

Summaries

Rainer Rilling: On the U.S. Role in the Development of Global Capitalism. A Critical Literature Review

Neither the present political formation of globalizing capitalism nor the current era of international politics carry a name that has found widespread acceptance. By contrast, Sam Gindin and Leo Panitch speak with great determination of an informal »American Empire« and its historic »project of globalizing capitalism«. Their historic-economical study, »The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire« (2012) is an outstanding analysis of the central world order project of the United States. Neglected are, however, current debates regarding imperialism and imperialist projects and the analysis of the inner structure and subjects of the power structure of the »American Empire«, as well as struggles with competing projects.

Hartmut Haberland: English as ›Global‹ Language in High-tech Capitalism

English appears to be ›the‹ lingua franca of the world at present. But English is far from the only language relevant for transnational communication under the conditions of high-tech capitalism.

Ironically, technical development (as manifest in the increasingly multilingual and multiscript character of the World Wide Web) makes high-tech capitalism less dependent on the existence of a single world language. The special status of English today is seen as a form of hegemony that makes its dominance appear as natural and unquestioned. Haberland uses historical examples of dominant languages in Europe (Greek, Latin) to argue that language hegemonies develop out of political, economical and military hegemony but take on a life of their own that can outlast the dominance relations that helped to create it. Some of the problems of the existence of a hegemonic language are discussed and a warning is made against language protectionism.

Guglielmo Carchedi: Crises and the Falling Profit Rate – Empirical Evidence

Guglielmo Carchedi's essay deals with Marx's theory of the tendency of the profit rate to fall as an explanation of economic crisis. Using empirical data on the development of the U.S. economy since the Second World War the author takes a closer look at the two fundamental classes, *capital* and *labor*, as well as the process of value production. He rules out criticism from Keynesian and Marxist theorists which argue that the theory of the tendency of the profit rate to fall is not applicable to modern day capitalism. Carchedi shows empirically and theoretically the advantages and the validity of *Marx's law*, presenting it as a centerpiece of Marx economic theory.

G rard Dum nil and Dominique L vy: The Crisis of the Early 21st Century: Marxian perspectives

Neoliberalism is the new phase in which capitalism entered in the early 1980s. The target of this social order was to restore and increase the power and wealth of capitalist classes in alliance with the managerial classes. The current crisis manifests the contradictions of this endeavor. The new trends toward financialization and globalization combine their effects with a growing imbalance of the U.S. economy. The paper refutes interpretations pinning the crisis on declining or low profit rates, a rising share of profits entailing deficient demand levels and excess borrowing, as well as overaccumulation as proposed by long-wave approaches.

John Bellamy Foster: The Epochal Crisis

As distinguished from the normal developmental crises of capitalism an »epochal crisis« can be seen as a crisis that embraces all aspects of the system and its interactions with natural environment: A crisis that is simultaneously social, economic, and environmental, raising the question of an epochal transition on the scale of the transition from feudalism to capitalism. It is argued that the capitalist system is now caught in such an epochal crisis. Both the economic and the environmental dimensions are addressed along with the logic of revolutionary struggle under these conditions.

Frigga Haug: Following Rosa Luxemburg's Footsteps in the Fight for a Democracy From Below

To use Luxemburg's concepts from the beginning of the last century we must compare the political and economic situation of today with that of her time. By doing this the essay concludes that the rupture of 1989 followed by the crisis of high-tech capitalism has turned the clock backwards: With regard to the position of the labour class on a world scale we have come back to wild capitalism of the pre-welfare state. We must ask whether it may be adequate to change trade-union politics of the period of embedded capitalism for a politics closer to Luxemburg's »revolutionary real-politik«.

Wolf-Dieter Narr: With the Flow, Against it? Michael Th. Greven's Triumph Over »System Oppositionists«

This essay reviews a book titled »System Opposition. Contingency, Ideology, and Utopia in Political Thought of the 1960s«. The author shows that Greven analyzes emancipatory positions and attitudes against the background of an affirmation of the status quo, the undefined »system«. It becomes evident that Greven lacks distance to his subject, which manifests itself in his self-evident assumption of established, liberal-democratically constituted domination and its »values«. This leads to an abandonment of utopian perspectives, and a failure to differentiate processes of social change.