

Being-for-Others: *Marxiology Beyond Darwin and Freud*Brij Mohan^a*Professor and Dean Emeritus, School of Social Work, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803, USA***ARTICLE INFO***Article history***RECEIVED:** 12-Feb-25**REVISED:** 02-May-25**ACCEPTED:** 07-May-25**PUBLISHED:** 30-Jun-25

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**ABSTRACT**

Human struggle for survival—dominance and subjugation—is an evolutionary journey which began before History. This brief article is premised on the assumption that Homo Sapiens remain an incomplete species. We live through a perilous phase fraught with uncertainty and plausible extinction. Being-for-Others may thwart evolutionary conclusions.

Keywords: Human Society, Evolutionary Domination, Civilized Chaos, and Marxiology.

“History is neither predestined mechanistic movement, nor does it move in a circle like the water-wheel, which fills in and drains out at the hands of the ever-toiling historical Ass—called the Man” (Dange, 1961: 14).

“Spirit is to be observed in the theatre of world history, where it has its most concrete reality,” wrote G.W.F. Hegel (1988: 19). “The idea that people should be able to choose their own communities—instead of being stuck where they are born—is distinctly American innovation. [I]t may be America’s most profound contribution to the world,” writes Yoni Applebaum in *The*

Atlantic (March 2025)¹. Thanks to President J. F. Kennedy². As analyzed below, Applebaum’s essay merits serious reexamination.

The state of civilization in the 21st Century is not a utopian epoch. Man³ has achieved pinnacle of advancement. This also includes astonishing tools and innovations perfected for mass murders and self-destruction. A mask of mythologies of conquests, enemies, and allies has unmasked our creatureliness. This whole paradigm is best demonstrated by US Vice President’s recent rebuke of the Europeans in Munich⁴.

¹Cf. ‘How Progressives Froze the American Dream,’ in *The Atlantic* (March 2025 Issue; February 19, 2025); digitally retrieved February 16, 2025).

²I emigrated to the United States of America on March 1, 1975.

³Used as a generic label for people without any gender-bias.

⁴224,878 views Feb 14, 2025 [#jdvdance#xijinping#vladimirputin](https://twitter.com/jdvance/xijinping/vladimirputin)
US Vice President JD Vance delivered a historic speech at the Munich Security Conference in Germany on February 14. In a big surprise, Vance strongly criticized European leaders for their approach to free speech. He also said the greatest threat facing the continent was not from Russia and China, but “from within.” INTERNATIONAL NEWS [#jdvdance#xijinping](https://twitter.com/jdvance/xijinping)

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Ever since *Homo Erectus* and *Neanderthals* became bipedal creatures, their hands and fingers began to create things that evolved into this civilization. Mark Willis Thomas, and his wife Rujeko Hockley, --“an art power couple”—puts it succinctly to achieve racial equality: “The road to progress is always under construction” (*Time*, February 24, 2025: 59). Our ‘new normal,’ is now defined by the contours of insecurity. Alisa Quart has a point: “In this moment of rupture and uncertainty, this sort of solidarity [“communitas”] can be an unexpected salve. With that recognition, we must each develop a clearer understanding of how those in power deliberately exploit our individual and societal uncertainty—and what we can do about it” (Quart, 2025: 29).

The American dream has vanished from the people’s imagination as the road to progress looks like a bombarded zone. Power’s unrelenting forces have brought back nineteenth century’s social Darwinism to its new dawn. Can reexamination of Marxiology help? Civil society’s predicament is not akin to a crossroads. It’s cultural evolution that unveils a prehistoric drama of human proclivities in a perpetually troubled transition.

Riane Eisler (1988) posits ‘dominator’ and ‘partnership’ models that unravels the crisis of Western civilization. Can the two societal models co-exist? The question has been answered by the Twentieth Century’s world wars, proliferation of nuclear bombs, and continued avarice for control and conquest. From Gaza to Ukraine, Greenland to ‘Gulf of America,’ the specter of lust, acquisition, and pugnacity continues to design social and political organizations across the nations. The ‘economic’ angle has a paramountcy in this global re-evolution. Trade and tariffs, nationalism, capitalism, statism, and the looming fragments of a *Third World War* are ominous signs of a lost paradise.

