



## Crisis and Revitalization in Marxist Theory

By: John Bellamy Foster

### Szymanski's Cycles

In the 1960s and early 1970s Marxian theory (including Marxian-influenced critical theory) was arguably the most dynamic force within social theory as a whole. However, by the late 1970s its impact had begun to wane as capitalist societies turned further to the right with the rise of neoliberalism and as the academy shifted to postmodernist deconstruction. This was widely perceived as constituting a crisis of Marxian theory, one that could be traced to the failure of the 1968 revolt in the West—later to be amplified by the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989 and fall of the Soviet Union itself in 1991.

In an early response to these developments entitled “Crisis and Vitalization in Marxist Theory,” Al Szymanski (1985) argued that Marxism was not to be seen “as a static system, a linear trend, or a back and forward movement between the same two poles” (p. 315).<sup>1</sup> Rather Marxist theory developed through an “oscillation between orthodoxy...and open and eclectic formulations,” exhibiting a cyclical pattern, but with long-run development. Marxian theory, he claimed, could be seen “as repeating a basic cycle of four phases: (1) a period of energization or impetus; (2) a period of formation/reassertion of revolutionary materialist theory; (3) a period of the watering down of revolutionary formulation; and (4) a period of predominance of explicit ‘revisionism.’” Szymanski designated “five (or five and-a-half)” cyclical periods up to that point, each designated by its beginning revolutionary upsurge: “1843-1849; 1864-1871 (the half period); 1884-1906; 1917-1921; 1935-1949 and 1967-1970” (pp. 315-16).<sup>2</sup>

Since this was a materialist analysis, the development of ideas was not seen as independent of material conditions. Nor were they, however, to be seen as mere “reflections” of an “economic base.” Rather, as Marx explained, ideas themselves—once they came into being—became a material force. Although the course of Marxist theory reflected changes on the ground, the relatively autonomous cyclical pattern of theory itself (and its continuity and development over the course of these cycles) was a critical issue.

As Szymanski elaborated on his four phases, Phase I exhibited a “‘storm the heavens’ mentality...Everything is possible” (p. 317). Phase II was the period in which “seminal theoretical works” were most likely to appear, “often written as pamphlets, polemics or manifestos in Phase I” and then developed further, usually by “young activist leaders” of Phase I. “In some cases,” he wrote,

<sup>1</sup> Al Szymanski was one of the founders and early formative thinkers of the Section on Marxist Sociology of the American Sociological Association. His article on “The Crisis and Vitalization in Marxist Theory” was published posthumously following his death in March 1985.

<sup>2</sup> He added in a footnote: “The timing of these periods is, not surprisingly, somewhat different in different parts of the world capitalist system, as all movements do not peak at precisely the same time” (p. 316).

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“publication occurs with a considerable delay; e.g., the 1960s works of Marcuse, and of Baran and Sweezy, had been germinating for 25 years” (p. 318). Phase III is the period in which “the disjunction between theory (revolutionary) and practice (reformist) which began to appear toward the end of Phase II becomes dominant.” Here “verbal discourse is still one of orthodox Marxism, but the substance of that discourse...undergoes a fundamental transformation in the direction of idealism, eclecticism, voluntarism, subjectivism, democracy, reformism, and evolutionary politics” (p. 318). Finally, Phase IV is “the period of true crisis in Marxist theory.” Here “the unity of theory and practice is restored—now around an explicitly reformist practice and revisionist theory” (p. 319).

“The minority who persist [in Phase IV] in adhering to orthodox categories, in spite of the withering of the mass movements that had once made them vital, adopt a siege mentality....The cost of maintaining a revolutionary materialist analysis is the crystallization of the disjunction between critical theory and practice....Revolutionary materialism, now cased in a hard shell, has rigidified. But irrelevance nevertheless keeps the seeds of what once was a vital, creative and powerful force alive” (p. 319).

### The Fifth Cycle

Szymanski's main interest, naturally, was the “fifth cycle,” which had its “beginning revolutionary upsurge” in 1967-1970. The distinctive feature of this period, he claimed, was the emphasis on the “Third World,” reflecting the fact that it drew its main inspiration from “developments in China, the Cuban Revolution, the Vietnam [W]ar, and the civil rights struggles in the U.S.” (p. 325). Nevertheless, “by the late 1970s in France and soon thereafter in the rest of the West, a wide variety of individualistic, humanistic, empiricist and reformist ideologies became dominant....The discourse of revolutionary Marxism, after a moment of leading massive demonstrations around 1968, became increasingly isolated from mass struggles (which now were led by confirmed social democrats). Once again the separation of revolutionary Marxist theory and mass movements in the West became complete” (p. 330).

For Szymanski it was clear “that it is from the needs and experience of revolutionary movements, not the heads of intellectuals, that theoretical advance springs....The energy and imagination of working people spill over to the intelligentsia.” For this reason, he argued, “it is no accident that many of those in the West who are today adherents of orthodox Marxism have ties to the vital mass movements of the less developed countries.” The actual revitalization of Marxist theory in the advanced capitalist countries themselves, however, was likely to occur only as a result of “protracted economic depression or warfare” (p. 331).

