

Economics 713: Political Economy
John Jay College
City University Of New York
Fall 2020

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Introduction:

This course provides a critical analysis of the capitalist system using a Marxist political economy framework. The class is not designed as a critique of mainstream economics but rather aims to provide tools for understanding the system's injustice (e.g. exploitation, alienation, oppression, inequality, deprivation), its instability (e.g. business cycles, structural crises, uneven development), and its unsustainability (e.g. ecological crises, global warming). Still, wherever possible, we will point to other heterodox traditions that have addressed these and other issues to compare and contrast with the Marxist contributions.

Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this class, students should be proficient in:

- 1) Understanding the dynamics of a capitalist economy.
- 2) Understanding major debates on the nature of capitalist economies
- 3) Thinking critically about different economic paradigms
- 4) Reading academic literature, both empirical and theoretical, in the traditions of heterodox political economy
- 5) Approaching original research topics using traditions in heterodox political economy

Texts:

- 1) Marx, K. *Capital*, Volume 1, Penguin edition.
- 2) Tucker, R. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd edition
- 3) Sweezy, Paul. *The Theory of Capitalist Development*, Monthly Review Press.
- 4) Heinrich, M. *An Introduction to the Three Volumes of Karl Marx's Capital*, Monthly Review Press.

Much of the material of the first two books is available at the Marxist Internet Archive (MIA): <https://www.marxists.org/>. Relatively cheap copies of the other two can be obtained online.

Recommended Books

- 1) Dobb, M. 1975. *Theories of Value and Distribution since Adam Smith*
- 2) Harvey, D. 1982. *The Limits to Capital*, Basil Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.
- 3) Wolff, R. and Resnick, S. (2012). *Contending Economics Theories: Neoclassical, Keynesian, and Marxian*.
- 4) Rubin, I.I. 1928. *Essays on Marx's Theory of Value*.
- 5) M.C. Howard and J. E. King. 1989. *A History of Marxian Economics Vol 1 and 2*.
- 6) Beaud, M. 2002. *A History of Capitalism 1500-2000*
- 7) Hobsbawm, E. 1996. *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991*,
- 8) McNally, D. 1993. *Against the Market: Political Economy, Market Socialism, and the Marxist Critique*.
- 9) Bottomore, T. A 1985. *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*.
- 10) Brennan et al. 2017. *Routledge Handbook of Marxian Economics*
- 11) Clark, S. 1991. *Marx, Marginalism, and Modern Sociology*

I strongly recommend that you get some of the books listed above in hardcopy for your personal library (all of them are pretty cheap except last one). They will prove useful, not only for this class, but for your ongoing development as political economists. If you want more recommendations, let me know and we can meet to discuss your interests.

Audio-Visual Supplements

In addition there are a variety of good audiovisual materials that provide a decent (sometimes problematic) introduction to the work of Marx and other political economist often presented alongside or against Marxian economics. I recommend that, if you have little training in PE or want a quick refresher, you watch the following documentaries:

A) *BBC's Masters of Money 3 Episodes*

- 1) Marx-<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QdbyUy-DN80>
- 2) Keynes-http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCcyq-u2y_8
- 3) Hayek-http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_vx5s1h0BXw

B) *BBC 's Genius of the Modern World: Karl Marx:*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_cU9MUhUWk

Assessment

A number of writing assignments (5 to 6) of varying lengths will be assigned throughout the semester with the shortest being around 3-5 pages and the longest 10-15 pages. Your writing is expected to be accurate, clear, creative, and critical while showing engagement with the assigned readings.

Your final grade will be based on the following standard grading scale:

A 93.0-100.0

A- 90.0-92.9

B+ 87.1-89.9

B 83.0-87.0

B- 80.0-82.9

C+ 77.1-79.9

C 73.0-77.0

C- 70.0-72.9

F 70 and below

Disability

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who would like to discuss classroom or exam accommodations should come and see me as soon as possible. You can meet me after class or privately during office hours. For your information, the phone number for Student Accessibility Services is (212) 237-8031, if you want to call and register.

Writing Center

If you need help with written English, you may consider dropping by the writing center, located in room 2450N. They provide free tutoring to students, helping them become more effective writers, from organizing and structuring a paper, to writing and proofreading it.

