

EGOISM AND INEQUALITY—

WRONGLY CONVICTED



VALDEMAR MALIN

An inconvenient truth about egoism and economic inequality (unequal distribution of resources among humans and among other living beings). And a provocative outlook on how they relate to each other, to human nature and Nature herself.

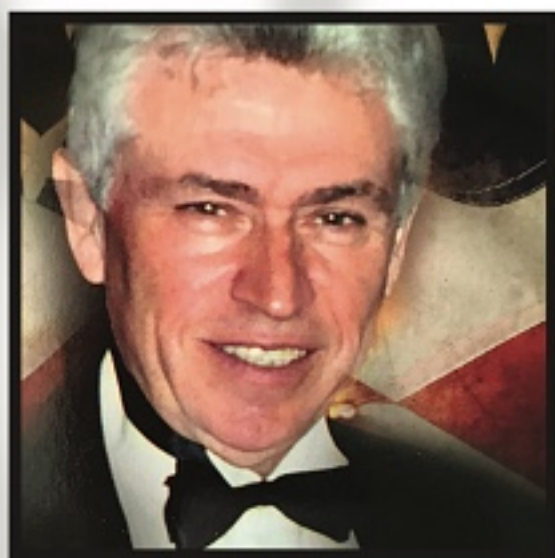
Egoism and Inequality - Wrongly Convicted (English Edition)

By Valdemar Malin

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EGOISM AND INEQUALITY—WRONGLY CONVICTED

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INCONVENIENT TRUTH ABOUT EGOISM

VALDEMAR MALIN

*Egoism is condemned, rejected, banned and expelled!
But stubborn egoism is still here. Healthy, resilient and
indestructible, it survived a centuries-long war waged
by Man against it. Because on its side is...Nature!*

It's Misunderstood World of Egoism!

It happened in the former USSR back in the 1970s. At that time, I lived in the city of Kiev (now the capital of Ukraine) in a large 9-story apartment building with a spacious communal playground behind it.

One winter, I decided to build a relatively small ice-skating rink in that playground. My only motivation was to give my 5-year-old daughter the opportunity to practice figure skating. Every day after work, despite biting wind and freezing cold, I cleared this area from snow. Then I carried buckets of water down from my sixth-floor apartment (the building had no elevators) and poured it over the surface to create ice.

I could see the curious and excited faces of many neighbors watching me from the windows of their warm apartments. Yet not a single person came down to help. However, once the skating rink was finally finished, they and their children happily used it throughout the entire winter.

Although it is not obvious right away, this story is not about me or about a skating rink. This story is, in fact, about egoism and its antipode altruism. But this is not another story, which comes to a well-known conclusion—egoism is bad and altruism is good.

Quite the opposite! This story revealed a complex and ambiguous meaning hidden in it. It blurred the border between what was considered to be good or bad in reality. between self-interests and the interests of others, which, in fact, divide humanity into two distinct and irreconcilable camps—egoists and altruists! It raised a number of unexpected and provoking questions in my mind about egoism and altruism.

What is more important—self-interest or the interests of others?

The theory of altruism claims that we should care not for self-interest, but for the interests of others. In return, the others, by definition, should care for our interests, isn't it? In fact, it is not so! I had to build the skating rink alone, while the others (my numerous neighbors) didn't care about me, at all!

Why does Nature need egoism? Nature created all of us to be altruists as the proponents of altruism believe. But, in fact, I alone was altruist there, while all my numerous neighbors turned out to be egoists! Why did Nature create so many egoists and so few altruists? After all, the main concern of Nature is to secure survival of all living beings on earth? Does Nature need so many egoists for it?

Is altruism a camouflaged form of egoism? Paradoxically, but I behaved as...an egoist too! After all, I was motivated by my own self-interest—I worked so hard for the sake of my own child. I would've never worked that hard for the sake of others! But, in fact, other kids in the neighborhood became beneficiaries of my selfish actions. Does it mean that selfish and discredited egoism may serve interests of others, while selfless and glorious altruism can act out of selfish motives?

Do egoists act with no regards to the interest of others and at the expense of others? You may accuse me of such behavior also! After all, I used a part of a community playground to build a skating rink just for my child with no regards to interest of those who had no little children. And I did it at the expense of those who had no interest in having a noisy skating ring nearby! But, in fact, many of them were often coming down themselves to skate or to watch, while the rink brought a lot of the skaters and the spectators from the entire neighborhood who enjoyed it and had a lot of fun!

This essay will give unusual answers to these questions. But before that, other debatable questions should be answered.

Why can't we get rid of egoism since creation of humanity and up to this day? Does it prove that egoism is an inborn trait of human nature? I wonder did God create Adam himself as egoist?

How do the Holy Books such as the Torah, the Bible and the Quran relate to egoism? What did the greatest religious scholars and secular thinkers say about egoism?

And finally, how did altruism and Marxism transform egoism in modernity? After all, altruism and Marxism, in fact, declared a merciless war on egoism, while in altruistic, collectivist and Marxist society like the former USSR egoism was outlawed! Everyone, instead of caring for others, was compelled to live for others (for the Communist Party and the Government)!

Was Adam an Egoist?

Many people are familiar with the famous fresco "The Creation of Adam." This painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Vatican was done by the great Italian artist Michelangelo. This masterpiece depicts a Biblical moment when God is about to spark life in his creation—Adam.

But not many are aware that the fresco hides mysterious philosophical messages in its details. For more than 500 years, countless art analysts have been trying to find and decode those messages, to no avail. Everyone interprets them differently and finds something new raising even more questions.

For example, why does God outstretch his arm toward Adam? Some analysts believe that God reaches out to Man and humanity. Why don't the fingers of Adam and God touch each other? It symbolizes the moment preceding the conception of Life. Who are the restless characters behind God's back? The angels. Then why do they have no wings and grouped in a shape of a human brain? Why is the red cloth around the angels in the shape of a woman's...uterus?

