

INTRODUCTION

There are many human adventures—as many as there are men and women on this earth. There are over six billion of us crawling over the face of the earth, eating, sleeping, working, loving, pursuing our individual life-adventures as best we are able. We are told that our lives are what we make of them. But North American white males will have quite different adventures than South African blacks or Hindu peasants, or, for that matter, North American white women. In spite of these differences, we all share in the larger Human Adventure of our species, an Adventure that began when our ancestors left the forest for a communal life on the plains, began using fire, cultivating plants, and building cities, an Adventure that is continuing today in humanity's struggles for a world of peace and social justice.

There are many human adventures, but there is only one Human Adventure. This book is an examination of this Human Adventure, from the ancestral communism of our earliest human ancestors through the present time and down to the seventh generation of our children and grandchildren. Although this may seem to be an unworkably broad and amorphous topic, it is an important one. Most of our energies are devoted to our individual adventures, to our careers, families, and electronic gadgetry, but there are good reasons for devoting some attention to the larger significance of human life. Particularly in troubled times like the present, when our species is threatening itself with extinction, we need to consider both where we are going and whence we have come. As human beings, we are all interdependent and what affects some of us necessarily affects us all. The Human Adventure, in other words, directly impinges on our own lives, and we need to understand this in order to live as full and enriching lives as possible.

For many, America is a paradise, a harmless place where one can pursue one's pleasures without having to worry about others. But however much we want to turn our backs and ignore the oppression and suffering in the world, we cannot. Even leaving aside the possibility of nuclear holocaust and eco-catastrophe, young men being sent to foreign lands to kill and be killed, young women being assaulted and abused in their own homes, and careers for which both are preparing simply may not be there.

Thus, although we may think we can simply pursue our own interests without any concern for others or for the larger world in which we live, this is not the case. For our own survival and well being, we must understand the world in which we live.

We must understand the Human Adventure to enrich our own individual human adventures. We have all been told—by the Church, the Market, the Schools, or our Parents—that there are particular ways we should lead our lives, that we should earn

lots of money so that we can buy Porsches and vacation at Club Med, that we should love America and hate and fear Communism, or that we should be good heterosexuals and hate homosexuality. Perhaps we do want to lead our lives in these ways, but perhaps also we do so only because we are not aware of the alternatives. We can only know what is right for us if we carefully consider the alternatives. If we fail to do this, we run the risk of leading inauthentic lives, of following scripts that other people have written for us (telling us that these scripts are written by God, by Human Nature, or whatever), rather than of leading our lives the way we decide is appropriate for us.

We all carry around with us a lot of ideological baggage given us by our parents, the schools, the church, and the media. Many of us don't even know we are carrying this baggage, just as a pollywog doesn't know it is living in water. The only way we can be aware of the baggage we carry is by considering the baggage others carry. In the course of the Human Adventure, human beings in various societies have developed a wide variety of different life styles and even within our own society there are alternative ways of thinking and living. Unless we know about these, and unless we understand the nature of the world in which we live, we are not really free in our personal or political lives.

Young men and women in the United States, however, are poorly prepared to understand what is actually going on in our world. Essential facts and ideas are not taught in our schools. Myths and slogans are too frequently substituted for the critical analysis necessary to understand reality.

This book, then, is not intended simply as a story to be read for momentary amusement. It is intended as an exploration of the facts, ideas, and analyses essential for understanding the Human Adventure. Our approach will be scientific, in that it will involve the critical evaluation of alternative theories about the nature of social reality in an effort to determine which is closest to the truth. Science is too important to be left to the experts; the scientific method can and must be used by anyone who wants to understand the nature of the reality in which they are immersed.

The purpose of the book is to encourage the reader to develop a critical and skeptical attitude toward social scientific fact and theory, and toward our popular conceptions of America and the modern world. Clearly, such a task, which may involve a total re-structuring of one's thinking about the world, cannot be completed within a few weeks or months. The book is intended as an invitation to begin a process of intellectual growth which, once initiated, really has no end.

The facts we will be considering may seem distasteful, and the ideas new and unnecessarily complex and confusing. But, as Marx warned those "who zealously seek the truth":

There is no royal road to science, and only those who do not dread the fatiguing climb of its steep paths have a chance of gaining its luminous summits. (Marx 1867:21)

Before one can even begin to ascend these steep paths, however, one must struggle through the swamp of conflicting facts and theories promulgated by our schools and mass media. In many ways, this swamp is even more difficult and confusing than the climb itself, and it is easy to lose one's way. One needs a map which will not only show where we want to go and how to get there, but also the alternate paths which may seem attractive at first but lead nowhere.