Late Work

Late work will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances. It is your responsibility to make sure work can be done in time, or, when circumstances are beyond your control, to let me know.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

For quick definitions of violations of academic integrity go to:

<http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/academics/762.php>

For the entire policy on academic integrity please see the Graduate Bulletin:

<http://johnjay.jjay.cuny.edu/bulletins/graduatebulletin20132014.pdf>

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, words, or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one's own creation. Using the ideas or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism. It is the student's responsibility to recognize the difference between statements that are common knowledge (which do not require documentation)

and restatements of the ideas of others. Paraphrase, summary, and direct quotation are acceptable forms of restatement, as long as the source is cited. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The Library has free guides designed to help students with problems of documentation.

Incomplete Grade Policy

An Incomplete Grade will only be assigned in exceptional circumstances. See the College Bulletin for full details:

<http://johnjay.jjay.cuny.edu/bulletins/graduatebulletin20132014.pdf>

Extra Work Policy

No extra credit assignments will be available to any student at any time during or after this course. Students who want to pass the course are advised to do all of the required work with care.

Course Outline (* means required)

1. Political Economy vs Economics

*Bowles, S. 1974. Economists as Servants of Power, *American Economic Review*, Vol. 64, No. 2: 129-132.

*Roncaglia, A. 2017. The Economist as an Expert: a prince, a servant or a citizen?

*Perlman, F. "Introduction", in Rubin, *Essays in Marx's Theory of Value* pp. ix-xii

*Heinrich, M. 2004. *Introduction to Three Volumes of Capital (13K from hereafter)*, Ch.1.

Crotty, J. and Rapping, L. 1975. The 1975 Report of the President's Council of Economic Advisors: A Radical Critique, *American Economic Review*, 65 (5): 791-811.

Resnick, S. 1975. The State of Development Economics, *American Economic Review*, 62 (2): 317-322.

Bowles, S. and Gintis, H. 1988. Contested Exchange: Political Economy and Modern Economic Theory, *American Economic Review*, 78 (2): 145-150.

Bowles, S. And Gintis. H. 1992. Power and Wealth in a Competitive Capitalist Economy, *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 21 (4): 324-353.

Lafargue, P. 1883. *The Right to be Lazy*. Available in MIA.

Russel, B. 1932. In Praise of Idleness.

2. Marxist Political Economy: Background and Method

*Tucker, Introduction.

*Marx & Engels, "Communist Manifesto," in Tucker: pp. 473-500.

*Marx, K. 1843 Letter to Ruge, "For a Ruthless Critique of Everything Existing" in Tucker: 12-15.

*Marx, K. *Capital*, Preface to First Edition and Preface to French Edition.

*Sweezy, P. 1942. *The Theory of Capitalist Development*, pp. 11-20.

*Hegel, G.W.F. 1808. Who thinks abstractly?, Available at MIA.

- *Marx, K. 1859. Preface to a Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy. in Tucker, pp. 3-6.
- *Marx, K. 1857. "The Method of Political Economy", *Grundrisse*, pp. 100-108. Available at MIA
- *Resnick S. and R. Wolff. 1982. Marxist Epistemology: The Critique of Economic Determinism, *Social Text*, 6: 31-72.
- *Heinrich, M. 2004. *I3K*, Ch. 2
- Buck-Morss, Susan. (2001). Hegel and Haiti, *Critical Inquiry*, 26(4)
- Darity, W. 1997. Marx, Keynes, and Sraffa: Conflicting attitudes towards political Economy,
- Perlman, F. Commodity Fetichism, in Rubin.
- Ollman, Bertell. The Meaning of Dialectics.
- Heinrich, M. *Karl Marx and the Birth of Modern Society*.
- McLellan, David. *Karl Marx: A Biography*.
- Mehring, Franz, Karl Marx: Story of His Life.^{[L][SEP]}
- Lenin, V. "Karl Marx", *Lenin's Collected Works*, Vol. 21. Available at MIA.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. *The Age of Revolution 1789-1848*.
- Marcuse, Herbert. *Reason and Revolution*, pp. 3-29.
- Pinkard, Terry. *German Philosophy 1760-1860: The Legacy of Idealism*, pp. 1-18.
- Anderson, Perry. *Considerations on Western Marxism*, pp. 1-5.^{[L][SEP]}
- Mandel, Ernest. *Formation of the Economic Thought of Karl Marx*, Ch. 1-4.^{[L][SEP]}
- Bronfenbrenner, M., "The Vicissitudes of Marxian Economics," *History of Political Economy*, Fall, 1970.
- Marcuse, H. 1941. A Note on Dialectics
- Lenin, V.I. On The Question of Dialectics, MIA
- Stedman, G. 1990. Dialectical Reasoning, *The New Palgrave: Marxian Economics*, pp 121-128.