### The Protracted Crisis

Given that there is no clear mechanism involved in Szymanski's cycles in revolutionary activity and Marxist theory, which appear to depend to a large extent on the internal contradictions of the system, it would be a mistake to make too much of this periodization, except historically, i.e. after the fact. Nevertheless, it is interesting that his framework points to generational cycles of roughly 20-30 years (perhaps influenced by long waves of capitalist development and the ensuing economic ups and downs and related periods of militarization/demilitarization). Viewed in this way one might have expected a new radical/revolutionary movement and an upsurge in Marxist theory (a new Phase I) to have begun sometime around the late 1980s, or at least by the 1990s. One is tempted therefore to inquire whether there was a missing or delayed sixth cycle in the development of revolutionary practice and Marxist theory.

The question may of course seem a bit mechanical. There are too many historical contingencies, too many changing relations, to expect social cycles to fall into a very regular periodization. Nevertheless, the issue of a missing or delayed sixth cycle in the development of Marxian theory does raise some intriguing questions about the historical nature of our time and the actual revitalization of Marxism that we are now witnessing.

The year 1989—about the time that Szymanski's analysis suggested that a renewal of revolutionary activity could take place as a result of such factors as economic stagnation and war—is in fact remembered

as a year of revolution emanating from stagnation and war. But the revolt was against the entrenched ruling classes of the Soviet bloc countries, rather than against capitalism as such, and led to a restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union itself.

Most Western Marxists (Szymanski himself was an exception) had long distanced themselves from developments in the Soviet Union—where the Stalinism of the 1930s had created the conditions for the rise of a new ruling class. Yet, the fall of the Soviet bloc was widely interpreted on the left (as well as the right) as a historical rejection of Marxism. Accompanied as this was by the rise of market fetishism and the fall of European-style social democracy, the result was to reinforce for a considerable period of time the hegemonic view that, in Margaret Thatcher's words, "there is no alternative."

At the same time capitalism was going through a major transition from monopoly capital to global monopoly-finance capital. The stagnation of the accumulation function in the advanced capitalist states and a slowing of the trend-rate of growth were accompanied by a financial explosion and the triumph of financial capital (Foster 2006, 2007). As the world entered the 1990s, therefore, the left was almost everywhere in disarray.

Nevertheless, to see 1989 simply as a year of defeat for the left would be a major error. The turn to finance in the advanced capitalist economy generated its own historically specific ideology of neoliberalism. The global structural crisis of capital underlying these developments reignited class and imperial wars throughout the world, with the assault falling most heavily on those areas of the periphery most firmly under the control of the advanced capitalist states: Latin America, Africa, and parts of Asia. Meanwhile, the growth of global environmental crisis in the late 1980s increasingly undermined faith in the system. As a result, the very moment that socialism was being pronounced defeated, the roots of the revitalization of Marxist theory and practice were being laid.

As Ricardo Alarcón, president of the National Assembly of Cuba and its permanent representative to the United Nations, has stated, "So much was said about the fall of the Berlin Wall that few realized that at the same time the Caracazo was taking place. When

the impoverished masses took to the streets of the Venezuelan capital (February 27, 1989) to protest against IMF draconian measures and were brutally massacred, the western media kept a despicable silence. However, it was the beginning of a process that no one can deny anymore: the bankruptcy of the neo-liberal economic model" and the path to a socialism for the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Alarcon 2007: 9).

## The Revitalization of Marxist Theory

The crucial conceptual blockage that prevented this new historical moment from being seen in its proper perspective at the time can of course be traced to the symbolic "death of Marxism" identified with the collapse of the Soviet bloc. A theoretical critique that dealt with the global transformations taking place at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first centuries on a level rivaling the greatest contributions of Marxist theory in the past was therefore needed.

Beginning in the early 1970s István Mészáros, Lukács's most brilliant student, and author of the magisterial *Marx's Theory of Alienation* (1971), redirected his research from his major philosophical treatises to the question of the "global structural crisis of capital." The result of two decades of intensive work was his monumental *Beyond Capital* (1995). Among his most important innovations was to return to Marx's original emphasis on the critique of *capital* generally, as opposed to *capitalism* specifically. This allowed Mészáros to develop not only a systematic critique of the most advanced stage of monopoly capital, but also to dissect the demise of the Soviet revolution, as a result of the failure to transcend the root capital relation. Mészáros emphasized the need for a more radical-democratic socialist revolution that would put the people in charge, merging Rousseau and Marx. Already in 1995 Mészáros had singled out Hugo Chávez as the most brilliant analyst of the Latin American situation, and as its leading potential revolutionary political figure (pp. 710-12; Mészáros 2007). Chávez himself was to pore over *Beyond Capital* incorporating it into his conception of revolution, thereby laying the basis for a new revolutionary state that would turn power over to the masses in every institutional way possible, while

promoting the general will through the executive power.

The five years from 1998 to 2003 could be seen as a turning point, possibly constituting a new Phase I at the world level. In 1998 Hugo Chávez was elected president in Venezuela and immediately set out through popular mobilization to create a new revolutionary constitution in Venezuela, a process completed in December 1999, establishing the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Meanwhile, street protests in Seattle in November 1999 helped ignite the anti-capitalist globalization movement, leading to major protests in Europe, the United States and elsewhere in the first two years of the new millennium. The terrorist attacks of September 2001 became a pretext for a new global assault by the U.S. empire, in the form of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and an extension of the U.S. worldwide military base system, aimed at ending the decline of U.S. hegemony and creating a new century of U.S. global domination. This sparked the greatest wave of world anti-war protests in history. The failure of the U.S.-backed coup against Hugo Chávez in 2002 was followed by Chávez's increasingly open advocacy of a new "socialism for the 21<sup>st</sup> century," and his promotion of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas, together with Cuba and Bolivia. The election of Evo Morales of the Movement Toward Socialism as president of Bolivia in 2005 (Bolivia's first indigenous president), the election of Rafael Correa, also an advocate of a "socialism for the 21<sup>st</sup> century," as president of Ecuador in 2006, Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega's return to power in the 2006 election in Nicaragua, the electoral and popular revolts in Mexico in 2006-2007, the successful transition in Cuba, coming out of its "Special Period" and emerging as a world leader in ecological restoration, and the continuing resistance of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC), constitute elements in a widespread Latin American revolt.<sup>3</sup>

