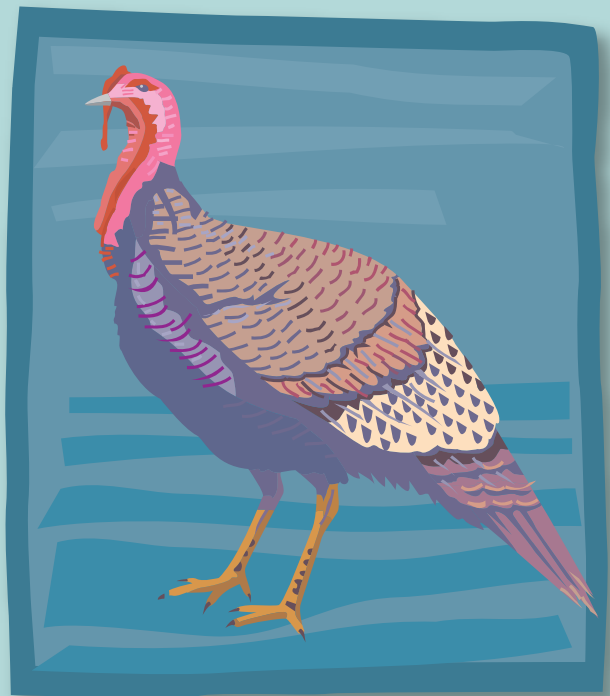


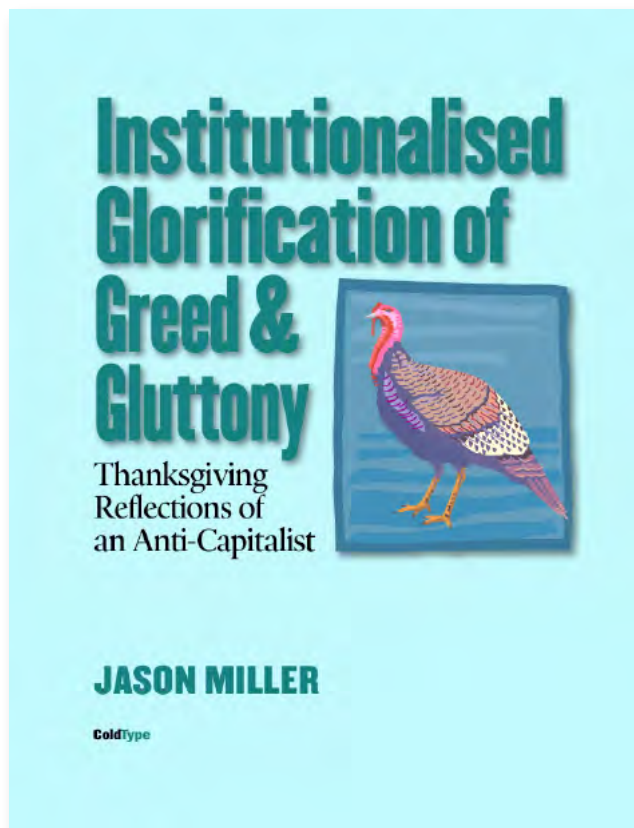
Institutionalised Glorification of Greed & Gluttony

Thanksgiving
Reflections of an
Anti-Capitalist



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ColdType



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Gluttony and greed kill more than the sword.

— Italian proverb

Gluttony and surfeiting are no proper occasions for thanksgiving.

– Charles Lamb, 1821

Another propaganda-driven greed-fest has just passed in the land of the corporatized and the home of the subservient. Obedient little wage slaves and consumers that most of us are, we have once again dutifully greased the wheels of the monstrous capitalist machine and made our proper sacrifices at the altar of Mammon. Between our voracious inhalation of all manner of edibles to our obscene spree of rapacious spending using money eagerly fronted by the usurious kings of finance capital, Thanksgiving and Black Friday are celebratory days indeed for the moneyed elite comprising the allegedly non-existent ruling class in our “egalitarian” and “democratic” nation.

I celebrated Thanksgiving. However, I wasn’t bowing my head and expressing gratitude to the Calvinist God in which I am “supposed to” believe for the things for which I “should” be grateful. There was an interesting duality to my day as I contemplated that for which I feel a deep ingratitude and celebrated that which sparks my feelings of sincere gratitude.

