

**Alex Demirović: Structure, Agency, and the Ideal Average.** The first part of the article argues in favor of an anti-hermeneutic strategy of reading Marx, taking into account the always shifting character of the meaning of his theory due to historical transformations generated by social struggles and the partisan and interventionist character of any Marxist theory. This has effects upon how the relation of structure and agency has to be conceptualized as a specific historical relation – very often ignored by a misled sociological reading of Marx in the tradition of Weber and Parsons. Decisive is the argument that in Marx's theory the differentiation and opposition of structure and agency is in itself not pertinent but has to be explained in terms of historical struggles. At the centre of the argument is a reformulation of the law of value as a logic of collective practice and the important meaning of what Marx calls the "ideal average" as a subject of his theory.

**Urs Marti: Marx and contemporary Political Philosophy.** Is Marx a „real“ political thinker? Political philosophers often raise the objection that the understanding of law and politics as superstructure is incompatible with serious political reflection. The objection doesn't note the common theoretical foundations of liberalism and Marxism. The theory of Marx nonetheless turns out to be an analytical tool which allows a better understanding of liberalism's contradictions, as comparisons with Kant, Tocqueville, Rawls and Habermas may clarify.

**Jörg Stadlinger, Dieter Sauer: Marx & Modernity: Dialectic of Liberation or Paradoxes of Individualization?** This article discusses the use of "paradox" and "ambivalence" as key terms of social theory as suggested by modernization theories instead of the dialectical term "contradiction". It is shown that the underlying assumption of these concepts – the "paradoxical force to freedom" – is based on questionable and not thought-out premises. In contrast, the use of Hegel's dialectical idea of freedom and Marx's Theory of Productive Forces offers a perspective in which "paradoxes" stated by the modernization theories can be conceptualised and in which the underlying changes can be identified as a momentum of a Dialectic of Liberation. The historical basis of the "Paradoxes of Individualization" are changes in the relation of autonomy and heteronomy related to the radical change in the organisation of work.

**Hanno Pahl: Marx, Foucault and the Project of Social Studies of Economics.** The paper argues for carrying forward the project of investigation and critique of economics in the tradition of the *Critique of Political Economy*. It first examines Marxian and Foucauldian perspectives on economics before turning to more recent attempts in the field of *Social Studies of Science* (namely Mirowski and Yonay). Various modes of critique are discussed and compared. Two of the main questions regard the problem whether the discussion of economic theories should rely on a strong concept of truth and how to discuss correlations between structural and semantic dimensions.

**Paul Burkett, John Bellamy Foster: Metabolism, energy, and entropy in Marx's critique of political economy: Beyond the Podolinsky myth.** Until recently, most commentators, including ecological Marxists, have assumed that Marx's historical materialism was only marginally ecologically sensitive at best, or even that it was explicitly anti-ecological. However, research over the last decade has demonstrated not only that Marx deemed ecological materialism essential to the critique of political economy and to investigations into socialism, but also that his treatment of the coevolution of nature and society was in many ways the most sophisticated to be put forth by any social theorist prior to the late twentieth century. Still, criticisms continue to be leveled at Marx and Engels for their understanding of thermodynamics and the extent to which their work is said to conflict with the core tenets of ecological economics. In this respect, the rejection by Marx and Engels of the pioneering contributions of the Ukrainian socialist Ser-

gei Podolinsky, one of the founders of energetics, has been frequently offered as the chief ecological case against them. Building on an earlier analysis of Marx's and Engels's response to Podolinsky, this article shows that they relied on an open-system, metabolic-energetic model that adhered to all of the main strictures of ecological economics – but one that also (unlike ecological economics) rooted the violation of solar and other environmental-sustainability conditions in the class relations of capitalist society. The result is to generate a deeper understanding of classical historical materialism's ecological approach to economy and society – providing an ecological-materialist critique that can help uncover the systemic roots of today's "treadmill of production" and global environmental crisis.

**Jannis Milios, Dimitris P. Sotiropoulos: Marxian Theory and Imperialism.** For more than a century 'imperialism' has been a key concept in theoretical discussions and politics, never denoting a single theoretical approach. In classical Marxist theories imperialism was seen as the notion deciphering capital's global trajectories, to the extent that the different nation-states were not fading away despite the global character of capitalism. Many subsequent narratives of international capitalism represent alternative attempts at conceptualizing the very same problem of the 'lack of correspondence' between the territory of the national state on the one hand and the sphere of operations of capital. In our view, all these theoretical strategies share a common point of departure: namely, the rejection of the Marxian concept of social capital. This rejection has significant consequences for the way of understanding how class power is organized within a social formation and so the way in which we should understand imperialism. The concept of the imperialist chain opens up a fertile theoretical terrain in an endeavor to extend the Marxian problematic.

**Klaus Müller, Rudi Schmidt: From the Greek Crisis to the European Crisis.** Membership in the Euro-Zone did not help Greece to escape the global financial crisis. To be sure, Greece's backward economic structure and its corrupt political culture of clientelism and tax-evasion as well as an overblown incompetent administration drove the country into deep public debts and deficits. Nevertheless, the actual crisis started with several external shocks and was exacerbated by discord in the euro-zone. Afraid of abetting French ambitions towards an 'economic government', the German government delayed common approaches to fend off speculation against 'deficit sinners' and invited the IMF - thereby opening the window for speculative attacks against the euro-zone as a whole. It remains to be seen if the recently improvised European Stabilization Mechanism can be a first step towards an overdue economic complement to EMU or if it will generalize IMF-style structural adjustments inside the EU. The latter 'solution' of the European crisis would, as already observable in the Baltics, put heavy social costs on deficit countries and undermine the justifications given for European integration, namely to secure convergence, cohesion and solidarity between its members.

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