

It's Worse Than Cultural Marxism

Like pagan Danes sweeping through Christendom, rioters pillaged and torched my city of Minneapolis. The results are devastating.

For several miles, you can drive along Lake St., the epicenter of the rioting, and witness one burned-out building after another interspersed with piles of rubble where some once stood. Those buildings still standing are often still boarded up, covered in graffiti, with upper windows shattered.

I would expect the same from a war zone. But Minneapolis did not experience the fury of war, it experienced something worse: the full rage and wrath of man.

From what unholy pit did this rage burst forth? Cultural Marxism? No. I actually think our problems are much deeper than even that toxic ideology.

If we are to confront and stop the destruction, we must identify why the ideology of destruction is so appealing. We need to understand the foundational, driving force.

Writing about Charles Dickens' *Barnaby Rudge: A Tale of the Riots of Eighty*, Myron Magnet digs into one of the deeper impulses that animates man: The desire to be God.

Magnet uses the term "revolutionary millennialism" to describe what happens when that individual desire is found on a mass scale. The term itself is actually borrowed from the historian Norman Cohn and his book *Pursuit of the Millennium*.

Essentially, millennialism represents a deep frustration with the human condition and the inability to overcome our limits. It is an "overcharged self-cherishing" that is convicted of

the "immaculate holiness of one's own impulses coupled with a certainty that one was incapable of sin". Oddly enough, the ultimate manifestation of this uncorked rage is not in a great act of creation, but rather great acts of destruction. The end of revolutionary millennialism is a lashing out at everything that may tell us that we are not God.

Why destruction? Because "millenarian movements belong to a long tradition of popular protest against the irreducible unfreedom of the civilized condition." To free ourselves to be God, we must destroy any limits placed upon us, including those by civilization and even our own soul and reason. We can only be free when our passions are freed.

As Myron Magnet explains with detail,

"Virtually by definition, millennialism is antipolitical: the wish to establish the City of God on earth displays an exhausted patience with the City of Man. Indeed, what the millennial kingdom chiliastic sects seek to create is a realm which has superseded the need for government on any level, including the individual's government of himself. For the millenarian revolution proposes to rectify the human condition, abolishing man's chronic unhappiness by making absolute the freedom of each individual and sanctifying his every impulse. This revolution will bring about a world not new but, instead, identical to man's primitive condition before such fallen, corrupt institutions as the state and the organized church arose to constrict human life.

"Central to the ideology of revolutionary millenarianism ... is 'a self-exaltation that often amounted to self-deification.' Such representative millenarians as the heretics of the Free Spirit, finding God in everything and everything a part of God, did not hesitate to extend these principles to themselves: they needed only to become conscious of their essential divinity, they held, 'to surpass the condition of humanity and become God.'..."

“But what chiefly followed from such overcharged self-cherishing was a conviction of the immaculate holiness of one’s own impulses coupled with a certainty that one was incapable of sin.”

The desire to make oneself into anything you want is now celebrated, even if it goes against not only civilization but even nature and reality.

While horrified by what’s happening and, like many people, suspecting we’re just seeing the beginning of our travails, I am oddly sympathetic to these millennialist impulses.

How many young Americans are deeply wounded by divorce, abuse, and neglect as the family disintegrates in the acid of our culture? And how many of those wounded souls were given the tools to overcome and make peace with their pasts through their education? Not very many.

Consider the reality of their lives.

We took a generation or two of spiritually and emotionally wounded individuals raised on pabulum and entertainment, and then told them to take on \$50,000, \$100,000 or even more school debt just to get a job. From the get-go, we chained these young souls who then were sent out into a debt-based economy that keeps all of us racing the Red Queen. Finally, add the fact that true community is nearly absent from our world. The results?

America now has many millions of deeply wounded souls, already chained to debt, getting into more debt and feeling imprisoned, but without the support of family, friends, church, or community.

Are we really that surprised that destruction of our civilization appeals to a surprising number of young people? Without understanding a purpose to suffering or life, they

have lashed out quite dangerously.

What can prevent it? Initially, brute force. If a man cannot govern himself, someone else will govern him.

But that is not a path that leads to a flourishing, free people.

I fear that if we do not seriously and effectively address the mental and spiritual state of far too many young Americans, we are hurtling towards a cataclysm.

This is no longer just a fight of intellects; it is a spiritual fight.

Godspeed!

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