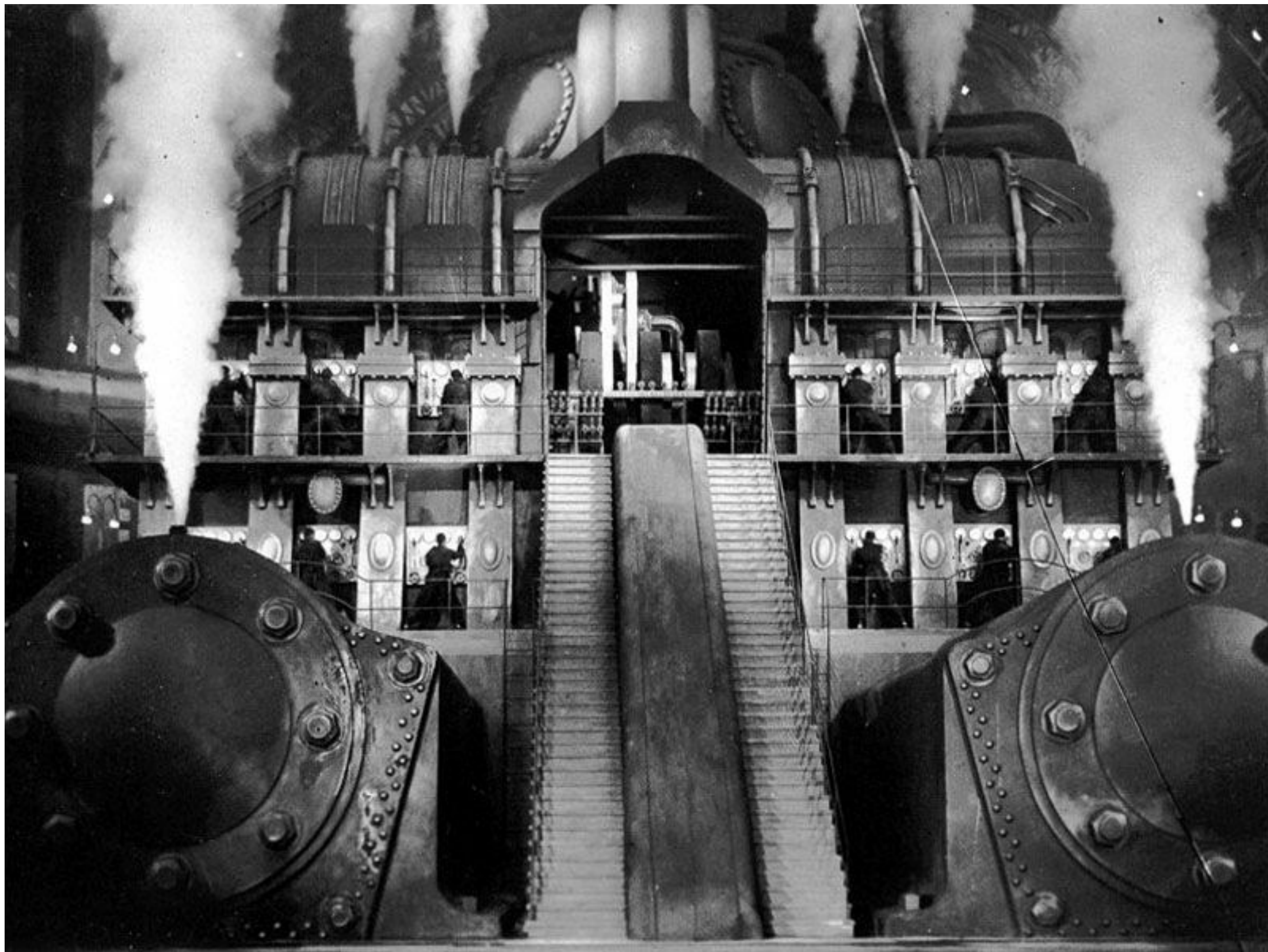


**“COMPETING VISIONS OF THE FUTURE:
SOCIALIST AND CLASSICAL LIBERAL”**

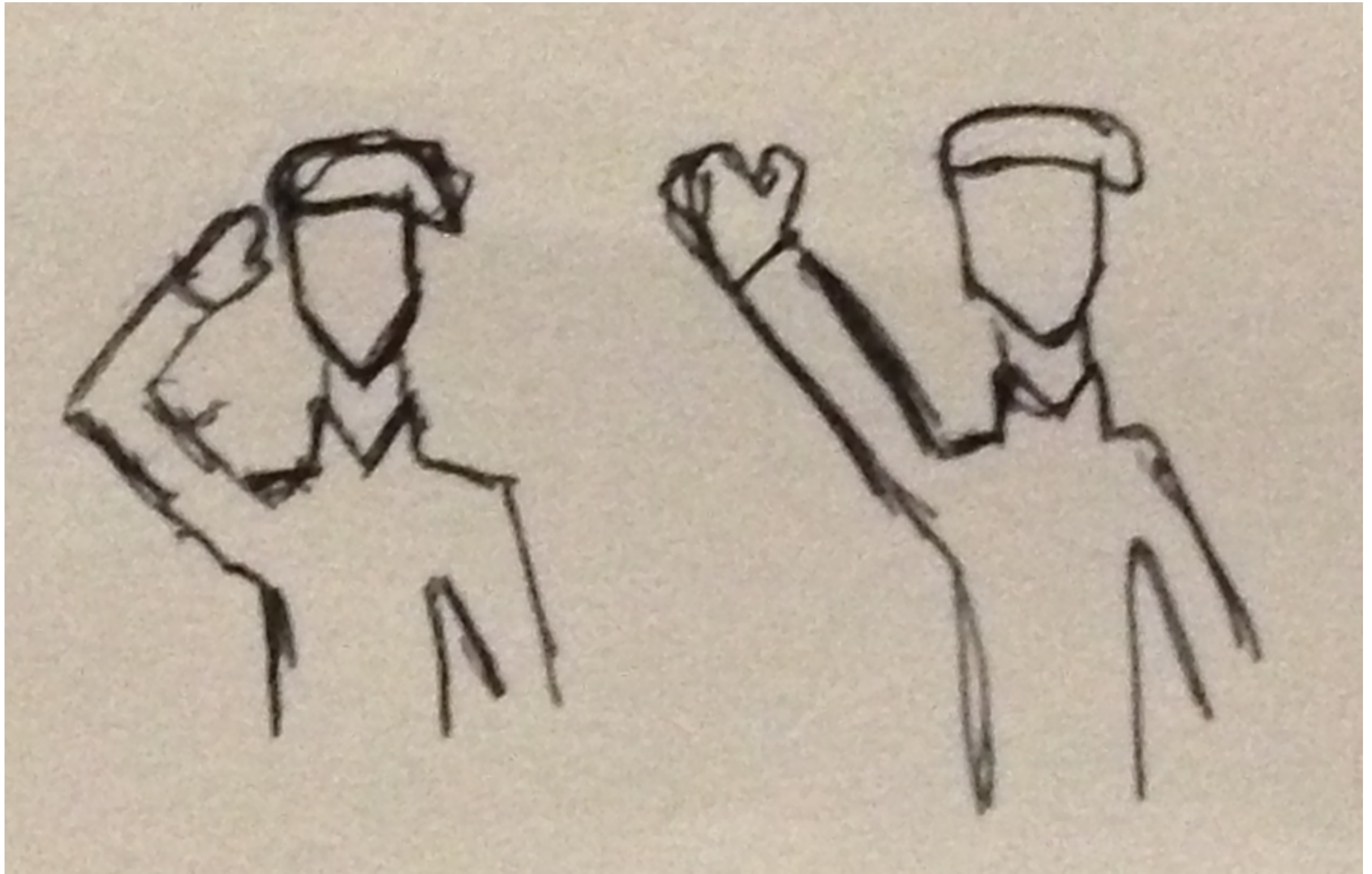
IHS Summer Seminar

Bryn Mawr, June 2015

Dr. David M. Hart



**The central power station for the underground city of Metropolis.
Fritz Lang, *Metropolis* (1926)**



Lecture Outline



**Map of Thomas More's Island of Utopia
(1516)**

Imagining the future?