The components of my “Thanklesssgiving” included:

- 1. The trillions of OUR tax dollars OUR government spends each year attempting to attain global hegemony** through nearly ubiquitous military bases, a nuclear arsenal large enough to obliterate the universe, and numerous ecocidal, genocidal invasions of ridiculously weaker nations which, fortunately, usually give us a bit of what we deserve by sending us home limping.
- 2. The US American Gulag**, a penal system populated by over two million human beings.

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The “land of the free” has the largest number of incarcerated people in the world, even surpassing China, the most populous and allegedly most repressive nation on the planet. Criminalizing select forms of self-medicating (those that predominate in the urban core Bantustans to which we have relegated much of our black population) has proven to be an efficient means of “legally” repressing black males. Meanwhile, alcohol, a drug which severely impairs judgment, lowers inhibitions, causes the bloody demise of over 16,000 innocents on our highways each year, and tends to increase the belligerence factor exponentially, remains quite legal and practically flows from the spigots of our homes. And we’re imprisoning people for the possession of marijuana?

3. Factory farms and the fast food industry that necessitated their genesis. Speciesism is a cancer that has long infected our collective thinking with the notion that we can selectively inflict wanton cruelty on non-human animals. Pigs are as intelligent as dogs (imagine the mass outrage if we began large-scale torture, mutilation, and consumption of family canines), yet we imprison them in such tight quarters for such extended periods that they go insane, we treat sows as breeding machines, rip out their teeth without anesthetic, sometimes disembowel them with hooks through their anuses while they are alive, and at other times boil them to death while they are still conscious. Recently, the turkeys who suffered unimaginably painful lives and deaths (so their flesh could help expand the midriffs of scores of millions of human animals) experienced their own “thanksgiving” when their agonized existences finally came to an end. Instead of using the monster military (which We the Taxpayers have paid to create) as a means to murder untold millions of civilians who “are in the wrong place at the wrong time,” perhaps we would be better served to evacuate the human and non-human animals from the murderous slaughterhouses and thus finally facilitate the smart use of “smart bombs.”

4. The crypto-racism that continues to mar our sociocultural landscape like cesspools of toxic sludge. Aside from the aforementioned “War on Drugs” that targets black males and enables us to justify arming and supporting Right Wing Latin American dictators who foster an environment which allows our corporations to rape their nations, there is still a chasm of inequality between blacks and whites in terms of income, wealth, health, and education. The root causes of this gross injustice are myriad but include rampant covert racism (Jim Crow is not dead; he has simply gone incognito) and epidemic inter-generational poverty perpetuated by deplorable public education in predominately black schools and various other nearly insurmountable systemic impediments to climbing the socioeconomic ladder. And let’s not forget SNN’s Lou Dobbs and his crusade against the Mexican migration to the US forced by neoliberal economic policies born of savage capitalism.

5. The War on Terror. A more appropriate name for this abomination would be “The War

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on Islamic People because many of their nations possess much of the oil that capitalism needs to continue fueling the engines of profit and endless growth and because many Muslims are furious that the Zionists stole Palestine.” I guess they went with the War on Terror because the true name is too cumbersome. If we stopped bankrolling the terrorist state of Israel, launching imperial invasions, installing and supporting ruthless regimes, and wielding our economic power like a cudgel, we would stop pissing off so many people and wouldn’t have the constant concern of angry victims employing asymmetric warfare against us.

6. The evisceration of our Constitution and steady march toward fascism. Bush’s signing statements, the Patriot Act and subsequent Orwellian legislation, the trend toward privatization of the military, the increasingly incestuous relationship between the public and private sectors, two consecutive stolen Presidential elections, Islamophobia, pathological nativism, and an ever-increasing obsession with militarism are the obvious symptoms of a nation plunging into an abyss not unlike that experienced by the Germans under the Nazi regime. While we are not there yet, we are certainly experiencing the prefigurements of “capitalism in decay.” Remember that Hitler and his cabal did not fully initiate the machinations of fascism overnight, either.

7. The soul- (and human- and animal- and Earth-) murdering socioeconomic construct of capitalism. While it is true that selfishness, greed, narcissism, and the tendency to exploit are intrinsic to each human being, we choose to glorify, embrace, amplify and perpetuate a system that demands that we hone these characteristics like weapons in order to “succeed” within our malignant means of economic organization. Tragically, even those who recognize the infinite toxicity of such practices still need to employ them to some extent simply to survive.

