5) in Chinese archeological terms, it looks very much as though that even if there had been matriarchy or at least matrilineality earlier, it had disappeared. Some graves are much bigger than others, and they are always men's graves. They are also always warriors' graves. In fact we find weapons clearly designed to be used against people and not just for hunting. Indeed there is evidence that they were so used. Some of these weapons are found embedded in human skeletons' necks and in their ribs, and these skeletons appear not in a grave but shoved down a well.

Clearly, by the last stages of the transition from Yangshao to Longshanoid we find evidence of patriarchy (if not yet patrilineality), war and in the course of the Longshanoid the first archeological evidence of slaves. Even by late Yangshao times there is

evidence that small villages were being linked into networks sharing cemeteries, and therefore apparently sharing ruling class members.

One can only conclude that the Marxian myth does indeed "save the phenomena" of Chinese prehistory as the archeologists deliver it to us, and does so at least adequately. While one may quibble, for example, with the claims about Primitive Communist Yangshao's alleged "matriarchy," that is not central to the Marxist vision. It was merely Engels's chivalrous gesture to 19th century radical feminism. (Engels was much more trustworthy where women were concerned than was Marx. He not only married his Irish-Catholic mistress on her deathbed so that she would not die thinking she was going to Hell, but made arrangements for Marx's illegitimate child by his wife's servant to be brought up decently.)

If Engels's feminism is not central to the Marxist myth, Engels could swallow Steven Goldberg and half the misogynists in Greenwich Village, and still claim to be accounting for the archeological data without serious distortion, though this would irk most contemporary American radical feminists who are more feminist than Marxist. Chinese feminists have long since realized that there is no more to be gained from Marxism than from Confucianism in terms of liberating Chinese women politically or socio-economically.

Even without the feminist trimmings, one cannot dismiss the 20th century post-classical economic restatements of Marxism as an ordering framework (i.e. myth in the non-pejorative sense) out of hand. Its description of Primitive Communism fits archeological descriptions of Yangshao. Its description of the beginnings of Slave Society fits the archeological data of the Longshanoid Late Neolithic.

Nor is there any question that there were plenty of slaves underfoot with nasty things being done to them, most conspicuously during the latter part of the Shang period, which Chinese Marxists label as the beginning of the mature stage of Slave Society. Slaves were then apparently being regularly used in massive numbers as human sacrifices buried on the edges of aristocrats' graves and in the foundations of public buildings.

B. Envy and its Political Consequences

4b. In what ways does Helmut Schoeck's theory of social behavior underpin Elman Service's explanation for the origins of the state? How well does the Serviceian myth "save the phenomena" of Chinese prehis-

tory? Why, nevertheless, is the Serviceian theory no more than a subordinate part of Voegelinian political theory?

1. Envy, Envy-Avoidance & Social Discipline

Engels's is by no means the only empirical social science-based view of the origins of the state (as opposed to the à priori social science of Buchanan and his fellow Public Choicers, and the quasi-mathematical types like Robert Axelrod).

There is a very good book which describes a simple but very comprehensive theory on the nature of social behavior. It is by a German sociologist born in the 1920s named Helmut Schoeck: *Envy: A Theory of Social Behavior*. The German version appeared in 1966, and it was translated into English in 1969.

Schoeck's thesis is that the ability to respond to envy is hard-wired into our species. *Homo sapiens sapiens* is (like most of his cousins, the Pongids) a kind of "herd ape," i.e. a fairly bright hairless ape who lives in herds, and hence must take guidance from the behavior of the other apes in his particular herd. How does one of these bright, hairless apes decide when to give something to one or more of the others? Apparently each ape can notice differences between what he has and larger quantities of that good the other apes in his horde have, with these differences evoking resentment from the ape possessing less.

When a person notices that another has a bigger piece of fruit than he does, he makes a behavioral display to communicate his envy to the other. The other notices that envy display, and is hard wired to respond to it. He has an irresistible impulse to break off a piece of that fruit and give it to the other, or perhaps give the whole fruit to the other if that other is a dominant male or female. The dominant animal will then likely break off a piece and give it back to the non-dominant ape to assuage the lesser beast's envy.

There even seem to be associated with the display of envy certain universally employed hard smiles and funny looks around the eyes that are genetically based. We can always tell, even when we move into another culture when somebody is envying us, because he gives us the same odd look whether he is a Ubangi or a Gaul or a New Yorker. If we can always tell when the other guy is envious of us, that shows that envy and hence envy-avoidance forms of behavior are likely hard-wired.