- human nature
- social and economic institutions
- the role of the State
- science and technology

Examples of socialist visions of the future:

- “utopian socialism” - Charles Fourier
- Fabian Socialism
- “scientific socialism” - Karl Marx
- “bureaucratic socialism” - V. Lenin's post office

Examples of CL visions of the future:

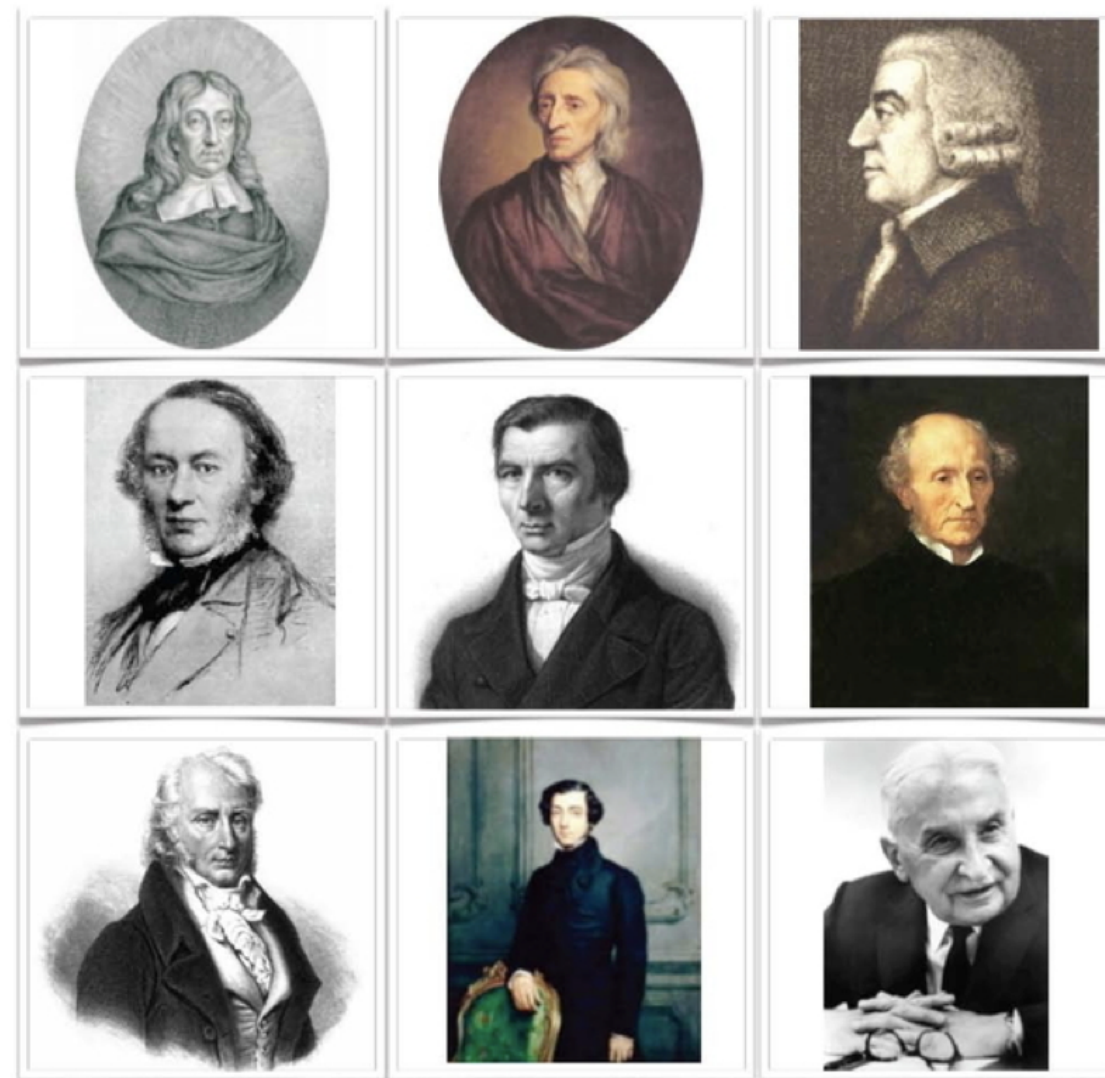
- Condorcet's "10th Epoch" (1794-5)
- Richard Cobden's "I have a Dream Speech" (1846)
- Bastiat, "The Utopian" (1847)
- JS Mill's idea of "experiments in living" (1859)
- Herbert Spencer's "The Political Prospect" (1876)
- Molinari, "The Society of Tomorrow" (1899)

Contemporary philosophers:

- R. Nozick - “framework for utopias”
- C. Kukathas - the liberal archipelago

The OLL Reader

The OLL Reader: An Anthology of the Best of the Online Library of Liberty [Updated February 13, 2015 - 72 extracts]



[From left to right: John Milton, John Locke, Adam Smith, Richard Cobden, Frédéric Bastiat, J.S. Mill, Benjamin Constant, Alexis de Tocqueville, Ludwig von Mises]

PART XI: VISIONS OF THE FUTURE↩

1. No. 54: James Harrington, “The Commonwealth of Oceana” (1656) - EBooks </titles/2565> or <HTML>
2. No. 52: Marquis de Condorcet, “Tenth Epoch. Future Progress of Mankind” (1794) - EBooks </titles/2563> or <HTML>
3. No. 57: John Stuart Mill, “The Spirit of the Age” (1831) - EBooks </titles/2572> or <HTML>
4. BOB 3.3: Frédéric Bastiat, “The Utopian” (17 Jan. 1847) - EBooks </titles/2484> or <HTML>
5. No. 53: Gustave de Molinari, “Of the Liberty of Government” (1849) - EBooks </titles/2564> or <HTML>
6. No. 55: Herbert Spencer, “Political Retrospect and Prospect” (1882) - EBooks </titles/2566> or <HTML>

<<http://oll.libertyfund.org/pages/best-of-the-oll>>

Some Definitions

ESQUISSE DE L'ORGANISATION

POLITIQUE ET ÉCONOMIQUE

DE LA

SOCIÉTÉ FUTURE



PAR

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PARIS

GUILLAUMIN ET C^{ie}

ÉDITEURS DU JOURNAL DES ÉCONOMISTES
RUE RICHELIEU, 14

1899

- "**utopia**": from the Greek "ou" (no) and "topos" (place), thus a place that does not exist
- "**eutopia**": from the Greek "eu" (good) and "topos" (place), thus a good or desirable place
- "**dystopia**": from the Greek "dus" (not good, bad) and "topos" (place), thus a bad or undesirable place



**“What we lack is a
liberal Utopia”**

Friedrich A. Hayek (1899-1992)

F.A. Hayek, “The Intellectuals and Socialism,” *The University of Chicago Law Review* (Spring 1949)

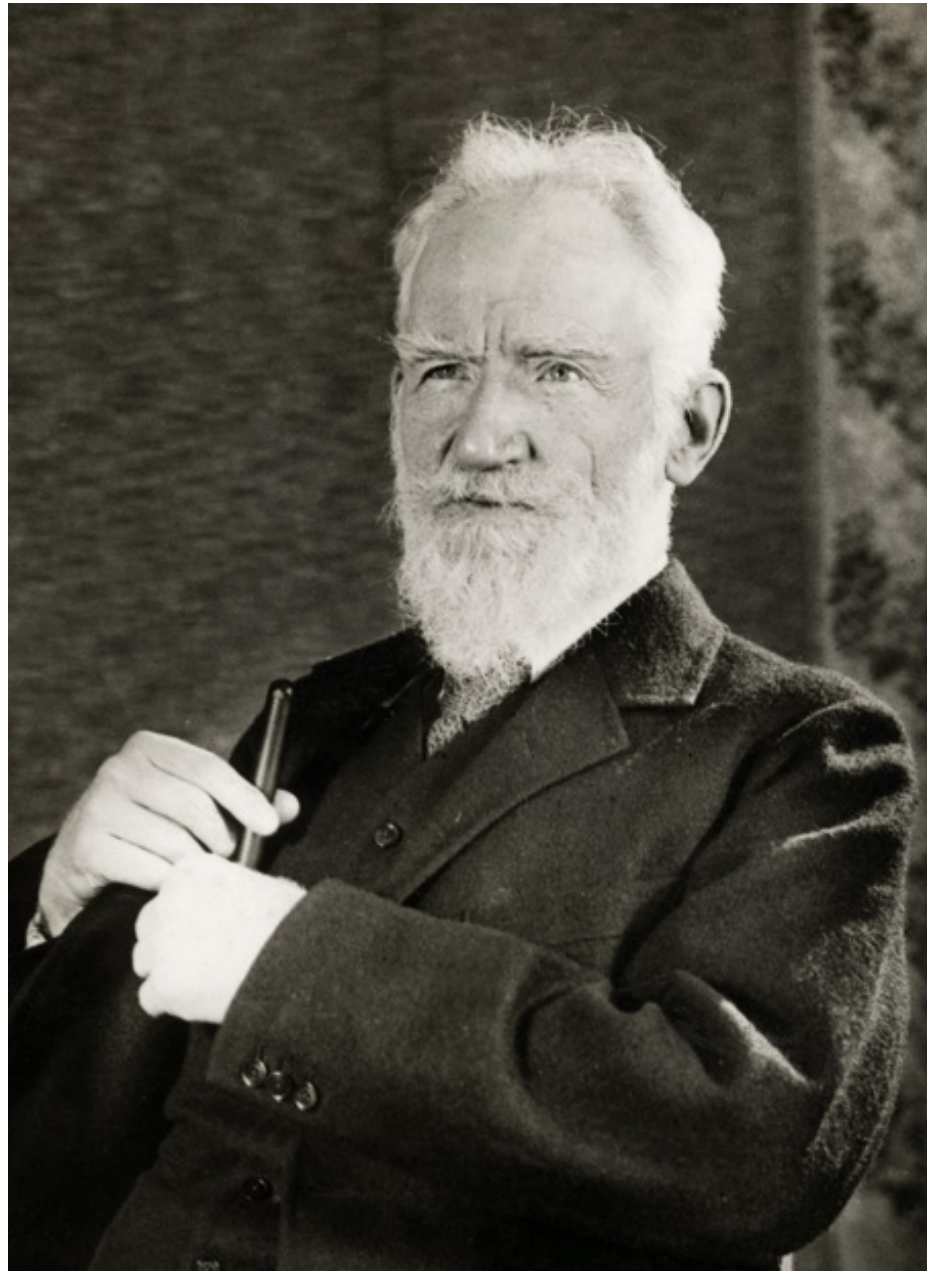
I

(S)o long as the people who over longer periods determine public opinion continue to be attracted by the ideals of socialism, the trend will continue. If we are to avoid such a development, we must be able to offer **a new liberal program which appeals to the imagination**. We must make the building of a free society once more an intellectual adventure, a deed of courage. **What we lack is a liberal Utopia**, a program which seems neither a mere defense of things as they are nor a diluted kind of socialism, but **a truly liberal radicalism** which does not spare the susceptibilities of the mighty (including the trade unions), which is not too severely practical, and which does not confine itself to what appears today as politically possible. **We need intellectual leaders who are willing to work for an ideal**, however small may be the prospects of its early realization. They must be men who are willing to stick to principles and to fight for their full realization, however remote. The practical compromises they must leave to the politicians. Free trade and freedom of opportunity are ideals which still may arouse the imaginations of large numbers, but a mere "reasonable freedom of trade" or a mere "relaxation of controls" is neither intellectually respectable nor likely to inspire any enthusiasm.

