

ANARCHISM AND UTOPIA: WILLIAM MORRIS'S *NEWS FROM NOWHERE*

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News From Nowhere is a complex work, requiring interpretation on many levels: literary—historical, biographical, political.¹ This essay will concentrate on the last of these. *News From Nowhere* is unusual among utopian romances in that it was intended to have a direct bearing on the political tactics of a group attempting to bring about the changes in society proposed by the text. This aspect of *News From Nowhere* can best be analyzed when it is considered not as a book, but in its original form, as a newspaper serial. In the following pages I will discuss William Morris's association with the Socialist newspaper *Commonweal*, then trace a debate about Anarchism which took place in its pages. This information will then be used as an introduction to an analysis of the political material in *News From Nowhere*. I hope to establish by this means that *News From Nowhere* was not merely an escapist utopian fantasy (although it was that too), but was, at least in part, a political act. I also wish by these reflections to add something to our knowledge of an interesting text, and of an important author, and perhaps to contribute some information to the discussion of the status of texts located on generic borderlines.

An imaginative work serialized in a newspaper may differ in at least one crucial way from the book form of the same work: it can have a particular, time-bound context in the pages of the newspaper. This serves to focus interpretation immediately—at least for the original audience. *News From Nowhere* contains criticisms of certain tendencies in the emerging English revolutionary movement of the 1890s, especially those of the Anarchists. This layer of meaning, which would have been most important to the first audience of the tale—the readers of the Socialist League's newspaper *Commonweal*—was pointed to by the opening phrases of *News From Nowhere*, which they found on the front page of the January 11, 1890 issue of that paper:

Up at the League, says a friend, there had been one night a brisk conversational discussion, as to what would happen on the Morrow

of the Revolution, finally shading off into a vigorous statement by various friends of their views on the future of the fully-developed new society. . . . there were six persons present, and consequently six sections of the party were represented, four of which had strong but divergent Anarchist opinions. One of the sections, says our friend, a man whom he knows very well indeed, sat almost silent at the beginning of the discussion, but at last got drawn into it, and finished by roaring out very loud, and damning all the rest for fools. . . .²

Later, "our friend" "turned over the many excellent and conclusive arguments which, though they lay at his fingers' ends, he had forgotten in the just past discussion" (1). The "brisk conversational discussion" referred to in these opening lines of *News From Nowhere* is a reference to a debate about Anarchism that took place within the Socialist League in 1889 and 1890, a debate which eventually destroyed the League. The romance itself is, then, literally first of all a vehicle for the presentation of Morris's own "many excellent and conclusive arguments" against Anarchism. This general interpretation has been common since the appearance of the second edition of E. P. Thompson's *William Morris*. What is not often discussed is the level of particularity at which Morris carried on the debate by means of *News From Nowhere*.

In January 1883 Morris had joined Hyndman's (Social) Democratic Federation in January of 1883.³ It was a small political faction with parliamentary ambitions (or, at least, its founder Hyndman had such ambitions), and Marxist tendencies. In December 1884 the Social Democratic Federation split, the majority of the Executive going with Morris, Eleanor Marx, and Edward Aveling into a new organization, the Socialist League. (The split had to do with the unusually difficult personality of Hyndman, the "Tory revolutionary," and a debate over the agitational use of reformist issues.) Like the Social Democratic Federation's *Justice*, the Socialist League's newspaper, *Commonweal*, was funded by Morris, who became the editor of the latter. Continuing to react against Hyndman's "opportunism," Morris took up a position of rigid anti-parliamentarianism which was later to make the League particularly attractive to Anarchists.

