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Spring 2009

Marxian Theory  
Economics 709

The course is designed first to present a critical overview of the Marxian tradition as well as touch on differences between that tradition and non-Marxian economic theories and second to read Marx's Capital from a class conceived as surplus labor perspective. The first objective comprises two parts of the following reading list. In Part I, different theories of knowledge within that tradition are compared and contrasted. In Part II different Marxian approaches to understanding society are compared and contrasted. The second objective is dealt with in Part III of the reading list. There, based on a surplus notion of class, Marxian value theory is developed and extended to analyze several concrete issues in Capital and beyond.

There will be two take home exams. The first will cover Parts I and II and the second Part III. Required readings are indicated by an asterisk and have been placed on reserve at the library. A number of assigned readings will be from Marx's Capital (Penguin) and Resnick and Wolff's Knowledge and Class. These paperback books have been ordered for the course and are available in the textbook annex. A number of readings also can be found in Resnick and Wolff, New Departures in Marxian Theory.

The course assumes some familiarity with the basics of Marxian theory. However, at times it may be useful to consult one or more of the following introductory texts: Sweezy, The Theory of Capitalist Development; Mandel, Marxist Economic Theory, vols. 1 and 2; Howard and King, The Political Economy of Marx; Resnick and Wolff, Economics: Marxian versus Neoclassical. A more advanced and interesting text is Kliman, Reclaiming Marx's "Capital." Finally, a classic biography of Marx is Mehring, Karl Marx.

**I** *Marxian Theories of Knowledge: Empiricism, Rationalism, and Dialectical Materialism*

- \*R. Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature, "Introduction," "Privileged Representations," and "From Epistemology to Hermeneutics," 3-13, 165-212, 315-356.
- \*B. Hindess, Philosophy and Methodology in the Social Sciences, "Introduction," and "The Critique of Empiricism," 1-22, 196-228.
- \*D. Lecourt, Marxism and Epistemology, 7-19, 25-86, 129-141.
- \*L. Althusser, "Contradiction and Overdetermination," 87-128 and "On the Materialist Dialectic," 161-218 in For Marx.
- \*L. Althusser, "Marx's Relation to Hegel," 163-186 in Politics and History. "Lenin and Philosophy," 27-67 and "Lenin before Hegel," 103-120 in Lenin and Philosophy.
- \*S. Resnick and R. Wolff, Knowledge and Class, Chs. 1 and 2, 1-108.
- \*K. Marx, Grundrisse, "The Method of Political Economy," 100-108.
- \*J. Amariglio, "Economics as a Postmodern Discourse," in W. Samuels, ed., Economics as Discourse, 15-46.
- \*S. Hall, "Signification, Representation, Ideology " Critical Studies, Vol. 2, No. 2 (June 1985), 91-114.
- S. Resnick and R. Wolff, "Rethinking Complexity in Economic Theory: the Challenge of Overdetermination," New Departures in Marxian Theory, Chap. 2, 51-67.

- F. Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy, especially 42ff., and "Theses on Feuerbach," 82-84.
- V. I. Lenin, Materialism and Empirio-Criticism, Chap. Two, 94-142.
- G. Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, "What is Orthodox Marxism?" 1-15 and "The Standpoint of the Proletariat," 149-209.
- Mao, Four Essays on Philosophy, "On Practice," 1-22 and "On Contradiction," 23-78.
- J. Amariglio, "Marxism Against Economic Science: Althusser's Legacy," 159-194 in P. Zarembka, ed., Research in Political Economy, vol. 10.
- R. Williams, Marxism and Literature, 21-44.
- B. Latour and S. Woolgar, Laboratory Life, 174-183, 235-261.
- S. Woolgar, Science: The Very Idea.
- C. Norris, Deconstruction, "Roots: Structuralism and New Criticism," "Jacques Derrida: Language Against Itself," "Marx and Nietzsche," 1-41, 74-89.
- J. Frow, Marxism and Literary History "Marxism and Structuralism," 18-50.
- J. Rajchman and C. West, Post-Analytic Philosophy, 259-275.