Hidden mysterious messages make imagination soar. Let's find some new messages in this Michelangelo's fresco also.

Egoism is, no doubts, one of these hidden messages. Why did God give Adam an elbow? For stretching his arm *out* to help *others*? No, for bending his arm *in* to help *himself* reach his own mouth first! Then he can help others. That's what is called self-interest or egoism today.

Thus, the hidden message of the artist to future humanity—God created egoism to help humanity to survive! All living creatures, including Man, will have to care for themselves and their self-interests first rather than for interests of others.

Altruism, which means (for its modern proponents) to be concerned for others, to show kindness, compassion and selflessness, may be found among the relevant hidden messages in the Michelangelo's fresco too.

Concern and kindness are depicted this way. Outstretching his right arm, God is about to touch and to breathe life into Adam. So, creation of Adam may be considered the greatest act of God's kindness and concern for future humanity!

Compassion is written all over God's face when God is going to bring a wife for Adam to soothe his loneliness. With his left arm, God embraces Eve nudging her toward Adam to start the conception of humanity.

Selflessness is not only to reach out to others, but also to help sacrificing one's own wellbeing. God is ready to carry out a selfless act—to create humanity. This is not a small sacrifice! God knows what to expect from unruly and stubborn mankind—nothing but troubles! As described in Torah (Genesis 6:5-6): “God saw how great was man's wickedness on earth... And God regretted having made humankind.”

The opponents of altruism may find the opposite messages too. Look at Adam's reluctantly outstretched arm! He just pretends to be kind and selfless! He outstretched his arm not voluntarily, but because he fears God! Not out of concern for others, but out of vanity and to feel good about himself! But when no one is watching, Adam will

certainly reach his own mouth first—his elbow has already been slightly bent.

“Straighten your arm!” God hisses with a strain smile and points his finger at the Adam’s elbow. “Do it or I’ll do it myself!” Altruists need coercion to help others!

This bizarre search of new messages hidden in the Michelangelo’s fresco is, of course, an allegory. But it may give you an idea about the concepts of egoism and altruism before we start discussing these complex and confusing subjects below.

Do Torah, Bible and Quran Condemn Egoism?

We believe that the Holy Books of three major religions (the Torah, the Bible and the Quran) reject egoism and promote altruism, and we follow this rule too considering egoism as a desirable and altruism as an undesirable trait of human nature and behavior. It seems to us that, from antiquity to modernity, egoism and altruism have always been the epitomes of the eternal Evil and eternal Good, respectively!

But is this true? In fact, the truth may turn out to be unexpected and inconvenient for many. The most surprising fact is that, since antiquity, egoism was not considered to be a negative trait of human nature and an unacceptable behavior. Only in modern time, not long ago, humanity began to treat egoism with contempt and hostility.

As will be demonstrated below, the three major religions, in fact, never rejected egoism. The greatest religious scholars and secular thinkers accepted and even endorsed egoism for millennia, while altruism appeared less than 2 centuries ago!

But first, let’s clarify one detail. As reflected in the title, egoism is the main subject of this essay. But what does altruism have to do with it? Altruism is directly related to egoism. As a rule, in any discussion about egoism, the main counter-argument will always be altruism. This

essay is not an exception, especially, since altruism became responsible for a fundamental transformation of egoism as will be shown below. It happened in modern time and not as a result of evolutionary (gradual and incremental) development, but as a sudden, radical change!

The Torah written around 15th century BCE (before Common Era) is one of the five books written by Moses from the words of God. For example, in the book of Leviticus (19:17), Moses calls for Jews: *Love your fellow Jews as you love yourself*. Here, “to love yourself” means the behavior that will be named later self-interest and, eventually, egoism. In the same token, “to love others” means kindness, selflessness or compassion and, eventually, altruism.

The New Testament of the Christian Bible, which was written in the 1st century CE (Common Era), follows the Torah, but gives more direct interpretation of the God’s will. For example, Book 11, Chapter Philippians 2:4 reads: *Let each of you look not only to your own interest, but to the interests of others*.

Quran, the central religious text of Islam written in the 7th century CE (610-632), accepted egoism also. Here is what Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1058-1111 CE), one of the greatest theologians and philosophers of Islamic world, wrote in his masterpiece The Marvels of the Heart, Book XXI of the Revival of the Religious Sciences: *The lower-self* (ego, selfishness) *is not evil by itself, as these most basic feelings of our psyche* (person’s identity) *are critical for our survival*. However, it should be *brought under control of higher-self* (love of God). In other words, selfishness (egoism) is acceptable as long as it is combined with love for God.

Thus, three major religions do not reject self-love, self-interest or egoism. They imply that this trait of human nature was given to Man by God to help humanity survive. Also, they set the “Golden balance” between self-interest and the interests of others—you should care for yourself and for others about the same. Thus, a border line was drawn: caring more for yourself than for others brings you to the domain of egoism, caring less—and you enter the domain of altruism.

Great Philosophers About Egoism

Below are the examples, from antiquity to modernity, of what the greatest religious sages and secular thinkers said about egoism. (Make a note that egoism was known to humanity under different names like self-love, self-interest, friendliness toward yourself, concern of or care for yourself, etc.).

Secular philosophers of classical antiquity accepted self-interest and egoism. Among them were the founding figures of Western philosophy who lived in ancient Greece in the 4th-3rd centuries BCE.

Socrates (470-399 BCE), widely regarded as a founder of Western philosophy, claimed that *one's own happiness was the most important in life and that everyone should strive to achieve happiness*. What does this claim mean and what it has to do with self-interest (egoism)?