My approach is basically Marxist (though many Marxists may not see it as such). The problems we face as a species flow from the present system of class rule, capitalism. The solution is revolution. If our species is to survive, we must complete the world revolution that is currently in progress. I am optimistic that we can do so, and I hope my book will contribute to the clarity of purpose necessary for this task.

Anyone wishing to understand the modern world must address Marx for he remains the most powerful and enduring critic of bourgeois society. Yet Marx alone is not enough. It was Lenin who applied Marxism to the twentieth century and developed the organizational form—the vanguard party—that actually demonstrated the possibility of overthrowing capitalism. As Stalin noted:

Scores and indeed hundreds of times in the course of the centuries the labouring people have striven to throw off the oppressors from their backs and to become the masters of their own destiny. But each time, defeated and disgraced, they have been forced to retreat, harbouring in their breasts resentment and humiliation, anger and despair, and lifting up their eyes to an inscrutable heaven where they hoped to find deliverance. The chains of slavery remained intact, or the old chains were replaced by new ones, equally burdensome and degrading. Ours is the only country where the oppressed and downtrodden labouring masses have succeeded in throwing off the rule of the landlords and capitalists and replacing it by the rule of the workers and peasants. You know, comrades, and the whole world now admits it, that this gigantic struggle was led by Comrade Lenin and his Party. The greatness of Lenin lies above all in this, that by creating the Republic of Soviets he gave a practical demonstration to the oppressed masses of the whole world that hope of deliverance is not lost, that the rule of the landlords and capitalists is shortlived, that the kingdom of labour can be created by the efforts of the labouring people themselves, and that the kingdom of labour must be created not in heaven, but on earth. [as quoted by Cameron 1987:25]

But Stalin's Marxism-Leninism, while essential for defeating Nazi imperialism, is no longer adequate for dealing with the changing reality of the twenty-first century. We must incorporate the ecological consciousness of the Green movement, the feminist consciousness of the international women's movement, and the theological consciousness of the Central American revolution into the proletarian science of Marxism. And we must do so without losing any of the power and clarity of purpose of Marxism-Leninism. In short, we must do for Marxism-Leninism what Lenin did for Marxism. Only then will we have a social science capable of illuminating the complex class struggles of the modern epoch and guiding our species into the next phase of the Human Adventure.

In this task, there are five areas that must be addressed.

First, there are issues of gender raised by feminism. We need to recognize that since the dawn of civilization women have borne the brunt of class oppression. There is in fact a global war against women (Heise 1989), and women have played crucial roles in struggling against oppression. As Marx noted,

Anyone who knows anything of history knows that great social changes are impossible without the feminine ferment. Social progress can be measured exactly by the social position of the fair sex. (Marx to Kugelmann, December 12, 1868, as quoted by Rosenberg 1989:7)

The great social changes which are imperative if our species is to survive cannot be effected without the full participation of women. Men cannot free themselves from class, racial, and ethnic oppression without the full participation of women, and without themselves participating fully in the struggle against gender oppression. In

this struggle, the data and perspectives of anthropology are crucial, for anthropology not only reveals the diverse forms of patriarchal oppression, it also reveals the existence of nonpatriarchal societies, societies in which women have enjoyed high and respected status and full control over their productive and reproductive powers. Biology is not destiny, and male chauvinism does not flow from human nature, but rather human greed.

Second, there is the issue of Eurocentrism. While it is true that Europeans led the world into the modern age of industrial civilization, it is also true that Europeans did this on the backs of Africans, Asians, and Native Americans. Europeans developed their industrial civilization by plundering the rest of our species, and justified this plunder by constructing false ideologies of racism and Western superiority. But while Europeans led us into our current crisis, Third World peoples, both in the oppressed nations and within the imperialist nations, are playing crucial roles in leading us out of the crisis, in the struggle for a more humane social order. The Chinese, Cuban, Vietnamese, Central American, South African, and Palestinian revolutions are playing central roles, as is the struggle of African Americans in the liberation struggle in North America. Here again, the data and perspectives of anthropology are important. For while 19th century anthropology was guilty of constructing elaborate theories of racial superiority and inferiority, 20th century anthropology has overturned them and stripped them of their scientific respectability. The anthropological perspective of cultural relativism, which insists on understanding different cultures in their own terms, is also crucial. It is no longer sufficient to speak of Western civilization as the pinnacle of human achievement. It is essential to recognize the contributions to our past, present, and future made by Africans, Asians, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans and Australians, and other indigenous peoples.