## II *Marxian Theories of Society*

### (a) Mode of Production and Determinism

- \*K. Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, "Preface," 19-23.
- \*K. Marx and F. Engels, Selected Correspondence, letter to Bloch, Sept. 21-22, 1890.
- \*K. Marx, Capital, 3, 927.
- \*F. Engels, Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, sections I-III.
- \*B. Hindess and P. Hirst, Pre-capitalist Modes of Production, 9-17, 21-23.
- \*B. Hindess and P. Hirst, Mode of Production and Social Formation, 1-33, 46-62.
- \*A. Cutler, Hindess, Hirst, and A. Hussain, Marx's Capital and Capitalism Today, vol. one, 107-143, 174-182, 207-242.
- \*R. Williams, Marxism and Literature, 75-89.
- \*A. Callinicos, Is There a Future for Marxism?, "Relations of Production," 142-167.
- \*S. Resnick and R. Wolff, "Radical Economics: A Tradition of Theoretical Differences," New Departures in Marxian Theory, Chap. 13, 279-302.
- G. Cohen, Karl Marx's Theory of History, "The Primacy of the Productive Forces," 134-174.
- J. Elster, Making Sense of Marx, "Explanations and Dialectics," "Modes of Production," 1-52, 241-317.
- L. Althusser and E. Balibar, Reading Capital, "The Basic Concepts of Historical Materialism," 199-308.

### (b) Concepts of Class and Conditions of Existence

- \*S. Resnick and R. Wolff, "A Marxian Theory of Classes," Knowledge and Class, Chap. 3, 109-163.
- \*R. Wolff and S. Resnick, "Power, Property, and Class," New Departures in Marxian Theory, Chap. 6, 118-136.
- \*J.K. Gibson-Graham, et al., "Introduction: Class in a Poststructural Frame," in J.K. Gibson-Graham, et al., eds. Class and Its Others, 1-22.

A. Cutler, Hindess, Hirst, and Hussain, Marx's Capital, vol. one, 182-206, 243-262.

(c) Different Class Structures and Applications

(i) Class Structures

S. Resnick and R. Wolff, "The Theory of Transitional Conjunctures and the Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism in Western Europe, RRPE, vol. 11, no. 3, Fall 1979, 13-18.

S. Gabriel, "Ancients: A Marxian Theory of Self-Exploitation," Rethinking Marxism, vol. 3, no. 1, Spring 1990, 85-106.

J.K. Gibson-Graham, "Waiting for the Revolution," Rethinking Marxism vol. 6 (1993), 10-24.

R. Weiner, "The Political Economy of Organized Baseball," chap. on slavery, Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. of MA, Amherst.

Resnick and Wolff, "Communism," in Class Theory and History, 3-81.

(ii) Applications

H. Fraad, S. Resnick, and R. Wolff, "For Every Knight in Shining Armor, There's a Castle Waiting to be Cleaned," New Departures, Chap 8, 159-195.

M. Van der Veen, "Beyond Slavery and Capitalism: Producing Class Differences in the Sex Industry," in Class and Its Others, 121-141.

C. Rio, "'This Job Has No End': African American Domestic Workers and Class Becoming," in Class and Its Others, 23-46.

F. Curtis, "Ivy-Covered Exploitation: Class education and the Liberal Arts College," in Re/Presenting Class, 206-226.

A. Chakrabarti and S. Cullenberg, "Development and Class Transition in India," in Re/Presenting Class, 182-205.

S. Kayetekin, "Sharecropping and Feudal Class Processes in the Postbellum Mississippi Delta," in Re/Presenting Class, 227-246.

(d) The Place of Capital in Marxian Theory

\*L. Althusser, Reading Capital, Part II, 145-193.

G. Lukacs, The Ontology of Social Being: Part 2 Marx, 49-56

K. Marx, "Preface to the First Edition" and "Postface to the Second Edition" of Capital, 1.

R. Rosdolsky, The Makings of Marx's Capital, Preface and Part One, XI-XIV, 1-72.

E. Mandel, "Introduction" in Capital, 1, 11-86.

### III *Marx's Value and Surplus Value Theory*

(a) Commodities and Money

\*Marx, Capital, 1, Chaps. 1-3.

\*Marx, Critique of Political Economy, Chap. 2.

