

U.S.G.

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Union of Socialist Geographers

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FROM THE EDITORIAL COLLECTIVE:

We apologize for the delay in sending the second newsletter. A postal strike, the holidays, our own inertia, and lack of response from afar, hampered the effort. We are working on the third problem, and hoping that people out there are working on the last. A third newsletter is in preparation at the moment, for which articles, book reviews, news, are needed.

In this issue there are several new features which hopefully will be regular ones to which everyone will contribute:

1. Bibliography of Socialist Geography: Each issue featuring one geographer, **AND SEVERAL TOPICS.**
2. From the Bookshelves: Notes on recent articles and books, or older material which might be of interest. This should include reviews of journal issues from the past two years or so initially, in a general way, eventually reviewing the latest issues of selected journals on a regular basis.
3. Fetishism of Space: Perhaps serious, perhaps tongue in cheek, exposes of the geographer's angle on where it's at. Dig up those little gems from the literature. If this needs justification, perhaps it is that we need to keep from falling into the same traps.

Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting New York 1974.

A MINI-COURSE ON MARXIST PERSPECTIVES IN GEOGRAPHY.

Sponsored by: The AAG Committee on Marxist Perspectives on Geography and the Union of Socialist Geographers.

Participation Limited to 60.

Monday, April 11th

8.30 - 10.10 a.m. An introduction to basic Marxian concepts and principles of enquiry: topics for discussion include materialism, alienation, relation to nature, mode of production, and the like. Discussion leaders: David Harvey (Johns Hopkins), Ron Horvath (Simon Fraser), Richard Peet (Clark) and members of the USG from Simon Fraser.

10.30 - 12.10 p.m. An introduction to Marx's analysis of the capitalist mode of production with particular emphasis on Capital. Discussion leaders: Joern Barnbrock (Johns Hopkins), Nathan Edelson (Simon Fraser), David Harvey (Johns Hopkins) and Carolyn Rock (Johns Hopkins).

Tuesday, April 12th.

7.30 p.m. A series of general discussions contrasting Marxian and liberal approaches to problems of special interest to geographers. Four discussion groups will be formed and the following have agreed to participate in a dialogue on each topic:

1. Poverty and Population Problems - Richard Peet (Clark), Richard Morrill (U. of Washington) and Richard Walker (Berkeley).
2. Cultural Evolution - Kirsten Haring (Clark), Ron Horvath (Simon Fraser), Clark Akatiff (Saklan Institute), and Bob Galois (Simon Fraser).
3. Urbanization - George Carey (Rutgers), Lata Chatterjee (Johns Hopkins), Kevin Cox (Ohio State) and David Harvey (Johns Hopkins).
4. Imperialism - Jim Blaut (Chicago Circle), Mike McNulty (Iowa), Colm Regan (Simon Fraser) and the USG members from Simon Fraser.

The evening session will be split into two concurrent sessions so that participants will have a choice of attending either 1 or 2 and 3 or 4.

THE USG AT THE CAG

The Vancouver local of the USG is holding two paper sessions at the 1976 Annual Meeting of the CAG:

-The Geography of Women: A Socialist Perspective.

-Space, Class, and Dominance: The Canadian Experience.

The meeting will be held in conjunction with the Learned Societies meeting at Laval University this summer. The CAG meeting will be held at Laval University, Québec City, May 23-27.

The organizers of the Women's Session invite papers from interested socialist geographers, women and men. We must have a one thousand word abstract by March 1, and the full paper by April 1. Work is currently being done by members of the SFU local on the subjects of residential differentiation and the family, migration of women, and the relation of women in the labour force to the housing mortgage market. Anyone interested in submitting a paper, or offering suggestions or comments (bibliographical material, names of people we might contact) please write Lee Seymour and Suzanne Mackenzie, c/o Geography Dept., SFU.

The following is an outline of the proposal for the Space, Class, and Dominance Session. The organizers of this session invite comments or bibliographical suggestions. Write Alan Mabin, c/o Geog. Dept., SFU.

The session will consist of seven parts:

1. Introduction. Alan Mabin, SFU.

The objectives of the Working Group on the Canadian Experience of Imperialism, and of the session, will be introduced. These include the examination of models which have been employed in the analysis of the political economy of Canada; and the proposal of a more comprehensive framework for such an analysis. The introduction will outline the structured development of ideas represented by the of papers in the session.

2. The use of the metropolis-hinterland model in Canadian studies. Manfred Malzahn, SFU.

Historical development of the model since the 1920's, and how it has been used.

3. Space, class, and dominance: some critical comments. Colm Regan, SFU.

With this paper, the session will move to a critique of the metropolis-hinterland model. A more satisfactory approach to Canadian studies, exemplified by Naylor's work, will be introduced. The basis of Naylor's analysis lies in the model of imperialism. The paper will conclude by providing an introduction to the theory of imperialism.