Morris's voice dominated the columns of *Commonweal* from its first issues until just before the serialization of *News From Nowhere*. The usual issue of the paper featured a long front-page article by Morris, typically called "Notes on Passing Events," and

frequently also included a second article by him, either an account of an agitational journey to Scotland or Ireland, an editorial, or a short poem. During the weeks that *Commonweal* was serializing Morris's *A Dream of John Ball*, *The Pilgrims of Hope*, or *News From Nowhere*, their installments stood in place of most of his political commentary—stood in place of them in two senses: they took up the room that he would have used for other purposes, and they were another form of that continuing political commentary. Thus his imaginative works published in *Commonweal* were in no sense a diversion from his usual political writings; they were, perhaps not simply, but yet quite directly, political writings in another genre. Habitual readers of *Commonweal*, turning to the third or fourth page of the journal, would thus find either Morris's account of the condition of factory workers in Leeds, say, or an episode of one of the imaginative works, perhaps *News From Nowhere*.

Commonweal was intended for two audiences: for those not yet converted to Socialism it was a vehicle for the propaganda of the cause; it was also an instrument for the publications of debates among members of the Socialist League. After 1888, as the Socialist League gradually filled up with Anarchists, *Commonweal* itself became more and more the organ for the expression of Anarchist and violently anti-trade union views that could only alienate its working class readership.⁴ Morris lost control of the League in 1890.⁵ He continued, however, to cooperate with the Anarchists (publishing, for instance, an editorial in *Commonweal* on June 7, 1890, entitled "Anti-Parliamentary"). *Commonweal*, in turn, carried advertisements for Morris's books until nearly the end of the year. The political background and purpose of *News From Nowhere* can be placed among those dying convulsions of the Socialist League. The story was published in installments in *Commonweal* from January 11 to October 4, 1890, and must have appeared to contemporary readers to have been, minimally, a vehicle for the presentation of Morris's own views about Socialism and the current intra-party struggles (just as *A Dream of John Ball* had also served that purpose when it had been published in installments in *Commonweal* three years earlier).

Let us turn now to particulars. In the April 13, 1889 issue of *Commonweal*, a letter by James Blackwell had noted "the recent decided tendency of the Socialist League towards Communist-Anarchism," and advocated a discussion on the issue based on the text of an Anarchist statement by the Spanish Socialists at their

“Congress of Valence” (117). This was a direct challenge to Morris, who replied on May 18, selecting as the basis of his critique of Anarchism its weakness as a decision-making procedure: “experience shows us that wherever a dozen thoughtful men shall meet together there will be twelve different opinions on any subject which is not a dry matter of fact (and often on that too); and if those twelve men want to act together, there must be give and take between them, and they must agree on some common rule of conduct to act as a bond between them, or leave their business undone” (157). One can hear behind those words many inconclusive meetings of the Socialist League Executive in those Anarchist-haunted months.

There were two letters in the June 22 issue of *Commonweal* (signed by H. Davis and “Anarchist”) rather heatedly arguing against all authority in social organizations. Blackwell rejoined the discussion in the July 6 issue, stating that “We Socialists ought to make up our minds on two things. 1. What sort of society we are trying to realise. 2. How we should act in order to bring it about.” (This, of course, would be practically the argument for *News From Nowhere*.) Blackwell’s comments about authority included the following “concrete example” of the social decision-making process: “A section of the community wishes to build a large common dwelling for the whole village, another section wishes that each family shall inhabit a separate cottage; how do they settle it? Either by the section who want the common dwelling having a common dwelling for themselves and letting the others have the separate cottages, or by one party voluntarily giving way to the other. It would be absurd to try coercion” (211). (Perhaps Morris picked up the word “section” for use in the opening paragraph of *News From Nowhere* from this example of Anarchist rhetoric.)

The following month Morris countered with his own example, contending that “however much the unit of association may be divided, people will have to associate in administering and sometimes there will be differences of opinion as to what should be done. E.g., a community discuss the building of a bridge; some say Ay and some No, and persist in that opinion after all possible arguments have been exhausted: what is to be done: which party is to give way? Our Anarchist friends say it must not be carried by a majority; in that case, then, it must be carried by a minority. And Why? Is there any divine right in a minority? I fail to see it . . .” (August 17, p. 261).