\*I. I. Rubin, Essays on Marx's Theory of Value, Sections I and II, 5-184.

D. Harvey, The Limits to Capital, 1-20.

J. Roche, "Marx's Theory of Money and the Accumulation of Capital," Ph.D. diss., Univ. of MA., chaps. 2 and 3.

J. Amariglio and A. Callari, "Marxian Value Theory and the Problem of the Subject: The Role of Commodity Fetishism", Rethinking Marxism, vol. 2, no. 3, Fall 1989, 31-60.

(b) Transformation of Money into Capital

\*Marx, Capital, 1, Chaps. 4-6.

\*Marx, Capital, 2, Chap. 1.

Marx, "Results of the Immediate Process of Production" as appendix to Vol. 1 of Capital, 949-956.

Marx, Capital, 1, Chaps. 19-21.

Marx, Grundrisse, 239-273.

Harvey, The Limits to Capital, 20-24.

(c) Absolute and Relative Surplus Value

i) \*Marx, Capital, 1, Chaps. 7-11.

ii) \*Marx, Capital, 1, Chaps. 12-18.

\*Marx, Grundrisse, 398-423; 649-652; 745-758.

Marx, "Results of the Immediate Process of Production," as appendix to Vol. I, 956-971.

Marx, Theories of Surplus Value, Part II, pp. 203-206.

Marx, Wage Labour and Capital, especially Chapter IX., 43-48.

Marx, Wages, Price and Profit, especially Chapter VI, 39-42.

Marx, Capital, 3, Chap. 10, and Chapter 50.

Harvey, The Limits to Capital, 45-54.

G. Carchedi, Frontiers of Political Economy, Chap. 3, 55-123.

(d) Distribution of Appropriated Surplus Value

i) Claims on surplus value: profits, fees, interest, salaries, dividends, rents, taxes

\*Marx, Capital, 3, chaps. 48-49 and chap. 51.

\*Resnick and Wolff, Knowledge and Class, "Class Analysis: A Marxian Theory of the Enterprise," 164-230.

Marx, Capital, 3, chap. 16. chap. 21; chap. 23; chap. 27.

Marx, Capital, 2, chap. 6.

Engels, Anti-Duhring, Part II, "Capital and Surplus Value (Conclusion)," 233-234.

Harvey, The Limits to Capital, 39-44; 68-74; 255-260; 330-333; 362-366.

Resnick, "Class, Contradiction, and the Capitalist Economy," New Departures, Chap. 11, 238-251.

Resnick and Wolff, "Class and Monopoly," New Departures, Chap. 10, 221-237.

ii) Claim on Surplus Value: Capital Accumulation

\*Marx, Capital, 1, chaps. 23-25.

\*Marx, Capital, 2, chaps. 2-4.

Marx, Capital, 3, chaps. 5-6 and chaps. 13-15.

Marx, Grundrisse, 745-778.

Marx, Theories of Surplus Value, Part II, 470-535, especially 492-517.

Marx, Capital, 2, chaps. 17-21.

Marx, Capital, 3, chap. 30.

E. Mandel, Marxist Economic Theory, Vol. 1, chaps. 5, 7, 11.

D. Harris, Capital Accumulation and Income Distribution, chap. 3, 51-96; chap. 10, 249-284.

S. Cullenberg, The Falling Rate of Profit, chaps. 1-3, 1-84.

A. Kliman, Reclaiming Marx's "Capital," chap. 7, 113-138.

B. Norton, "Radical Theories of Accumulation and Crisis: Development and Directions" in B. Roberts and S. Feiner, Radical Economics, 155-193.

Harvey, The Limits to Capital, chap. 6, 156-189; chap. 7, 190-203.

(e) The Story of Capitalisms

\*Marx, Capital, 1, chaps. 26-33.

Marx and Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party.

\*Resnick, and Wolff, "The Reagan-Bush Strategy," New Departures, Chap. 15, 309-329.

Resnick and Wolff, "Exploitation, Consumption, and the Uniqueness of U.S. Capitalism," New Departures, Chap. 17, 341-353.

Resnick and Wolff, "A Class Theory of State Capitalism," in Class Theory and History, 85- 103.