The caption of this paper has roots in Continental Philosophy. From Descartes to Heidegger to Sartre, *Being* has been suffixed with “-in-itself,” “-with-itself,” and “-for-others” with different meanings. *Being-for-others* is more Sartrean than Heideggerian.

We live in an advanced stage of evolution. Science, technology, Gandhi, Godse, Einstein, Trump, and Noam Chomsky are all aspects of human ingenuity—our dreams and delusions embedded in the veneer of our civilization. Our fantasies and self-righteousness sometimes yield dubious manifestations of success. They all fail us—we humans. Man is a self-alienated animal.

A damaged, unhinged nation is lost in search of its destiny. Napoleonic surge of neo-imperial-narcissism,

surreally, is a Shakespearean tragedy. *Return of the Leviathan* manifests a new, rather dubious social reality. The Golden Age as envisioned by populist demagogues, is a perilous delusion. An oblique thrust of this riveting book brings civilizational dysfunctionality to the fore, which calls for a new Social Contract. “Being for Others” is a veritable challenge. The persistence of Poverty of Culture (PoC) breeds violence and greed without institutional coherence. The duality of paradoxical post-Enlightenment is a false consciousness of progress (Mohan, 2025). The *Anxious Generation*, Jonathan Haidt (2024) contends, has been imperiled by the onslaught of tech-oligarchs.

The plague of teenage anxiety, fear, and a sense of nothingness should be a wake-up call. Our culture wars, artificial intelligence, and myth-making proclivity distort the reality of three fundamental bedrocks of civility: *Truth, Values, and Justice*. In modern history no other democracy has shown its fragility than the American system. Why this seismic political change?

We have been made to believe that Harvard, MIT, Yale, et al. have produced geniuses who will save the world. Henry Kissinger received a Nobel Prize for ending the Vietnam War. Kennedy, Johnson, and their successors created the Great Society that liberal democrats claim credit for. The world changed after 1945, and its ambiguous ascendance is false. Noam Chomsky is perhaps the most renowned and hard-hitting critic of American foreign policy. He believes it’s the intellectuals’ responsibility to unravel the truth. In *The Myth of American Idealism*, Chomsky, and his co-author Nathan Robinson, debunk the belief that America is a global superpower as well as a “benevolent hegemon” (2024). Americans are naive in believing that their country is “committed to promoting democracy and human rights” (Bessner, February 2, 2025: 61). The myth of (American) Justice is starkly different: Daniel Bessner, reviewing *The Myth of American Idealism*, recounts the ignominious catalog of U.S. foreign policy which is a horrifying account of inhumanity:

“[O]ur 1947 intervention in Greece to suppress a popular communist uprising; our subversion of Italy’s 1948 election; our repression of democratic and left-wing groups in postwar Japan and South Korea; our participation in the 1953 overthrow of Iran’s Mohammed Mossadegh, the 1954 overthrow of Guatemala’s Jacob Arbenz, and the 1961 assassination of the Democratic Republic of the Congo’s Patrice Lumumba; our many failed attempts to murder or overthrow Cuba’s

[#vladimirputin#us#usvicepresident#germany#europeanleaders#eu#freespeech#threat#munich#munishsecurityconference](#) (Retrieved February 15, 2025)

Fidel Castro; our participation in the annihilation of Indonesian communists and fellow travelers; our destruction of North and South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos; our involvement in the 1973 overthrow of Chile's Salvador Allende; our provision of aid to Guatemala as its government prosecuted a genocide; and so on, down to the present day." (Bessner, 2025: 61).