4. Investment, control and ownership patterns in the B.C. resource hinterland. John Bradbury, SFU.

Within a framework provided by the theory of imperialism, this paper will proceed to examine the evidence of the process of dominance as displayed in British Columbia. In particular, the roles of Japanese and United States corporations in the resource industries of B.C. will be discussed.

5. (Imperialism and Newfoundland...?). D.J.B. Overton, SFU.

A further case in which the theory and method previously outlined may be applied is internal to Canada: the experience of Newfoundland will be investigated.

6. (A further paper on Canada and the West Indies). Author to be decided.

As the session is still in the process of final preparation, we are uncertain as yet as to the person who will present the paper on this topic. It will deal with the role of Canada as a imperialist power

in the West Indies, thus using the selfsame theory which will previously have been applied to the external domination of part of Canada and to internal domination in the case of Newfoundland.

7: Synthesis. Alan Mabin, SFU.

Finally, the development of ideas in the session will be traced and the session will be opened to general discussion.

The following is a brief description of some of the recent activities of the Vancouver local:

We began seminars in the summer for the purpose of raising questions about the relations among ideology, views of human nature, and social and natural science. We had one session in the fall on behavioural psychology and science, including a general discussion of science, ideology, and practice. Such seminars are useful to a group in which individuals are involved in more specific pursuits.

We have had informal afternoon sessions as well, in order to provide an opportunity for members to air their completed or ongoing work and to receive suggestions for improvement.

In September, it was proposed that the local mount a course at SFU on socialist perspectives in geography, with two objectives--fostering internal intellectual development of the local, and establishing external relationships in the region. Several comprehensive outlines came out of ensuing discussions, but the project as first envisioned was abandoned, realistically in view of our more pressing struggle for mere survival at SFU. We would like to put as many of these outlines as possible into the newsletters to aid people with similar objectives.

One of the more rewarding tasks of late has been reading Capital in groups, involving almost all of the members, and resulting in many more people than before having a solid foundation and dedication from which to work.

Work is now concentrated on presentations for the AAG and CAG--on urbanism, imperialism, geography of women, cultural evolution, and human nature. The afternoon sessions, perhaps one more ideology discussion, and the Capital reading groups will continue through spring.

A socialist women's group has recently been formed. The participants have read J. Mitchell, Bebel, and Rowbotham so far. They would welcome suggestions for pertinent reading to make the most of time spent on this.

JIM OVERTON SAYS:

"What practice is development geography the theory of?... Things only become problems in theory after they become problems in practice."

U. S. G. Course Proposal.

The following course outlines are from the proposed Vancouver Local Course on Socialist Geography (see notes on S.F.U. local).

We are including 3 outlines in this issue and will include 4 more in the next issue. Questions and comments are welcome.

① U.S.G. Original Course Proposal:

1. An introduction to socialist geography. An historical introduction outlining the ideological foundations of modern geography;

- i. its origins - mercantilist era, mapping;
- ii. environmental determinism; regionalism, colonialism;
- iii. quantitative revolution; behavioural geography;
- iv. crisis in establishment geography.

Socialist Geography

An introduction to the literature. An outline of coming seminars.

2. Alternate views of Nature - Kropotkin, Reclus - the anarchist tradition.
Marxist theory of nature.

3. Marxist Economic Geography. Capital - theory of circulation, theory of accumulation etc.

4. Marxist transportation.

5. Marxist Urban

② _____ Suggested topics for the proposed course.

1. The crises in bourgeois geography-old and new

2. The Key importance of the concept of mode of production (Communal, Asiatic, Slave, Feudal, etc., modes of production)

- a) The invariant elements in a mode of production.
- b) The elements specific to different modes of production.
- c) How elements in a mode of production are combined.
- d) How to analyze a country, region, continent which has more than one mode of production. This raises the important issue of the dominant mode of production and its relationships with subordinate modes of production. e.g. 19th Century Russia had the following modes of production:
 - i. slave
 - ii. feudal
 - iii. communal
 - iv. independent commodity producers
 - v. capitalism.

Sources: M. Lebowitz, E. Balibar. V.I. Lenin

12. Capitalism, natural resources and population growth.
 13. Capitalism and change: surface structure changes and deep structure changes.
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③

1. The concept of ideology--what it means, how it is used in geography and what possible alternate ideologies exist.
2. The Marxian perspective on history--historical materialism,
3. Examples of bourgeois ideology in geography, ghetto geography and internal colonialism. Population problems.
4. An alternate ideology for geography, e.g. concept of nature--Kropotkin etc.
5. Nature of capitalism as a system contradiction and crises.
6. Marx's concept of crisis and the Role of the State for example.
7. Aspects of a Marxian approach to geography
 - (a) Alienation
 - (b) Imperialism
 - (c) Housingand other possible examples

FROM THE PRESS:

First Build Raft.