Schoeck's thesis is that envy and envy-avoidance is the single common denominator we perceive in all our human social relationships. Schoeck distinguishes envy from "jeal-

ousy," which perhaps evolves out of envy at a much later stage of human evolution or is simply its logical reciprocal as exercised by a dominant individual. Envy is evoked by perceiving something held by another that the envied does not have but desires to have. A jealous reaction occurs when someone reaches for something that the jealous individual has, and which he feels entitled to have exclusive possession of and rejects the overture to give up. Yet another variant is called "emulation." I have a big fruit. You don't. So you go trudging off to emulate me and find a big fruit of your own.

It would appear, according to Schoeck's searches of the anthropological literature, that there is no way prior to the invention of the state of avoiding envy or of responding to it except by some act of envy-avoidance which requires giving up whatever you have that evoked the envious reaction from your neighbor.

This is a very important conclusion. Until the state and the concepts of Heaven and "luck" are invented, apparently all linked together, all communities had to be relatively small, and they had to be relatively homogeneous.

They had to be homogeneous because envy-avoidance decrees the ending of any material basis for difference in status or wealth between individuals. A community had to be small because the number of interpersonal comparisons goes up as the square of the number of participants in a society increases. As a consequence, a society of five to seven dozen people in size has reached a point where the number of envy-avoidance comparisons that any individual must regularly make becomes so burdensome that he would have no time to do anything but constantly compare every permutation of his status with the reaction of each of his fellows to that change.

The path of least resistance is to split the community after it reaches a population of 100-200, and move the two communities apart far enough so each person no longer needs have anything to do with so large a number of individuals.

If Schoeck's reasoning is correct, no pre-state community should be bigger than an agricultural village of 100-200 people. That seems to be the largest size community you can expect to get until some new way to ward off envy is invented other than giving up goods an individual has acquired that the others in the group do not have. The empirical anthropological evidence does not falsify Schoeck's thesis. Pre-state communities are as small as he predicts.

2. The State as Envy-Avoidance Mechanism

One way to short-circuit envy is for a high-status person to accumulate goods but to periodically throw a big party and give them all away to members of the community. This is what happens during the potlatch of the Pacific Northwest Indians. Remarkably similar ceremonials are practiced by various groups in New Guinea and in the Southern Philippines. Potlatches seem to appear during the transition into larger communities that are trying to break the comfortable upper limits for pre-state community size.

In such communities a "big man" (an important fellow in the community) is allowed to temporarily pile up goods, but then in ceremonial fashion he discharges all the envy-laden tensions in the group by giving all those goods away. The notion of the "evil eye" also arises in such communities. Accusations of using an "evil eye" on one's fellow villagers are most easily warded off by making presents of goods to one's accusers.

There is a surer mechanism than this, Schoeck hints toward the end of his book. You can invent the state, discover Heaven, and conjure up the idea of luck. A number of historical anthropologists during this century, Elman R. Service, of the University of California Santa Barbara, being the most recent of them, have carried this insight further. Earlier, the Hungarian Karl Polanyi did the same sort of thing. There is also a Germanic tradition in anthropology which held onto this insight.

These writers all noticed that the state is a well nigh perfect envy-avoidance mechanism because the men who invent and administer the state invariably make a claim to connection with the transcendent. Even to be "lucky" (a notion that apparently does not exist before Heaven is discovered) is invariably viewed as being favored by Heaven or the gods. In Service's aphorism, the rulers gain "unequal access to goods" by making persuasive claims of "unequal access to gods." They are the first lucky people. Eventually, by the high civilized stage, the idea of luck is generalized to support gambling and games of chance.

Having made the transcendental claim, and having created the state on the basis of that claim, the rulers can then go on piling up goods without evoking envy from any members of the community. Who would become envious of the son of the god, the fellow whose mommy stepped in the god's toe-print, or whose mommy was impregnated by the dark bird that came from Heaven? You don't mess around with such a fellow. In New York gangster circles they still say such a

fellow is "connected." (They mean "connected" with the mob. In ancient times he would have been connected with the gods.) Envy of such a fellow is out of the question.

Notice that this is the low, material explanation as to why Heaven is always trumps. Eric Voegelin gave a more abstract explanation: Somebody else can always go and find some other Earthly factor to overbear your Earthly power, but nothing on Earth can trump Heaven.