Human nature, which is a product of natural evolution (or God's will), encompasses such traits as emotions. Happiness is a positive emotion that brings you pleasure, contentment and joy. It arises when you fulfil your own desires and achieve satisfaction, advantage or benefits as the most important goal in your life. Coincidence or not, but self-interest is a motivation that helps to achieve that goal. That's why striving to achieve happiness is a way to pursue your self-interests.

Thus, Socrates' claim about happiness contains two fundamental ideas about self-interests (egoism). First, Socrates endorsed self-interest recognizing it as a natural trait of human nature granted us by Nature (or God). Second, he believed that everyone *had to* pursue their own self-interest. In modern psychology, these ideas were named psychological and ethical egoism, respectively.

The great ancient philosophers Plato, a friend and a student of Socrates, and Aristotle, a student of Plato, endorsed self-interest (egoism) either.

Plato (428-348 BCE), in Book IV of the Republic, which gives the account of human psychology, claimed that we were *motivated to act in our actual self-interests* (psychological egoism).

Aristotle (384-322 BCE) gave his blessing to psychological egoism also. In his Nicomachean Ethics, he considered that *one*

person's love for another person was based on and derived from the love the lover has for himself. Here, Aristotle considers self-love as some form of self-interest (egoism) and those who love others out of self-interest as egoists, anyway, although the noble ones. However, he didn't disregard the interests of others too. He admitted that "*the virtue stood in the middle.*" Thus, Aristotle confirmed the "Golden balance" between self-interest and the interests of others set by the Torah and the Bible.

In the Middle Ages, prominent philosophers embraced self-interest and egoism as well. Here are some examples,

Aurelius Augustinus of Hippo (364-430 CE), one of the greatest Christian theologians and philosophers, was originally from North African province of the Roman Empire (modern Algeria). He viewed *self-love (self-interests) as a positive trait of human nature as long as it is combined with whole-hearted love for God* (psychological egoism).

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 CE), an Italian priest one of the most prominent medieval philosophers, echoed the Aristotelian views on egoism: *the friendliness one has toward another comes from the friendliness one has toward oneself* (psychological egoism).

In the modern period (16th-20th centuries), philosophers shared the views of their predecessors on egoism.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), a prominent English philosopher of the 17th century, was the first among the modern philosopher to recognize and endorse egoism. He claimed that *all human actions were driven by egoism and self-interest* (psychological egoism).

Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), the famous Dutch philosopher of the 17th century, claimed that *reason demands that everyone loves himself and seeks his own advantage; that everyone should strive to preserve his own being* (the theory that later was named rational egoism).

Max Stirner (1806-1856), an outstanding German philosopher of the 19th century, was the first who coined the term "egoism." He believed that *everyone was propelled by their own egoism and desires* (psychological egoism). Responding to those who condemned egoism

and praised selflessness and self-sacrifice, Stirner wrote: “Are those who sacrificed themselves not egoists? Having only one passion, they care only about satisfying it!” Thus, Stirner was the first who understood that altruism was the form of egoism!

And, finally, Ayn Rand (1905-1982), a popular Russian-born American writer and philosopher of the 20th century, was one of the most prominent defenders of egoism. In her book *The Virtue of Selfishness* (1964), she considered *the action to be rational if and only if it maximizes one’s self-interest*. She named her theory *rational egoism*.

Thus, for more than three millennia, the most famous and influential religious sages and secular philosophers openly recognized and accepted self-interest (egoism). They believed that egoism was not the eternal evil of humanity, but one of the most important traits of human nature; that we were born as egoists; that egoism was given to us by Nature (or God)! Some philosophers went even further. They believed that we *should* act in our own interest rather than in the interest of others, while Aristotle, believed in the Golden balance set by the Torah and the Bible between self-interest and the interests of others.

How Altruism and Marxism Transformed Egoism

Such favorable attitude toward egoism was abruptly and unexpectedly changed in 1851 when French philosopher Auguste Comte introduced a new, revolutionary theory, which he named *altruism* (from the French word “altrui” meaning “others”).

Comte believed that to be concerned about and care for other or to be kind and selfless was not sufficient for the mankind any more. Therefore, altruism called for mankind to commit something unprecedented—to *live for others* and, thus, *sacrifice yourself for the sake of others!*

It was an unheard-of call to change human nature and an arrogant challenge to Nature herself! In fact, Comte proposed not only a theory,

but a collectivist lifestyle for humanity, which was a direct call to radically change society too! However, being a realist, he understood that it would be impossible to put his theory into practice because of the inborn egoism given to humans by Nature (or God). Therefore, Comte called for humanity to go against Nature (or God) and *irradicate egoism!*

Since that time and up to these days, egoism has been commonly considered a repulsive, disgraceful and undesirable trait of human nature and anti-social, unacceptable behavior as well. In contrast, altruism has been considered a noble and desirable trait and the role model for prosocial behavior.

It would be unfair to blame the theory of altruism alone for such sharp turn of attitude toward egoism. The theory of altruism would have remained another phantasy if it had not received support from an unexpected and powerful ally—Marxism! This theory about society, economics and politics was developed by German philosopher Karl Marx in the second half of the 19th century.

It was not a coincidence that the Comte's ideas "to live and sacrifice yourself for others" were incorporated by Marx into his theory, in which the ambiguous term "others" was substituted for clear terms "ideology, party, government or state." Thus, altruism became an important part of Marxism!

That's what changed the attitude toward egoism! It happened when altruism and Marxism formed the alliance, which exists up to this day! In this unholy alliance, each of them had its own task.

If the task of altruism was to discredit, convict and sentence egoism, the task of Marxism was to carry out the sentence.

Altruism brought great publicity to egoism. Judge by yourself. The term "egoism" (or its equivalent) appeared in literature in about 1800. Since that time, the frequency of its usage was rising very slowly. By 1850, (for the first half of the 19th century), it reached just about 0.1/M (per million words). But for the second half of the century, it skyrocketed reaching about 0.6/M by 1900!