As the global structural crisis of capital, now extending to the planet itself, has unfolded, issues of

imperialism, class inequality, class struggle, and socialism have come back to the fore, while Marxist ecological analysis is transforming the way we think about material relations. The titles of the last five special summer issues of *Monthly Review*, point to some of the major world developments: *Imperialism Now* (2003), *China and Socialism* (2004), *Socialism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2005), *Aspects of Class in the United States* (2006), and *Revolt in Latin America* (2007). Theorization about socialism, in response to past failures at socialist construction and inspired by the new struggles for socialism in Venezuela and elsewhere, are now developing at a fast pace, particularly among theorists who have focused on third world conditions. In addition, to Mészáros's *Beyond Capital*, Michael Lebowitz (author of his own important work *Beyond Capital* [2003]) has authored *Build it Now: Socialism for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2006), also praised by Chávez. Mészáros's soon to be released *The Challenge and Burden of Historical Time* (2008, forthcoming) evokes this new revolutionary process, helping to provide a theoretical basis for the Bolivarian revolution (emphasizing the continuity between Rousseau, Bolívar, Marx and Chávez).<sup>4</sup> Symbolic of this new period of energization in Marxist theory is a reconsideration of the classics. Thus a new annotated edition of *The Communist Manifesto*, edited by Phil Gasper (Marx and Engels 2005), corrects past mistranslations into English and connects the *Manifesto* to today's revolutionary and class movements, and to gender, race, and environmental struggles.

Perhaps the most ambitious recent development in Marxist theory, aside from reformulations of state-society relations in the transition to socialism, has been the ecological turn, which is broadening the notion of materialism (in line with Marx's own analysis), from a primarily economic to a wider ecological form. This theoretical turn had its inception the late 1980s with the growing awareness of planetary ecological crisis associated with the destruction of the ozone layer, global warming, and the accelerated ex-

<sup>3</sup> Latin America was not the only region to see revolutionary activity in this era, as witnessed by the astounding victories of the new Maoist revolutionary movement in Nepal in the opening years of the twenty-first century.

<sup>4</sup> The publication of *The Crisis and Burden of Historical Time* will be followed by the publication of two major philosophical works by Mészáros, many years in the gestation: *The Social Determination of Method* and *The Dialectic of Structure and History*.

inction of species. A key development was the creation in the late 1980s and 1990s of *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*, with James O'Connor as founding editor. The debates that ensued led to a host of theoretical works, including Carolyn Merchant's *Radical Ecology* (1992), O'Connor's *Is Capitalism Sustainable?* (1994), Paul Burkett's *Marx and Nature* (1999) and *Marxism and Ecological Economics* (2006), my own *Marx's Ecology* (2000), Joel Kovel's *The End of Nature*, and Peter Dickens's *Society and Nature* (2004). In the last decade in sociology major Marxist or Marxist-inspired ecological analyses have appeared in the *American Journal of Sociology*, the *American Sociological Review*, *Theory & Society*, *Sociological Quarterly*, *Organization & Environment*, *Monthly Review*, the *Socialist Register*, and elsewhere (see, for example, Foster 1999; York, Rosa, and Dietz, 2003; Foster and Clark 2004; Clark and York 2005a; Clark and York 2005b; Clausen and Clark 2005; Burkett and Foster 2006; Clausen 2007). This work, though having its epicenter in the United States, has been most influential in the periphery of the capitalist world economy, where radical ecological struggles are occurring in Latin America, Asia and Africa. In its Special Period Cuba became a world leader in organic agriculture. And Fidel Castro, in 2007, emerged as a major commentator on world ecological problems.<sup>5</sup>

We have therefore entered what might be considered, in Szymanski's terms, a new vital phase of Marxist theory, which like all previous such phases has its distinctive traits: its focus is on the periphery, its search for a revolutionary-democratic collectivism, and its ecological-materialist analysis. Yet, there was clearly a long down phase in the fifth cycle of Marxian theory, resulting from the effects that the downfall of the Soviet bloc (occurring simultaneously with a new global capitalist assault in the form of neoliberalism) had on left consciousness. The revitalization of Marx-

ist theory began not in the late 1980s but in the late 1990s.<sup>6</sup>

Further, the revitalization has lagged even more in the advanced capitalist West (with some exceptions, such as, theorists linked to the third world, and ecological analysis). Despite the growing evidence of the global structural crisis of capital, the disappearance of a supposed social democratic alternative has left would-be radicals with no mid-point between liberalism and Marxism, requiring a much greater leap than in the past. The Thatcherite "there is no alternative" still holds considerable sway. In this situation, erstwhile, self-styled leftists caught up in an atmosphere of defeat still cast around for postmodernist and post-Marxist straws. Hence, the remarkable phenomenon that in 2000, even as revolutionary struggle and imperialist war were beginning to heat up once again, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000) got enormous favorable publicity (partly as a result of the warm reception of the media monopoly) for their post-Marxist claim that imperialism had ended with the Vietnam War, and that a new constitutional order of globalized "Empire" based on Jeffersonian democracy was opening up for the world multitude. A kind of classical revisionism thus thrust forward in the West effacing all other tendencies at the very moment that Marxist theory was revitalizing in the world as a whole.<sup>7</sup>

History has no end. Claims that socialism and Marxist theory were dead and the Empire triumphant misunderstood the nature of the historical process, and now have been proven wrong. Just as human actors make history, they can remake it, but only under definite conditions inherited from the past. Such remaking is again possible in our time.

