

Waiting for a Communist Superman

In the pursuit of a communist society, many Marxist-Leninist authors have written about the new kind of person who will create this society. This new human being will be a stark contrast to the kind of person that existed in a capitalist system.

Once these capitalist chains are removed, mankind will soar to new heights, [wrote](#) Leon Trotsky, the Soviet revolutionary and political theorist:

Man will make it his purpose to master his own feelings, to raise his instincts to the heights of consciousness, to make them transparent, to extend the wires of his will into hidden recesses, and thereby to raise himself to a new plane, to create a higher social biologic type, or, if you please, a superman. (Literature and Revolution. 1924)

Che Guevara, the Cuban revolutionary, expressed the idea of “a new man,” even more succinctly.

“To build communism it is necessary, simultaneous with the new material foundations, to build the new man and woman,” Guevara [wrote](#) in *Socialism and Man in Cuba*.

This vision is sometimes referred to as the “New Communist Man.” This new man is usually described as being of great virtue, work ethic, and comradery. This kind of man is a higher, fuller version of the man who is oppressed under feudalism and capitalism.

The process by which this *Homo Communist* will come about is expressed by Trotsky as a sort of evolution, whereby one achieves a mastery over one’s self to become a higher form of

being. After this process of mastery is complete, the new communist man will arrive.

“The forms of life will become dynamically dramatic,” Trotsky wrote in *Literature and Revolution*. “The average human type will rise to the heights of an Aristotle, a Goethe, or a Marx. And above this ridge new peaks will rise.”

The results promised by Trotsky have yet to arrive in socialist countries, but this does not mean the idea has been abandoned. Propaganda that existed in the Soviet Union, for example, is filled with the ideas of a different kind of person for a different kind of society. However, an important point must be emphasized. The rhetoric around the “New Communist Man” always puts the catalyst for change inside the individual. In other words, the new man will arise from within as soon as communism is established.

Would this really be the case? There are reasons to be skeptical. One need only point to [the countless abuses of human rights](#) committed by socialist and communist countries. Control and coercion is exerted over the economy, society, and everyday life. Freedom disintegrates.

Importantly, no reasonable argument was ever given as to why man’s nature and abilities should suddenly be transformed under Communism. It was simply assumed to be true by the Marxists and Leninists. And when no Communist Supermen appeared to fill the ranks of communist society, the mold of the new man was imposed from above.

The need for a new man is not a concern faced by societies based on individual liberty and private property rights. Liberty does not require that man be or do anything in order for society to function. The societal order is created by the people who live within it, based on their own values and principles. A bottom-up creation allows for individuals to flourish, as there is no coercion forcing man to act or behave

in certain ways. Individuals come first.

This is why there will never be rhetoric around a “New Capitalist Man.” In any shift towards a free society, individuals have the primacy. The goal is a societal order in which men and women are left free.

A socialist society operates opposite of a society rooted in freedom. The societal order is created from above, with values and principles imposed on those below. Man is to fit within this society. If he does not, he must be changed.

The Marxist-Leninist approach to society fails because it tries to recreate man. He must be changed in order to create this new society. In order to create a new world, the pieces must be reconstructed. The fact that man can and should be changed is taken for granted. Trotsky and Guevara never asked if the “New Communist Man” could be created. They assumed that as soon as man was freed from his capitalist chains, this evolution would occur automatically.

When no Communist Supermen appeared embracing [the state's vision](#) of selfless collectivism, force was the only tool left. Man had to be changed to fit inside the collectivist utopia, which became instead [a mass graveyard](#).

In a twisted way, there is a grain of truth to the concept of the “New Communist Man.” He does in fact exist, but in reality this new man is a subjugated man. In a word, this new man is *unfree*.

The “New Capitalist Man,” on the other hand, has his will subject to none but himself. While he may not turn into a Aristotle, Gothe, or Marx, he is at least free to choose.

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This article was originally published on FEE.org. Read the [original article](#).

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