

CONTENTS

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Bertram Roberts

- 2 **Prabhat R. Sarkar.....NEO-HUMANISM: PART TWO
Counteracting Geo- and
Socio- Sentiments**
- 7 **Sohail Inayatullah..... HAWAII: PAST, PRESENT
AND FUTURE TRENDS**
- 11 **Ac. Krtashivananda.....EXPLOITATION AND
Dhanjoo Ghista LIBERATION OF AFRICA**
- 14 **Betty Collier..... DISTRIBUTIVE INJUSTICE IN
AMERICA**
- 17 **Phillip Carspecken.....PROUT - ZEITGEIST OF THE
FUTURE: Alternative to
Capitalism and Communism**
- 20 **'Layi Abegunrin.....LIBERATION STRUGGLE IN
SOUTH AFRICA**
- 23 **Prabhat R. Sarkar..... PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIO-
ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY**
- 26 **Johnny Washington..... THE ROLE OF PHILOSOPHY
IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

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HAWAII: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE TRENDS

by **Sohail Inayatullah**, Department of Political Science, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

This paper discusses the exploitative theses in Hawaii, caused by the capitalist-modernization model of development, resulting in Dependency, Centralization and Technocracy, bourgeoisie lifestyle, social and cultural maldevelopments, and nonparticipation in and noncontrol over the future of Hawaii. Due to the resulting relegation of Hawaii to the status of a periphery of the 'Center' (the countries that control the world economic system), there is a definitive trend towards an alternative spiritual way of life. Also, a new socio-economic model is explored in relation to a fourth trend - the 'South' breaking away from the dependency imposed on it by the 'North' and the resulting inevitable new international order.

Preface

There have been numerous attempts to look at the future of Hawaii, but none of them have adequately taken into account global events, trends and goals. In addition, previous attempts have looked at the future only from the dominant capitalist-modernization paradigm, wherein self-interest fails to give expression to the antithesis to the current exploitation of Hawaii. This paper rejects this paradigm, and instead attempts to see Hawaii's future from a dialectical and spiritual approach.

A dialectical approach assumes that change is part of the very essence of nature, that conflict of interests are inherent in social dynamics; and that latent realities exercise a decisive influence upon manifest phenomena. It recognizes that major social trends have a 'manifestative' and 'retarditive' phase. It is in this retarditive phase that new institutions and social movements with new images of the future, opposite or in conflict with the prevailing social order, are born.

By using a spiritual or ideological approach, this paper hopes to avoid only focusing on technological and economic factors. Rather, ethnicity, culture, language and the role of ideas (intellectual and spiritual) are seen to be of utmost importance in understanding the future of Hawaii.

Trend One: Dependency

Dependency theory states that over the last few centuries, the Center (those countries that control the world economic system) has shaped the development of the Periphery (the less developed and dependent areas) in conformity with its own needs and development patterns. This has occurred by the Center of the Center (the elite of the developed area) forming a harmonious association with the Center of the Periphery (the elite in the dependent area). Dependency

theory asks questions: who benefits politically (power), economically (wealth), psychologically (self-esteem and identity) and what is the distribution of these benefits in the Center and in the Periphery?

It rejects the self-interest promoting Capitalist-Modernization (C-M) model of development, which states that an undeveloped area will develop through the transfer of technology, capital, knowledge and by specific agents (such as transnational corporations, US AID, and other similar agencies and programmes). In the C-M model, the development of the Periphery is a dependent one, which leads to human social and cultural maldevelopment. Dependency theory argues that such a C-M model is inappropriate for Peripheral development, and that it only leads to a subtle technological, economic, political and cultural neo-colonialism.

Hawaii is an island chain with economic, cultural and communicating inter-relationships with not only the US (as the leader of the First World) but also the world-at-large. The Dependency theory can help explain the problem of Hawaii's underdevelopment through a historical-structural analysis of dominance and imperialism. Some characteristics of an underdeveloped dependent area, in the special context of Hawaii are: (1) Emphasis on one or two products (pineapple and sugar); (2) Unintegrated economic structure; (3) Nonaccumulation of capital (because profits from transnationals' mainland investors do not stay in Hawaii); (4) Loss of control of the future; (5) Loss of autonomy; (6) No real development in terms of dignity (meaningful work), identity, diversified economy, control over economy, self-reliance, or equitable distribution of power, wealth and self-esteem.