II

The main lesson which the true liberal must learn from the success of the socialists is that it was **their courage to be Utopian** which gained them the support of the intellectuals and therefore an influence on public opinion which is daily making possible what only recently seemed utterly remote. Those who have concerned themselves exclusively with what seemed practicable in the existing state of opinion have constantly found that even this had rapidly become politically impossible as the result of changes in a public opinion which they have done nothing to guide. **Unless we can make the philosophic foundations of a free society once more a living intellectual issue, and its implementation a task which challenges the ingenuity and imagination of our liveliest minds, the prospects of freedom are indeed dark.** But if we can regain that belief in the power of ideas which was the mark of liberalism at its best, the battle is not lost. The intellectual revival of liberalism is already underway in many parts of the world. Will it be in time?

The Fabian Socialist Vision



George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)

- Fabian Society founded 4 Jan. 1884
- strategy was **gradual change within existing institutions** such as Parliament
- named after Roman general Fabius Maximus (nicknamed "Cunctator", the Delayer) who used tactics of harassment and attrition of the enemy instead of direct confrontation (i.e. revolution)
- members included H. G. Wells, Leonard Woolf and Virginia Woolf, George Bernard Shaw, Ramsay MacDonald, Emmeline Pankhurst, Sidney and Beatrice Webb
- influenced Labour Party founded 1900
- very influential in Labour parties throughout English speaking world
- one of its leading members was George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), an Irish playwright and a co-founder of the London School of Economics
- key collection of essays and statement of purpose: *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, ed. G. Bernard Shaw (1889)
- prompted immediate CL reply: *A Plea for Liberty: An Argument against Socialism and Socialistic Legislation* (1891); *A Policy of Free Exchange* (1894), ed. Thomas Mackay

The Fabian Socialist Vision I

Goals of the Fabian Society (1884):

- The Fabian Society aims at the **reorganization of Society by the emancipation of Land and industrial Capital from individual and class ownership**, and the vesting of them in the community for the general benefit. In this way only can the natural and acquired advantages of the country be equitably shared by the whole people.
- The Society accordingly works for **the extinction of private property in land** and of the consequent individual appropriation, in the form of **Rent**, of the price paid for permission to use the earth, as well as for the advantages of superior soils and sites.
- The Society, further, works for **the transfer to the community of the administration of such industrial Capital** as can conveniently be managed socially. For, owing to the monopoly of the means of production in the past, industrial inventions and the transformation of surplus income into Capital have mainly enriched the proprietary class, the worker being now dependent on that class for leave to earn a living.
- If these measures be carried out, without compensation (though not without such relief to expropriated individuals as may seem fit to the community), Rent and Interest will be added to the reward of labor, **the idle class now living on the labor of others will necessarily disappear**, and practical equality of opportunity will be maintained by the spontaneous action of economic forces with much less interference with personal liberty than the present system entails.
- For the attainment of these ends the Fabian Society looks to **the spread of Socialist opinions**, and the social and political changes consequent thereon. It seeks to promote these by the general dissemination of knowledge as to the relation between the individual and Society in its economic, ethical, and political aspects.

The Fabian Socialist Vision 2

Goals of the Fabian Society (1888):

- Complete **shifting of burden from the workers**, of whatever grade, to the recipients of rent and interest, with a view to the ultimate and gradual extinction of the latter class.
- To **raise, universally, the standard of comfort** by obtaining the general recognition of a minimum wage and a maximum working day.
- To enable all, even the poorest, children to obtain not merely some, but **the best education** they are capable of.
- To **provide generously, and without stigma, for the aged, the sick, and those destitute** through temporary want of employment
- The gradual **public organization of labor for all public purposes**, and the **elimination of the private capitalist and middleman**.
- To obtain the most accurate **representation and expression of the desires of the majority of the people** at every moment.



Western notions of Utopia

Image of the Garden of Eden from *Answers in Genesis* website

Map of Thomas More's Island of Utopia (1516)



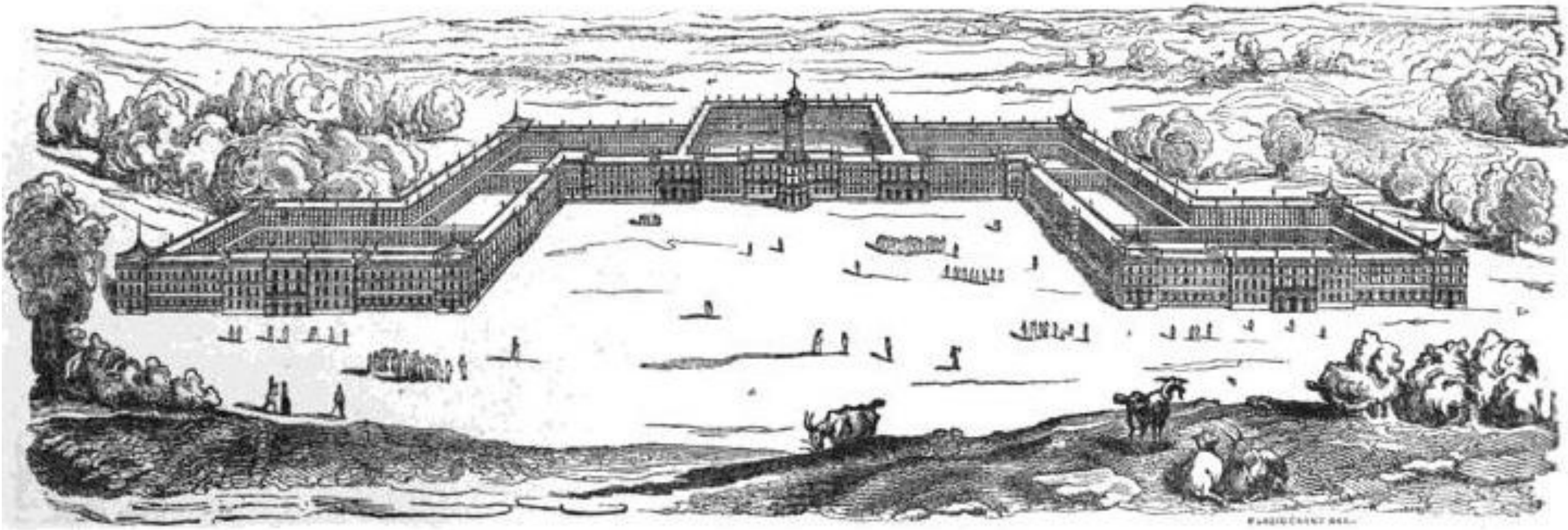
Socialist Visions of the Future I

- the **economic problem of scarcity** and the **knowledge problem** (prices to allocate resources rationally) have been eliminated (assumed away)
- there is a need to create a "**New Socialist Man**" who can live in this radically new social and economic system (loses selfishness and greed)
- crucial in building the "New Socialist Man" is to take **control over the upbringing of children** in order to instill the new socialist values in them; hence the need to take them away from their families, and "socialised" (literally) by **public schooling**, service in the **military**

Socialist Visions of the Future 2

- people no longer live in private homes as a family or household, or run their private business or work for someone who does, but **communal living** (barracks), public (state) ownership of property, **communal working** arrangements (labour army, large state run factories, state bureaucracies)
- the **end of wage labour and profits**
- rule by a wise and humane **managerial elite** (party) who rationally plan all aspects of society and the economy
- in some accounts, the prosperity of a few/elite must be **supported by the slave labour** of others,
 - More's *Utopia* (1516)
 - the Morlocks in H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine* (1895)

