

Review: Tom Bramble, *Introducing Marxism: A Theory of Social Change, Socialist Alternative, Melbourne, VIC, 2015*

Pages: 245

Devil Promulgates Doctrine of Devils

Marxist University lecturer Tom Bramble regurgitates broken Marxist-Leninist philosophy and tries to make it relevant to the 21st century and Australian society. He fails miserably.

The two core axioms of: 1) “surplus” value (SV) over wages as theft, and 2) human nature being inherently good are false:

1) Employers do not live in an economic bubble and, except in cases of cartel or other anti-competition behaviours, aren't able to determine SV. They can only extract what markets will bear. Furthermore, SV consists of a fair wage for worker input, *plus* a fair *return* for the owner from risks taken and work to create and manage businesses which employ people, without which wages and total economic value would be nil! If effect, he has equivocated “surplus and theft” with capital return, which they are not.

If the counter argument is bosses break rules and are corrupt (which some are), there ought to be strong anti-trust laws in place, as well as enforcement, which is a different argument. Such a charge though destroys his other assumption; the inherent goodness of man.

He assumes modern technology is agnostic to economic systems, but without a profit incentive, which sane economist believes a planned economy would have invented the computer or smartphone for example? History shows soviet countries struggled to feed starving populations and simply copied capitalist technology, whilst squandering huge state resources on policing, confining, and murdering ‘counter-revolutionaries’ in their eternal ‘revolution’.

2) Tom believes in the mythology of evolution and deep time, that long ago in an imaginary prehistoric world, primitive ape-like ‘men’ unburdened by money and capitalism lived in a socialist utopia. It was

only after they ‘evolved’ (no scientific evidence for this is provided) into *Homo sapiens*, that capitalism and class structures were created. This false creation story ignores man as a designed being, fully formed by God as told in Genesis 1 in the Bible.

His supporting argument is because there are many different cultures and ideas, no fixed human nature exists. This is a plain red herring as fixed sinful human nature is quite capable of existing in many different cultures, depending on how close or far they align with Biblical principles. The evil of atheist-socialist systems like the Soviet Union and North Korea for example is on another level than the U.S., which still has some vestiges of Christianity and thus human rights left.

His face-saving conclusion that “One Country Socialism” is impossible is both illogical and self-defeating, for if socialism in one country only fails, a worldwide ‘country’ would suffer exactly the same fate.

History has proven that spreading failed socialism to more countries only multiplies its failures; global socialism would be the opposite of universal brotherhood in a world of plenty, it would be a dystopian gulag of permanent want. However, capitalism proves itself viable since it *can* survive on its own. At its core, socialism is a parasite, moving from host to host till no more blood is left to suck.

Tom also goes to great lengths avoiding what a *true* socialist state would look like because he doesn’t know; it is reached only after the ‘workers’ have united and shed the requisite amount of burgeoise blood and remade in this image.

Stalin is anathematised, but is Tom to deny his Soviet Union was not truly socialist? He doesn’t make a whisper of Mao, Pol Pot, Kim Il Sung, Fidel Castro, etc., for obvious reasons. With so many provable historical failures under his belt, the modern Marxist is left only with his revolutionary pipe dream and that “next time it will be different”.

It won’t.

Introduction (pp. 1-3)

I) What's Wrong With Capitalism? (pp. 4-21)

Of the ten richest Australians, five inherited their wealth.

The working class makes up 70%.

The traditional middle class of 25% are called, "petty bourgeoisie".

"The only way a capitalist can make profits is to pay workers less than the value they create each day." [p12]

"Capitalists grow rich because of legalised theft." [p13]

"No exploiting class organises production for the good of the exploited". [p13]

You can't be a capitalist and stagnate since dynamism produces wealth.

II) The Working Class and Trade Unions (pp. 22-42)

Marxism is a theory to destroy capitalism and replace it with a "humane, equitable" one [!]. [p23]

Workers are the gravediggers of capitalism.

"We need a revolution".

Peasants' fondest wish was to own their own plot of land.

The strike is the workers' secret weapon.

Socialist support 100 percent union membership in every workplace.

Workers must develop an "internationalist class consciousness" to succeed.

In 1966, rural industry made up 9% of the economy; today it is 1.5%. Manufacturing has shrunk from 26% to 8%, while professionals have risen from 10%-22%.

Striking is less useful since bosses will just shut down and go overseas.

Employees stay 5-7 years on average at their jobs.

Union coverage is now only one in six.

III) The Capitalist State (pp. 43-61)

Thomas Hobbes stated, “anarchy is a war of all against all”.

The Australian government is the largest employer.

For petty crimes, police act mostly like insurance company inspectors, and they are generally disinterested in “white-collar crime”.