A coincidence or not, but the frequency of usage of the term "altruism" in 1900 was about the same. This may indirectly confirm

that both subjects were inextricably linked to each other—promotion of altruism went hand in hand with demonization of egoism!

Demonization of egoism continued in the 20th century until Marxism became the ruling ideology in the USSR. Since that time, the main goal of ideologists of Marxism and its proponents has become to *irradiate* egoism—one of the main goals of Comte's altruism. Everyone was compelled to live for others (for the Communist Party and the Government), while those who care for themselves were accused of egoism and punished, while the Soviet propaganda tried to convince the world that Marxism changed human nature and created a new Soviet type of human being void of egoism.

The catastrophic failure of the USSR along with Marxism in the 1990s, led to failure of altruism too! But altruism and Marxism haven't died. Moreover, both theories are enjoying a renaissance in the West, Britain and the US becoming major centers of Marxist thoughts now.

However, their proponents had to adapt to a new reality. That's why they have changed the definition of altruism. They don't use the merciless demand to live for others any longer. Instead, they are trying to convince the world that altruism is a synonym of Biblical kindness, selflessness and compassion. But this is just a deceit! This is just a tactical retreat, while the strategic goals remained the same. They did not change their attitude to egoism either. (The reasons for such transformation are described in the essay "Inconvenient Truth about Altruism" in this book).

Thus, for millennia, egoism was acceptable and legitimate! But it took only several decades since the rise of altruism and Marxism, and egoism has become a defendant and a convict! In other words, altruism with the aid of Marxism had turned egoism into a criminal! The situation reminds the court proceedings in which due process is ignored—there is a prosecutor who brings criminal charges, but there is no defense council to challenge them.

This essay and other essays included in Part 1 of this book will try to make a difference no matter how small it may be. On the pages of this book, an imaginary retrial of egoism, objective and fair, will take

place, and an imaginary council will challenge the undeserved charges against egoism. New arguments will be brought in defense of egoism based on comparison of egoism to altruism. After all, altruism is claimed to be the antipode of egoism that should replace egoism, once and for all.

This is not an academic discussion about egoism and altruism. This is a conversation that is based on well-known and little-known facts that are looked upon at a different angle.

We are not going to cover all the questions---the subject is too complex and multifaceted to cover in one essay or even one book. Do you remember the story about the skating ring told earlier? Now, the conversation to follow will answer the questions that raised in connection with that story.

As a reminder, it includes the most provocative questions. What are the interrelationships between self-interests or interests of others? How does Nature relate to egoism? Is altruism another form of egoism? Does egoism, in fact, exist at the expense of others and doesn't care for others?

Part 1 includes more essays that answer other provocative questions related to egoism and altruism.

Relationship between Self-interests and Interests of Others

Altruism and Marxism, which emerged in the 19th century, declared war against egoism, a war of annihilation, the bloodiest battle taking place between two irreconcilable opponents—the interests of others are trying to destroy self-interests.

Forget about self-love, a relatively modest portrayal of egoism described by Torah that means simply to be concerned about your own self-interests (desires, needs or wellbeing). It looks innocent in comparison with the contemporary definitions of egoism developed not without aid from the ideologists of altruism and Marxism!

For example, the American Psychological Association (APA) claims that egoism is based on selfishness and self-interest with disregard for the needs of others.

Here is the summation of the definitions of egoism from various modern sources. Egoists are those who just take care of themselves or care more for themselves than for others. Today, under influence of altruism and Marxism, the definition is considerably expanded. Egoists are those who act with no regard to the interests of others or at the expense of others. It came even to extreme! Egoists are those who are unwilling to live or sacrifice for the sake of others!

It is easy to notice that the definitions of egoism set the balance between the self-interest and the interest of others, from a modest and natural (to care for yourself) to an impossible, foreign to human nature and Nature herself (unwillingness to live or sacrifice yourself for the sake of others).

So, you have a choice. Take care of yourself (instead of others), and you'll be labeled egoist and subjected to punishment! Yes, punishment! Anyone who lived in the USSR or other countries, in which the ruling ideology was collectivism, knows what it means. If you were accused of egoism, you could be expelled from college or lose your job! Because egoism is associated with individualism, which any bourgeois, capitalist society is based on! It makes you an ideological enemy—one of the worst crimes in a collectivist society!

What's left is to take care of others, and you'll avoid the disgrace and problems! But who will take care of yourself then? The others! The Communist Party and the Government! Those who lived in the USSR or other socialist countries know what a nightmare it was!

We mentioned “others” many time, but who are, in fact, those abstract “others,” anyway? Those who we are compelled to live for by altruism? If they are your own family, then it's hard to disagree—you care about yourself, but neglect the needs of your own family, then you are an egoist.

But what if you care for *yourself* and *your* family, but not for others; if you give to *your* family all they need and desire—not to others? Then you are an egoist, anyway, by definition! But this is

against Nature—a mother won't take away a piece of bread from her kids to give it to somebody else! Mother Nature created family to preserve and continue Life.

In real life, you may care for others too. But, naturally, not as much as for yourself and your family, and only for those whom *you* like—friends, colleagues, etc. You may give also to a charity, but only to *your* favorite one and only if there is enough to give. Such preferences and the selective behavior still make you an egoist, by definition as well. But this defies common sense! When you give to a charity, your donation has to be considered an act of kindness, selflessness and compassion, not egoism even if it is done out of self-interest.

And finally, would you care for others if they are strangers? Would you give to a charity you don't like? Or to give at the expense of your needy family? If you don't, you are an egoist either!

So, no matter what you do, you behave as an egoist unless you care for others rather than for yourself and your family.

Why the proponents of Marxism and altruism are so interested in expanding the definition of egoism? Because it expands the number of those who may potentially be accused of egoism. Those people will do anything to avoid those accusations which makes it easier to compel them to *live for others!*

Why does Nature Need Egoism for?