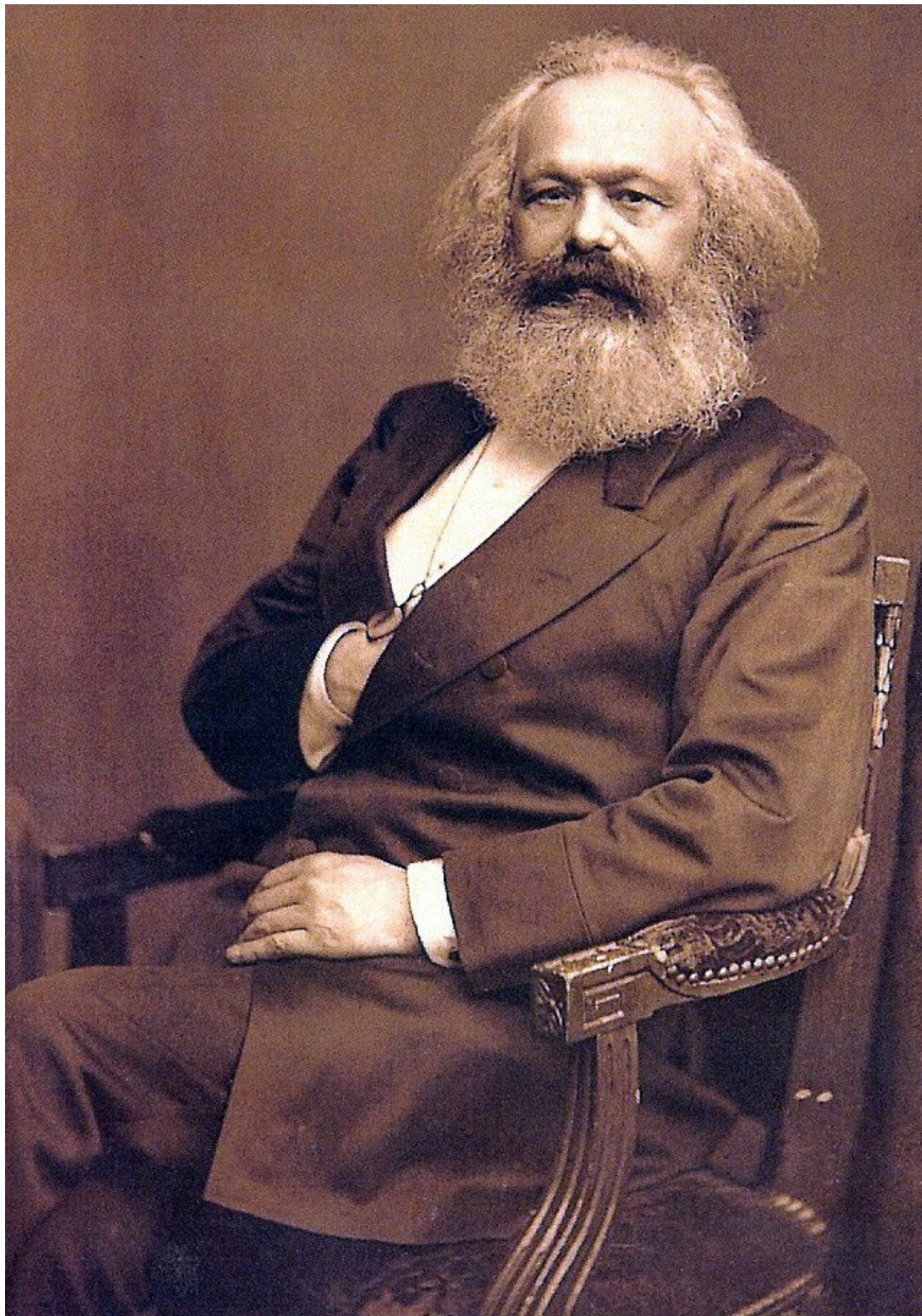
Charles Fourier and “Utopian Socialism”



Plan for a Fourierist Phalanx

Charles Fourier (1772-1837), *Le Nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire* (1829)

Karl Marx & "Scientific" Socialism



Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Reluctance of K. Marx to imagine what a socialist future would look like:

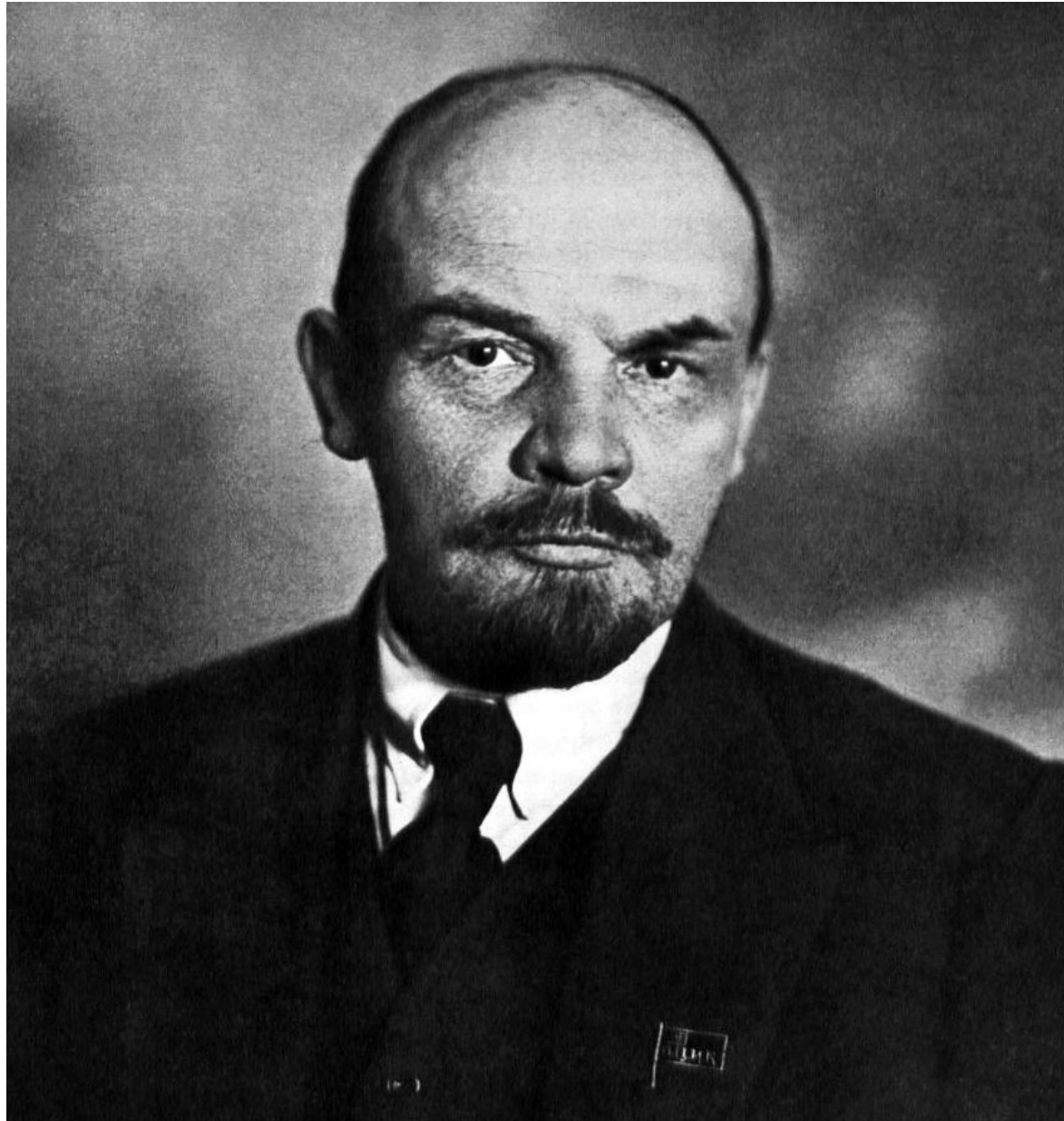
- assumed capitalist society would create the bureaucratic and organisation forms which would continue after revolution
- *The German Ideology* (1845): only speculated about what future socialist society might be like in a few throw away lines
- end of division of labour
- challenged by a reviewer of *Capital vol. 1* (1867) for not providing more detail about how a future socialist society would work in practice
- contemptuously dismissed it by saying that he was not in the business "of writing recipes for the cook-shops of the future"

Further, the division of labour implies the contradiction between the interest of the separate individual or the individual family and the communal interest of all individuals who have intercourse with one another. And indeed, this communal interest does not exist merely in the imagination, as the “general interest,” but first of all in reality, as the mutual interdependence of the individuals among whom the labour is divided. And finally, the division of labour offers us the first example of how, as long as man remains in natural society, that is, as long as **a cleavage exists between the particular and the common interest**, as long, therefore, as activity is not voluntarily, but naturally, divided, man’s own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him. For as soon as the distribution of labour comes into being, each man has a **particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape**. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a herdsman, or a critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; while in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, **to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner**, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic. This fixation of social activity, this consolidation of what we ourselves produce into an objective power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations, is one of the chief factors in historical development up till now.



A Marxist “Cookshop of the Future”?

Vladimir Lenin & "Bureaucratic" Socialism



Vladimir Lenin
(1870-1924)

- "The State and Revolution: The Marxist Theory of the State and the Task of the Proletariat in the Revolution" (Sept. 1917)
- believed managing a business or an entire economy was an **engineering and an accounting problem** which had been solved by capitalism
- his model of socialist management was the Post Office

State and Revolution I

But the mechanism of social management is here already to hand. Once we have overthrown the capitalists, crushed the resistance of these exploiters with the iron hand of the armed workers, and smashed the bureaucratic machinery of the modern state, we shall have a splendidly-equipped mechanism, freed from the “parasite”, a mechanism which can very well be set going by the united workers themselves...

To organize the whole economy on the lines of the postal service so that the technicians, foremen and accountants, as well as all officials, shall receive salaries no higher than "a workman's wage", all under the control and leadership of the armed proletariat--that is our immediate aim....

State and Revolution 2

Accounting and control -- that is mainly what is needed for the "smooth working", for the proper functioning, of the first phase of communist society. All citizens are transformed into hired employees of the state, which consists of the armed workers. All citizens becomes employees and workers of a single countrywide state "syndicate". All that is required is that they should work equally, do their proper share of work, and get equal pay; **the accounting and control necessary for this have been simplified by capitalism to the utmost and reduced to the extraordinarily simple operations** -- which any literate person can perform--of supervising and recording, knowledge of the four rules of arithmetic, and **issuing appropriate receipts**.