<sup>5</sup>The full set of Fidel Ruiz Castro's 2007 columns can be found under "Commentary" on the *Monthly Review* website, [www.monthlyreview.org](http://www.monthlyreview.org).

<sup>6</sup>Seminal works are emerging earlier on in the new cycle than Szymanski's framework would suggest, so that the 1990s were a period of great theoretical advance as represented by Mészáros's work and developments in Marxist ecology. This reflects the fact that Marxian theorists, took on the issue of the global structural crisis of capital in these intervening years, while the growth in the 1990s of a global environmental movement critical of capitalism inspired new Marxist theory in that area.

<sup>7</sup>For a sense of how retrograde Hardt and Negri's thesis was it is only necessary to compare it to Mészáros's (2001) analysis, composed at the same time, which much more accurately captured the global contradictions of our time.

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## Conferences and Calls for Papers

Two important web resources that maintain conference schedules and their attendant submission deadlines are the International Sociological Association and the American Sociological Association's Regional Conference Schedule.

You can find the schedule of international conferences maintained by the ISA at:

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\*\*If there are other calendars you are aware of that we should publish in *From the Left* so that members have access, please e-mail information to the newsletter editor.

# Books

## New and recent books of interest

### *Romania's Tortured Road Toward Modernity.*

Thomas J. Keil. (2006) Boulder, CO; East European Monograph Series, Columbia University Press, New York.

### From the Historical Materialism Book Series:

#### *Exploring Marx's Capital: Philosophical, Economic and Political Dimensions.*

By Jacques Bidet (author), Alex Callinicos (foreword) and David Fernbach (translator) (Hardcover) 2007

#### *Marxism and Ecological Economics: Toward a Red and Green Political Economy.*

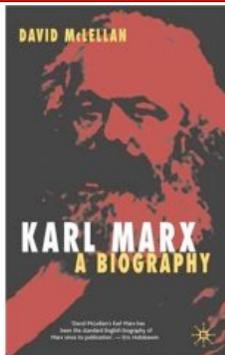
By Paul Burkett (Hardcover) 2006

#### *Western Marxism and the Soviet Union: A Survey of Critical Theories and Debates Since 1917.*

By Marcel Van Der Linden (Hardcover) 2007

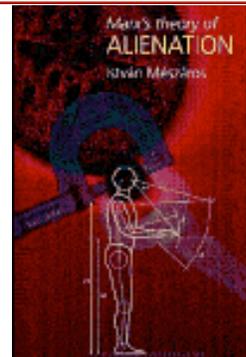
#### *Althusser: The Detour of Theory.*

By Gregory Elliott (Hardcover) 2006



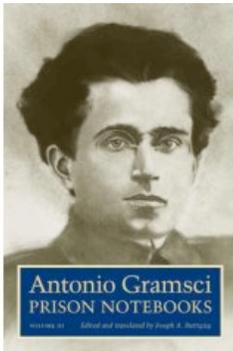
#### *Karl Marx: A Biography, 4th Ed. (Paperback) 2006*

By David McLellan



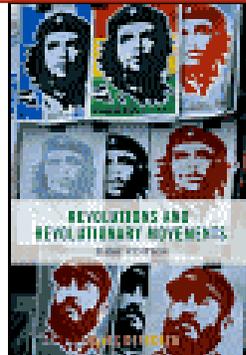
#### *Marx's Theory of Alienation*

By István Mészáros (Hardcover) 2006



#### *Prison Notebooks, Volume 3*

By Antonio Gramsci, Translator: Joseph A. Buttigieg (Hardcover) 2007



#### *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements, Vol. 3*

By James Defronzo (Paperback) 2007

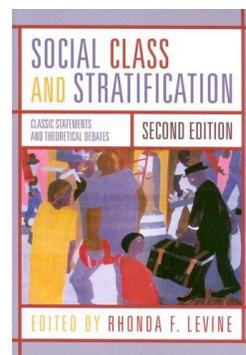


#### *More Unequal: Aspects of Class in the United States*

Monthly Review Press (Summer 2007). Edited by Michael D. Yates with contributions by John Bellamy Foster, Vincent Navarro, William K. Tabb, Michael Perelman, Richard D. Vogel, David Roediger, Kristen Lavelle and Joe Feagin, Sabiyha Prince, Martha Gimenez, Stephanie Luce and Mark Brenner, Peter McLaren and Ramin Farahmandpur, Michael D. Yates, Angela Jancius, and Michael Zweig.

#### *Social Class and Stratification: Classic Statements and Theoretical Debates*

By Rhonda Levine (Paperback) 2nd. Ed. 2006



## Forthcoming...“Ten Days in Paris”

By: Dianne Dentice

It is interesting to note that the ten days that Marx and Engels spent together in late August 1844 was never chronicled in letters between the two men. Even in Engels' later writings he refers to the meeting in passing. Marx reviewed some of their work from that time period but never mentions any details about what happened during the ten days they spent together. The meeting has been mentioned by notable scholars such as David McClellan, Isaiah Berlin, Werner Blumenberg, and Hal Draper, however. Given the importance of this interlude to the future development of Marxism and the 40 year friendship and collaboration between the two men it deserves more than mere mention in the literature.