Now we also know why a link to Heaven, however defined, works as well as it does. If you don't have a connection with Heaven, the hard wiring in any human herd ape's head will require anyone possessing goods his fellows lack to feel uneasy when he evokes the envy-smile from a neighbor, and so he hurries to give up his goods and cannot long remain in a materially superior position. Before it can come into operation for any given pair of herd apes, even Axelrod's calculus of cooperation is short circuited by the envy of everyone else.

Only the invention of the state frees the calculus of cooperation to operate. And creation of the state requires the claim of connection with Heaven. Only that can short-circuit the envious smile, allow the would-be ruler to permanently retain his superior material position and persuade one of the prisoners to play tit for tat with the other prisoner. A permanent transfer of wealth is made from the ruled to the new group of what we can now call the rulers. Eventually this new type of relationship allows a big enough new kind of community to arise within which a drift toward cooperation among strangers of the sort Axelrod envisions can get under way.

This new type of relationship we can call the "political redistribution" of wealth from ruled to rulers. It also occasions some cross distribution. The ruler, having acquired tribute from the ruled, takes his cut off the top, then (still on non-economic grounds, trade not yet having come into existence to any significant degree) redistributes a measure of the remainder. He may give it to his own relatives, to headmen already within his sphere, and to people whom he would like to turn into his relatives, at least fictively, such as the big men of some nearby villages on the periphery of his state-community which he would like to incorporate into his state's network of sub-communities.

Who knows, the ruler may even engage in a measure of redistribution to people in general: Every now and again the ruler may have some of the tribute he has received from the fishing villages transferred to all the people of the upland villages who otherwise have no opportunity to eat fish. Likewise, he may occasionally also distribute mutton collected from the upland villages to the

fish-eating but non-sheep-raising villages of the creek shores.

3. Stages of Early State Evolution

The transition into the state-community goes through several stages. Service uses for these the labels that were pioneered by Max Weber, one of the founding fathers of modern historical sociology. He talks of a charismatic stage, an hereditary-traditional stage and a legal-rational stage of state development.

Charismatic, as its Greek root *charisma* implies, involves a sacred form of "charm." One is charming in the Greek myths and Homeric sagas when some god or goddess is speaking through one. Not just Greek gods, but the gods of all early civilizations spoke through favored individuals.

To be at the charismatic stage of state formation means that each new chieftain has to demonstrate anew his connection with the gods. As Mencius put it, Yao must present Shun to Heaven. Heaven bestows charismatic qualities upon Shun, and that's why the princes and the litigants all come to Shun's court. Shun later had to present Yu to Heaven to achieve the same results. Because Heaven spoke through Yu, the princes and litigants all came to his court too.

Yu presented his own son to Heaven. When Heaven accepted Yu's son Qi, and did not accept Minister Yi, it was Qi who exhibited the requisite charisma. Since he was also Yu's son, he also represented the boundary between the charismatic and the hereditary-traditional stages of the state's development in Chinese myth. According to the Confucian myth-cycle, at least, the hereditary traditional stage got under way fully when Qi's son was presented to Heaven as a matter of course, merely to meet the ceremonial requirements of the situation.

The beginnings of the last stage, which Weber called the "legal-rational" stage, coincided with the transition into the stage of high civilization as I define it. This is the point at which Elman Service bails out, fearful of being convicted of being a mere historical anthropologist practicing ancient history without a license. (Academic boundaries tend to be observed more carefully by American academics than by the Germanic pioneers in such inherently interdisciplinary fields as history.)

There was no reason why Service should have ended his book at that point, except that he would find he could for the high civilized stage no longer use secondary works written by other anthropologists who deal with surviving pre-state and early state communities through conducting oral interviews with their

members. That style of work is what makes the anthropologists the genteel journalists of the scholarly world. There are no surviving first stage high civilizations in which to do field work.

If Service had continued, he would have had to start reading surviving ancient texts written in dead languages, probably moving his finger from word to word, moving his lips as he did so the way classicists do. The classical scholars and ancient historians who do that are operating on and just past the opening edges of the legal-rational stage. Occasionally, some of these people, one of whom is me, read people like Elman Service and apply anthropological methods to early legal-rational stage documents.