When the majority of the people begin independently and everywhere to keep such accounts and exercise such control over the capitalists (now converted into employees) and over the intellectual gentry who preserve their capitalist habits, this control will really become universal, general, and popular; and there will be no getting away from it, there will be "nowhere to go".

The whole of society will have become a single office and a single factory, with equality of labor and pay.



**"Clerks and Carriers in Large City PO"
Smithsonian National Postal Museum**

Free Market Economists' Vision of the Future



What do free market economists say future will be like:

- **more of the same** as human nature remains same and economic laws universal
- there will be **markets in everything**, people will pursue their goals/ends with limited resources, opportunity costs always present
- also **totally different** because of technological and entrepreneurial innovation
- hedge bets by saying "**ceteris paribus**" (other things being equal), and "**at what price?**"

Not very helpful!

Some CLs' Vision of the Future



Examples of CL visions of the future:

- Condorcet's "10th Epoch" (1794-5)
- Richard Cobden's "I have a Dream Speech" (1846)
- Bastiat, "The Utopian" (1847)
- JS Mill's idea of "experiments in living" (1859)
- Herbert Spencer's "The Political Prospect" (1876)
- Molinari, "The Society of Tomorrow" (1899)

Condorcet, *Outlines of an Historical View of the Progress of the Human Mind* (1794-95)

- Condorcet died in prison at the hands of the Jacobins
- the inevitability of the spread of reason, liberty, & prosperity in 10th Epoch
- Predicts future:
 - end of inequality, especially political inequality
 - unlimited expansion of industrial output
 - an end to war
 - improvements in diet, health and human longevity
 - independence and freedom to colonies
 - end of slavery
 - equal rights for women



Marquis de Condorcet (1743-1794)

Condorcet I

Then will arrive the moment in which the sun will observe in its course **free nations only**, acknowledging no other master than their reason; in which **tyrants and slaves, priests and their stupid or hypocritical instruments, will no longer exist** but in history and upon the stage; in which our only concern will be to lament their past victims and dupes, and, by the recollection of their horrid enormities, to exercise a vigilant circumspection, that we may be able instantly to recognise and effectually to stifle by the force of reason, the seeds of superstition and tyranny, should they ever presume again to make their appearance upon the earth.

Condorcet 2

Among those causes of human improvement that are of most importance to the general welfare, must be included, the **total annihilation of the prejudices which have established between the sexes an inequality of rights**, fatal even to the party which it favours. In vain might we search for motives by which to justify this principle, in difference of physical organization, of intellect, or of moral sensibility. It had at first no other origin but **abuse of strength**, and all the attempts which have since been made to support it are idle sophisms.

Condorcet 3

Such are the questions with which we shall terminate the last division of our work. And how admirably calculated is this view of **the human race, emancipated from its chains, released alike from the dominion of chance**, as well as from that of the enemies of its progress, and advancing with a firm and indeviate step in the paths of truth, **to console the philosopher** lamenting the errors, the flagrant acts of injustice, the crimes with which the earth is still polluted? It is the **contemplation of this prospect that rewards him** for all his efforts to assist the progress of reason and the establishment of liberty. He dares to regard these efforts as a part of the eternal chain of the destiny of mankind; and in this persuasion he finds the true delight of virtue, the pleasure of having performed a durable service, which no vicissitude will ever destroy in a fatal operation calculated to restore the reign of prejudice and slavery. **This sentiment is the asylum into which he retires**, and to which **the memory of his persecutors cannot follow him**: he unites himself in imagination with man restored to his rights, delivered from oppression, and proceeding with rapid strides in the path of happiness; he forgets his own misfortunes while his thoughts are thus employed; he lives no longer to adversity, calumny and malice, but becomes the associate of these wiser and more fortunate beings whose enviable condition he so earnestly contributed to produce.

Richard Cobden's “I have a dream” speech (1846)



speech in Manchester on January 15, 1846 on even passage of Repeal of Corn Laws (27 January 1846):

- responding to criticisms that he did this for personal interest
- his vision of the world would look like 1,000 years hence when “**the Free-Trade principle**” he advocated had become universal
- “**the greatest revolution** that ever happened in the world’s history”

Richard Cobden (1804-1865)

Cobden I

But I have been accused of looking too much to material interests. Nevertheless I can say that I have taken as large and great a view of the effects of this mighty principle (free trade) as ever did any man who dreamt over it in his own study. I believe that **the physical gain will be the smallest gain to humanity from the success of this principle**. I look farther; I see in **the Free-trade principle** that which shall act on **the moral world** as the principle of gravitation in the universe,—drawing men together, thrusting aside the antagonism of race, and creed, and language, and uniting us in the bonds of eternal peace. I have looked even farther. I have speculated, and probably dreamt, in the dim future—ay, a thousand years hence—I have speculated on what the effect of the triumph of this principle may be. I believe that the effect will be **to change the face of the world**, so as to introduce **a system of government entirely distinct from that which now prevails**.

Cobden 2

I believe that the desire and the motive for large and mighty empires; for gigantic armies and great navies—for those materials which are used for the destruction of life and the desolation of the rewards of labour—will die away; I believe that such things will cease to be necessary, or to be used, when man becomes one family, and freely exchanges the fruits of his labour with his brother man. I believe that, if we could be allowed to reappear on this sublunary scene, we should see, at a far distant period, the governing system of this world revert to something like **the municipal system**; and I believe that the speculative philosopher of a thousand years hence will date **the greatest revolution that ever happened in the world's history** from the triumph of the principle which we have met here to advocate. I believe these things: but, whatever may have been my dreams and speculations, I have never obtruded them upon others. I have never acted upon personal or interested motives in this question; I seek no alliance with parties or favour from parties, and I will take none—but, having the feeling I have of the sacredness of the principle, I say that I can never agree to tamper with it. I, at least, will never be suspected of doing otherwise than pursuing it disinterestedly, honestly, and resolutely.

Frédéric Bastiat's "The Utopian" (1847)



Frédéric Bastiat (1801-1850)

what he would do if the King of France made him "dictator":

- cut the tax on postage from 43 to 10 centimes
- cut the salt tax from 30 c./kg to 10 c./kg
- end the prohibition and high tariffs on imported goods - universal 5% tariff rate
- abolish all tolls imposed on local goods brought into French cities
- disband the national army of France and replace it with local voluntary militias
- end all state subsidies to religious groups and enact freedom of religion
- end all state funding of education and enact freedom of education
- pay off the national debt

Bastiat I

U: "International relationships based on justice, and the likelihood of peace, which is almost a certainty. I would disband the army."

"The entire army?" (400,000 men)

U: "Except for some specialized divisions, which would recruit voluntarily just like any other profession. And as you can see, conscription would be abolished." ...

"In short, you are disarming the country based on a Utopian faith."

U: "I said that I was disbanding the army and not that I was disarming the country. On the contrary, I intend to give it an invincible force."

"How are you going to sort out this heap of contradictions?"

U: "I will call on the services of all citizens." (local militias) ...

The Utopian becomes excited: "Thank heavens; my budget has been reduced by 200 million! I will abolish city tolls, I will reform indirect taxes, I ..."

"Just a minute Mr. Utopian!"

Bastiat 2

The Utopian becomes increasingly excited: "I will proclaim the freedom of religion and freedom of education. New projects: I will purchase the railways, I will reimburse the debt, and I will starve stockjobbing of its profits."

"Mr. Utopian!"

U: "Freed from responsibilities which are too numerous to mention, I will concentrate all of the forces of government on repressing fraud and distributing prompt and fair justice to all, I ..."

"Mr. Utopian, you are taking on too much, the nation will not follow you!"

U: "You have given me a majority."

"I withdraw it."

U: "About time, too! So I am no longer a Minister, and my plans remain what they are, just so many UTOPIAS."

Gustave de Molinari and "The Society of Tomorrow"



