

Summaries

Fredric Jameson: A New Reading of Capital

This essay previews the argument of Fredric Jameson's forthcoming book, *Representing Capital*, a Commentary on the First Volume of Karl Marx' *Capital*. Jameson claims that the first volume gives a complete picture of capitalist totality. In his understanding, the main contradiction of capitalism is the generation of a mass of potentially uninvestible capital on the one hand and a mass of unemployed people on the other. In view of the incompatibility between social democracy and capitalist society, Marxism should be understood not as a political radicalism, but as the search for a radical alternative to the entire economic system.

Hans Jürgen Krysmanski: Fredric Jameson's Capital

Jameson's interest lies in representations of totality. *Capital*, Volume One, appears as a perfect example of totality, describing the progress of an 'infernal machine' as an unfolding, dialectical process. Jameson follows capital's play of categories, neglecting its political critique and concentrating on its conceptual climax: How industrial capitalism generates an overwhelming mass of potentially uninvestible capital on one hand, and an ever-increasing mass of unemployed people on the other.

David Harvey: History versus Theory: On Marx's Method in Capital

Marx's historical analyses would appear to be incompatible with his writings on political economy. This is due to the fact that historical particularities are not dealt with at the same analytical level as the general framework of political economy. The exclusion of historical particularities often makes the application of a general theory difficult, but it allowed Marx to develop a framework of which transcended the historical particularities of his own time. A theoretical renewal must be able to distinguish between these two levels and to capture recent particularities central to the development of and a transition from capitalism.

Wolfgang Fritz Haug: Harvey's American Capital

Harvey and Haug, both born in 1936, started giving introductory lectures and organizing reading groups on Marx's *Capital* in the same year as well, 1971 – and since then never stopped. Their approaches to Marx and to contemporary capitalism in crisis are in many regards parallel – except that Haug develops his reading in Marx's own language, whereas Harvey – claiming to »pay careful attention to Marx's language – what he says, how he says it« – relies on Ben Fowkes's English version from 1976. Herein lies the problem. When Harvey believes to read Marx »on his own terms« he reads Fowkes's terms, which in many cases have a different thrust than Marx's »own terms«. Haug compares Fowkes' version with Engels' translation from 1887 and both of these with Marx's own last edition and his French translation. When Harvey says that »the mainly German critical philosophical tradition weighed heavily on Marx« and that in Marx's first chapters »half the time you have no idea what he is talking about«, Haug highlights a number of basic mistranslations which all contribute to obfuscating what Marx calls »my dialectical method«. – This comedy of errors reaches its peak in the German translation of Harvey's *Companion*. Haug's philologically tight analysis reveals instances of what he calls »a twofold linguistic money laundering«. Given the status of English as *lingua franca* of globalization and the importance of Harvey's crisis lecture on *Capital*, widely followed via internet, Haug calls attention to the necessity of a new English translation and critical edition of Marx's main work as a means of establishing a reliable textual basis for its international reception and the debates surrounding it.

Carlos Fernández Liria & Luis Alegre Zahonero: Commodity Production and Capitalist Appropriation. On Method in Marx's Capital

Few subjects have been discussed by Marxists as structure and method in *Capital*. *Capital* has deep structural problems, as the results produced in its analytical development apparently contradict the premises at the starting point. This is most evident in the theoretical transition from Part I

to Part II of Volume One. In this paper we meticulously analyze the different versions written by Marx in his attempt to provide an explanation that would offer a transition. We demonstrate that Marx himself is unclear on how to deal with this question. Contrary to general opinion, we argue that it is not possible to find in this passage any dialectical mechanism that might offer a real explanation for the structural problems of *Capital*.

Jannis Chasoglou: Ricardo and the Critique of Political Economy – the »New Reading of Marx« and the Scholarly-Political Relevance of Classical Political Economy

Marx never left any doubt regarding his intellectual indebtedness to Classical Political Economy, especially the work of David Ricardo. By contrast, neoclassical economic thinking has always tried to erase the influence of Political Economy and objective value theory from the scholarly field of economics. The so-called »New Reading of Marx«, prominently advocated by Michael Heinrich, claims to continue the legacy of Critique of Political Economy but it one-sidedly over-emphasizes the discontinuities between the Classics and Marx, ignoring the important insights of Smith and Ricardo as a fundament for Marx's own theory. This article will stress Ricardo's significance in the development of Marx's social theory and point to major differences between the two theoretical strands. It will show that the anti-Ricardian stance of the proponents of a »New Reading of Marx« is no coincidence, but is closely connected to their subjectivist value theory which has little to do with the labour theory of value developed by Marx.

Bernd Röttger: Basic Problems of Materialist analyses of Capitalism and Crisis

The recent crisis of the capitalist mode of production led to a renaissance of critical analyses of capitalism. In their »portrait of a mode of production«, Resch/Steinert present an »introduction« into the complexity of materialist analyses of capitalism and crisis. Their book is a starting point for discussing basic problems of analyses of capitalist reproduction und transformation that draw on a Marxist concept of mode of production.

Wolf-Dieter Narr: Capitalism at its Highest Level. Haug's Present Reading of the Crisis

Wolfgang Haug's new book, *High-Tech Kapitalismus in der Krise* excels as an outstanding analysis. Following Marx's footsteps, it identifies hybrid forms of present-day capitalism; state-centred politics' inability to come to grips with it; as well as potential upheaval from below. Two particular strengths are Haug's persuasive analysis of the new reach of financial capitalism, its speculative quality on the one side and its harsh limits regarding industrial, i.e., »real« capital on the other. Moreover, Haug shows phenomenologically the irritating correspondence between an »old« and »new« world power with all determining effects: the United States and China.

Richard Sorg: Hans Heinz Holz and Dialectic

This article traces the ambitious attempt of recently deceased Marxist philosopher, Hans Heinz Holz. Holz traced the history of dialectical thinking, thereby reconstructing important philosophical fundamentals of occidental culture. Systematically, he argued that since the beginning of philosophy, dialectical figures have attempted to answer a basic contradiction: In order to think, we fix identities (identity/difference) but at the same time we experience a permanent change in that which is identical, i.e., non-identity. How change has been conceived is therefore one of the questions out of which a theory of dialectics emerged.

Christian Siefkes: Subversive Laughter – Hackers, Ethics and the Virtual Struggle Against Representation and Commodity Form

Hacker groups such as LulzSec and Anonymous are met by politicians and authorities with distrust and oppression. Hackers challenge conventional politics by their refusal to be represented, preferring to take things into their own hands instead. They refuse all attempts to force information into the straitjacket of the commodity form. This is a challenge to the commodity form and capitalism in general, since both fall to pieces if people refuse to take them for granted, asking instead how needs can be met directly. Meanwhile, another, more constructive kind of hackers are busy inventing commons-based peer production, an emerging mode of production that has the potential to challenge and ultimately supplant capitalism.