



**KENNESAW STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

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# Commentary

**Title:**

*"On the Thermodynamic  
Properties of Capitalism"*

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December 2023

In “Pre-Death Thoughts of Faust” Nikolai Berdyaev (a famous Russian philosopher of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) reflected on Oswald Spengler’s “The Decline of the West” by lamenting the crisis of Western culture and civilization. In the end of his note, awed at the dystopian presentiment surrounding the physics of that time, he poses the following philosophical and rhetorical question: “The world will perish from inexorable and irresistible yearning for physical equality. And is the pursuit for equality in the social realm the same entropy, the same demise of social cosmos and culture within the uniform distribution of the heat energy, irreversible into the energy creating culture?”

Clearly, in the social and cultural decay of Europe portrayed by Spengler, Berdyaev saw parallels in how both physical and social worlds conformed to thermodynamic processes shaping our Universe. His main argument was that social systems just as physical systems are subject to the laws of thermodynamics and lose their quality “cultural” energy and order with the rise of entropy. But I think that Berdyaev’s message was more subtle and grand. His statement came amidst the plight of the first half of the twentieth century, which witnessed unprecedented warfare and the rise of communistic states. Ruminating over the creeds of total equality initially heard from the outskirts and then within the bosom of the intellectual realm, Berdyaev foresaw a fundamental problem at the level of the very laws that define our Universe. In this note I ponder his message in relation to economic and social systems and argue that “avant-garde” policies of equity and inclusion revered in Western societies only accelerate the demise of the social cosmos envisioned by Berdyaev almost a century ago.

Without going into the technicalities of the laws governing thermodynamic processes, consider the following example: Imagine a cup of coffee sitting on a table. When we think about the coffee in the cup as a system, it is most likely portrayed as something dull and dismal: not much is happening there. Now, let us add some milk. We will notice a sudden change in this system – it has become “alive,” and, with some degree of enthrallment, we can observe peculiar and whimsical somersaults jointly performed by the amalgamating substances. However, as time passes, the blending is complete, and the liquid inside the cup is back to the same vapid homogenous condition. From a thermodynamic standpoint, both the initial and the ultimate states of the described system are chaos, and when an order is created within the system by the milk, its entropy works in such a way as to eliminate this order.

Consider a different example. When our Universe was born, it was a homogenous, boring, and dreary system. However, as stars, planets, gas clouds, quasars and other macroscopic objects of the Universe started to shape, the system became animated in this strange and alluring dance of incomprehensible scale. This is the period in which we live now. We also know that in the distant future, everything in the Universe will implode and disintegrate, and the system will turn into an infinite plateau of homogeneity. The harsh truth of reality is that all turbulences that emerge within any system are bound to fade with time just as the energy of a propelled pendulum.

According to the second and most important law of thermodynamics, entropy of each system increases with time, and the only way to decrease it is to create order by borrowing “energy” from adjacent systems. In the case of coffee, the system gets reanimated by the energy it receives from the milk, and in the case of the Universe, the entropy gradually but relentlessly takes its toll on the massive amount of energy released by the Big Bang. As noted by Berdyaev, systems affected by entropy are not confined to physical systems. Any system, whether economic or social, is also subject to the laws of thermodynamics and an incessant accumulation of entropy.

The examples above show that any development is innately associated with order, and any order is congenitally linked to variety, which pertains to all distributions emerging within order, including normal distributions affecting a stellar panoply of phenomena on our planet (and in the Universe). The fundamental problem with variety is that it creates seemingly unequal outcomes, which shape the cornerstone of perorations expeperated by the apologists of socialism. However, truly equal outcomes can only be observed in the absence of variety or within complete chaos attributable to the extreme states (origin and death) of any system. The “life” of a system is indispensably engraved in inequality of outcomes, which are the result of the variety of order that the system generates. Hence,

we face an existential tradeoff between development/growth but inequality of outcomes and chaos/stagnation but so-called equity, or do we?

History showed that there is only one economic system that generates order and variety at a scale sufficient to bolster economic development: Capitalism. It is not a coincidence that until the industrial revolutions that stampeded across Western Europe over a span of several centuries, the world was in economic stagnation with economic growth rates hovering around zero. It is only with the advent of capitalism that the economic systems started to stir up enough order for the whole civilization to flourish. While the price paid for the rampant development was inequality, everyone was better off. Rich became richer, but poor also became richer – the undisputable fact, which is always obfuscated by the sycophants of socialism. Hundreds of millions of people around the world have been lifted out of poverty because of the order that capitalism has created. Ironic, but exuberant regulation, taxation, and other endeavors by the left aimed to institute so-called distributional justice are hitting the poor the most – the attempts of Western governments to “green” Africa are an excellent example of this flagrant hypocrisy.

The preceding logic shows that the entire constellation of socialistic and communistic arguments goes against the very laws defining our Universe. As a result, all communistic regimes fade and crumble in the wake of accumulating chaos. These days, the Western world faces a new peril coming from the social communism of the radical left who are championed by the apocalyptic horsemen of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Their primary purpose is to destroy the order created by socio-economic systems and submerge society into the vacuum of the “cultural” energy cringing before the entropic climax. By focusing on eliminating differences in outcomes, DEI minions only accelerate entropic accumulation. As entropy reaches its maximum, twilight falls, and our social-economic system descends into a quiescent state within the uniform distribution of energy, which once fueled normal distributions underpinning the progress of the whole civilization.

Within the constraints of the immutable laws of our Universe, the order generated by capitalism, political and social pluralism is the only salvation from the accumulating entropy. Multifarious distributions and variety, which are brought by biology, social interactions, and free markets, create order that boosts development across all spheres of our lives. The attempts to equalize outcomes, whether economic or social (or even biological!), aid entropy in its pursuit to eradicate any remaining order and submerge the system in utter chaos. As the order is being created, normal distributions germinate from the uniform distribution that depicts the initial state of any system. By eliminating outcomes attributable to these distributions, the system swoops back (or forward) into its dreary uniform state, which also eliminates all the progress it has made on its way to maturity. Therefore, we ought to accept the laws of our Universe and allow for the variation in outcomes. As a result, we can be sure that the economic system is “alive” and evolves, pulling all the tails of the respective distributions in the trail of its mean soaring into the future of variety, abundancy, and individual welfare.