Who knows better what you need? Who will take care of you better—you or others? You, of course, almost everyone will say. That's how Your Majesty Nature created human beings and all living creatures! Due to this wise order, the living world has been able to survive on earth up to these days!

But all of a sudden, a certain part of humanity decided that this was a mistake on the part of Nature. They believe that to care for others is better for mankind than to live for yourself, thus, turning human nature upside down! They believe that by correcting this mistake of Nature, humanity will secure brighter future!

They claim that the selfless people who prefer to live for others, in fact, exist! It's true. But such insanely selfless individuals are as rare as tiny islands in an endless ocean because they simply destroy themselves. (See the essay "*Man Who Lived for Others*" in this book).

Why did Nature create a vast ocean of egoism and self-interest and the rare, tiny islands of selflessness—not otherwise? Obviously, Life needs a lot of egoism. Nature doesn't create anything useless as was noticed by the great ancient philosopher Aristotle. But Nature didn't expect that arrogant Man would revolt against her and would try to drain the ocean of natural egoism and fill it with artificial altruism!

Self-interest is a fundamental law of the Living Nature—take care of yourself or die from hunger, thirst, cold or heat and without passing your genes to the next generation. That's how all living creatures, big and small, have been living since the dawn of Life!

What about cooperation? Does it contradict this law? No, just the opposite! Cooperation is a strategy to achieve your self-interest. Living creatures get together into a flock and cooperate if it satisfies their self-interest better. Otherwise, they lead a solitary life.

Human beings are a part of the Living Nature too! Since prehistoric time, humans have been using cooperation to satisfy their self-interests in order to survive!

Since the Biblical time, humanity has been familiar with self-interest (egoism) entrenched in human nature from birth. Just read the Ten Commandments written 3,500 years ago, and you will find proof of that. Here is one of the Commandments: "Love your neighbor as yourself". The second part of the Commandment calls for self-love (egoism). And the vast majority of humanity follow this call. But how many do follow the first part of the Commandment? How many such people did you encounter in your life? In this respect, the call of the creator of altruism A. Comte to irradicate egoism and replace it with altruism looks impractical and unreal.

Just think about it. Humanity was given millennia to get rid of egoism and replace it with altruism! But humanity has not been able so far to do it despite enlightenment, education and indoctrination. Maybe

the learning period was insufficient to hammer into our heads the vices of egoism and the virtues of selflessness? Or it's simply impossible to change human nature?

Egoism was created by Nature at the dawn of humanity. No one has been teaching us egoism or forcing us to behave egoistically. Even A. Comte recognized the fact that egoism is an inborn and domineering trait of human nature and that it suppresses a weaker trait—altruism.

Therefore, he declared egoism to be useless, detrimental and dangerous. Therefore, he called on humanity to despise, reject, condemn, ban and expel egoism. But stubborn egoism is still here. Healthy, resilient and indestructible, it survived a millennium-long relentless war waged against it by Man. Because on its side is ... Nature that exists millions of years!

In contrast, altruism was born not by Nature, but by a human mind just...175 years ago! We have been taught altruism since kindergarten, and we are forced to behave altruistically by public opinion, morality and even laws. That's why altruism is revered, admired and even worshipped. But despite such non-stop brainwashing, we still have to prove that altruism exists and justify its usefulness with theories and research.

Millennia come and go, but an imaginary human society in which altruism should replace egoism still remains a fantasy. Because in a real world, it's just the opposite. The great British philosopher of the 19th century Herbert Spencer noticed that, during food shortages, those who "take care of others (altruists) die; those who care of themselves (egoists) survive." Therefore, it's egoism that replaces altruism "to make preservation and continuation of life possible."

So, if you live in a society of abundance and satiation, you can afford to be an altruist and to give to others. But at the first signs of hunger, whom will you call first to come to the rescue? Egoism! You should thank egoism for the abundance and satiation too! (But this is a separate subject).

So, why in the world is egoism indestructible? Because ugly but resilient egoism lives in a real world. In contrast, beautiful but fragile altruism resides only in an idealistic human mind. Why do you spray

weeds in your backyard? Because they are ugly to your taste (in your mind) and, therefore, undesirable. Because you want to protect your beautiful but fragile grass from these naturally resilient weeds. Stop spraying, and weeds—the children of Nature—will come back and overwhelm your artificially-nurtured grass.

Stop watering your pampered grass, and it will wither. Not the weeds! In other words, you can take the wolf out of the forest, but you cannot take the forest out of the wolf. In the same token, you can take egoism out of the human mind, but you cannot take it out of the human nature.

Weeds nurtured by Nature vs. grass nurtured by Man! Egoism vs. altruism! For ages, Nature has been engraving egoism into the human genome as streams of water carve into granite rocks. In contrast, irrevocable truth has been hammered into our minds—altruism is Virtue, egoism is Evil! We must destroy egoism and correct this «error» of Nature!

We got accustomed to such myths. Can we trust them? Let's figure it out.

Altruism—a Hidden Form of Egoism!

Altruism is a complete opposite (antipode) of egoism. This is one of many myths about egoism. There is a popular belief that altruists are selfless and give donations, while selfish egoists do not. But what a surprise! The donations of altruists are not selfless! In fact, if you dig deeper into altruism, you can find there unimaginable—egoism!

In 2007, a team of researchers led by psychologist Prof. Ulrich Mayr at the University of Oregon found that “charitable giving activates the areas of the brain associated with *pleasures*.” Your brain releases chemicals of pleasure, such as dopamine, and you feel good. Such narcotic state (so-called “helper’s high”) is felt by the givers when they hear thanks and praises from the recipients. Your brain says, “Donate more, and you will get a reward—another dose of dopamine again.”