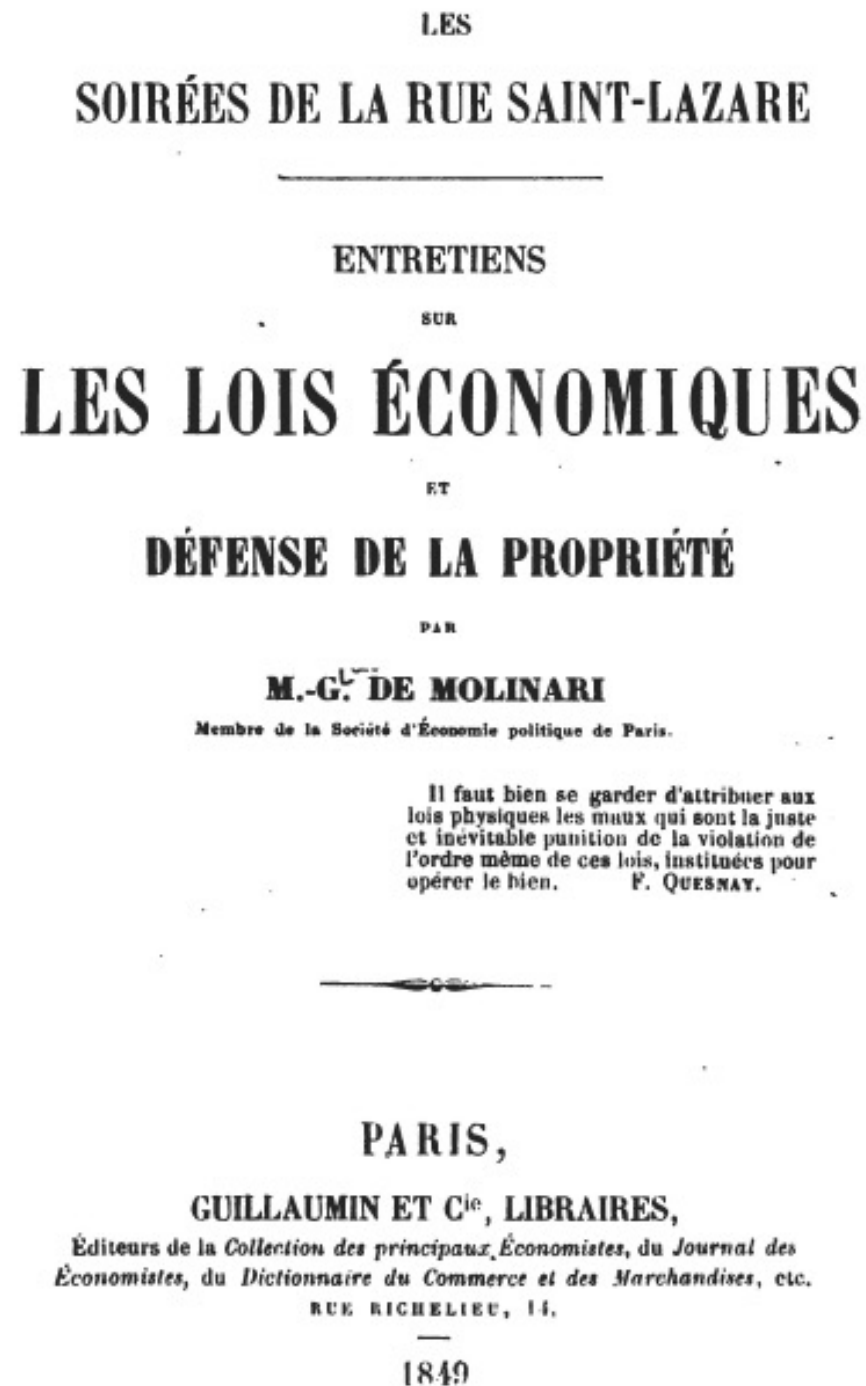
G. de Molinari

Gustave de Molinari (1819-1912)

During the Economists' campaign against socialism during 1848-49 Molinari rethought the problem of public goods:

- private provision of all public goods discussed in *Les Soirées de la rue Saint Lazare* (1849)
- SII on the private production of security (also article *JDE*, Feb. 1849)
- section on Public Goods in *Cours d'économie politique* (1855)
- banned or regulated industries as well govt. monopolies will be supplied on the free market
- every "industry" will have its own entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs and the Private Provision of Everything



- every industry will have its entrepreneurs
- entrepreneurs de prostitution (prostitution business - brothels)
- entrepreneurs d'éducation - entrepreneurs in the education business (schools)
- entrepreneurs d'industrie agricole - entrepreneurs in the agriculture industry (farms)
- entrepreneurs de diligences - entrepreneurs in the coach business (cabs)
- entrepreneur de pompes funèbres - entrepreneurs in the funeral business
- le laborieux entrepreneur, naguère ouvrier - entrepreneurs who have emerged from the working class, i.e. "self-made" entrepreneurs
- entrepreneur de sécurité - entrepreneurs in the protection business (police & defense)

Gustave de Molinari and "The Production of Security" (1849)

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1899

- extrapolation from existing commercial practices (insurance)
- need for security (consumers) & desire for profits by producers
- private provision of any good or service more efficient (and just) than “communist” (state) provision
- competition (and cooperation) between providers lowers cost and improves services
- his radicalism tempered in *The Society of Tomorrow* (1899, 1904) - small proprietary communities or local/municipal monopolies

Molinari I

THE CONSERVATIVE: But, once again, it is inconceivable how the industry that provides the security of person and property could be organized if it were made free. Your logic leads you to dreams worthy of Charenton.

THE ECONOMIST: Let's see! don't get angry. I suppose that after having just found out that the partial communism of the State and commune is completely wrong, you would leave free all branches of production except for justice and public defense. So far, there is no objection. But a **radical economist, a dreamer**, comes and says: Why then, after having freed the different uses of property, won't you also free that which insures the preservation of property? Won't these industries, like the others, be exercised more equitably and more usefully if they are made free? You claim that this is impracticable. Why? On the one hand, aren't there, in the heart of society, men who are specially qualified to judge the disputes which arise among property owners, and to assess the crimes against property, and others who can defend the property of persons and things from the aggression of violence and fraud? Aren't there men whose natural aptitudes make them specially suited to be judges, policemen, and soldiers? On the other hand, don't all property owners without exception have need of security and justice? Aren't they all prepared, therefore, to impose sacrifices on themselves in order to satisfy this urgent need, especially if they are unable to satisfy it themselves or if they can't do it without a greater expenditure of time and money?

Molinari 2

(E. cont'd) Now, if there are, on the one hand, men able to provide a need of society, and on the other hand, men prepared to suffer sacrifices in order to satisfy this need, isn't it enough to leave both of them free to go about their business so that the goods demanded, material or non-material, are produced and that the need is satisfied?

Doesn't this economic phenomenon happen irresistibly, inevitably, like the physical phenomenon of falling bodies?

Am I then not justified in saying that, if a society gives up the provision of public security, then this particular industry would nevertheless be provided? Am I not justified in adding that it would be better under the regime of liberty that it was under the regime of the community?

THE CONSERVATIVE: In what way (would security be provided)?

Molinari 3

THE ECONOMIST: **That is of no concern to economists.** Political economy can say: if such a need exists, it will be satisfied, and it will be better under a regime of total liberty than under all others. This rule has no exception! but how this industry will be organized, is **a technical matter about which political economy cannot speak.**

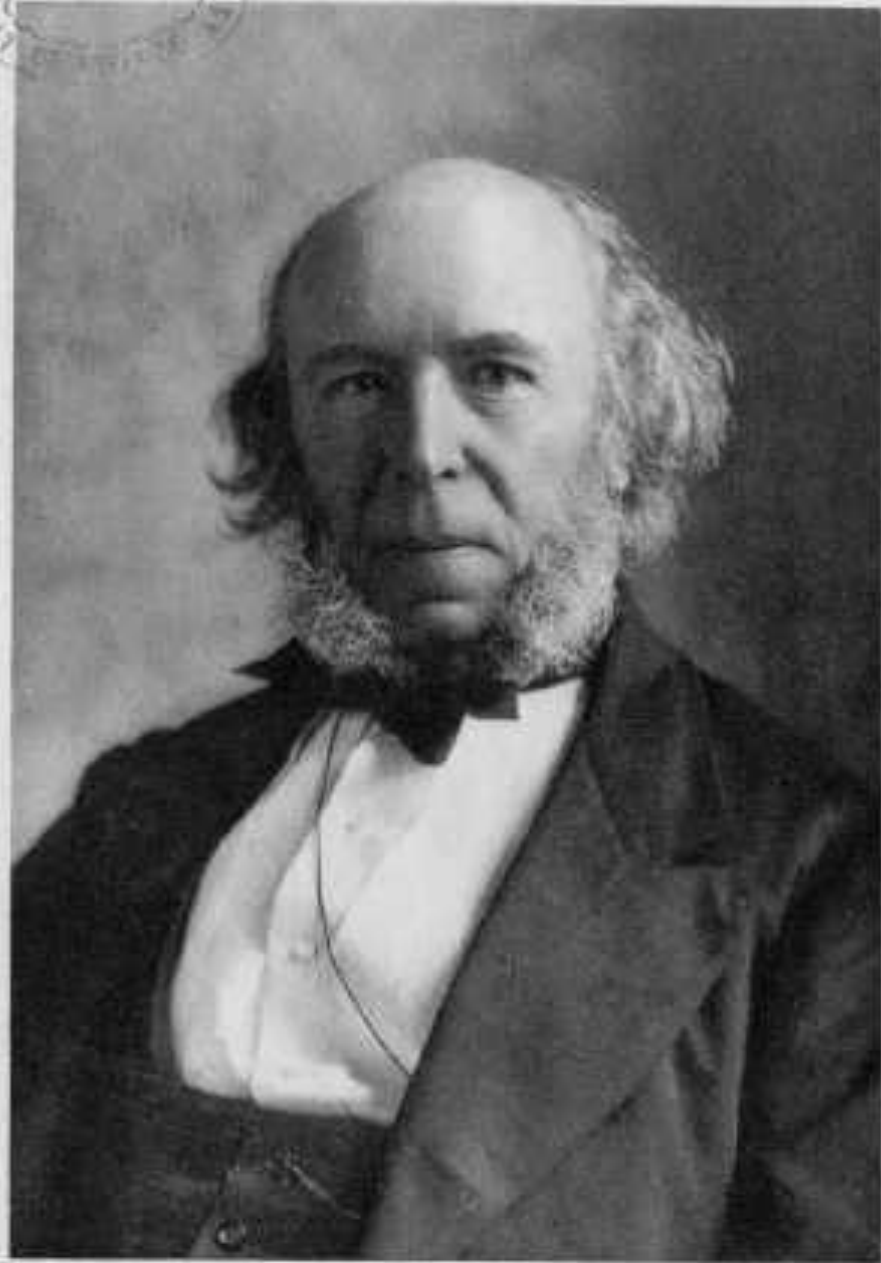
Thus I can maintain that if the need to be fed is manifest in the heart of society, this need will be satisfied, and that the freer each person is to produce food or buy it from whomever he wishes, the better it will be.