4. The Sage Rulers and the Three Dynasties

The stages of Chinese prehistory and early history fit rather nicely into these three Weberian stages that Service employs. The Sage Rulers of antiquity, beginning with the culture heroes, belong to the charismatic stage.

The Three Dynasties, Xia, Shang and the pre-conquest beginnings of Zhou, belong to the hereditary-traditional stage. Western Zhou represents the transition into the legal-rational stage. The Confucian myths contain a fair amount of material on the collection of tribute by Yu and his successors, and some hints on its collection earlier.

What we may call the Serviceian myth apparently fits the archeological data at least as well as does the Marxian myth, but it also fits the Confucian myth far more closely than can the Marxian myth. Since it also dovetails with the Schoeck and Voegelin theses at the lower and upper levels, and a case can be made that Voegelin's explanation of historical reality is deeper than Marx's, the complex explanation for the appearance and evolution of the state produced by combining Voegelin, Service and Schoeck would appear to have greater explanatory power than either the original or later versions of Marxism.

Intrinsic defects in the Marxist approach reinforce this conclusion.

C. Intrinsic Defects in the Marxist Myth

4c. In game theory terms, why is the Marxian myth least likely of all the "myths" considered here to be realized? Why, nevertheless, must it be taken seriously!!

1. Pedigrees of the Myths

We now have three myths to juggle. The Confucian myth itself embraces several other myths and types of myth from the purely historical to the metaphysical. The Marxian myth is reasonably labelable as myth in the sense of being an account of a situation which rests upon both logic and historical evidence, but goes well beyond that evidence and displays errors in its logic. Just as Engels added Lewis Morgan's anthropology of the North American Indians to Marx's presuppositions, and so acknowledged in the extended title of his book, we can add evidence from Helmut Schoeck's and Elman Service's more recent anthropology to the larger frameworks provided by Eric Voegelin and Public Choice political theorists to construct a third and more up to date myth of our own.

Morgan was one of the first anthropologists to deal with the societies of the Indians of the Northeastern United States. However, Schoeck and Service are able to stand upon an additional 150 years of anthropology of a much greater variety of pre-state and early state peoples. Morgan comes practically at the beginning of modern anthropology. Schoeck and Service can summarize much of the whole corpus of anthropology leading up to their and our times.

Which of these myths is best? The Confucian myth is my sentimental favorite. It is by far the most fun to read. It grows out of the very fabric of Chinese culture's history, and yet seems to have held up tolerably well in its ability to save the phenomena modern scientific archeology has been delivering up on the ancient Chinese state's prehistory and history.

Unfortunately, though I hate to admit it, the Marxian myth also saves the phenomena, and native Chinese ideas congruent with Marxism have also grown out of the fabric of the history of Chinese culture.

But one can argue that the Schoeck-Service myth saves even more phenomena and connects up with something larger than itself, namely the philosophy of history of Eric Voegelin into which it nests very nicely because Schoeck and Voegelin give complementary reasons why a claim of transcendence must be made. Such a claim both accommodates the logic of the situation and the

hard-wiring of our brains, and Schoeck gives a century's worth of anthropological evidence for the existence of that hard wiring. It would be even better if brain physiology were well enough developed to back up that conclusion with some brain anatomy, but that has not happened yet.

Hence there are reasons for the connection with Heaven both from the lower end, with Schoeck and Service, and from the high side in metaphysical terms as well as from the pure formal logic of the situation provided by Eric Voegelin.

2. The Game Theory Test

One more thing can be done, one inspired by the statistical games played by some branches of Public Choice political theory. Suppose you play a "founding early civilization" game. Imagine which set of rules will wind up dominant in such a game. Will a bunch of dirty, woman- and-people-in-general-stealers committing the Marxian version of Original Sin more often than not manage to found a stable early state? Or will a bunch of Confucians or Schoeck-Service-Voegelinians come out on top more often?

This is merely something I propose doing. I haven't gone through the formality of setting up all the detailed rules for playing such a game. If it could be done, it would be useful. It seems to me, however, that without actually doing that, it is more plausible that the non-Marxian state would become dominant.

There are two potential players in such a game: potential enslavers and potential slaves. By the nature of the situation, there ought to be many more slaves and potential slaves than there are slave owners and potential slave owners. Otherwise there isn't much fun in owning slaves. As you approach parity between the two groups, they might have to take turns enslaving each other! What's the point of that sort of exercise? That sounds more like marriage than state formation's political relationships!