The pages of *Commonweal* in August and September of 1889 were filled with accounts of the great Dock Strike. An actual revolutionary situation seemed to be developing, but it faded again with the approach of winter. In September and October *Commonweal* printed the exceedingly lengthy and detailed "Principles of 'The Co-operative Commonwealth, Central Phalanx, Grass Valley, Nevada Co., Cala., U.S.A.,'" a utopian community scheme. The article was followed by an anonymous editorial comment to the effect that the whole thing seemed too complicated to be practical. The tone of that printed sigh sounds like Morris, who made few other contributions to the paper before a series of articles on "Monopoly" began in December, followed by the first installment of *News From Nowhere* after the New Year.

Thus, when the readers of *Commonweal* saw the opening lines of *News From Nowhere* on the front page of the January 11, 1890 issue, they knew that Morris was making a major (and last) statement concerning the Anarchist faction that had taken over control of his League. The installments of the romance were typically slightly over one page in length and appeared in nearly every issue of the newspaper from the beginning of the year until October. They were often the lead feature, but more usually appeared on the third or fourth page as the principal continuing article. As the spring of 1890 wore on, large parts of the serial took the form of dialogues between "William Guest" and various characters representing the society of the future, particularly "Old Hammond," the 107-year-old historian.

The question of which, if any, character speaks for an author, although complex, is not as complex as usual in a political work like *News From Nowhere*. There are moments when it appears that in this story there are only projections of William Morris to serve as characters. At one point in the text, it even seems that old Hammond is Morris himself, or "William," in a relatively straightforward way.

As for me, I was now looking at him harder than good manners allowed of, perhaps; for in truth his face, dried-apple-like as it was, seemed strangely familiar to me; as if I had seen it before—in a looking-glass it might be, said I to myself.

(53)

Later this identification is weakened, and the possibility is allowed that Hammond may be "William's" great-grandson (96-7). In ei-

ther case the reader is made to understand that Hammond's opinions are very like those of Morris. There is little here of that distance between character, narrator, and author that we expect in more conventional fictional narratives. Many of the characters in a romance of this kind are hardly more developed than the Roman names used to designate interlocutors in eighteenth-century philosophical dialogues. Hammond, like his ancestor, the traveler in More's *Utopia*, is functionally similar to a messenger in Job: he exists in order to tell us what it is that he has seen; he exists in order to answer his visitor's questions about the strange society that he has reached.

These questions and answers have multiple purposes in *News From Nowhere*, serving to carry the allegory into areas that might otherwise be difficult to portray and allowing Morris to make pronouncements about such things as why Communism is superior to, say, State Socialism (107). They allow Morris to carry out his Anarchist correspondent's injunction to describe: "1. What sort of society we are trying to realise. 2. How we should act in order to bring it about." The issue of April 26, 1890 addresses the first point. It contains the following discussion between "William Guest" and old Hammond about decision-making. Hammond chooses to use the example of the bridge, already used by Morris the previous August in his non-fictional debate with the Anarchists:

'Well,' said he, 'let us take one of our units of management. . . . In such a district, as you would call it, some neighbours think that something ought to be done or undone: a new town-hall built; a clearance of inconvenient houses; or say a stone bridge substituted for some ugly old iron one,—there you have undoing and doing in one. Well, at the next ordinary meeting of the neighbours, or Mote, as we call it . . . a neighbour proposes the change, and of course, if everybody agrees, there is an end of discussion, except about details. Equally, if no one backs the proposer—"seconds him", it used to be called—the matter drops for the time being; a thing not likely to happen amongst reasonable men, however, as the proposer is sure to have talked it over with others before the Mote.

(88)

These two alternatives—complete agreement on an issue or complete disagreement—avoid most of the complications of the Anarchist debate, which, after all, turns on the matter of minorities. But already Morris has introduced the notion of "reasonable" con-

duct: the reasonable man would not raise an issue which only he supported.