I maintain further that things would happen in exactly the same way if, instead of food, it was a matter of security.

Therefore, I claim that if a community gave notice that after a certain interval, **a year for example**, it would cease the payment of judges, soldiers and policemen, at the end of the year this community would not have fewer courts and governments ready to function. And I add that if, under this new regime, each person retained the right to freely engage in these two industries and to freely buy these services, security would be produced most economically and would be the best possible.

THE CONSERVATIVE: I still reply that it is inconceivable.

Herbert Spencer's "Political Prospects" (1876)



Herbert Spencer
When 73

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)

Spencer's 20 year project to describe the structure and evolution of society:

- *Principles of Sociology*, 3 volumes (1874-96)

speculated about future as end of evolution through stages:

- from simplicity to complexity
- status to contract
- bondage to freedom
- militant society to industrial society

utopian liberal vision of future if state could be reduced and war ended:

- Chap. XIX "Political Retrospect and Prospect," vol. 2 *Part V: Political Institutions*

dystopian vision of future if not:

- "The Coming Slavery" in *The Man versus the State* (1885)

Herbert Spencer & "the régime of voluntary cooperation"

THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY

BY
HERBERT SPENCER

IN THREE VOLUMES
VOL. I

NEW YORK
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
1898

"the ultimate political regime" under full liberty, where
"voluntary cooperation (would be) carried to its limit":

- the gradual and ultimately complete **transition from war to peaceful production**
- **universal free trade** (or the "unshackling" of exchange)
- the ever deepening of the **division of labour** and the greater productivity this produces
- **representative systems** with an elected head of state
- centralised government would be replaced by **localised municipal government**, thus "the carrying of local rule to the greatest practicable limit"
- as the state does less and less, **private associations** of all kinds would spring up to carry out needed social functions
- disappearance of war for good, replaced by **international arbitration** to solve disputes

Spencer I

Already we have seen that in the militant type, political control extends over all parts of the lives of the citizens. Already we have seen that as industrial development brings the associated political changes, the range of this control decreases: ways of living are no longer dictated; dress ceases to be prescribed; the rules of class-subordination lose their peremptoriness; religious beliefs and observances are not insisted upon; modes of cultivating the land and carrying on manufactures are no longer fixed by law; and the exchange of commodities, both within the community and with other communities, becomes gradually unshackled. That is to say, as industrialism has progressed, **the State has retreated** from the greater part of those regulative actions it once undertook. This change has gone along with an increasing opposition of citizens to these various kinds of control, and a decreasing tendency on the part of the State to exercise them. Unless we assume that the end has now been reached, the implication is that with future progress of industrialism, **these correlative changes will continue**. Citizens will carry still further their resistance to State-dictation; while the tendency to State-dictation will diminish.

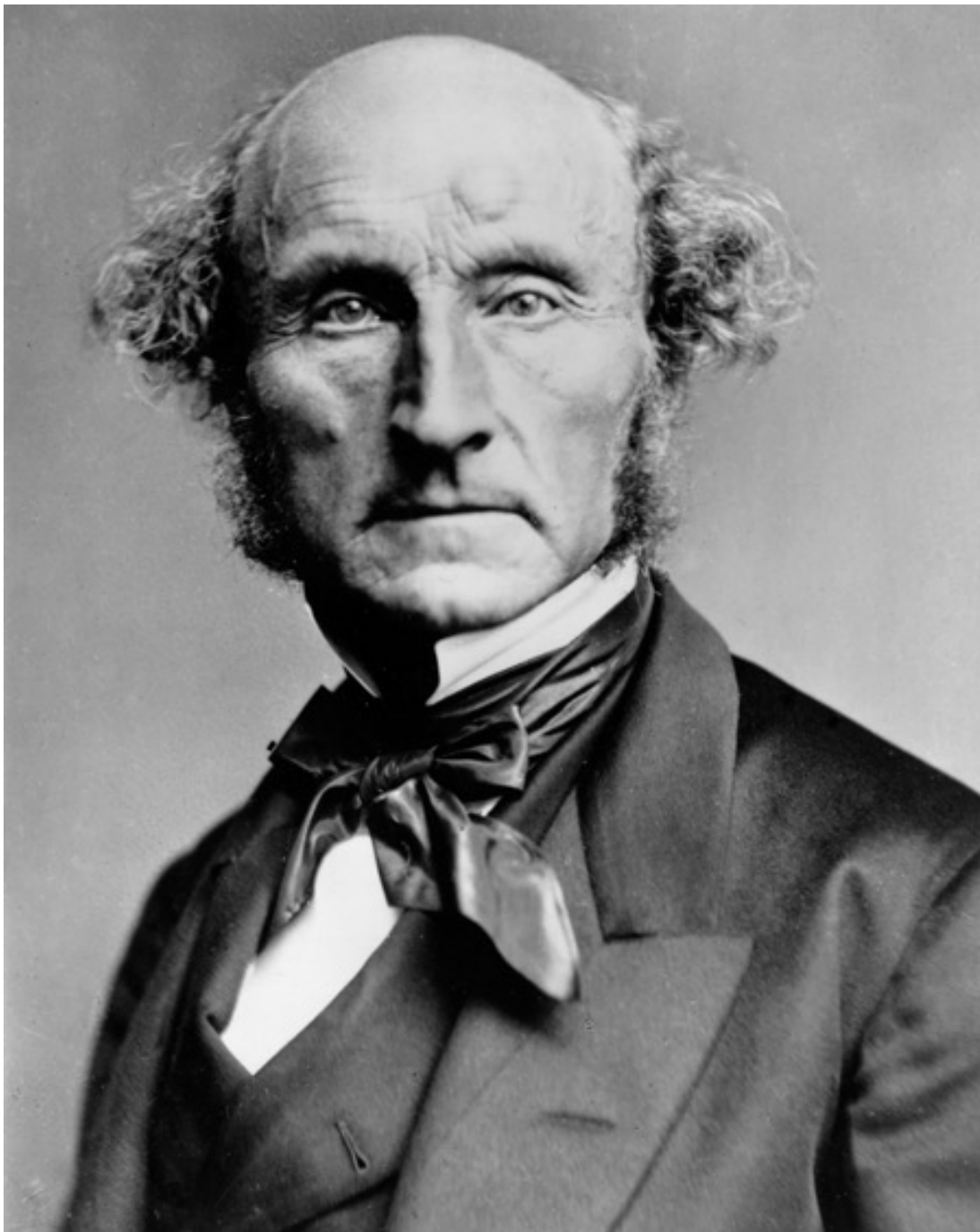
Spencer 2

Concerning local government we may conclude that as centralization is an essential trait of the militant type, **decentralization** is an essential trait of the industrial type. With that independence which **the régime of voluntary cooperation** generates, there arises resistance not only to dictation by one man, and to dictation by a class, but even to dictation by a majority, when it restrains individual action in ways not necessary for maintaining harmonious social relations. One result must be that the inhabitants of each locality will object to be controlled by the inhabitants of other localities, in matters of purely local concern. In respect of such laws as equally apply to all individuals, and such laws as affect the inhabitants of each locality in their intercourse with those of other localities, the will of the majority of the community will be recognized as authoritative; but in respect of arrangements not affecting the community at large, but affecting only the members forming one part, we may infer that there will arise such tendency to resist dictation by members of other parts, as will involve **the carrying of local rule to the greatest practicable limit**. Municipal and kindred governments may be expected to exercise legislative and administrative powers, subject to no greater control by the central government than is needful for the concord of the whole community.

J.S. Mill's idea of "experiments in living" (1859)

CHAPTER III: "Of Individuality, as One of the Elements of Well-Being", *On Liberty* (1859)

- a free society - individuals engage in "different experiments of living" in an attempt to discover which one best suited their needs and interests
- similar to free speech - different ideas could be tested in free argument
- "**experimentalists**" - completely free to do this, so long as they did so at their own cost