The authors make a sensational conclusion that altruists who give to the poor (or even those who *pay taxes*) feel the same pleasant *excitement* as if they eat *food* or have...*sex*! Yes, sex! No kidding!

A stunning revelation! Altruists receive a reward for their donations—pleasure! It means that they give to help the poor not out of *selflessness*, but out of their *self-interest*! Surprise! Altruism is a hidden form of egoism!

What a pity that the poor can't feel the same «pleasant excitement» aroused by imaginary food and sex—they do not give donations to charities and do not pay taxes. As for taxpayers, they are not sexually aroused by paying high taxes, either. On the contrary, it makes them feel impotent facing the harassment of omnipotent IRS.

There is a bright side of it, though. If paying taxes is associated with sex, it's at least a safe sex—taxes can give you headache, not a venereal disease. Moreover, if you are harassed by the IRS, you can sue them for sexual harassment. (Just a crazy thought).

You may call it irony or even sarcasm of history, but altruism, the theory, which called on us to live for *others* and to eradicate egoism, turned out to be based on...egoism! While its proponents turned out to be egoists themselves!

The point is that after the catastrophic collapse of the USSR and communism, the world shuddered when it learned how many millions of lives of *others* were wasted due to experiments with Marxism and altruism! As a result, both theories were discredited, while their proponents lost power over *others*—the very purpose for which these theories were created. Nevertheless, even today, the self-interest of the proponents of Marxism and altruism is still to force everyone to live for *others*, again!

A classic example how self-interests is put above the interests of *others*, which is a definition of egoism!

Does Egoism Exist at the Expense of Others? Does it Care Only about Itself?

Egoism exists at the expense of others! It's another myth that implies that egoism is a parasite. Let's figure it out.

In a real world, natural resources on the planet Earth (the things valuable for life such as sun energy, oil, minerals, drinkable water, nutritional vegetation, etc.) are distributed unevenly. Mental and physical abilities are distributed unequally between humans, as well as between other living beings. Therefore, availability and consumption of these resources are also unequal.

In a real world, everyone gets what comes naturally—according to availability of resources and individual abilities. Elephants need and get more than rabbits. Do they exist at the expense of rabbits? This is the real world in which egoism resides.

In contrast, altruism lives in an artificial world created by Man in his mind. In this egalitarian world, all resources are equally distributed around the planet, while physical and mental abilities are divided between people equally too, as well as between other living beings. In this imaginary world, if there are more of something somewhere or someone gets more, it can happen only at the expense of others. In this absurd world, Saudi Arabia gets more oil at the expense of Europe; the US gets more fertile soil and food at the expense of Ethiopia; and Bill Gates, the genius, gets more wealth at the expense of worthless Joe Blow.

Only in this idealistic, utopian world, egoism is a parasite and gets more at the expense of others, while altruism takes from someone and gives it to someone else, arbitrarily—not according to the availability or the abilities, but based on subjective, ideological principles born in a human mind, not in Nature.

Egoism doesn't care about anyone! Another myth. Egoism says, "I care genuinely for you, your needs and well-being, but only for you and your family. I do not ask others for anything. And others should do the same. Pursuing self-interest, we can help each other reach greater

prosperity and faster than when we are coerced to share with each other.”

Here is a house for sale. Its value is \$200,000. But a buyer offers...\$300,000, while the owner agrees to sell it only for...\$100,000. What is it? Are these two guys crazy? No, they have no self-interest!

Two words—self and interest. Without an interest you won’t lift a finger—you won’t read books, have friends and a family, a job, earn a living and even live. If you lose interest to live, you commit suicide!

As for self, if you do all this stuff not for yourself and your family, but for others, then you don’t exist as a person. In other words, without self-interest, Life stops!

Who has self-interest? Everyone! Those who have and are interested to have more, as well as those who don’t have and are interested to have what others have. So, what’s wrong if you have self-interest—rely only on yourself, work tirelessly, create new businesses, invent new things and, thus, accumulate wealth? What’s wrong if you do it only for yourself and your family? Does it mean that you don’t care for and don’t help others?” In fact, such egoists care for and help others too, but in a different manner. Self-interest compels them to produce more for others; serve others better; and offer things of higher quality and wider variety at more affordable prices to others. As a result, they help others to have what those others need, want and can afford.

What about altruism? It doesn’t care about you or your family, by definition. Its first concern is to put interests (needs and desires) of others over your own interests. Altruism does not produce anything—it takes away things from you and gives them to others. As a result, altruism can’t meet all the needs and desires of others. Everyone loses in the end! Altruism doesn’t earn what it gives away so generously to others? It is not capable of earning—it makes everyone poor! Then who earns all this prosperity? Egoism does!

The principles of egoism and self-interest make some members of a society very wealthy, but they bring unprecedented prosperity to all others. It is not surprising that the middle class in the US, the society organized on the principles of self-interest and egoism, is the wealthiest group of world’s population (the infamous global 1%). It is not

surprising also that the living standard of American welfare recipients (the poor who do not work) is higher than that of an average worker living in 141 (of 213) countries of the world (World Bank's data, 2009).

In contrast, altruism, despite good intentions and promises to bring equality, happiness, abundance and prosperity, brings nothing, but an equal share of misery, deprivation and poverty to almost all members of altruistic societies. The living examples are USSR and other socialist countries. (History 101).

The father of altruism, French philosopher Auguste Comte, predicted that only “those societies in which altruism would triumph over anarchical impulses of individualistic egoism would achieve a lasting and equitable social order.”

Comte was right! Just look at the USSR, the most genuine altruistic society in which equality was legalized, while individualistic egoism was banned. It really achieved “lasting and equitable social order” like...at a Soviet cemetery. Everyone is equal there, everyone is lying silently, orderly and permanently, next to each other on a small but equal parcel of the government-owned land.

