I. Marx

A. Society

1. origin

a. necessity: food and shelter

b. cooperatively working together to satisfy social needs

c. transform nature into human social world (society)

i. species being: humans create social world

through labor (free and spontaneous)

ii. creative activity (praxis)

d. newly created social world defines conditions under which human beings can act (mode of production)

i. productive forces: labor power, means of production, and raw material

ii. relations of production: property relations

iii. social relations: superstructure

iv. consciousness

e. society appears “natural”

i. reified

ii. human beings are alienated

iii. false consciousness

2. society as conflict

a. within base (economy)

b. conflict

i. productive forces v relations of production

ii. class conflict

c. social world is ultimately transformed through this conflict into another new social world

3. History: society moving through stages

a. defined by economic structure

b. stages are

i. primitive communism

ii. Asian society

iii. Ancient society

iv. Feudal

v. capitalism

vi. communism

c. conflict within each stage

i. inevitable

ii. outcome dependent: praxis

d. each stage is an advance

e. capitalism: final stage before communism

i. productive forces

ii. overcome scarcity

B. Capitalism and Class conflict

1. Definition of class: specific relation to means of production.

2. Capitalism: Class conflict

a. two major classes

i. bourgeoisie or capitalist class

ii. proletariat or working class

b. capitalist: own the means of production

c. proletariat: labor power is sold to capitalist

d. conflicting interests: can’t be reconciled

3. interest of capitalist

a. profit: increasing return on investment

b. expansion

i. new markets

ii. cheap resources

iii. cheap labor

c. control productive forces

d. maintain relations of production

e. limit costs

i. wage labor

ii. theory of surplus value

2. interest of worker

a. affirmation of species being

b. control forces of production

c. transform relations of production

C. Power and Conflict

1. power of capitalist

a. controls productive forces

i. owns natural resources

ii. owns factories, machines, stores

iii. labor (only market for labor power)

b. makes economic decisions

i. what is produced and when

ii. where

iii. who works, when, how long

c. controls state

i. political system

ii. use of force

d. controls of the ideological institutions

i. media

ii. education

e. controls legal system

i. laws

ii. courts

2. power of worker

a. labor power (but) has to sell it

b. class consciousness(but) has false consciousness

D. However: Capitalism will self-destruct ( declining rate of profit)

1. huge monopolies

2. competition to invest in more expensive technologies

3. competition to lower and lower prices-

4. declining rate of profit

5. workers lower and lower wages

6. system destruct

7. workers will recognize class consciousness

III. Marx Revisited

A. Wrong

1. Capitalism didn’t self-destruct.

2. Communism and dictatorships

a. Soviet Union: Lenin and Stalin

b. China: Mao

B. Failed to predict

1. Fascism

a. authoritarian capitalism

b. power: government/big business/military

c. ideology: nationalistic/quasi religious/party/leader

d. worker transformed:

i. believer

ii. labor towards ideological goals

2. welfare state

1. function: ameliorate negative effects of capitalism

b. example: New Deal

3. “wealthfare” state

a. function

i. externalize costs

ii. subsidize the rich

b. example: U.S. post WWII

4. consumerism

a. identity

b. credit

c. false consciousness

5. power of mass media

a. size

b. types

c. influence

6. rise of middle class

7. breakdown of labor unions

8. deindustrialization