

in the twentieth century. The editor, Thomas Hammond, compares the Outer Mongolian takeover of the early 1920's with those of Eastern Europe and North Korea in the 1940's. For him a *significant* event for the revision of the Marxian economic-class-conflict theory was to be found in the statement made by Lenin in 1920 before the Second Congress of the Comintern:

It would be incorrect to say that the capitalistic stage of development is inevitable for backward peoples -- With the help of the proletariat of the more advanced countries, backward countries can skip over to a Soviet system and arrive at communism through special stages of development, avoiding the capitalist stage of development.^6

Clearly the importance of the Leninist revision was not to be handled solely in terms of past documents (Danto), but in the reformulation of theory to meet new present and future situations.

(3) We come now to what is the most widely evoked approach to historical importance, namely *consequential* significance. A given event is said to be important when other events which can be shown to follow from it are seen as significant in their own right. The two previous types, the moral and the theoretical, seem to be special cases of the consequential view. Danto rightly takes causal analysis to be important for determining what may count as an outcome of a given antecedent event. But it is important to note as far as the work of historians is concerned that to speak of *significant* consequences may require taking into account such features as the reasons agents give for their actions, evidences of behavior directed toward future ends, and even the claim that some events are important because they are *humanly* significant.^7 The Russian Revolution and the Nazi use of genocide are clear modern examples of the last point. These events are not only important because of their consequences causally but because of the way they have indelibly influenced our modern historical consciousness.

The drastic reduction in population during the fourteenth century by the Black Death established its importance immediately. So Danto summarizes the economic consequences: "We may say that the significance of the Black Death was that it created a sellers' market in labour, hence a rise in wages, hence contributed to the break-up of the feudal structures of tied labour."^8 Danto might well agree that if we were doing religious history we might consider the impact of the plague upon late medieval man's perception of his own temporal nature and his concern with salvation. Or, in view of the coming Reformation, the historian might consider its influence on the development of theology. The "causal" connections would then be closer to what we might call "reasonable implications."

Certainly no one questions the "human" significance of the Russian Revolution or the Black Death. What is important to notice is that the historian's actual use of the consequence view is not limited to a strict causal analysis. Often a complex set of inferences about the process of events is required if narratives are to be explanatory. The historian displays the evidence for the significance of certain events by establishing selected *relationships* between the past, present and future. Danto is not unjustified in expressing concern about those philosophies of history which speculate