3. Alienation

- *Marx, K. 1844. Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts" in Tucker, pp. 70-81
- *Marx, K. "Alienation and Social Classes" in Tucker, pp. 133-135.
- *Pappenheim, Fritz. *Alienation in American Society*
- *Bowles, S. and Gintis H. 1975. [Class Power and Alienated Labor](#)
- *Wolff. R. 1976. Alienation and Human Needs
- *Bowles S. and Gintis, H. 1976. Response to Wolff.
- *Ollman, B. *Alienation*, Chapters: Intro, 2, 4, 18.
- Mézsáros, Istvan. *Marx's Theory of Alienation*
- Rubin, I.I. *Essays on Marx's Theory of Value*, Ch.1-7
- Bowles, S. and Gintis, H. *Schooling in Capitalist America*
- Pappenheim, F. *The Alienation of Modern Man*
- Marcuse, H. *One Dimensional Man*
- Marcuse, H. *Reason and Revolution*
- Fromm, E. *The Sane Society*.
- Lukács, Georg. *History and Class Consciousness*
- Rubin, I. *Essays on Marx's Theory of Value*.

Postone, M. *Time, Labor, and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory*

Dhondt, G. et al. Behind the masks of total choice: teaching alienation in the age of inequality.

4. Theory of Value and Surplus Value

a) Commodities and Money

*Marx, *Capital*, Vol 1, Chapters 1-3

*Marx, *Critique of Political Economy*, Chapter 2.

*Sweezy, Paul. *Theory of Capitalist Development*, Chapter 2.

*Luxemburg, Rosa. The Social Character of Value.

*Heinrich, M. *I3K*, Ch. 3

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

Harvey, D. *Limits to Capital*, pp. 1-20.

Lukacs, G. *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 83-110.

Dobb, M. *Political Economy and Capitalism*, Chapters 1 and 3.

b) Transformation of Money into Capital

*Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1, Chapters 4-6.

*Marx, *Capital*, Volume 2, Chapter 1.

*Sweezy, P. *Theory of Capitalist Development*, Chapter 4.

*Heinrich, M. Ch. 4.

Marx, *Grundrisse*, pp. 239-272.

Harvey, *The Limits to Capital*, pp. 20-24.

c) Absolute and Relative Surplus Value

*Marx, *Capital*, 1, Chaps. 7-11.

*Marx, *Capital*, 1, Chaps. 12-18.

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

*Heinrich, M. 2004, *I3K*, Ch. 5.

*Braverman, Harry. *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, Chapters 4,5 and 6.

*Marglin, Stephen. What do Bosses Do?

*Ignatiev, Noel. Introduction to *Modern Politics*.

Haraszti, M. 1978. *A Worker in a Worker's State*.

Hamper, B. 1992. *Rivethhead*.

Tregenna, Fiona. 2011. What does the services sector mean in Marxian terms?, *Review of Political Economy*, 23(2): 281-298.

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

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

Harvey, *The Limits to Capital*, pp. 45-54.
Romano P. and Stone, L. *The American Worker*, Part 1.