Morris, or rather Hammond, then turns to the crucial question of minority views:

But supposing the affair proposed and seconded, if a few of the neighbours disagree to it, if they think that the beastly iron bridge will serve a little longer and they don't want to be bothered with building a new one just then, they don't count heads that time, but put off the formal discussion to the next Mote; and meantime arguments *pro* and *con* are flying about, and some get printed, so that everybody knows what is going on; and when the Mote comes together again there is a regular discussion and at last a vote by show of hands. If the division is a close one, the question is again put off for further discussion; if the division is a wide one, the minority are asked if they will yield to the more general opinion, which they often, nay, most commonly do. If they refuse, the question is debated a third time, when, if the minority has not perceptibly grown, they always give way; though I believe that there is some half-forgotten rule by which they might still carry it on further; but I say, what always happens is that they are convinced, not perhaps that their view is the wrong one, but they cannot persuade or force the community to adopt it.

(88)

Again, Morris is saying that there is no need to imagine extreme situations: people are reasonable, or will be, in the Socialist future; rules to deal with unreasonable situations will exist, but they will become "half-forgotten."

"William," obviously a veteran of nineteenth-century Anarchist debates, presses Hammond in exactly this area of the procedures for decision-making under Socialism.

'Very good,' said I, 'but what happens if the divisions are still narrow?'

Said he: 'As a matter of principle and according to the rule of such cases, the question must then lapse, and the majority, if so narrow, has to submit to sitting down under the *status quo*. But I must tell you that in point of fact the minority very seldom enforces this rule, but generally yields in a friendly manner.'

(89)

In Utopia, or Nowhere, minorities will have better manners than they appear to have had within the Socialist League. The very length of this exposition of the decision-making procedures in Nowhere reflects the intensity of the debate on that issue within the

Socialist League, a debate which concerned the society of the future, no doubt, but which more crucially concerned the society of the present, the League itself. Society, in either case, can only exist if people occasionally subordinate their right to differ to their duty to agree. Or so at least Morris seems to be saying, seems to have concluded from the negative effects on the Socialist League of the Anarchists' failure to do so.

The discussion of how to govern the future concludes with a characteristically good-humored defence of democracy.

"But do you know," said I, "that there is something in all this very like democracy. . . ."

Said he: "The only alternatives to our method that I can conceive of are these. First, that we should choose out, or breed, a class of superior persons capable of judging on all matters without consulting the neighbors; that, in short, we should get for ourselves what used to be called an aristocracy of intellect; or, secondly, that for the purpose of safe-guarding the freedom of the individual will, we should revert to a system of private property once more. What do you think of those two expedients?"

"Well," said I, "there is a third possibility—to wit, that every man should be quite independent of every other, and that thus the tyranny of society should be abolished."

He looked hard at me for a second or two, and then burst out laughing very heartily; and I confess that I joined him.

(89)

The third possibility, Anarchism, was the goal that Morris heard urged on him frequently in those twilight days of the Socialist League, and one which we find his representatives here laughing out of court, "very heartily." Since *News From Nowhere* was Morris's last extensive public statement as a member of the Socialist League, such attacks on Anarchism as this direct statement must be taken seriously as being as much a part of the motivation of the book as its negation of nineteenth-century English capitalism, its dream of an "epoch of rest."

The extensive descriptions of the communal organization of the society of the future might also be pointed to as part of Morris's critique of Anarchism. The accounts that we are given of the social structure of *Nowhere* are quite far from Anarchist notions of Utopia. This is perhaps masked for late-twentieth-century readers by the fact that Morris's utopian Communism and Anarchism are nearly equally remote from our post-industrial society, making it easy to elide the crucial differences. But as Patrick Brantlinger has

pointed out: "Far from being a mere 'Arts and Crafts Utopia,' *News From Nowhere* is the best fictional vision of the future according to Marxism in English."⁶ It was, to be sure, a nineteenth-century Marxism, an English Marxism, particularly a Marxism with the humane face of William Morris. This personalizing of a view of the future was given advisedly. Morris himself was aware of the importance of differentiating between his own opinions and those positions of a more general acceptance within his organization. The following statement along those lines appeared in *Socialism, Its Growth and Outcome* (written with E. Belfort Bax and also first published as a serial in *Commonweal*):