Given the numerical superiority of slaves and potential slaves, it would always be in their interest in the early stages of a game if they hear rumors of an Engelsian slave stealer coming over the horizon to find some Serviceian Sage—a charismatic chieftain who is a god or whose mommy the god impregnated, or who tells a convincing story along those lines. Such a man can not only help stave off Engelsian slave stealers, but can lead those who join him in enslaving the potential slave stealers themselves. The latter would deserve such treatment.

That scenario not only seems plausible but it accords with much of the narrative that

we have from the Confucian myth. The only slaves mentioned in the early records seem to be prisoners of war. The Shang and Zhou had slaves all right, thereby allowing the Marxian myth to save the phenomena, but they don't seem to be the right kinds of slaves. Nor do there seem to be enough of them. Some of the slaves ought to have been from inside the Shang and Zhou communities. And yet different words are used by contemporary sources for insiders who are being ruled than for these prisoner slaves.

3. The Twentieth Century Context

Well then, it would seem that all things considered we ought to abandon the Marxian mythical state in favor of a state evolving along Confucian or Serviceian lines (and there is not a dime's worth of difference between the two latter; a Serviceian state is just a Confucian state described with the language of historical anthropology rather than with the more compact language of ancient Chinese ancestor worship religion).

Why then did I drag Marxism into the argument? Remember, this course and Chinese political history continue right up to the present, and for the last half-century or so, China has been run by Marxists. I have read most of Engels' book in Chinese in the form of quotations stuck on and in archeology and political history articles dealing with ancient times in the contemporary Chinese scholarly press. Engels is no more easy to take in Chinese than in English, but there is no avoiding him. Maybe that alone is reason enough to try to come to terms with him and his partner in philosophical crime, Marx.

Still worse, there are Marxist and analogous to Marxism interpretations of Chinese political history even among Chinese and foreign (particularly Japanese) right-wing scholars who are merely Hegelians rather than out and out blood-red Marxists. But they too are inclined to swallow the Engelsian view of the origins of the state, and they have written some of the most important modern treatments of ancient and modern Chinese political history. So we are stuck with them too.

We are also operating within our own American university tradition, which is practically the last bastion of overt Marxism in the world. A kind of non-denominational Marxism dominates what one can call the "academic consensus" among academic social scientists and a fair number of those who think of themselves as humanists. Without Marx the academic consensus would only have Freud left, and the feminists won't let them do much with Freud any more.).

To paraphrase Raymond Aron with my less gainly jargon, Marxism is the opiate of the 20th century's meritocratic sector of the ruling class all over the world, and we are stuck with these guys even here in the more or less free world. So I have no choice but to work this chapter in. If you do further reading along these lines, whether you like it or not you're going to have to swallow an even stiffer dose of Marx and especially of Engels.

If you are like me, you'll realize you cannot get by saying Marxism is the intellectual equivalent of spinach, and (like the little girl in Dorothy Parker's short story) you say the hell with it. You will wind up trying to make a virtue out of the necessity and tell the academic equivalent of Popeye stories about the virtues of Marxist spinach.

It was cold comfort that a recent article in the *Journal of Asian Studies* applauded the fact that surprisingly few distortions have been introduced by Chinese academic use of Marxian categories for Chinese history. In other words, like geocentrist astronomers in the generations before they were finally upended by heliocentrism, Chinese Marxists have managed to save most of the phenomena for their doctrines by introducing lots of epicycles into their explanations. I suppose we should be grateful.

Suggested Further Reading:

- Engels, Friedrich. *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State in the Light of the Researches of Lewis H. Morgan*. New York: International Publishers, 1942/1891.
- Goldberg, Steven. *The Inevitability of Patriarchy*. New York: Morrow, 1974.
- Goldberg, Steven. *Why Men Rule: A Theory of Male Dominance*. Chicago: Open Court, 1993. A revised, expanded and equally politically correct version of the 1974 edition.
- Schoeck, Helmut. *Envy: A Theory of Social Behavior*. Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1987/ 1969tr/1966.
- Service, Elman R. *Origins of the State and Civilization: The Process of Cultural Evolution*. New York: Norton, 1975.
- Bain, Gerald M. & Ronald Cohen, eds. *Hierarchy and Society: Anthropological Perspectives on Bureaucracy*. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1980). Cohen is a colleague and follower of Elman Service.