The essay “Inconvenient Truth about Egoism” is an updated and expanded version of the essay “Egoism—Wrongly Accused” by Valdemar Malin published in the Internet Journal “Kontinent” on January 23, 2021. For additional information, see the book “Altruism, the Bad, the Good and the Ugly” by Valdemar Malin.

INCONVENIENT TRUTH ABOUT ECONOMIC INEQUALITY AND EQUALITY

VALDEMAR MALIN

*Contradiction between
economic inequality and economic equality
is the reflection of an irreconcilable conflict
between Nature and human mind!
Economic equality is always born on
the ruins of economic inequality!*

Reasons for Economic Inequality and Equality

If you ask what are the reasons for economic inequality, you will hear many explanations that are based on politics or ideology. However, the real reasons, in fact, are related not to ideology, but to biology—to human nature.

Human diversity is one of these reasons! This extraordinary and inexplicable plan created by Nature for all living beings, including humanity, is hard for human mind to comprehend. Why there are billions of human beings on the planet Earth, but each of them, by some reasons, is different. Each of them is unequal in everything—in size and physical abilities, in intellect and mental capacities, in character and talents! How can the bearings of such a society run at all if all the human balls are so unequal? Is Nature so incompetent and wasteful to produce such mind-blowing human diversity carried to almost absurdity?

The gifted and not gifted among us is another reason for economic inequality. Why did Nature divide humanity into two categories? She made some of us to be hardworking, entrepreneurial, decisive, talented

and strong, while she deprived others of these qualities? Why did Nature create envy as one of the most destructive features of human nature and pit not gifted against gifted?

The urge to possess and amass is the most important reason for economic inequality. This strong urge is a distinctive feature of human nature inherited from our primordial ancestors who were constantly preoccupied with one thought—how to survive! How to possess their own territory, and gain food—the more, the better! And, of course, the gifted will always possess, gain and amass more than not gifted will. Millennia come and go, but this urge to possess and amass as much as possible have been staying with us since the birth of Man. As a priceless gift from Nature, it became the most notable trait of human nature that helped humans to survive.

Oh, I am already hearing loud, indignant voices: “But this is greed! This is an appalling trait of human nature! Everyone despises and rejects it!” But is that so?

Let’s imagine that you came to your bank. You need \$1000 to repair your car. But, what a luck! You turned out to be the million’s customer, and the bank offered you a reward—take any sum, from \$1000 to \$1 million! Are you greedy or not greedy? Will you take as much as you need (\$1000), or you will go after \$1 million? Will you be satisfied with what you need, or you will prefer to possess and amass as much as you can?

If you consider yourself not greedy, but take \$1 million, don’t be ashamed! It is hard to deny it, but almost everyone in your situation will act the same way. This assumption doesn’t require verification. Only very few will refuse to take free \$1 million (if not to count those, of course, who are completely mad)!

Why is that? Because to take \$1 million even if you need many times less is natural. No one will be surprised by that! That’s how Nature created us—to amass as much as we can. On the other hand, to refuse to take \$1 million is an incredible act because it is contrary to Nature and human nature!

Some believe also that greed exists only because incompetent Nature made a serious error. Therefore, competent human mind should correct this mistake and irradicate greed!

But what a paradox! Despite the seemingly “incompetent” Nature, which created economic inequality, Life on the planet Earth is maintained for millions of years. Nature doesn’t do anything useless (Aristotle). In contrast, a “competent” human mind, which invented economic equality, managed to bring Life on the planet to the brink of extinction just for several millennia!

In summary, *the contradictions between economic inequality and equality are the reflection of an irreconcilable conflict between Nature and human mind!*

Economic Equality— a Bloody Experiment in the USSR

Maybe socialists know something that Nature doesn’t? Maybe they are smarter than Nature? They want to eliminate billionaires and the rich in an uncontrollable and wasteful capitalist society that allows and encourages economic inequality.

They want to build a new strictly-regulated society without economic inequality and the rich. They want to take away their illegally acquired wealth stolen, as they claim, from the poor. In such society, thanks to economic equality, everyone will become the same and will behave the same way. Therefore, social envy will disappear, and all people will be able to live in harmony with each other.

But here is a problem. People cannot be the same as balls in a ball bearing. They cannot behave the same way as bees or bacteria. People would have been the same and behaved the same if they had been genetically identical. But even monozygotic (genetically identical) twins differ from each other because it is the law of Nature.

Still, limited human mind may sometimes consciously or by mistake ignore this law of Nature. The off-springs of incestuous sexual relations with close blood relatives are very close genetically to their parents. But Nature forbids incest and punish severely for it. Those off-

springs are born sickly and handicapped—physically *deformed*, mentally *deficient* and *unviable*. They cannot survive without medical aid and, therefore, don't live long.

What a striking coincidence! Just look at any socialist society that enforces economic equality and coerces its people to be and behave the same way. Such society is born sickly and handicapped—economically *deformed*, technologically *deficient* and *unviable*. It cannot survive without aid of coercion and violence. Therefore, it doesn't live long. It is a sick and crippled society!

It's not surprising. Such societies live following the theories born in a limited human mind contrary to the recommendations of Nature. This is a reason that may explain the collapse of the socialist and communist world in the 20th century. Nevertheless, proponents of the left ideology are still calling for eradication of economic inequality and the rich and for replacing it with economic equality.

But is economic equality viable at all? The answer to this question was given by a catastrophic collapse of the former USSR—the first state in the world history that established economic equality and eliminated the rich.

For 70 years, the Soviet people were forced to behave and think the same way; love the same things and hate the same people; reject individualism and egoism; embrace selflessness and self-sacrifice; give up private and even personal properties and be content with poverty and destitution.

It was unprecedented revolt against human nature aimed at changing it in order to form a new type of a human being—a new, Soviet man, identical and submissive.