Dependency in Hawaii: Not only has Hawaii for the last two centuries been 'under the influence' of outside Center interests, but Hawaii can even be termed as an underdeveloped area. The different stages in Hawaiian history (since the coming of the Western ships) are as follows: The first stage, during 1778-1800, involved England using Hawaii as a provision trade center. As soon as the British did not need food from Hawaii, a new stage began and sandalwood became the main industry until 1825. New Englanders were the main foreigners and profits for them reached as high as 700% per cargo. However, the capital accumulated did not lead to internal development of Hawaii's economy, but only benefited the elite in Hawaii, while the actual physical work was done by Hawaiian labourers.

The next stage of integration into the world economy occurred when Hawaii emerged as a Pacific base for the New England Whaling industry, because of high whale prices and Hawaii's strategic location. However, as petroleum replaced whale oil and whales became scarcer, the whaling industry died. In addition, Hawaii was also being culturally integrated into the Center (the US), as Christian

missionaries brought their Western cosmology for the 'uncivilized' natives to adopt.

By the late 1900's, with capitalist development spreading rapidly across North America and the emergence of the West Coast as a market for agricultural commodities, Hawaii's role shifted to that of a sugar supplier. Thus began the plantation economy, characterized by (1) a political economy dominated by a two-crop economy (pineapple and sugar), (2) cultural division of labour, (3) lack of representation in political institutions, (4) absence of organization that could effectively defend workers' interests, and (5) a feudal concentration of landholdings.

Hawaii thus continued to be a perfect place for exploitation - cheap land, cheap labour and a populace that could be easily controlled. The presence of Business from the Center was augmented by the presence of the State and the military from the Center. (The government made it easy to increase capitalist penetration by building an economic infrastructure and by making new land arrangements which favoured foreign investment and monopoly land ownership)

Tourism: By the mid-twentieth century, however, because of changes emanating from the Center, the plantation economy stagnated and tourism emerged as the prime industry. Even the elite in Hawaii lost their independence, and Hawaii's final integration into a world economic system dominated by transnational corporations resulted. The subsequent uneven development of the economy became more pronounced.

Tourism as an industry is four and one-half times the size of agriculture (sugar, molasses and pineapple) and almost twice that of the military. The Department of Planning and Economic Development estimates that even if tourism growth decreases from the past 10% annual growth rate to 1% by 2000, the number of visitors will still be 7,836,500 by 2000.

The damaging influence of the tourism industry has been: high unemployment and underemployment, increasing inequalities between rich and poor, increasing numbers of marginalized people, and ethnic division of labour in tourism, a gross over-dependence on tourism as an economic base, an unfavourable balance of payments vis-a-vis the metropole (the U.S. and Japan), cultural debasement, and large-scale outmigration.

The *Hawaii State Plan* readily admits that a major proportion of Hawaii's income and employment (especially related to the primary industry, tourism) is heavily dependent on outside forces, and the State's inelastic demand for commodity exports (mainly foodstuffs) is also largely dependent on economic and political forces outside the state. Because this state of affairs cannot provide enough jobs for its youth, the *Hawaii State Plan* recommends outmigration now, while Hawaii's population of young adults and recent arrivals is still relatively mobile (by encouraging local schools and employment agencies to develop contacts with mainland employers), thereby actively promoting Hawaiians' losing their own land. Such are the devious ways of super-capitalism, which further promotes television blitzes on how beneficial tourism is to Hawaii. However, how much dignity can there be in being a bellhop or a hotel maid for life!

Tourism, when uncontrolled, can only be considered a subtle form of prostitution! Moreover, who really benefits from Hawaii's tourism industry? They are no doubt the managers and owners of numerous large corporations.

Further, almost every economic enterprise (ranging from department stores to local bakeries) is controlled by overseas capital. Not only do the Islands lack economic control over key industries but these industries are narrowly based and incredibly vulnerable to the global situation. **Hawaii, then, can be referred to as an underdeveloped area, being totally dependent on the Center.** The role of Hawaii for the past two centuries has been one of being relegated to a subordinate position in history, one where the dependent area adjusts to, rather than initiates, economic and political processes.