8. The mainstream media and Madison Avenue. These entities are deeply complicit in crimes of the highest order, including the ongoing genocide in Iraq that has killed millions of people dating back to the Gulf War and the insatiable desire we US Americans have to acquire more “stuff” (also known as consumerism – a practice that is literally killing our planet). Crypto-fascist media outlets like Fox News and the endless stream of advertising blasted at us 24/7 serve the interests of our moneyed elite well as they shepherd the masses to support and glorify the malevolent American Empire with sanguine enthusiasm.

9. The myth that “America doesn’t torture.” Sorry folks, but we have been doing it for some time. Abu Ghraib was no anomaly. MK-ULTRA was not about mind control. The CIA used the results of the horrifying abuse Dr. Ewen Cameron inflicted on his psychiatric patients to write Kubark, their manual on employing psychological torture. During

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the Vietnam War, the US employed Operation Phoenix, which included the routine use of torture and resulted in the deaths of over 20,000 Vietnamese. The School of Americas (now called the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation) at Fort Benning in Georgia has churned out over 60,000 Latin American Right Wing thugs trained to torture and murder any who dare challenge the sacred right of capitalists to rape and exploit our neighbors to the south, including saintly men like Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was gunned down for having the fortitude to stand up for the impoverished victims of US-sanctioned and financed death squads in El Salvador.

10. The existence of over one million homeless human beings in a nation awash in abundance. Our perverse system spends trillions of PUBLIC dollars on our leviathan killing apparatus yet we apply asinine palliatives, like the privately-funded Christian homeless shelter where I helped prepare and serve Thanksgiving dinner again this year, to feed and shelter our indigent and hungry brethren (many of whom are veterans who were brain-washed into serving in our imperial conquests and then kicked to the curb like yesterday's garbage).

As I reveled in my role of ingrate to the Empire, I gave sincere thanks for:

1. Family and true friends.

2. Patrice Greenville, the editor in chief of Cyrano's Journal, who is also my friend, ally, and mentor.

3. My intellect, moral stamina and profound life experiences which have enabled me to shed my false consciousness and begin waging a sustained struggle against the many ravages of the cancer of capitalism and the American Empire.

4. The numerous anti-capitalist individuals, websites, publications, and groups with which I have become allied and affiliated.

5. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, for providing us with the knowledge and tools to battle the exploitative, murderous abomination that is destroying the Earth.

6. Radicals throughout history, including Thomas Paine, Rosa Luxemburg, Emma Goldman, MLK, Malcolm X, Archbishop Romero, and many others.

7. The Earth, its infinite beauty, and its capacity to sustain life.

8. Groups like PETA and the Animal Liberation Front. While I don't formally militate with a specific group, I am a passionate animal liberationist. Collectively, we horrifically torture and slaughter billions of animals each year. While too far ahead of the conscious-

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ness curve to effect sweeping changes to the prevailing paradigm, “terrorist groups” like the ALF serve the movement well and their efforts are laudable.

9. Hamas, for the social service work it does on behalf of its horribly oppressed people and for its relentless struggle against US/Israeli efforts to eradicate the Palestinians.

10. Hugo Chavez, for catalyzing and perpetuating the Bolivarian Revolution as an alternative to the deeply entrenched Washington Consensus and for the huge strides he has made towards egalitarianism in Venezuela.

12. Fidel Castro, despite his imperfections (which have been ridiculously over-exaggerated by both the capitalist propaganda networks and the reactionary Gusanos), has remained steadfast in his defiance against US and capitalist domination of the Western Hemisphere and has launched numerous invasions of other nations with his army of physicians. Small wonder he invokes such fear in the tiny, shriveled hearts of capitalists and petite-bourgeoisie the world over.

12. The Internet, for providing a means for people of conscience to connect, network, and strive to give the masses an education to supplant their capitalist mind-fuck. Underestimating the importance of winning hearts and minds would be a gross miscalculation indeed for those of us who want to evoke significant social and political change for the better.

Yes, our social indoctrination to immerse ourselves in the “traditional activities” of Thanksgiving and Black Friday is premised on filthy lies, the torture of hundreds of millions of innocent birds, a celebration of the initiation of the Native American Genocide, an unconscionable waste of resources, and the insatiable greed of those atop the capitalist hierarchy. More nauseating than eating too much turkey, isn't it?

Yet that doesn't mean that we can't opt out of “the great American tradition,” use the time to experience gratitude for those aspects of our existence which are truly meaningful, and commit ourselves to the struggle against the beast that is devouring them.



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