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Brian C. Anderson: Democratic Capitalism and its Discontents: Study Guide

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BRIAN C. ANDERSON: DEMOCRATIC CAPITALISM AND ITS DISCONTENTS: STUDY GUIDE, 2008

Steven Alan Samson

CAPITALISM AND THE SUICIDE OF CULTURE

Outline

- A. MOST TERRIBLE CENTURY
 - 1. Isaiah Berlin
 - 2. Secular Religions
 - 3. The Ruin Left in Their Wake
 - 4. Who They Wanted to Destroy: Bourgeois Liberal Democracy
 - 5. The Fall of Political Messianisms Has Not Assured the Future of Democratic Capitalism
 - a. Radical Islam
 - 6. The Hubris of Secular Religions: Claiming to Solve the Political Problem
 - 7. The Richest Current of Liberal Democratic Thought Makes No Such Claim
- B. THE DREAM OF TRANSCENDING POLITICS
 - 1. François Furet
 - a. Historian of the French Revolution
 - 1) Break with the Marxist view
 - 2) Rejection of historical inevitability
 - 3) Claim that the revolution released utopian hopes
 - 2. *The Passing of an Illusion*
 - 3. Communism's Seductive Appeal: The Coupling of Two Incompatible Ideas
 - a. Cult of volition
 - b. Certainties of historical science
 - 4. Berlin on Its Emotional Allure
 - 5. Two Political Weaknesses of the Bourgeois Regime
 - a. Egalitarian Outbidding
 - 1) Equality likened to an imaginary horizon
 - 2) Promise of Communism
 - a) Sacrifice of "formal liberties"
 - b) Egalitarian apocalypse
 - b. Liberal democracy's moral indeterminacy
 - 1) The sovereign individual
 - 2) Threefold liberation
 - 3) Deliverance from the past comes at a price
 - a) Existential questions become more difficult to answer as the self moves to the center
 - 6. Psychological Corollaries of These Two Weaknesses
 - a. Self-Doubt
 - b. Self-Hatred
 - 1) Leading Marxist thinkers originally came from bourgeois money

Review

political messianisms

two political weaknesses of the bourgeois regime

psychological corollaries

François Furet

origin of leading Marxists

incompatible ideas

threefold liberation of the bourgeois city

THE INEDUCABLE LEFT

Who wants to see any more of that pallid and parasitic European ruling class that led directly from the ancient régime to nationalism, from populism to fascism, and now pushes for a generalized neoliberalism? Who wants to see more of those ideologies and those bureaucratic apparatuses that have nourished and abetted the rotting European elites? And who can still stand those systems of labor organization and those corporations that have stripped away every vital spirit?

- Brian C. Anderson, Democratic Capitalism and Its Discontents.
Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2007, pp. 3-8.

Outline

C. EVIL EMPIRE

5. "Alternative Political Organization"
 - a. Global citizenship
 - b. Absolute democracy
 - c. Citizenship income: equal compensation for all
6. Emancipation of the Human Will
 - a. No subjection to a City of God
 - b. Posthuman identities
 - c. Secular Pentecost
7. Cleansing Bloodletting [cf. Shafarevich's "The Socialist Ideal"]

Review

citizenship income

posthuman identities

cleansing bloodletting

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Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2007, pp. 3-8, 29-30.