

Why Do Dead Ideas Continue to Haunt Us?  
Posted On:December 31, 1969

In New Orleans, there is a belief in the \223undead\224\227zombies\227who will not stay buried after they have died. This is definitely not a good thing to believers in Voodoo. However, in various places around the world, we are still seeing what we thought were dead ideas coming back to ruin a new generation of lives. There are three zombies out there: Marxism/Maoism, Nazism, and the cult of Militant Islamism.

Marxism/Maoism. Apparently there are people who didn\222t hear that Marxism and Maoism were failures. Marxism is a classical doctrine that appealed to so many because it pretended to promote equality and justice. However, in practice, in the hands of the Maoists and Stalinists, unjust and unequal extreme dictatorships ruled Russia and China. They didn\222t bring equality; they brought slavery to the masses.

In Nepal, a decade-long simmering terrorist revolution led by some Maoist \223true believers\224 finally wore down the government and won an election, narrowly. They demanded that the king step down (he had already gone from absolute monarch to constitutional monarch, not good enough for them) and renamed the kingdom The Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. With their narrow win, they promised that they would be \223moderates\224 (a bit like being moderately pregnant).

Unsurprisingly now, their teeth are showing, and they are once more sowing discord and violence. This \223roof of the world\224 is headed for a hellish future. This is one more example that a small but determined cult can overwhelm a much more passive majority.

Another place where a Marxist takeover is unfolding is Venezuela, where a populist leader, Hugo Chavez, is relentlessly dismantling every private institution in the country and turning Venezuela into an economic and political disaster. Populism (support of the poor and uneducated) gives him his clout\227and he strangles the press, opposition, and private enterprises through control over all means of power (police, propaganda, and military). He is now running out of money, the consequence of nationalizing and ruining his oil industry. I don't think he will die in bed of old age.

Neo-Nazism. This powerful and deadly fascist government that brought on World War II, the Holocaust, and death and destruction on the German people, collapsed at the end of the war. What has come back from the dead, however, are this movement\222s most hideous values\227racist hatred taken up by Skinheads (a violent fringe) and so-called \223Aryan\224 movements in the United States and Europe. Their numbers do not seem to be growing\227so we can hope that these Neo-Nazi cults will continue as an embarrassing (and violent) subculture until they finally run out of steam.

Militant Islamism. This particular sect of Islam has created a totally imaginary Islamic history in which a wise and just Caliphate ruled over a unified Islamic world. What they overlook is that no Caliph (leader of the faithful after Mohammad) died in bed in old age; that Islam was divided by violent dissidence from the beginning; and that they are delusional in thinking the world is going to convert\227either to Islam, or even less likely, to their own fascist cult.

The Prophet Mohammad had a hard time preventing his Arab followers from killing each other. He tried to unify his new religion by deporting from the Arabian Peninsula any other sects that refused to convert to Islam (Jews, Christians, Pagans). However, as Islam spread out beyond Arabia, conquering larger and more sophisticated cultures than theirs, they could not follow their founder\222s policies. Instead, they settled on trying to forcibly convert the conquered, or levying extortionate taxes on Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, Hindus, and Buddhists to support their global project. This policy gave their victims an offer that they couldn\222t easily refuse, which accounts for Islam\222s unusually quick growth.

Our Medieval ancestors (Christian and Muslim) considered Dame Fortune to be the ruler of the world. Her wheel lifts some up to prominence and then casts them down again. Perhaps this is true for today too\227that which goes around comes around\227even after it is dead.

671 words

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