It must be understood therefore that in giving this outline of the life of the future, we are not dogmatizing, but only expressing our opinion of what will probably happen, which is of course coloured by our personal wishes and hopes.⁷

Morris's statements about the importance of the author's temperament in the interpretation of utopias can be over-emphasized, especially in view of the conventional portrait of Morris's temperament as that of the "idle dreamer." Neither *News From Nowhere* nor Morris's statement in a letter written in 1888 that "the political position of Socialism is to substitute the relations of persons to persons, for the relation of things to persons,"⁸ is, however, altogether outside the mainstream of Marxist thought, but both of them do place an emphasis on an almost Kantian humanitarianism that is sometimes difficult to find in other social theorists. Marx himself, in *Capital* at least, seemed much more intent on the relations of persons to social systems than on their relations to one another in his occasional speculations about the future of Socialism.⁹ With these shades of difference in mind, it is probably well to approach a historical reading of *News From Nowhere* by taking into consideration the angle recommended by E. P. Thompson: "*News From Nowhere* must not be, and was never intended to be, read as a literal picture of Communist society."¹⁰

Two areas of the story are particularly useful for this analysis: those theoretical conversations with old Hammond about the development of the society of twenty-second-century England and the frequent asides by the narrator comparing what he sees with what he remembers from the nineteenth century. In *News From Nowhere*

we cannot sit back as passive spectators, looking at a pretty never-never land. Always we are conscious of Morris's troubled brow,

his sense of not being part of the scenes through which he moves. He is the link between our experience and the future.¹¹

Let one example of the book's "criticism of capitalist society" stand for many. It is a passionate outburst by the narrator: "suddenly the picture of the sordid squabble, the dirty and miserable tragedy of the life I had left for a while, came before my eyes; and I had, as it were, a vision of all my longings for the rest and peace in the past, and I loathed the idea of going back again"(135). Such explicit comparisons between the allegorical level and the nineteenth-century "real" world to which it is related enforce the traditional satirical point of the utopian fantasy. They act as a commentary on the idealized world of the future, lest we miss the point.

If much of *News From Nowhere* is devoted to a rebuttal of Anarchist notions, it is equally important for this early and vivid use of Marxist theory in an attempt to predict the evolution of English society. The center of this claim of *News From Nowhere* to be at once utopian and scientific Socialism is in the account that old Hammond gives of "How The Change Came" (103). This is a clear rendering of the step-by-step dialectic of social forces resolving themselves into structural change. It is deliberately not an exercise in utopian socialism alone, which Morris and Bax had indicted in *Socialism, Its Growth and Outcome*.

These men thought it possible to regenerate Society by laying before it its shortcomings, follies, and injustice, and by teaching through precept and example certain schemes of reconstruction built up from the aspirations and insights of the teachers themselves. They had not learned to recognise the sequence of events that forces social changes on mankind whether they are conscious of its force or not, but believed that their schemes would win their way to general adoption by men's perception of their inherent reasonableness. They hoped to convert people to Socialism, to accepting it consciously and formally, by showing them the contrast between the confusion and misery of civilisation, and the order and happiness of the world they foresaw.¹²

Both this statement and the careful account of "How The Change Came" testify against any allegation of simplistic utopianism in Morris's work. He did not hope to "convert" society to Socialism through depicting its virtues in *News From Nowhere*, as he did not think that consciousness acts independently of social forces.