Third, we need to consider very seriously the ecological critique of modern industrial civilization, in both its capitalist and socialist forms. It is becoming increasingly clear that our planet simply cannot endure industrialism in its present form. Marx is sometimes accused of professing a blind faith in industrialism, but this is not entirely true, for Marx did speak against the destructiveness of bourgeois industrialism for both human beings and the environment:

Capitalist production, by collecting the population in great centres, and causing an ever increasing preponderance of town population, on the one hand concentrates the historical motive power of society; on the other hand, it disturbs the circulation of matter between man and the soil; *i.e.*, prevents the return to the soil of its elements consumed by man in the form of food and clothing; it therefore violates the conditions necessary to lasting fertility of the soil. By this action it destroys at the same time the health of the town labourer and the intellectual life of the rural labourer. But while upsetting the naturally grown conditions for the maintenance of that circulation of matter, it imperiously calls for its restoration as a system, as a regulating law of social production, and under a form appropriate to the full development of the human race. In agriculture as in manufacture, the transformation of production under the sway of capital means, at the same time, the martyrdom of the producer; the instrument of labour become the means of enslaving, exploiting and impoverishing the labourer; the social combination and organisation of labour-processes is turned into an organised mode of crushing out the workman's individual vitality, freedom, and independence. The dispersion of the rural labourers over larger areas breaks their power of resistance while concentration increases that of the town operatives. In modern agriculture, as in the urban industries, the increased productiveness and quantity of the labour set in motion are bought at the cost of laying waste and consuming by disease labour-power itself. Moreover, all progress in capitalist agriculture

is progress in the art, not only of robbing the labourer, but of robbing the soil; all progress in increasing the fertility of the soil for a given time, is a progress toward ruining the lasting sources of that fertility. The more a country starts its development on the foundation of modern industry, like the United States, for example, the more rapid is this process of destruction. Capitalist production, therefore, develops technology, and the combination together of various processes into a social whole, only by sapping the original sources of all wealth—the soil and the labourer. (Marx 1867:505-507)

From the standpoint of a higher economic form of society, private ownership of the globe by single individuals will appear quite as absurd as private ownership of one man by another. Even a whole society, a nation, or even all simultaneously existing societies taken together, are not the owners of the globe. They are only its possessors, its usufructuaries, and, like *boni patres familias*, they must hand it down to succeeding generations in an improved condition. (Marx 1894:776)

Fourth, we must consider the issues raised by the emergence of liberation theology. We Marxists are atheists, and will no doubt remain so. But as Machovec (1972) has pointed out, Marx developed his atheism as a critique of the then-prevalent theological ideas which served to legitimate oppression, not as a dogma of the non-existence of God. As theological conceptions change, our attitudes toward them must also change. The theology of liberation is as fundamentally opposed as Marxism itself to the theology of oppression. Marxism cannot afford to ignore the new theological concepts and new questions posed by liberation theology.

Finally, we must absorb the positive achievements of bourgeois science. Bourgeois social science is a bundle of contradictions. While it seeks to legitimate and serve the status quo, it must also observe the canons of science. It embodies, therefore, both conservative and progressive tendencies. Bourgeois social science has accomplished much of value since Marx's time. It has provided scientific documentation to refute the doctrine of racial superiority and inferiority. It has made spectacular fossil discoveries illuminate the origin and evolution of our species. It has documented the antiquity and histories of Afro-Asiatic and Native American civilizations. The concepts and methodology of bourgeois social science may be inadequate as alternatives to Marxism, but they are indispensable as supplements to Marxism, and must be incorporated into Marxist theory.

In particular, anthropological perspectives are crucial in this re-thinking of Marxism. Both cultural relativism and the comparative perspectives need to be incorporated into the Marxism of the twenty-first century.

Before such a science can be developed, however, it is necessary to clear away a number of popular misconceptions about the nature of the modern world, about Marxism, and about social science in general. These tasks are addressed in the first two chapters.

Chapter One, "The Great American Myth," challenges commonly-held assumptions about the nature of U.S. society, the role of U.S. in the world, and the "Soviet threat." Alternative views are presented as equally reasonable and more realistic. This is done to introduce a critical stance toward the ideology of Americanism and anti-Communism.

This attempt to erode the hegemony of bourgeois ideology is continued in Chapter Two, "Blind Men, Elephants, and Polish Revolutionaries: The Development of Social Science." Broadly speaking, the various theories that social scientists have proposed to try to understand the human condition fall into two categories. There are

conservative theories which ruling classes promulgate to legitimize their rule and prevent others from understanding what is happening, and there are radical theories which are used by oppressed people to try to change society. The various orthodox schools of social science such as functionalism, structuralism, and neoclassical economics are viewed as so many blind men, each mistaking their portion of the sociocultural elephant for the whole. Marx, by contrast, attempted to view the total elephant and understand its laws of motion. But Marxism has been challenged by new radical theories as well as by the conservative status quo. Marxism, I believe, remains valid, but needs to be re-thought in the light of these challenges.