The above chronology does not include the assassination of Che Guevara; the destruction of Afghanistan and Iraq; the genocide in Gaza; and not yet-known covert operations that *Night Agents* conduct with impunity in the name of national security. The Regime Change strategy has not decreased threats to America. Nine-Eleven is an unforgettable consequential disaster. So was the heinous slaughter of peacefully assembled Jews on October 7, 2023. The American-Israeli alliance is guilty of expansionist ethnic cleaning. Our 47th POTUS and his real-estate tycoon-son-in-law, Kosher-view this graveyard of Gaza as areal estate project. This is capitalist-cannibalism—simple and obscene. Opposition to rapacious Zionism is not anti-Semitic. Anything that goes wrong is now blamed on DEI⁵.

The rampant unreason that abounds in popular culture explodes the American myth of reason. 'A deadly apathy,' David Shulman comments: "Israel has embraced cruelty and atrocity as a normative mode of waging war" (NYRB, January 16, 2025: 21). Mayhem and destruction of more than 60 thousand Palestinians is a war-crime that emboldens the credo of neo-imperialism.

The rumors of hegemonies' demise are exaggerated. Fady Roudah is brilliant as a doctor and poet. His pain and despair as a Palestinian intellectual are best summed up in his aphoristic words: "A free heart within a caged chest is free." Hebert Marcuse had voiced this ontology as: "Man is free even at the hands of his executioner."

"Culture demands continuous sublimation; it thereby weakens Eros, the builder of culture," wrote Herbert Marcuse (1955: 82). Human alienation is a foundational basis of democratic capitalism. Martin Wolf underscores

The Crisis of Democratic Capitalism (2024). When the truth is eclipsed by the motifs and heresies of popular culture, people lose confidence in their leaders and government. The schism benumbs sensibility and cynicism thwarts rationality. "Around the world, violent racist demagogues keep winning elections, and although they all seem very happy with the idea of private property, they are openly hostile to the rule of law, political liberalism, individual freedom, and other ostensible preconditions and cultural accompaniments of market economies," sums up Trevor Jackson in the *New York Review of Books* (January 2025: 32).

What I find inexplicable is the massive public dissonance about the force of evil that permeates society and culture. I recently wrote a Letter to *The Nation* about the rise of Trumpian triumphalism despite his worrisome pathology of leadership (February 18, 2025: 18). Realizing that it was Trump's supporters --'white trash' to Silicon Valley elites--who got him anointed as the King, I do not blame him for his colossal failures as the leader of a free world cannot be overstated. A King can do no wrong. It's a truism from the monarchical past. One must, however, rethink the people who voted for him. Their unabashed loyalty to a convicted felon is more worrisome than a flurry of Executive Orders that POTUS likes to signoff. People's acquiescence to predatory institutions shows masked apathy, amnesia, and helplessness which may imperil the pillars of a civil society. We can resolve the current 'constitutional crisis,' but the contagion of democratic paralysis and anti-democratic avarice threatens humanity. White Supremacy is an unabashed motif of the new administration. In *The Unseen Truth*, Sarah Lewis examines how an erroneous 18th-century story about the "Caucasian race" led to a century of prejudice and misapprehension (*The Nation*, Feb. 10, 25; web).

'The Mark of Imperialism,' Anatol Lieven contends, has shattered the myth of Liberal Internationalism. In fact, nationalist-imperialism imperils the plausible spirit of global cooperation. "Western progressives—American and European alike—need to break decisively with the neoconservatives and the liberal internationalism they've long promoted," observes Lieven. Dwight D. Eisenhower's poignant words cannot be overstated:

"The world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of the scientists, the hopes of its children. This is not a way of the life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron" (Quoted by Lieven, 2025: 7).

⁵What we design is neither universally acceptable nor always healthy. The U.S. Capital, for example, has the world's "most controlled airspace" (BBC News, January 30, 2025). An American Eagle just collided with a military Black Hawk helicopter in the icy Potomac River killing everyone aboard. President Trump lost no time to blame DEI initiatives for the disaster. Can such an accident happen with an ominous threat to the whole world? There will be one to play scapegoat for the numbing realities we confront. While the nation mourns, POTUS and his allies blame DEI as the cause of this disaster. *The Airlines' Dangerous Descent* was brought to the attention of all passengers by William McGee (2012).