He attempted, rather, to influence individuals, to "educate and agitate" so that people might be organized "to take their due places, when the crisis shall come which will force action on us." The description of revolution in *News From Nowhere* will do much toward dispelling the image of Morris as an other-worldly artist who merely touched politics, in a fit of absent-mindedness, as it were, with the tips of his fingers. His utopianism was not of that type. For it is highly unlikely that any but an acute, and above all, an engaged observer could have so accurately depicted the concrete conditions of reform, counter-revolution and revolt given in *News From Nowhere*.

This description may well have been prompted by a contemporary event. The English labor movement had celebrated May Day in 1890 on May 4th with an eight-hour demonstration. *Commonweal* published Morris's commentary on the demonstration in its issue of May 17. The front page of the May 24 issue carried the installment of *News From Nowhere* entitled "How the Change Came." If Morris had indeed taken seriously Blackwell's injunction to consider both the nature of the society of the future and "How we should act in order to bring it about," the description of revolution given in "How the Change Came" may well have been intended to have some influence on bringing about that change. From Morris's point of view, the revolution might already have begun with those great demonstrations of May. The story old Hammond tells is this: toward the end of the nineteenth and in the early part of the twentieth centuries the workers, despairing of freedom and Communism, attempt to ameliorate their living conditions, partially for the sake of amelioration itself and partially so as to make capitalism so costly as to be impractical. In order to accomplish these aims, the workers combine in a "federation of all or almost all the recognized wage-paid employments" (a goal of Morris's ally, Eleanor Marx, who had helped to organize the dock strike of the previous summer). Their initial demands are a shorter work week and a minimum wage as well as price controls on necessary commodities. After a prolonged struggle, they succeed in winning these things. Their success leads to state ownership of certain basic industries. Hammond calls this period that of "State Socialism."

But it did not work smoothly; it was, of course, resisted at every turn by the capitalists; and no wonder, for it tended more and

on October 4, 1890. Morris took his own local group out of the League on November 21, 1890. The "Anarchist-Communists" rapidly brought the League and *Commonweal* to an end in a chaos of plotting, quarreling, and libel. (It is possible that some of the wilder events of the next few years were, in a familiar pattern, financed either directly by the Government or indirectly, through such Tory paymasters as Maltman Barry.¹³ It is not necessary to adopt E. P. Thompson's position of complete hostility to Anarchism in order to see that the persons involved in these events were perhaps unworthy of the support that Morris gave to them.) There were Anarchist attacks on Morris published in the November 24, 1890 issue, and the newspaper suspended weekly publication at the end of the month. Morris had other things to do. He maintained the Hammersmith Socialist organization; he founded the Kelmscott Press at the beginning of 1891.

We have seen that Morris continued in the serialized parts of *News From Nowhere* a debate on the theory and practice of Socialism which had begun in the editorial columns of *Commonweal*. There are other layers of meaning in *News From Nowhere*, some literary, some personal, but the story was made to carry much political material which, in the pages of *Commonweal*, wove in and out of the fictional text from the other, "non-fictional," columns. Morris's utopia was an answer to Blackwell's questions about the kind of society the Socialists were aiming at and how they should go about bringing that society into being. Not only did it take part of its shape from the debate in which it was a powerful intervention, but that shape was also modified by other matters occurring during the period of its serialization. It is a singularly engaged utopian romance. The story of the making of *News From Nowhere* should also give us some material for reflection on the nature of the literary. In this case all the old questions about the independence and purity of the text seem more questionable than ever. Of course, the world of utopian narrative presents us with a political content more overt than many other fictional narratives. It comes at us in blocks of expository prose, rarely in narrative, more rarely still as the actions of characters. Set in the pages of *Commonweal*, the episodes and speeches of *News From Nowhere* were in themselves political acts, a last-ditch effort against the Anarchists who were seizing control of Morris's Socialist League, an apologia for a vision of the world as it might be, a plan for action

that was not followed. Later, when it was issued as a book, *News From Nowhere* became something else: literature.