5. Accumulation, Distributions of Surplus Value, Cycles, and Crisis

- *Marx, K. *Capital*, Volume 1, Chapters 23-25.
- *Marx, K. Crisis Theory, *Theories of Surplus Value*, in Tucker, pp. 443.
- *Sweezy, P. *Theory of Capitalist Development*, Chapters 5, 6, 8-11, 13-15.
- *Heinrich, M. 2004, *I3K*, Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9.
- *Marx, K., *Capital*, Volume 3, Chapters 5, 6, 48, 49, 51.
- *Quick, Paddy. 1977. The Class Nature of Women's Oppression, *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 9(3).
- *Quick, Paddy. 2016. Mode of Production and Household Production, *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 48(4).
- *Munro, K. 2019. "Social Reproduction Theory", Social Reproduction, and Household Production, *Science & Society*.
- *Resnick, S. 2001. Class, Contradiction, and the Capitalist Economy.
- *Crotty, J. 1985. The Centrality of Money, Credit, and Financial Intermediation in Marx's Crisis Theory, in Resnick and Wolff (eds.), *Rethinking Marxism*
- *Crotty, J. 1993. Rethinking Marxian Investment Theory, *RRPE*, 25(1): 1-26.
- *Kotz, D. 1991. Accumulation, Money, and Credit in the Circuit of Capital, *Rethinking Marxism*.

Marx, *Capital*, Volume 2, Chapters 2-4, 6, 17-21.

Harvey, David. *The Limits to Capital*, pp. 39-44; 68-74; 156-203; 255-260; 330-333; 362-366.

Wolff, R. 1978. Marxian Crisis Theory: Structure and Implications, *RRPE*. 10(1).

Weisskopf, T., "Marxian Crisis Theory and the Rate of Profit in the Postwar U.S.

Economy," *CJE*, Dec. 1979.

Bakir, E. 2015. Capital Accumulation, Profitability and Crisis, *Review of Radical*

Political Economics, 47(3).

Laibman, David. 2000. Capitalism as History: A Taxonomy of Crisis Potentials, *Science*

and Society, 63(4): 478-502.

Dobb, M. "Economic Crises" in *Political Economy & Capitalism*.

Bowles, S. 1985. The Production Process in a Competitive Economy: Walrasian, Neo-Hobbesian, and Marxian Models.

Wright, E.O. 1999. Alternative Perspectives on Marx's Theory of Accumulation and Crisis, *Critical Sociology*, 25 (2,3): 115-142.

Shaikh, A. 1978. Political Economy and Capitalism: Notes on Dobbs' Theory of

Crisis, CJE, 2,: 233-251.

Kalecki, M. The Problem of Effective Demand with Tugan-Baranovsky and Rosa Luxemburg.

6. Government and State

*Sweezy, P. *Theory of Capitalist Development*, Chapter 13.

*Heinrich, M. 2004. *13K*, Chapter 11.

*Boddy and Crotty, 1975. Class Conflict and the Political Business Cycle, *RRPE*, 7(1).

*Bowles, S and Gintis, H. 1982. The Welfare State and Long-Term Economic Growth: Marxian, Neoclassical, and Keynesian Approaches.

*Kalecki, M. 1943. Political Aspects of Full Employment

*O'Kane, C. 2014. State Violence, State Control: Marxist State Theory and the Critique of Political Economy.

7. Imperialism

*Lenin, V.I. 1917. *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, ch. 4-10. MIA.

*Wood, Ellen M. 2005. *Empire of Capital*.

*Sweezy, P. *Theory of Capitalist Development*, Chapters 16 and 17.

Fuchs, Christian, 2010. Critical Globalization Studies: An Empirical and Theoretical Analysis of the New Imperialism, *Science and Society*, 74(2): 215-247.

Bukharin, Nikolai, *Imperialism and World Economy*

Baran, P. 1957. *The Political Economy of Growth*.

Amin, S. 2010. Contemporary Imperialism, *Monthly Review*, 67(3).

8. Stages and Forms of Capitalism

*Resnick and Wolff. Oscillations in Capitalism and Among Economic Theories

*Kotz, D. 2002. Globalization and Neoliberalism, *Rethinking Marxism* 14:2.

*Crotty, J. 2000. Structural Contradictions of the Global Neoliberal Regime, *RRPE* 32(3).

Harvey, David, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 2005.

9. The Great Recession

*McNally, D. 2009. From Financial Crisis to World Slump: Accumulation, Financialization, and the Global Slowdown, *Historical Materialism*, 17(2).

*Kotz, D. 2009. The Financial and Economic Crisis of 2008: A Systemic Crisis of Neoliberal Capitalism, *RRPE* 41(3): 305-317.

*Resnick, S. and Wolff, R. The Economic Crisis: A Marxian Interpretation, *Rethinking Marxism*, 22(2): 170-186.