The so-called color-blind, merit-based New Deep State is confounded by omnipresent dark side of AI. It's not possible that AI will regulate all human affairs. If we can't manage our lives, someone else will do for us. Tech billionaires are not egalitarian saints. Our civilization is at a crossroads: Either global wellbeing or collective *Death Wish*. A mountaineer once fell on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. He built a school for girls. Later he went back to build 55 such schools. *Three Cups of Tea* is an inspiring story. Ironically, Taliban have overtaken this primordially deconstructed place where tribalism prevails. Dialectics is an endless process. *If winter comes, Spring can't be far behind*.

As a didactic-ontological exercise, I often used to ask my students: *Do something selflessly nice for a person who has been dehumanized without letting her/him know. Enjoy the silence of what you have accomplished: transformation*. An unselfish attack on inhumanity is the ethos of honest action. *Being for Others* is a powerful tool for social transformation. Sigmund Freud, 1962 concluded:

"Unhappiness is much less difficult to experience. We are threatened with suffering from three directions: from our own body, which is doomed to decay and dissolution and which cannot even do without pain and anxiety as warning signals; from the external world, which may rage against us with overwhelming and merciless forces of destruction; and finally, from our relations to other men. The suffering which comes from this last source is perhaps more painful to us than any other" (1962: 24).

"Our relations to others" cannot be smoothly cohesive due to the complexity of forces that constitute social life. Since the *Others* can be hell, we can't easily escape this alienation. We compromise and make friends. This approach, however, is unacceptable to the wild Ego. We must conquer the threats to eliminate what we are most afraid of. Self-preservation is key to both survival and conquest. Put simply, human proclivities--insecurity, perceived or real, resentment, and dominance--make what becomes of us.

Our civilization is built on repressed "suppression of instincts." The instinctual syndrome, 'unhappiness and work,' Marcuse writes, "recurs throughout Freud's writings and his interpretation of the Prometheus myth is centered on the connection between curbing of sexual passion and civilized work. Originating in renunciation and developing under progressive renunciation, civilization tends toward self-destruction" (Marcuse, 1956: 81-83).

John J. MacArthur, president and publisher of *Harper's Magazine*, opines: "Trump isn't a narcissist--he's a solipsist. The president delights in being attacked since it keeps the focus on him. The press should handle him like parents with an ornery child" (February 8, 2025; quoted from *The Guardian*). Robert J. Lifton, an investigative psychiatrist who diagnosed Trump as a 'solipsist,' unraveled an interesting profile:

"Trump's absence of external connection is self-evident: his treatment of the 'other' -- from his own family to his tenants, his political rivals, the victims of the Los Angeles fires or the displaced people of Gaza--displays not only a lack of empathy but also an emotional blindness. How else could he tease out loud about dating his own daughter, Ivanka? How else could he so cruelly insult former president Biden in his inaugural address, with Biden seated just a short distance away?"

John MacArthur's tantalizing insight into this political obscenity explains the morbidity of sordid banal behavior. Unguarded benevolence sometimes backfires. Once I appointed an apparent foreign scholar on par with my status and salary. In less than a year, his racist gamesmanship pushed me to the edge of an abyss. I had lost everything that I had earned. My "Otherness" had been confirmed. I became a victim of my own hubris: a pariah in my own house! Life became Kafkaesque. It took me more than three decades to forgive him. I am too human to forget, however. Predators are both narcissists and solipsists. The dangerous combination is not as rare as it seems. Thanks to Donald Trump for creating the specter of fear, insecurity, and exclusion. What far-right seeks to upend is Deep State, a power-center, secrete and beyond law. The irony is 'The Disrupter-in-Chief' (*Time*, February 19, 2025:28) has brought his own 'Deep State' on the edge of constitutional abyss. "Corporations do the military's laundry, cook its food, swab its latrines." but most Americans still do not understand that their celebrated high tech, postindustrial military establishment cannot so much as fire a rocket without assistance from private military firms." (2024: 31) Oligarchs have no real connection with people.