The Future: From a dialectical perspective, if dependency is seen as the thesis, then an antithesis - a development model, image of the future - qualitatively opposed to dependency is bound to gain momentum as contradictions in the thesis become increasingly problematic. The obvious antithesis would be the emergence of a strong and viable anti-dependency or self-reliance movement.

Initially it can already be seen in the throwing of rocks at tourists, in the feeling of general frustration among minorities and other marginal people. This frustration could result in an increase in violent crimes with the eventual bombing of hotels, and possible assassination of major political or corporate figures. Organized political struggle would be the apex of such a strategy to bring the future into the hands of the 'people'.

An alternative non-violent scenario would include increased public support for movements dedicated to self-reliance, self-sufficiency and local culture. The enemy for these movements would be seen as the military, the state, and in general the capitalistic system. Already numerous groups have emerged in the past few years that are seriously pursuing an alternative development strategy, with communities organizing agriculture and food cooperatives, economic diversification (diversified agriculture, aquaculture, small business, new services), collective land ownership over private ownership, and stopping tourism-based development through petitions and non-violent protests as well as through involvement in the conventional political process. Above all, the anti-dependency movement has a highly compelling image of an alternative future, which is a key to its eventual success.

Trend Two: Continued Growth, Centralization And Technocracy

Continued Growth: The characteristics of Continued Growth include: economic growth as measured by increasing GNP, increased extraction of natural resources, increased construction, capital intensive technology, secularism, and an economic industrial image of man. From such a model, colonialism, economic expansionism and the desire to bring the fruits of modernization to all, seem not only natural but also the duty of the more advanced area. Modernization also includes having less physical work, more television to watch, more computer games to play with, and more things to own.

There are positive and negative points to such an image of development. Positively it does lead to a better standard of living in terms of physical quality-of-life indicators, and leaves more freedom for thought, choice, and leisure. A few of the negative problems include the exploitation of the periphery of the Periphery (workers, females, the elderly, rural inhabitants) and the exploitation of the periphery of

the Center (minorities, migrant workers, females, students), and a host of problems that are presently being experienced by the 'overdeveloped' nations - unemployment, inequity, inflation, monopoly of wealth and power by the capitalist class, and worsening environmental conditions.

In addition, this model, based on the 'trickle-down' economic theory and the hope of limitless progress, does not take into account the spiritual dimensions of existence that relate to notions of self-realization and transcendence. Also, if development is defined as the 'process of people taking charge of their lives', then it is clear that greater economic wealth-greater consumerism does not lead to development

Centralization: The long range trend in Hawaii has been for individuals and communities to increasingly lose their power to various formal authorities: to the government for decisions affecting political and social life; to corporate business in terms of economic life; to television in terms of value formation; and to intellectuals and religious authorities in terms of idea and belief system formation.

Centralization entails the non-elite (the periphery of the Periphery) having decreasingly less control over their lives and the lives of their children, the rush to Oahu and Honolulu to live, urbanization and bureaucratization, anonymity and overcrowding, rape and murder, physical and mental stress, and loss of connection with nature and family.

Technocracy: Part and parcel of Continued Growth and Centralization is the BCI complex or technocracy. **The BCI complex is the cooperation between the bureaucrats** (city and state government officials), **the capitalists** (the center in the mainland and in Hawaii), **and the intelligentsia** (researchers that work only to further the goals of State and Corporate interests).

As mentioned earlier, **it is the interaction between the center of the Center and the center of the Periphery that leads to the exploitation of the Periphery and the development of dependency.** It is the close interaction of the state official and capitalists that has led to increasing amounts of land being zoned as non-agricultural and for tourist resorts. It was the State that frustrated land reforms in order to continue the policy of huge public rentals by plantations at nominal rates. The State diverted public funds to irrigate private sugar fields and it used the police to suppress the working class. The State then is not neutral. Rather, as Hawaii's history plainly shows, the State works in cooperation with capitalists and intelligentsia, to ensure the needed political order and economic stability for capitalism to thrive.