This initial collaboration also represents the early ideas of Marx. Engels was working on *The Condition of the Working Class in England* during this time and was already a committed communist. Both men were young. Engels was only 23 at the time and Marx was 25. Because of their youth, a one act play makes sense for college productions with actors around the same age. The play also sheds light on the personality of Engels who is often relegated to 'sidekick' status and not given the respect he deserves as an important partner and contributor to Marx's body of work.

American audiences in general are not familiar with the story of Marx and Engels. Howard Zinn wrote a play in 1999 titled *Marx in Soho* in which Marx engages in a monologue spoken to a contemporary audience about ongoing oppression and capitalist exploitation. He also talks about his family, acquaintances, and his life as a revolutionary. *Ten Days in Paris* is a play written for college audiences that will introduce them to the revolutionary ideas of the young Marx and Engels. The play also gives insights into early radical thought that eventually culminated in social change in Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the Russian revolution in 1917.

Dianne Dentice, an assistant professor at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas, graduated from Texas Woman's University in Denton, Texas in August 2006. Her dissertation dealt

with the white separatist movement in the United States. Currently she is focusing her research on the Ku Klux Klan. In addition to her research and teaching responsibilities, she plans to write a screenplay about Marx and Engels and a play about Thorstein Veblen.

## Recent Publications

- Clark, B. a. R. Y. (2007). The Restoration of Nature and Biogeography: An Introduction to Alfred Wallace's 'Epping Forest'. *Organization & Environment*, 20(2), 213-234.
- Clausen, R. a. B. C. (2005). The Metabolic Rift and Marine Ecology. *Organization and Environment*, 18(4), 422-444.
- Longo, S. B. a. N. M. (2006). "Meat, Medicine and Materialism: A Dialectical Analysis of Human Relations to Nonhuman Animals and Nature". *Human Ecology Review*, 13(2), 111-121.
- Longo, S. B. a. R. Y. (2008, Forthcoming). Agriculture Exports and the Environment: A Cross-National Analysis of Fertilizer and Pesticide Consumption. *Rural Sociology*, 73(1).
- Mancus, P. (2007). Nitrogen Fertilizer Dependency and Its Contradictions: A Theoretical Exploration of Social Ecological Metabolism. *Rural Sociology*, 72(2), 269-288.
- Skladany, M. C., Rebecca; Bolton, Ben. (2007). Off-shore Aquaculture: The Frontier of Redefining Oceanic Property. *Society and Natural Resources*, 20(2), 169-176.
- York, R. a. B. C. (Forthcoming). The Problem with Prediction: Contingency, Emergence, and the Reification of Projections. *The Sociological Quarterly*.

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## Section Conference Information

### Section on Marxist Sociology, ASA Panels and Business Meeting Schedule, August 13-14, Hilton, New York

This year at the ASA Conference in New York, the Section on Marxist Sociology has panels on both Monday, August 13 and Tuesday, August 14 (Tuesday is our section day).

This year we will have a **joint reception/party with the Political Economy of the World-System Section of the ASA**. It will be in the Broadway Room of Rosie O'Grady's pub at 800 Seventh Ave. across the street from the Marriot beginning at 8:00 P.M. on Monday August 13. I hope that many of you will be able to attend and we can have good cheers together with our PEWS friends.

We have the following sessions scheduled:

#### Monday August 13 2:30 P.M. Hilton

##### 417. Section on Marxist Sociology Paper Session. Marxist Theory: Contemporary Challenges.

Session Organizer: Jeffrey A. Halley, University of Texas, San Antonio

- Foucault, Rodinson and the Iranian Revolution: Revisiting a Classic Debate Between Post-Structuralist Philosophy and Marxist Sociology. Kevin B. Anderson, Purdue University; Janet Afary, Purdue University
- Reconsidering the Transformation Problem. Paul B. Paolucci, Eastern Kentucky University
- The Judgment of Taste: A Critique of Bourdieu. Jeffrey A. Halley, University of Texas, San Antonio
- The Notions of Class and Knowledge Labor in Informational Capitalism. Christian Fuchs, University of Salzburg

#### Tuesday August 14 8:30 A.M. Hilton

##### 487. Section on Marxist Sociology Paper Session. Capitalism and Environmental Decline

(Co-sponsored with the Section on Political Economy of the World System and the Section on Environment and Technology).

Session Organizer: Richard York, University of Oregon. Session President: Eugene Rosa, Washington State University

- Globalization, Foreign Investment Dependence, and Agriculture Production: A Cross-National Study of Pesticide and Fertilizer Use Intensity in Less-Developed Countries, 1990-2000. Andrew Jorgensen, Washington State University; Kennon Austin Kuykendall, Washington State University
- Killing the Mattanza: A Political Economic Analysis of the Sicilian Bluefin Tuna Fishery and its Environmental Impacts. Stefano B. Longo, University of Oregon.
- The Slow Co-Production of Disaster: Wildlife, Timber Capital, and the United States
- Forest Service. Mark Hudson, Ursinus College.
- Solving the Ecological Problems of Capitalism: Capitalism and Socialist Possibilities.
- Andrew W. Jones, University of Vermont
- Ecological Rent: Toward a Formal Theory of Ecological Degradation in Human Social Evolution. Kirk S. Lawrence, University of California, Riverside.