It is claimed there is no correlation between crime rates and police numbers.

Property and assets of capitalists must be seized [!].

The ALP was founded 1891 with high socialist hopes. In 1901 they became champions of the White Australia policy.

IV) Revolution (pp. 62-87)

Only through revolution can the working class become fit to design their new socialist utopia.

The mark of a revolution is sudden toppling of seemingly-invincible rulers. It is impossible without some sort of “situation” or crisis among the upper classes.

A socialist revolution differs in that it is a restructuring of society.

Russian worker committees were called *soviets*.

“Dual power” of socialists and the old government cannot last.

In the February 1917 Russian revolution, soldiers turned their guns on police when they fired on protesters.

In 1905, Jew Leon Trotsky was elected chairman of the workers;' council in Petrograd.

It is said Australians are too well off and apathetic to mount a revolution.

In 1804, 600 Irish convicts rebelled at Castle Hill.

The Eureka Rebellion was in 1854.

Post-revolution tyranny is part-and-parcel of the “counter-revolution” or purging of the remaining bourgeoisie.

Louis de Saint-Just, 1793: “Those who make a revolution half way merely dig their own graves.”

V) Socialism (pp. 88-106)

Marx: “Between capitalist and communist society lies revolutionary transformation in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat”.

The 1871 Paris Comune riot lasted only two months.

Proletariat political measures include: progressive income and wealth taxes; free education at all levels; free abortion on demand; confiscating all empty properties for the poor and homeless.

VI) Imperialism (pp. 107-131)

Imperialism is the ultimate stage of capitalism of monopoly world market domination.

The Australian ruling class hopes supporting the US in distant imperialist wars will function as payment of a premium of an insurance policy in case we are ever invaded. Therefore, it doesn't have to maintain a nuclear deterrent, and can access US, UK, and Israeli intelligence.

In the 1960s, Australia offered Pin Gap, Nurrungar, and Northwest Cape as US spy satellite locations, gathering information from the Middle East to the Pacific.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and subsequent Soviet Union collapse created a Pax Americana; which has 725 military bases round the globe.

PNG is Australia's largest aid recipient.

Socialists deny any inherent superiority of one nation, language, race, or culture.

VII) Class and Sexual Oppression (pp. 132-156)

33% of sodomites have self-harmed and 16% attempted suicide.

Native Americans called transvestites "two spirit people".

Lenin called revolutions, "festivals of the oppressed and exploited".

At Stonewall, June 1969, sodomites rioted for three days.

In 1978 at Mardi Gras, 53 were arrested as 2,000 marched.

VIII) Racism (pp. 157-176)

It is claimed that by 1901, Aborigines were reduced from 1M to 67,000.

IX) The Russian Revolution (pp. 177-206)

On 23/2/1917, Petrograd, 100K workers were striking. By the 25th, this had grown to 240K. On the 27th, the Tsar abdicated and government authority collapsed; the Romanov dynasty which had reigned for 300 years was over. Six years of Tsarist repression ensued.

Russia's unexpected defeat by Japan in 1904 sparked the 1905 revolution.

Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries were labelled "compromising socialist". The former hoped to nudge out capitalists in the government cabinet over time.

The Bolshevik slogan was, “peace, bread, land”.

The Russian government would rather have handed over Petrograd to the Germans than allow the soviets to rule.

The Soviet Congress opened 1145 on 25/10/1917 under the Petrograd Soviet. Delegates voted to abolish private ownership of land forever.

In 1920, abortion on demand was introduced [which Stalin would rescind!].

X) The Defeat of the Russian Revolution (pp. 207-222)

By 1918, industry had collapsed, and famine and disease were rampant. Former generals, landlords and capitalists, the “Whites”, were leading the counter revolution.

In March 1918, Russia surrendered its breadbasket Ukraine to Germany.

By the end of 1920, factory production was 13% of its 1913 level. Hundreds of thousands of workers fled to the country in search of food. Since people were reduced to scavenging, they were in no position to influence politics.

In March 1921, the Party Congress introduced the New Economic Policy (NEP) which stopped peasant grain requisitioning.

Lenin was bed-ridden from 1923 and died January 1924. While Leon Trotsky was his natural successor, he refused to challenge Stalin's power. He eventually fled to Mexico and was assassinated in 1940 after the 1930s Great Terror.

Stalin's Five Year Plan caused millions to die as he sought to “catch up” to the West.

Stalin died 1953.

XI) The Revolutionary Party and Our Project Today (pp. 223-244)

“Socialists are internationalists. We reject Australian patriotism and nationalism”.

“We oppose all immigration controls and support open borders”. [p244]