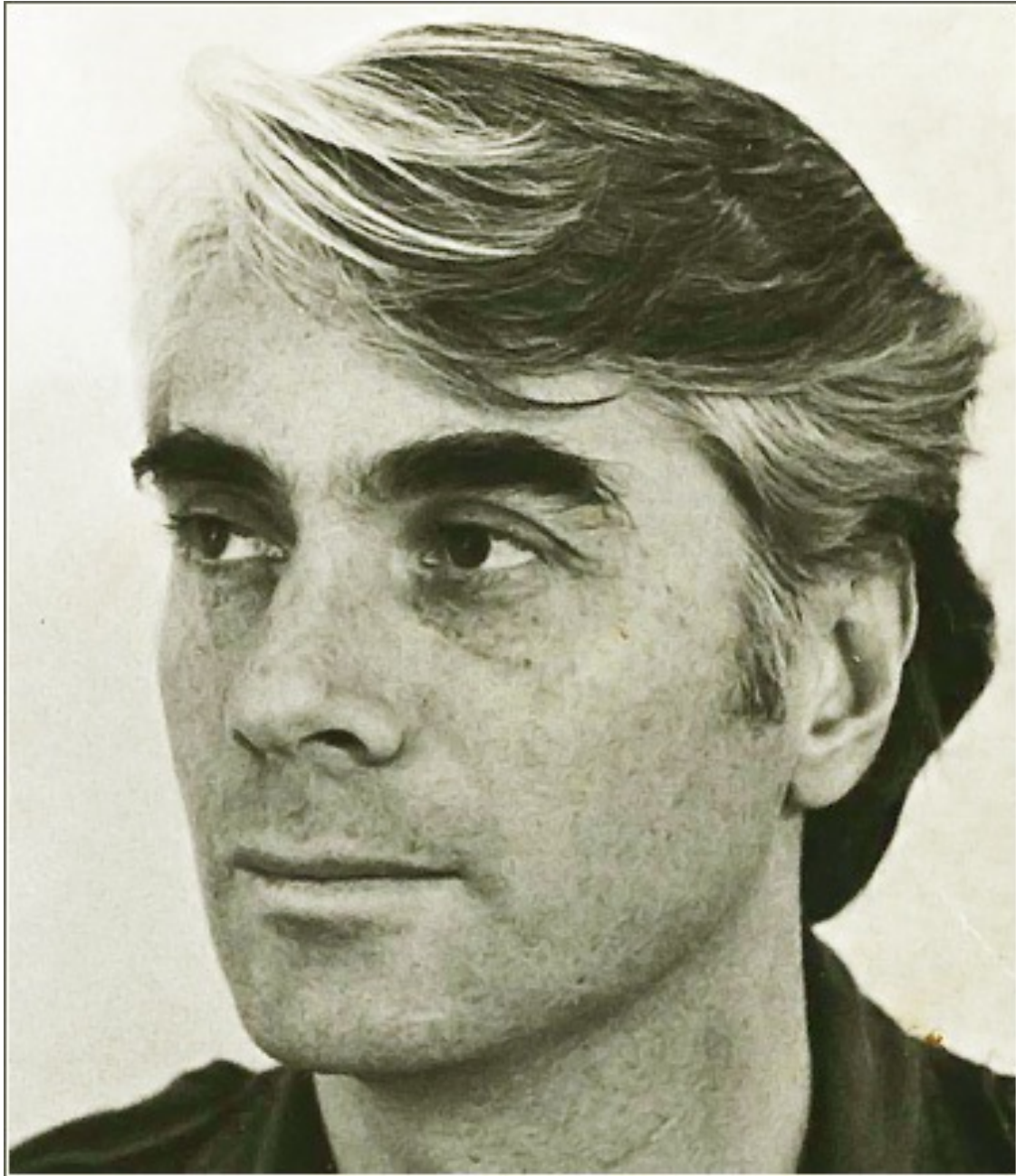
John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)

JS Mill I

The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited; he must not make himself a nuisance to other people. But if he refrains from molesting others in what concerns them, and merely acts according to his own inclination and judgment in things which concern himself, the same reasons which show that opinion should be free, prove also that **he should be allowed, without molestation, to carry his opinions into practice at his own cost.**

That mankind are not infallible; that their truths, for the most part, are only half-truths; that unity of opinion, unless resulting from the fullest and freest comparison of opposite opinions, is not desirable, and diversity not an evil, but a good, until mankind are much more capable than at present of recognising all sides of the truth, are principles applicable to men's modes of action, not less than to their opinions. **As it is useful that while mankind are imperfect there should be different opinions, so is it that there should be different experiments of living; that free scope should be given to varieties of character, short of injury to others; and that the worth of different modes of life should be proved practically, when any one thinks fit to try them.** It is desirable, in short, that in things which do not primarily concern others, individuality should assert itself. Where, not the person's own character, but the traditions or customs of other people are the rule of conduct, there is wanting one of the principal ingredients of human happiness, and quite the chief ingredient of individual and social progress.

Robert Nozick's "Framework for Utopias" (1974)



Robert Nozick (1938-2002)

Anarchy, State, and Utopia (1974): idea of competing utopias in a "**framework for utopias**":

"a wide and diverse range of communities which people can enter if they are admitted, leave if they wish to, shape according to their wishes; a society in which utopian experimentation can be tried, different styles of life can be lived, and alternative visions of the good can be individually or jointly pursued."

- "many communities trying out different patterns"
- "**filtering process**" - weed out poorly functioning communities
- "meta-utopia", a utopia which consists of the many individual utopias
- the "**minimal state**" makes this "framework for utopias" possible

Nozick I

The conclusion to draw is that there will not be one kind of community existing and one kind of life led in utopia. **Utopia will consist of utopias**, of many different and divergent communities in which people lead different kinds of lives under different institutions. Some kinds of communities will be more attractive to most than others; communities will wax and wane. People will leave some for others or spend their whole lives in one. Utopia is a framework for utopias, a place where people are at liberty to join together voluntarily to pursue and attempt to realize their own vision of the good life in the ideal community but where no one can impose his own utopian vision upon others. **The utopian society is the society of utopianism.** (Some of course may be content where they are. Not everyone will be joining special experimental communities, and many who abstain at first will join the communities later, after it is clear how they actually are working out.) Half of the truth I wish to put forth is that **utopia is meta-utopia**: the environment in which utopian experiments may be tried out; the environment in which people are free to do their own thing; the environment which must, to a great extent, be realized first if more particular utopian visions are to be realized stably. (pp. 311-12)

Nozick 2

The framework for utopia that we have described is equivalent to the minimal state. ...

This morally favored state (the minimal state), the only morally legitimate state, the only morally tolerable one, we now see is the one that **best realizes the utopian aspirations of untold dreamers and visionaries**. It preserves what we all can keep from the utopian tradition and opens the rest of that tradition to our individual aspirations. Recall now the question with which this chapter began. Is not the minimal state, the framework for utopia, an inspiring vision?

The minimal state treats us as inviolate individuals, who may not be used in certain ways by others as means or tools or instruments or resources; it treats us as persons having individual rights with the dignity this constitutes. Treating us with respect by respecting our rights, it allows us, individually or with whom we choose, to choose our life and to realize our ends and our conception of ourselves, insofar as we can, aided by the voluntary cooperation of other individuals possessing the same dignity. How dare any state or group of individuals do more. Or less. (pp. 333-34)

Chandra Kukathas and the "Liberal Archipelago" (2003)

The Liberal Archipelago: A Theory of Diversity and Freedom (2003)

- not interested in justice but with solving the problem of how communities with very different notions of justice and liberty can co-exist in some reasonably free and mutually beneficial manner
- the “liberal archipelago” of **multiple jurisdictions in a sea of mutual toleration**
- a free society is an "**association of associations**" or a "society of societies" (p. 22)



Chandran Kukathas (1957-)

Chandra Kukathas and the "Liberal Archipelago" (2003)

CHANDRAN KUKATHAS



The Liberal Archipelago

A Theory of Diversity and Freedom

OXFORD

- people must be prepared to "**live and let live**" (p. 30)
- accept that there are **multiple authorities and jurisdictions** where no one is above the other (p. 22)
- that the **legitimacy** of an authority "rests on the acquiescence of its subjects" (p. 25)
- that such a society will consist of "a **mixture** of liberal, less liberal, and thoroughly illiberal societies" (p. 27)
- the societies must allow individuals to exercise their **right of exit** if they find that society objectionable (p. 259)

Kukathas I

The state that emerges out of this understanding is a liberal state of a particular kind. It is one that is not guided by any larger purpose or common vision, or shaped by a particular conception of justice. It is a **state made up of diverse parts**, some of which might be made in the image of the whole -- tolerant and liberal - while others are virtually its antithesis - sectarian and inward-looking. It is not, however, a state which evinces a strong social unity liberalism of the archipelago of discrete and separate, though also sometimes overlapping and interacting communities, jurisdictions, and associations. And in this picture, **the state is only one community, jurisdiction, or association among many**. It might contain many smaller bodies, but it does not subsume them. It does not make up a body politic. **It comes out of the sea, but is no Leviathan**, being neither terrible, nor all powerful, nor eternal. And in a matter of generations, it will be gone - broken up and reconstituted in some other configuration yet to be imagined.

Kukathas 2

The liberal archipelago is a realm of mutual toleration, in which multiple authorities coexist. To the extent that authority is not devolved entirely to smaller units, but is also exercised by agencies that govern across jurisdictions and subsume a number of associations, that authority is limited in its scope and constrained in its power. This is the ideal the framers of the American Constitution had in mind when they devised a new system of government. (p. 266)

Conclusion

- Hayek's concern in 1949 that CLs had lost their utopian vision of what a free society would look like
- a vision of the future has been very important for some socialists (Fourier, Bellamy) but not others (Marx, Lenin)
- CL have a long tradition of imagining what a future free society would look like
 - Condorcet's 10th Epoch of reason, perfectibility, and radical liberty for all
 - Bastiat's dream of being a Utopian "dictator for a day" and imposing liberty from the top down (and then recoiling in horror)
 - Cobden's dream of "free trade in everything" and the municipalisation of the world
 - Molinari's vision of competing private insurance companies providing security like any other good or service in the market
 - Spencer's vision of an "industrial type" of society in which "the régime of voluntary cooperation" would see the gradual shrivelling of the central state
 - JS Mill's idea of "different experiments in living"
- More recently:
 - Robert Nozick's idea of competing utopias in a "framework for utopias" (1974)
 - Chandran Kukathas - idea of the "liberal archipelago" of multiple jurisdictions in a sea of mutual toleration (2003)