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NOTES

¹ For another aspect of *News From Nowhere*, see my "The Pleasures of William Morris's Twenty-Second Century," in *The Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies*, forthcoming.

² William Morris, "News From Nowhere," in *The Collected Works of William Morris* (London: Longmans Green and Company, 1912), 16:5. Page numbers cited in the text refer to this edition and volume.

³ Chushichi Tsuzuki, *Hyndman and British Socialism* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1961).

⁴ E. P. Thompson, *William Morris, Romantic to Revolutionary* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1955), 551.

⁵ Thompson, 655.

⁶ Patrick Brantlinger, " 'News From Nowhere': Morris's Socialist Anti-Novel," *Victorian Studies* 19 (1975): 39. Morris criticism is split into opposing camps: those who wish to read him as an "Arts and Crafts" fantasy writer and those who see him primarily as a Marxist. Brantlinger has, I think, found the latter camp rather too comfortable, exaggerating the extent to which the form of *News From Nowhere* deviates from that tradition to the genre of utopian romance. One moment of a proper consideration of Morris's work must indeed be that in which his commitment to Marxist theories is recognized, and it is all too easy to move from that recognition to a relative lack of interest in the elements of continuity in Morris's total artistic and literary output. If I am correct in my judging Brantlinger to have done so, he at least has good company in this: A. L. Morton, E. P. Thompson, and Paul Meier, among others. The opposite camp is represented by Blue Calhoun, Frederick Kirchoff, and Charlotte Oberg. I have tried to steer a middle course, placing the political works in their political context without forgetting Morris's previous development as a practitioner of literary art quite within a mainstream of Victorian culture. In doing so I have found guidance in an early essay: "William Morris and the Poetry of Escape," by Oscar Maurer, Jr. in *Nineteenth-Century Studies*, ed. Herbert Davis, William C. DeVane and R. C. Bald (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1940).

⁷ William Morris and E. Belfort Bax, *Socialism, Its Growth and Outcome* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1893), 259.

⁸ William Morris, *The Letters of William Morris*, ed. Philip Henderson (London: Longmans Green, 1950), 283.

⁹ Karl Marx, *Capital*, ed. Frederick Engels (New York: International Publishers, 1967), 1:60. For later Marxist statements on this point, tending more toward Morris's position, see *Existential Marxism in Postwar France* by Mark Poster (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1975).

¹⁰ Thompson, 806.

¹¹ Thompson, 804.

¹² Morris and Bax, 17-8.

¹³ Tsuzuki, 83.

News from Nowhere (1890) is a classic work combining utopian socialism and soft science fiction written by the artist, designer and socialist pioneer William Morris. It was first published in serial form in the *Commonweal* journal beginning on 11 January 1890. In the novel, the narrator, William Guest, falls asleep after returning from a meeting of the Socialist League and awakes to find himself in a future society based on common ownership and democratic control of the means of production. In this "News from Nowhere: Morris's Socialist Anti-Novel." *Victorian Studies* 19.1 (1975): 35-49. Brantlinger begins his article explaining what art is and argues that Morris believes it is useless. He discusses how in *News from Nowhere*, Morris creates a socialist future in hopes that popular art will one day be popular but then suggests that even in the future art will have no purpose, much like labor. Therefore, Morris's novel cannot fall under the Utopian Past genre. 4. Holzman, Michael. "Anarchism and Utopia: William Morris's *News from Nowhere*." *ELH* 51.3 (1984): 589-603. Holzman article argues that Morris's novel cannot be an escapist utopian fantasy because it was a political act during that time. "Anarchism and Utopia: William Morris's *News from Nowhere*." *ELH* 51.3 (1984): 589-602. Web. Latham, David. "Hope and Change: Teaching *News from Nowhere*." *The Journal of William Morris Studies* (Summer 2007): 6-24. Web. Ball and Dagger. News from Nowhere study guide contains a biography of William Morris, literature essays, quiz questions, major themes, characters, and a full summary and analysis.