



Marx's critique of political economy

During the 1970s, the publications of books in Sweden connected to Karl Marx's main work *Capital* were vivid. A quarter-century later the situation is different despite a number of international re-readings of Marx. The fall of the communist dictatorships has spurred a more open and unprejudiced debate on the works of Marx. In *Fronesis* no. 28, we draw attention to Marx's critique of political economy. We introduce new currents within contemporary research in the firm conviction that Marx's critique of economy will always be indispensable in discussions on globalization, class antagonism and capitalist exploitation.

The revival of international research on Marx is partly due to the publication of several formerly unpublished manuscripts. One is the so-called "revision manuscript", written by Marx in 1871–72, in which the theory of the fetish character of the commodity, later much discussed, is laid out. Part of this manuscript is published in Swedish for the first time.

Economists Andrew Kliman and Alan Freeman — both from the current Temporal Single System Interpretation (TSSI) — criticize the notion that Marx's theory of value has been proven to be inconsistent, a view often brought forward by economists. The authors rather claim that today, it is possible to hold up Marx as the most radical economic critic of capitalism. Mathematician and political scientist Michael Heinrich and philosopher Chris Arthur — both representing a tradition often labeled value-form analysis — highlights the Hegelian influences of the critique of political economy. According to Heinrich and Arthur, the theories of Marx imply an unfinished break with the fundamental categories of political economy, which makes the critique of economy an important tool for understanding today's global economy.

Sven-Eric Liedman, professor of history of science and ideas, discusses the relation between Marx and his colleague Friedrich Engels, claiming that their differences are greater than earlier believed. Liedman suggests that we are confronting one "Marxism" and one "Engelsism". The importance of Engels for the interpretation of Marx's works is also discussed by philosopher and economist Rolf Hecker (one of the editors of the German publication of the collected works of Marx and Engels).

In *Fronesis* no. 28, economic historian Daniel Ankarloo and sociologist Anders Ramsay also write extensive introductions to the authors being introduced.

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