The BCI complex transforms people into clients of bureaucrats, customers of corporations and converts of intellectuals. This centralization takes away the power of individuals and communities over themselves and over their futures. It puts people into the category of the planner and the planned. Thus, technocracy tends to form structures that de-politicize and de-humanize individuals. **Hence, self-reliance, decentralization, alternative developmental models and alternative ways of knowing are antithetical to technocracy.**

The Future: Technocracy then supports Dependency, Centralization and a Continued Growth model of development, and thereby invites its own antithesis: the increasing desire for individuals to take part in the political process, as reflected by the Neighbourhood Board system; the ability of neighbourhood boards to veto unwanted development

projects; awareness for the establishment of cluster neighbourhoods (instead of a larger Honolulu, or a series of Honolulu-type urban centers), which would be small and emphasize interpersonal communication.

The impact of electronic technologies on shaping the future cannot be stressed enough. Decentralization might occur if individuals could work at home by computer instead of having to go to the office. There will emerge decentralized committees, even tele-communities.

However, given the present political-economic system, these new technologies may only make it easier for the State and the corporate class to have greater 'control' over others, over greater distances. Furthermore, given the cost of new technologies, only the rich will be able to 'telecommute', thus leaving the urban areas for the lower working classes. Yet if costs are reduced considerably on new technologies (such as home computers, home video recorders, two way cable television systems, satellite technologies, and fiber optics), then a host of possible decentralizing effects are possible.

Once again, as with the antithesis to dependency, there would result a movement for self-reliance in terms of politics and small horizontal participatory structures in terms of organization. Individuals involved in this antithesis would favour alternative definitions (not conventionally accepted by the BCI complex) of what constitutes success, identity and knowledge. They would also favor community power, community-based development planning, and in general, decentralization.

Trend Three: The Bourgeois Way Of life

The bourgeois way of life (BWL) defines the major goal for people to be a far-reaching vision of the good life and the good society. This lifestyle includes the avoidance of manual work (for example, plantation work), the desire for material consumption, the desire for a small nuclear family, to live in privacy with considerable leisure, and in general, the desire that the above-mentioned characteristics will last for self and family.

External Contradictions: The bourgeois way of life as a goal is in fact unattainable as a global goal because those who do have, do so at the expense of others: - the working class, peasants, the young, females, minority races, and in general the periphery of the Periphery and the periphery of the center. Ironically, those in BWL are not themselves in control of their productive assets. Rather they are in a larger complex and technocratic system whose political and economic fluctuations can lead to a variety of crises - food, ecological, system overload, etc...that those in BWL are unable to handle.

Internal Contradictions: The internal contradictions are in the areas of human and social maldevelopment. Human maldevelopment includes: **disease of the body** (such as tumors and heart disease), **disease of the mind** (schizophrenia, psychosis (patients served by Hawaii mental health facilities have more than doubled from the 5,600 1967 figure), neurosis, and suicide); **diseases of the spirit** (a sense of meaninglessness, despair, negativity, and general lack of joyousness): all of these diseases are on the upsurge.

Social maldevelopment affects the realms of: **behaviour** (withdrawal, apathy, observerism and violent crime); **distribution of wealth and power** (increasing inequality and growing injustice); **social structure** (growing levels of in-

equity and dependency); **nature** (pollution, increasing amount of land being re-zoned for urban purposes - a 30% increase since 1964); and **culture** (the rejection of island lifestyles for western lifestyles).

The Future: There are numerous responses that emerge out of the contradictions of this goal. One is the chemical way of life, to soften the impact of the above-mentioned contradictions through the use of pills, drugs, tranquilizers, and forms of entertainment that help the individual forget about the problem of existence. These methods will become even more popular in the future, with drugs that can alter moods, emotions and even intelligence.

There is an alternative to the bourgeois way of life, and in Hawaii there are numerous types of alternative ways of life (AWL) - two of which fall into quite distinct categories. In the first instance, notice the increase in fitness clubs, with the desire for better health and designer jogging clothes, and the business executive who takes twenty minutes to meditate and then returns to his dehumanizing or exploitative job. This trend is very present in Hawaii and a favorite among the upper class. As an alternative, it continues to be in the heart of BWL but uses alternative lifestyle techniques to manage the maldevelopments of BWL.

