

## BOOK REVIEW

### **Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity**

#### *The Long View of History*

BY FREDERICK ENGELS, KARL MARX, GEORGE NOVACK, AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

---

**Reviewed by:** Peter W. Wood, author of *1620: A Critical Response to the 1619 Project* (Encounter Books, 2020). He is emeritus professor of anthropology at Boston University and currently president of the National Association of Scholars. Wood has written for the *Wall Street Journal*, *National Review*, *Claremont Review of Books*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and *the Spectator*.

*Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity* is a timely and somewhat unusual anthology of writings by Marx, Engels, the late American communist leader George Novack, and the contemporary Mary-Alice Waters. As an anthropologist and political conservative, this is not the company I would ordinarily keep, but as someone concerned about the rise of pseudo-history and pseudo-science in American society today, I find the frank materialism of the old-fashioned Marxist left refreshing, especially in its recognition of institutional progress through continuous social struggle.

Readers who have been inundated with identity politics and post-modern counterfactual fabrications would do well to refresh themselves on what a truly radical reading of the human past looks like, and how both biological evolution and social evolution have a major claim to our attention. As an introduction to an important but now neglected side of one of the great debates of our age, this short book genuinely deserves attention.