#### Tuesday August 14 10:30 A.M. Hilton

##### 517. Section on Marxist Sociology Paper Session. Another World is Necessary: Socialism for the 21st Century.

Session Organizer and President: Walda Katz-Fishman, Howard University

- People vs. Profits. Lauren Langman, Loyola University; David Schwiekert, Loyola University.
- From White Supremacy to Color-Blind Racism: The Limits of Racial Integration in White Nationalist America. Robert Newby, Central Michigan University.
- The Crisis of Global Capitalism and the Prospects for Socialism in the 21st Century. Berch Berberoglu, University of Nevada Reno.
- Socialism for the 21st Century?: Prefigurative Politics and Subsidiarity at the World Social Forum. Mark Frezzo, Florida Atlantic University; Marina Karides, Florida Atlantic University.
- The World Social Forum: Radical Democracy for the 21st Century. Thomas Ponniah, Harvard University

- Revolutionary Struggles in the 21st Century and the U.S. Social Forum. Jerome Scott, Project South; Walda Katz-Fishman, Howard University; Ralph Christopher Gomes, Howard University; Tomas Enrique Encarnacion, U.S. Census Bureau.

## Tuesday August 14 12:30 Hilton

### 549. Section on Marxist Sociology. Invited Session. The Global Crisis of Capitalism: Economic and Ecological.

Session Organizer: John Bellamy Foster, University of Oregon. Session Presider: Martha E. Gimenez, University of Colorado

- The Global Structural Crisis of Capital. John Bellamy Foster, University of Oregon
- A Transnational Capitalist Class?: At the Borders of Class and State Theory. William K. Tabb, United Nations Development Program, Consultant
- From Metabolic Rift to Metabolic Restoration: Learning from Cubas Organic Socialist Approach to Food Production. Rebecca J. Clausen, University of Oregon; Brett Clark, Monthly Review Foundation
- Empire and Outer Space. Peter Dickens, University of Essex; James Ormrod, University of Essex

## Tuesday August 14 2:30 Hilton

### 572. Section on Marxist Sociology Roundtable Session and Business Meeting.

#### 2:30-3:30 Roundtables

Session Organizer: Jacqueline A. Carrigan, California State University, Sacramento

#### Table 1. Critiques of Neoliberalism.

- Finance Capital, Labor and Neo-Liberal Accounting Practices. Dan Krier, Iowa State University.
- Neoliberalism or Democracy: Competing Forms of Social Organization in Latin America. Keffrey K. Dowd, Rutgers University.
- Musical Chairs: How the Forces of Global Neo-Liberalism Move People in the Periphery. Mike-Frank G. Epitropoulos, Tel-Piraeus, Spetses Island Campus
- Counter Ideology and Evolutionary Change. John Asamakopoulos, CUNY

#### Table 2. Localized Class Struggles.

- From American Values to American Values: How the Market is Devouring the Neighborhood. John Brueggemann, Skidmore College
- Marx in South Worcester: Practicing Radical Sociology in the Neighborhood. Corey Dolgon, Worcester State College
- Human Rights, Marxism and Mixed Income Ideology: The Case of New Orleans Public Housing. John D. Arena, Tulane University
- Cleaning Up the City: Urban Redevelopment and the Reconceptualization of Vagrancy. Lloyd Klein, Grambling State University; Stephen R. Lang, LaGuardia Community College, CUNY

#### Table 3. Comparative Perspectives on Class.

- Building Towards Socialism: Participatory Democracy in Venezuela. Stephanie Farmer, Binghamton University
- Class Structure, Income Inequality, and Class Consciousness in Urban China: Evidences from the 2003 Panel Data. Thung-hong Lin, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.
- Confronting Conflict: Mexican Social Movement Coalitions, Internal Conflict, and Change. Jose A. Munoz, New York-Stony Brook

#### Table 4. Structure and Agency.

- Sociological Vapourware. Alex Dennis, University of Salford; Alison Cavanagh, University of Leeds
- Structure, Agency, and the Reproduction of a Racialized Class Structure: Understanding Persistent Racial Inequality. Rhonda F. Levine. Colgate University.
- Union School or Revolutionary U?: Exploring the Links Between Working-Class Consciousness and Labour Education. Reuben Roth. Laurentian University
- Reproducing/Non-Reproducing Labor Power. Martha E. Gimenez, University of Colorado

#### Table 5. Critique of Capitalist Aesthetics

- The Front Lawn as a Work of Art and Nature in the Age of Chemical Reproduction. Eamonn Slater, National University of Ireland Maynooth, Co. Kildare

- The Ideology of Aesthetic in the Neo-Liberal Turn. Jyotsna Kapur, Southern Illinois University

#### Table 6. The State

- Theories of Globalization and Conceptions of the State. Matthew B. Flynn, University of Texas
- The Intellectual Conflicts of Mikhail Bakunin and Karl Marx. Sanja Jagesic, Wellesley College
- Militarism and Marxist State Theory. Daniel Egan, University of Massachusetts-Lowell
- Can There Be a Marxist Theory of Justice: Conceptualizations of Social Justice in Historical Materialist Framework. Sahan S. Karatasli, Johns Hopkins University

#### Table 7. Social Movements and Revolution.

- Is Another World Possible?: Marxism, Phenomenology and the Ontological Transformation of the World. Richard Randell, Webster University
- Theorizing Capital and its Transcendence: The Marxian Concept of Revolution and its Critique. Tauna Starbuck Sisco, Purdue University
- Ideology and Anti-Capitalism: A Case Study of the Anti-G8 Protests, July 2005. Yousaf Ibrahim, Leeds Trinity and All Saints College, Leeds, England