It was unprecedented revolt also against Nature herself! Aimed at correcting “mistakes” of Nature, its goal was to eliminate the rich and to build an indestructible society of economic equality—socialism.

However, from the very beginning, it became clear that this revolt against Nature and human nature was doomed to failure. Therefore, merciless coercion and bloody violence became the main method of persuading the new Soviet man.

From the very birth, the USSR was an economically deformed, technologically deficient and unviable socialist society. That's why

socialism has crashed and the artificially made, seemingly indestructible society of economic equality went down too.

And here Nature taught human mind an unforgettable lesson. Socialism crashed in the USSR after 70 years of uninterrupted brainwashing of the Soviet people. But literally overnight, they embraced individualism and egoism, private property and capitalist free market. They rejected selflessness and self-sacrifice as well. Their petrified, seemingly unalterable socialist society of ultimate equality has disintegrated into two unequal parts, the minority (the rich) appearing at the top, and the majority (the poor)—at the bottom.

Economic inequality came back spontaneously and naturally. Because Nature said so! The former Soviet people who were brainwashed for 70 years unanimously, by free will accepted economic inequality without any coercion or violence!

Human Society Stratifies Like Oil in a Glass of Water

Let's conduct a strange experiment that is seemingly not relevant to the subject of this essay.

Let's pour water into a glass that contains some vegetable oil at the bottom. As a result, a disorderly mixture of oil and water is formed. But almost instantly, a *spontaneous stratification* occurs creating two distinguishable layers, water being below and the layer of oil—always on the top. This advantage was given to oil by Nature—oil is lighter than water. This is the law of gravitation created by Nature!

What if we try to eliminate the stratification replacing it with the uniform mixture in which oil and water almost indistinguishable? Then we have to take away the advantage given to oil by Nature ignoring the law of gravitation. This can be accomplished by violently stirring the mixture.

But Nature cannot be fooled! Oil will always strive relentlessly to get to the top. And as long as violent stirring continues, the mixture remains uniform. Stop stirring, and stratification is restored again. Oil

will appear at the top, while water—below. This is the way Nature operates!

It's hard to believe, but the experiment described above has a lot to do with human society? Because, in a way, human society resembles that glass in which oil is mixed with water.

If a society is given freedom, then a similar *spontaneous stratification* occurs, instantly. Two distinct classes are formed—the rich and the poor, the rich being at the top of social hierarchy and the poor—at the bottom of it. This is a law of Nature!

The rich have an advantage—their wealth! As a rule, it's the result of one regularity—the vast majority of the rich are *gifted* people. Nature awarded them generously with talents, entrepreneurial spirit, decisiveness and boldness to take a risk. The gifted people among the poor are rare because most of them themselves become rich soon. This is human nature!

But about two centuries ago, the left ideology was born. Their ideologues declared that the class stratification had to be eliminated to make a uniform society even if it is necessary to stir society violently and break the laws of Nature. Also, the wealth of the rich had to be taken away—to deprive them of their advantage given by Nature. As a result, the rich will turn into the poor, and the society becomes uniform (everyone becomes poor). Only then the rich and the poor will become equal economically even if it is necessary to go against *human nature* for it.

Human nature can be fooled, of course, but it cannot be changed! There will always be gifted people in a society and those who will be willing to accumulate wealth. Therefore, they must be suppressed in order to maintain the uniformity of society. For forcing the society to accept this kind of economic equality, to use violence is required. But as long as the violence continues, the society remains uniform. Stop the violence, and the class stratification is restored again; economic equality turns spontaneously into economic inequality; and the rich will appear at the top, while the poor—at the bottom.

Economic equality is unceremonious and brutal abuse of not only Nature, but human nature as well. It suppresses the desire to strive for anything; to be responsible for your actions; and it makes you unable to make your own decisions. It corrupts human nature by free handouts for which a heavy price will have to be paid later.

In contrast, economic inequality is a natural state of the existence of Life and an important strategy of Nature. It ensures the survival of all living beings, including humans, because it is the most efficient way to use the limited resources of our small planet. After all, the survival has always been the main goal of continuation of Life on Earth.

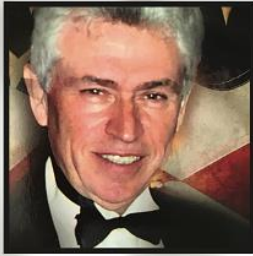
Thus, the idea of *economic equality* was invented by a limited and prone to err human mind. This *unnatural* idea, which works only in theory, is foreign to human nature and defies Nature herself! In practice, to make all people equal economically is possible, but only if all of them are made poor and are coerced to stay poor due to threat of violence! Therefore, such idea is doomed to failure.

In contrast, *economic inequality* is *natural*—it was created by competent, wise Nature. All living beings, including humans, have been practicing it for ages. That's why Nature created incredible human diversity, the gifted and not gifted, the rich and the poor! That's why human nature was enriched with a desire to possess and amass!

Just compare. The USSR was the first human society to try economic equality in practice. All the Soviet people were made *equally* poor. Such society lasted only 70 years and only due to coercion!

In contrast, the USA, the society of extreme economic inequality, will celebrates its 250th anniversary in freedom and unprecedented prosperity!

This essay "Inconvenient Truth about Economic Inequality and Equality" is based on the essay "Eliminate the Rich!" by Valdemar Malin published in the Internet Journal "Kontinent" on June 7, 2020. For more information, see the book "Altruism, the Good, the Bad and the Ugly" by Valdemar Malin.



EGOISM AND INEQUALITY—

WRONGLY CONVICTED



VALDEMAR MALIN

An inconvenient truth about egoism and economic inequality (unequal distribution of resources among humans and among other living beings). And a provocative outlook on how they relate to each other, to human nature and Nature herself.

Egoism and Inequality - Wrongly Convicted (English Edition)

By Valdemar Malin

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