

**AS SOON AS THIS BOOK CLOSES THE  
REVOLUTION STARTS.**

**TECHNO FEUDALISM**

**What Killed Capitalism**

**by**

**Yanis Varoufakis, 2023.**

**You may recall the song of Alex Glasgow, “As Soon As This Pub Closes The Revolution Starts”. After every verse he has another pint.**

The Revolution? You can guess.

Could Varoufakis have been inspired by that song? His book certainly uses theatrical devices to frame the story he tells: Greek myth and, most significantly, a chat with his old Dad. But no pints I am sure.

It is an important book. Varoufakis almost makes me nostalgic for good old fashioned capitalism, a time when I could work out who the bastards were and what they were doing to us. Living recently in what for me has been a confusing period making me unsure of how and why government was less and less accountable to the voters and society was more and more required to Do It Yourself I needed some serious sense-making.

This book provides it.

I doubt that I am the only one who struggles with the big words of economists and Varoufakis gives us some new ones, but towards the end of the book they made sense to me. Well, I think so.

Rent and Cloud are key words. So are Serf and Feudal. Not difficult words in themselves, but, even although we may think that the latter two belong to the history books they are key to how we need to see ourselves in a post capitalist world.

A Cloud economy easily escapes our notice. We do not realise that when we send messages to each other electronically we are informing the clever watchers about our interests and preferences. Does this mean Government by Amazon? Are we unseeing serfs?

By the way, how much tax does Amazon Pay? Is it unionised?

As a kid I loved painting clouds, they naturally changed shape and colour and they were difficult to define. No teacher could tell me that I had got it wrong. Today we conduct our ordinary lives under or even within clouds of which we are unaware and we are unable to easily discover shape and extent.

The knowledge that we unknowingly provide about ourselves is rented to those who can benefit from it. The charge is small, but the number of charges is large. We have an unseen economy.

Yes banks and chancellors of the exchequer play the old game but they might almost be termed 'the walking dead' because their relevance is not what it used to be.

And we economic serfs are now serving new feudal cloud lords while still believing that capitalism is our enemy.

Varoufakis provides us with a narrative that both illuminates and convinces.

Things have changed.

What to do about it? For Varoufakis doing nothing is not an option. He wants a revolution.

Ah, that word again.

Expanding upon his earlier writings, particularly *Another Now*, 2020, he provides us with a detailed social and political constitutional framework that emphasises inclusive decision making. It looks good.

I am reminded of Robert Peel's nine Principals of Law enforcement. They were the basis in 1829 for the establishment of the Metropolitan Police and their theme was policing by consent. Principle Seven says, "The police are the public and the public are the police."

Substitute the word 'government' for 'police' and we have a sense of what Varoufakis is suggesting.

But still we have a question. How do we bring about a revolution?

That word always takes me back to 1789. I guess that the French Revolution just has to come to mind when we think about massive social and political change.

We might say that this particular Revolution was caused by crap government and we can certainly replicate that. But once the Ancient Regime was overthrown what happened next? By 1804 France, having given us the word 'terroir', had an Emperor.

It and so much of Europe also acquired the Code Napoleon that we might almost think of as dictated democracy. Well, perhaps.

As you can guess I am not so much reviewing this book by Varoufakis as trying to communicate what he has made me think.

Yes, we need a revolution and afterwards the constitution he proposes looks pretty fine, but there is many a slip between cup and lip.

That prompts a thought, come on Yanis, buy us a pint or three. You make us think and we cannot do that without sustenance.

And while imbibing perhaps we might have some great ideas about making it all happen.

So perhaps some strong black coffee to follow the pints.

Cliff Jones, a couple of hours to 2024.

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