### Tuesday August 14 3:30-4:10

#### Marxist Sociology Business Meeting Hilton

Includes Awards Presentations

## Other Conference Sessions of Interest

### Saturday, August 11, 8:30 A.M.

#### 4. Thematic Session. Envisioning Real Utopias

##### Hilton New York

Session Organizer and Presider: Erik Olin Wright, University of Wisconsin

- Consumer-Topia: Envisioning a New Culture of Consuming. *Juliet Schor*, Boston College
- An Imaginary Map to Noplace. *Nancy Folbre*, University of Massachusetts
- Imagining and Enacting Postcapitalist Economies. *Katherine Gibson*, Australian National University; *Julie Graham*, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- Taking the 'Social' in Socialism Seriously. *Erik Olin Wright*, University of Wisconsin

To answer the question "Is another world possible?" we must not only understand the nature of barriers to social change in the world in which we live and the forces for social transformation that can potentially challenge those barriers. We also need some understanding of emancipatory alternatives beyond those barriers: what they would be like, how they would work, how they could be sustained, what dilemmas and contradictions they might embody. This session will explore a variety of perspectives on envisioning "real utopias" - imagined alternatives that embody emancipatory aspirations and yet have the potential to become real social environments for human flourishing.

#### 5. Thematic Session. Who Rules America? A Forty Year Retrospective

##### Sheraton New York

Session Organizer: Rhonda F. Levine, Colgate University Panel:

- *Andrew Hacker*, City University of New York-Queens College
- *Robert J.S. Ross*, Clark University
- *Aldon D. Morris*, Northwestern University
- *Jill Quadagno*, Florida State University

The 2007 meetings will mark the 40th anniversary of the original edition of *Who Rules America?* This session will examine the durability of the original thesis of *Who Rules America?*, the value of the additions and changes made to the thesis in the ensuing years leading to the fifth edition, and the usefulness of the perspective on progressive change and for understanding contemporary politics and envisioning the possibility of another world.

#### 28. Section on History of Sociology Paper Session and Business Meeting

##### Sheraton New York

Paper Session on New Directions in the History of Sociology (to 9:30 a.m.). Session Organizer and Presider: Isaac A. Reed, University of Colorado-Boulder

- Anecdotal Evidence in Clifford Shaw's *The Jack-Roller: A Delinquent Boy's Own Story*. *Stephen Harold Riggins*, Memorial University
- Social States of Mind and Action Regimes in french Sociology. *Bruno ?*, University of ?

- “A Century Apart: W.E.B. Du Bois and Robert Sampson on Race and Crime”. *Paul A. Gilbert*, Brown University
- “With the Practiced Eye of a Deaf Person”: Harriet Martineau,
- Deafness and the Scientificity of Social Knowledge. *Nadav Gabay*, University of California-San Diego

Business Meeting (9:30-10:10 a.m.)

### **30. Section on Science, Knowledge, and Technology Paper Session. Science, Technology, and Environments**

#### ***Sheraton New York***

Session Organizers: Patrick Eamon Carroll, University of California Davis; Thomas D. Beamish, University of California-Davis. Presider: Kelly Moore, University of Cincinnati

- Critical materialism in contemporary environmental sociology: A comparative exploration. Christopher S. Oliver, Michigan State University
- Envisioning Environment as Ecosystem: Cybernetics, Epistemology, and Ontology in Early Systems Ecology. Lisa Asplen, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- From 3D Space to Third Place: Building Sociable Public Places in Virtual Environments. Robert John Moore, Palo Alto Research Center; E. Cabell Hankinson Gathman, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Nicolas Ducheneaut, Palo Alto Research Center
- Taylorist Talk and Bossy Built Environments. Rachael Elizabeth Barlow, Indiana University

Sociologists interested in science, technology, and environment discuss “the environment” in a range of ways: natural, material, built, virtual, as place, and so on. This session aims to articulate different usages of “the environment” and related terms, and advance discussion on what these terms mean, particularly in relation to questions about materiality.

### **Saturday, August 11, 10:30 a.m. Meetings**

#### **Orientation for First-time Meeting Attendees — Hilton New York**

Task Force on Institutionalization of Public Sociology subcommittee — **Sheraton New York**

### **Sessions**

#### **35. Presidential Panel. Is Another World Possible in the Middle East?**

##### ***Hilton New York***

Session Organizer and Presider: Michael Schwartz, Stony Brook University. Panel:

- *Juan Cole*, University of Michigan
- *Gilbert Achcar*, Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin

This panel will speak to the theme of the conference by referencing both current dynamics and the future possibilities in the Middle East.