I lived in India until 1975 before I moved to the United State of America. The journey from a developing nation to the world's most advanced democracy was both exciting and challenging. I know first-hand how myths and realities shape life's expectations and illusions in the *Democracies of Unfreedom* (Mohan, 1996). 'The White Nationalist in Chief's Return to Power' (*The Nation*, March

2025) in the US is akin to the rise of fundamentalist nationalism in my native land. My feelings that the Jordan of hope has been crossed has been painfully delusional.

*Being-for-Others*⁶ is not an easily traveled road. It's full of thorns and hurdles. Those who chose this path are frontiersmen of the unknown future. Humanity must be saved from this civilization. Revolution devours its children. In *A Brief History of Equality*, Thomas Piketty concludes:

"The slave revolt in Saint-Dominique in 1791 paved the way for the end of slavery and colonialism, but the battle for racial equality is still being fought. The same is true of inequalities in status in general: in 1789 the French Revolution took an essential step by abolishing the nobility privileges, but it did not do away with multiple privileges of money—far from it" (2021: 95).

It's simple: the rich and the poor are so positively correlated. If they get richer, we get poorer. Invincibility of the "privileges of money" sustained a system anchored in primordial inequality. About six thousand years ago, Vedic scholars saintly enshrined this iron law in a deathless cycle of perpetual poverty through the hymns of *dharma* and *karma*. "The village community with its caste system is the basis of the structure of Indian feudalism," wrote S. A. Dange (1961: xii)⁷. *Upanishad* and *Vedas* have sustained *Caste* as a temple of institutional inequality. As I have assayed before, American 'racism' is an extension of Indian 'casteism.' This framework, until Marx exploded the myths, evolved through ages under the artifacts of feudalism, colonialism, capitalism, and imperialism. Socialism itself couldn't withstand the tremors of evolutionary transformations.

In a poignant critique of *Capital* (North and Reitter, 2024), one finds *Das Capital*—a book that changed the world—at the center of Capitalism, its rise and fall. Alyssa Battistoni sums up: "*Capital* is many things at once: It reads like an economics textbook in places, a work of history in others, and a satire still elsewhere; it contains math and poetry in equal measure" (2025: 61).

⁶"... the condensed wisdom of this book is the inspiration of a lifetime, from one of the greatest and most honest minds of our time, and for all free and hungry minds out there!" Professor Christian Aspetar's gracious observation-- ethos of my book released by Barnes and Noble in 2025—is much appreciated.

⁷Village community "did not exist in the period of primitive communism where there was no *Varna* or *Caste*." Cf. Dange, S. A. (1961: xvii). "Primitive accumulation" of the archaic past, Marx argued, gave birth to Capitalism (Cf. Alyssa Battistoni, 2025: 66).

Marxology is the Rosetta Stone to comprehend—and transform—a narcissistic-pugnacious culture, broken society, and divided world.

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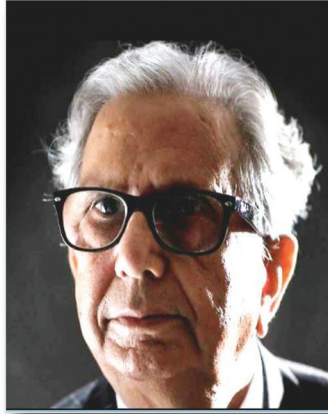
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Brij Mohan, Dean Emeritus at the School of Social Work, Louisiana State University, USA, is an internationally renowned Scholar with expertise in social philosophy, social welfare, public policy and international social development.

He is the author of 26 books and over 400 articles, papers, and reviews. His most recent books include *Development, Poverty of Culture and Social Policy* (Palgrave, 2011), *Climate, Economy and Justice* (Palgrave, 2015), *The Future*



of Social Work (Sage, 2018) and *Social Policy on the Cusp* (Nova, 2020). Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith honored him with a Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*) and the National Association of Professional Social Workers in India awarded him the *Life-Time Achievement Award*.

Currently, he is working on *Echoes from Kafka's Cave* (to be released by Barnes and Noble early next year).

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