Chapter Three, "Toward an Anthropological Marxism," attempts to reformulate Marxist theory in the light of modern social science fact and theory, in particular the challenges from ecology, feminism, and liberation theology. Basic Marxist concepts such as mode of production, exploitation, and class struggle are re-stated in terms of the basic components of all ecological systems: matter, energy, and information. In Chapter Three I propose a new mode of analysis, social thermodynamics, as a way to generalize Marx's labor theory of value to non-capitalist economic situations.

Chapter Four, "Institutional Alternatives," examines the functional alternatives to the key institutions of bourgeois society, the market, the state, the church, and the family. Anthropological data shows that these are not universal features of social life and that the needs met by these institutions are met in different ways in other societies.

In Chapter Five, "Prehistoric Revolutions," I discuss the major transformations that our species has gone through in developing from our ape ancestry through feudalism. There are three such revolutions. The Human Revolution involved the self-creation of humanity from ape-like ancestors. The Neolithic Revolution involved the development of plant and animal domestication and sedentary village life. The Urban Revolution involved the development of civilization and the division of the human community into rulers and ruled. These prehistoric revolutions form the backdrop for the emergence of the modern world.

The next three chapters of the book deal with the modern world.

Chapter Six, "The Revolutionary Bourgeoisie," presents Marx's analysis of capitalism. Marx saw the modern bourgeoisie as a revolutionary and progressive force in history, for it overthrew feudalism, developed modern science, and unleashed the tremendous productive potential of social labor. At the same time, however, it harnessed this productive capabilities of humanity to an inhuman force: capital.

Chapter Seven, "The Bourgeoisie in Triumph and Decay," examines modern monopoly capitalism and how it forces the productive potential of society into irrational areas, such as the arms race, advertising, and consumerism, while ignoring basic human needs of the population. Capitalism thereby fosters poverty, racism, sexism, crime, and alienation. In so doing, capitalism becomes a fetter on the further development of our species, and the greatest danger to the well being of our species.

Chapter Eight, "World Revolution of the Proletariat," examines the solution: socialist revolution. This chapter presents a major restatement of Marx's theory of revolution. Rather than viewing the world in terms of nations at various levels of economic development, we must examine how the World Capitalist System is undergoing a revolutionary transformation into World Socialism. This World

Capitalist System is composed of, not advanced and backward nations, but Overdeveloping Capitalist Nations and Underdeveloping Capitalist Nations. The Overdeveloping Capitalist Nations in North America, Western Europe, and Japan have developed affluent societies based on centuries of plunder of Third World nations. The Underdeveloping Capitalist Nations of Africa, Asia, and Latin America continue to live in poverty resulting from their colonial heritage and continued plunder by the Euro-American nations. Out of this global system of inequality and injustice, a new world is emerging. The leading forces in this transformation are the Protosocialist Nations, such as the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba, which have broken free from world imperialism and have embarked on independent roads of national development. Modern class struggle takes different forms in each of these three types of modern society, but the end result will be a communist world, exactly as Marx predicted.

In my Concluding Remarks, "With Marx and Jesus," I explore some of the implications of the Human Adventure of our species for our personal lives. In this, I draw upon the thought of Jesus, one of the earliest communist revolutionaries, as well as the scientific communism of Marx and Lenin.

My views are profoundly critical of the present state of the world and of the course upon which our nation has embarked. Critics of U.S. society are often asked why we don't move to Russia if we don't like it here. To ask such a question, however, is to misunderstand what America is all about.

Patriotism means more than simply waving a flag on the Fourth of July. Patriotism, I believe, means living one's life according to the highest ideals of our nation.

But our nation has embarked upon a course of injustice and self-destruction. We are not the first wealthy and powerful nation to do so. Long ago, the Hebrew prophets spoke out forcefully against the conventional wisdom of the day:

Hear this, you leaders of the house of Jacob
and rulers of the house of Israel,
who despise justice
and distort all that is right,
Who build Zion with bloodshed,
and Jerusalem with wickedness.
Her leaders judge for a bribe,
her priests teach for a price,
and her prophets tell fortunes for money;
Yet they lean upon the LORD and say,
"Is not the LORD among of us?
No disaster will come upon us."
Therefore because of you
Zion will be plowed as a field;
Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble,
and the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets.

Micah 3:9-12

To support our government in unjust and incorrect policies is false patriotism. To fail to speak out against national injustice is to ignore our responsibility to our nation and to ourselves.

I did not arrive at my views easily; they are the product of over thirty years of search and study. I have sought out the views of anti-communists as well as communists, of the political right and center as well as the left, of establishment

scholars as well as the crackpots. I have explored many false paths, but I believe I have traveled in the right direction. I do not set forth my views here as God's Truth, merely as the best view of reality that I have been able to find, and one worthy of consideration.