#### **36. Thematic Session. Environmental Constraints on Development**

##### ***Hilton New York***

Session Organizer: John Bellamy Foster, University of Oregon

- Third World Development, Global Equality and Environmental Sustainability. Walden Bello, University of Philippines, Diliman
- The Ecological Footprints of North and South and Problems of Sustainability and Equality. Richard F. York, University of Oregon
- Women, Development and Environment. Rebecca Pearl, Women, Development and Environment Organization

Discussant: William K. Tabb, City University of New York

#### **45. Professional Workshop. Your First Academic Job: Success in the Early Faculty Years**

##### ***Hilton New York***

Session Organizer and Leader: Kate Linnenberg, Beloit College. Panel:

- Tomas Roberto Jimenez, University of California, San Diego
- Jennifer Keys, North Central College
- Nathan D. Wright, Bryn Mawr College
- Greta R. Krippner, University of Michigan

#### **63. Section on Community and Urban Sociology Paper Session. Cities, Consumption and the Environment (co-sponsored with the Section on Environment and Technology)**

##### ***Sheraton New York***

Session Organizers: Kenneth Alan Gould, City University of New York - Brooklyn College; Sharon

Zukin, City University of New York Graduate Ctr.  
 Presider: Kenneth Alan Gould, City University of New York - Brooklyn College

- Bucolic Towns and Blocks of Cement: Environmental Protest in Fuheis, Jordan. Elizabeth A. Zack, University of South Carolina Upstate
- Conflicted Sustainability and Crushing Landscapes: The Neoliberal Quagmire of Urban Environmental Planning in Buenos Aires. Ryan Center, University of California, Berkeley; Federico Lastra, Universidad de Buenos Aires

- Environmental Justice, Citizenship, and Brown-fields Gentrification. Cheryl Teelucksingh, Ryerson University
  - Household Water Consumption in an Arid City: Affluence, 'Affordance,' and Attitudes. Sharon L. Harlan, Arizona State University; Scott Thomas Yabiku, Arizona State University; Larissa Larsen, University of Michigan; Anthony Brazel, Arizona State University
- Discussant: Kristen Vanhooreweghe, Brooklyn College and City University Graduate Center

## INVITATION TO A SPECIAL EVENT AT OUR 102nd ANNUAL MEETING

### “New York City Activists Meet Sociologists”

**Sat, Aug 11, 6-8pm**

*Hilton New York, Concourse G Room, Concourse Level.* (Food and drink will be provided).

This reception is an opportunity for informal—we hope, even fun!—interaction between sociologists and local New York City activists.

At this special Presidential event come to find activist partners for research and meet with other sociologists doing action or applied research. Graduate students are especially encouraged to come and network to find research and internship possibilities.

Please come meet and mingle with NYC activists involved in labor, electoral reform, environmentalism, welfare reform, community action, immigrant rights and immigration reform, transnational organizing, governmental watchdog action, justice, youth, school reform, homelessness, housing, anti-war efforts, and more.

Our hope is that this will be a mutually beneficial opportunity for activists and scholars—and the many of us who fall somewhere in-between—to meet, talk about the ways we work together and figure out new and better ways to keep our scholarship related to the work of activists.

At the reception, alongside food and drink, we'll hear some (very) brief presentations allowing plenty of time for you to introduce yourself and mingle with like-minded others.

Please spread the word about this event. If you have any question, please contact Penny Lewis at pennywlewis@gmail.com or Lorna Mason at lornalmason@gmail.com.

I look forward to seeing you in August.

In solidarity,



Frances Fox Piven  
 President, American Sociological Association

## In the News

Excerpted from *Business Week*:

Americans now spend \$41 billion a year on their pets—more than the gross domestic product of all but 64 countries in the world. That's double the amount shelled out on pets a decade ago, with annual spending



expected to hit \$52 billion in the next two years, according to Packaged Facts, a consumer research company based in Rockville, Md. That puts the yearly cost of buying, feeding, and caring for pets in excess of what Americans spend on the movies (\$10.8 billion), playing video games (\$11.6 billion), and listen-

ing to recorded music (\$10.6 billion) combined. "People are no longer satisfied to reward their pet in pet terms," argues Bob Vetere, president of the American Pet Products Manufacturers Assn. (APPMA). "They want to reward their pet in human terms." That means hotels instead of kennels, braces to fix crooked teeth, and frilly canine ball gowns. Pet owners are becoming increasingly demanding consumers who won't put up with substandard products, unstimulating environments, or shoddy service for their animals. But the escalating volume and cost of services, especially in the realm of animal medicine, raises ethical issues about how far all this loving should go...

Once acquired as sidekicks for kids, animal companions are more popular now with empty-nesters, single professionals, and couples who delay having children. What unites these disparate demographic groups is a tendency to have time and resources to spare. With more people working from home or living away from their families, pets also play a bigger role in allaying the isolation of modern life. About 63% of U.S. households, or 71 million homes, now own at least one pet, up from 64 million just five years ago.

And science is starting to validate all those warm feelings with research that documents the depth of the human-animal bond.

It doesn't take a scientist to figure out that there's money to be made in this environment. Companies from Procter & Gamble (PG) and Nestlé (NSRGY) to fashion brands including Polo Ralph Lauren (RL) and thousands of small entrepreneurs are sniffing around for new opportunities in the pet sector. After consumer electronics, pet care is the fastest-growing category in retail, expanding about 6% a year. More new pet products were launched in the first six months of last year than in all of 2005. And that doesn't account for the ways existing products are being recast to woo pet lovers. Del Monte has refocused staples to look more like human snacks—from Snau-sages breakfast treats shaped like bacon and eggs to Pup-Peroni rib snacks so appetizing that Wolford had to stop a TV anchor from popping one into his mouth on air. Even Meow Mix now comes in plastic cups rather than cans.

## In History

This is the 40th year since the assassination of Marxist Revolutionary, Che Guevara. His legacy is celebrated today.

This month in history...Columbus set sail from Spain, Nixon resigned, the U.S. invaded Iraq (1990), Reagan ordered the firing of the air-traffic controllers, Frank Little was killed, and James Baldwin was born.