The second is a conservationist view of the future, a desire for slow growth resource and heritage conservation, fundamental changes in lifestyle and social organization, a more frugal lifestyle, a return to limited manual labour (weekend gardens), a sense of community, individual self-actualization, a call for a fundamental change in the political system, and development of new institutions that are less dehumanizing and more futures-oriented.

In Hawaii, this AWL finds its expression in the renaissance of the Hawaiian culture - the call for minority political and cultural rights, the Hawaii Association for Self-Sufficiency, and other similar social-environmental-futures-spiritual organizations desiring a return to concepts of love and aloha, to appropriate technology, decentralized government, and to a greater emphasis on interpersonal and intra-personal communication. There are even those in this group who would favor violent change if necessary, although the vast majority would favor non-violent means of change.

Where BWL is based on materialistic metaphysics, this AWL is based on the more personal forms of spirituality. The influx of Buddhism is of special importance. There are numerous Zen centers, yoga groups, meditation centers, and wellness clinics. Undeniably the image of reality is a spiritually-oriented one, based on self-realization, individual freedom, ecological conservation, and local self-reliance (on psychological and political-economic levels.). This group will become more important and successful in presenting a viable alternative to BWL as it becomes less anti-technology and 'me' oriented and more active in political and economic affairs. This group will also become more important as it gets older and other age-cohorts die out!

Trend Four: Global Shifts Of Power

Perhaps the most important global trend is **the rise of the 'South'**. African, Asian and other developing nations want (1) better terms of exchange between themselves and developing nations, (2) greater control over their own economy and (3) a higher level of exchange and cooperation between themselves. That is to say, the Periphery nations want to break out of dependency. They desire a new inter-

national order, and are rapidly discovering ways of getting out of their traditional position. They are increasing their power through dialogue at the United Nations, through the power of oil and through violent and revolutionary means. **The 'South' nations may gradually control the world market and then eventually create peripheries of their own!**

This obviously has serious ramifications for the Center nations as it does for Hawaii; the external economic sector becoming less available to the industrial nations, more expensive commodities, less cheap labor, less political control over the 'South', a decrease in production, increasing economic problems such as stagflation, and in general the end of the 'good old days'. Also just as the external sector is becoming less available, the internal sector is increasingly pressing their demands by wanting higher wages and being willing to strike frequently. Meanwhile, there is an increasing concern in the 'Center' nations for some of the non-economic factors of development, mainly environmental pollution, nuclear waste problems and human and social maldevelopment. The trends point to increasing problems with the continued growth developmental model.

There are numerous options for the Center. The obvious and predictable one is a reactionary response - war, resulting in the invasion of the oil fields, a move to the political right - 'Reagonomics', and increasing productivity through new technologies, and automation. This is an attempt to salvage the continued growth capitalist model. For Hawaii, it would mean increased military presence in Hawaii, a nonconcern for social welfare, less Federal money for social welfare programs, and further attempts to make Hawaii into a Pacific Center

Hawaii would be conceived as an excellent place to establish an International Trade Center and an International Communications Center. This would greatly help the tourist industry, bring additional income into the state, and create a business and entertainment center for the elite as well as the new Asian rich and their investment capital. Hawaii could also function as a base for continued expansion and exploitation of the undeveloped Pacific area; in short, a continuation of dependency, centralization, technocracy and BWL.

An alternative scenario for the 'Center' would be a more symmetrical international global order, and in general abandoning the continued growth model, local self-reliant society with local participation and a greater concern for human growth, rather than with simply increasing economic wealth or political and military power over others.

A third alternative future would involve the end of the nation-state and the development of a world government or some other system of world governance; greater public control of large corporations; the development and cooperative running of new electronic, biological, space and parapsychological technologies; increased interest in **inner-directed spiritual activities.** This image of the future would favor Peripheries temporarily de-linking themselves with the world system and becoming self-reliant, but in the eventual hope of creating a global symmetrical and interdependent system of governance.

If Hawaii did become less dependent and more self-reliant, it (in light of its geographical position and its unique Asian-Pacific-American cultural heritage) could present a highly holistic and positive image of the future for others.