In an attempt to find the best location for a new storage depot, the Southwestern Electricity Board fed the problem into their computer. The printout suggested a spot 15 miles out to sea off the south coast of Cornwall.

Pioneer Graves Eyed.

Indians may be planning to turn the tables on white anthropologists who have been studying them for years. Dr. Richard B. Lee, an anthropology professor at University of Toronto, told a science writer's meeting that a Mohawk Indian suggested recently that Indians should dig up one of the pioneer cemeteries. Anthropologists have been digging up Indian burial grounds for years, Mike Mitchell of the St. Regis Mohawk reserve, near Cornwall, Ont., told an anthropologists meeting. So now he is thinking of asking for a Canada Council grant to dig up a pioneer cemetery. "He said he'd like to find out why the white man was always fighting over land that had never belonged to him in the first place," said Dr. Lee.

3. Alternative approaches to people/nature relationships. Marx, Reclus, Kropotkin.
4. Ideology and Geography
 - a) Explain the concept citing examples from the geographic literature.
 - b) The importance of representative metaphors for unearthing ideology.
5. Capital as a unity of production and circulation processes. The following topics would have to be covered:
 - i. What is value and how is it produced?
 - ii. The crucial distinction between product and commodity.
 - iii. The accumulation of capital
 - iv. Circulation of capital.
 - (a) the 3 circuits of capital.
 - (b) time of circulation.
 - (c) costs of circulation.
 - (d) the turnover time of capital (i.e., its production and circulation times).
 - (e) time of circulation in relation to location.
 - (f) the different times of turnover of different types of capital, (i) fixed, (ii) circulating.
 - (g) circulatory capitals, i.e., the capitals needed to circulate both money-capital and commodity-capital. This covers the retail, banking, and other financial sectors of the economy.
 - (h) the interrelationships between transportation (and communication) and circulation.
6. Some key locational characteristics of the capitalist mode of production as it has evolved:
 - (a) merchant capitalism (dispersed)
 - (b) industrial capitalism (concentration)
 - (c) international capitalism (tremendous geographic flexibility)
7. The capitalist urbanisation process.
 - i. its expression on a world scale.
 - ii. what specific capitalist processes (concentration or accumulation of capital and centralisation) operate to create areal differentiations within the city.

Sources: Harvey and Horvath.
8. Land-use and housing within the capitalist city.

I feel housing deserves at least one lecture since housing is the number one land-use in most, if not in all, capitalist cities.
9. The transportation and communication processes.
10. Imperialism
 - (a) the classical theoreticians--Marx, Lenin, etc.
 - (b) later and modern theoreticians.
11. Imperialism and economic growth:
 - i. within the advanced capitalist countries: stress on regional disparities.
 - ii. in the dependent capitalist countries: stress on lopsided economic growth.

Course Outlines in Transportation Geography

The following are outlines of courses currently being given at Simon Fraser University. The first is a 3rd year introduction to Transportation Geography (Michael Eliot Hurst) The Second is a fourth year course on Urban transportation. (Jim Overton)

1 GEOGRAPHY OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation, the movement of commodities, people, and information from one spatial point to another, flows out of and remains consistent with the basic economic structure of the society of which it is a part. It is integrally tied to the mode of production of a society, in all its relationships, including the spatial ones. Space does act as a barrier to capital in restricting its market, the movement of commodities to and from the stage of productive activity, and hence in a capitalist society to the realization of ever increasing amounts of surplus value. But capital by its nature overcomes spatial barriers and leads to the annihilation of space by time through the creation of means of increasingly efficient means of transportation; in turn they become a compelling necessity for the reproduction of capital.

These means of transportation in capitalist societies have moulded and shaped geographic landscapes in dramatic ways, and have largely been determined by private business firms rather than any collective mechanism of social decision-making. Thus in an important respect profit seeking, in what has become a relatively decentralized market, has moulded the environment. Marx called the first major transport innovation, the railroad, "the cause of capitalism's reconstitution of the world"; not only in the sense that it was the communications mode adequate to modern production, but because it was the basis for the first large joint-stock companies which in turn became the modern bank and corporation. The railroad, as an epoch-making innovation, contributed to the concentration of capital to a new degree. Later the railroad was replaced by another powerful economic force in stimulating the capitalist economy - the automobile. So successful has been this latter mode that it is difficult now to imagine an auto-free metropolitan capitalist economy.

By the 1970's transportation in most countries involves a considerable percentage of GNP. In North America the whole area of transportation absorbs over one-quarter of the GNP, and is an arena marked by persistent fraudulent charges, oligopolic legerdemain which destroys mass transit systems, and most recently the use of the capitalist state via Amtrack, Conrail, etc., to achieve goals integral to the prevailing mode of production.

This approach to the geography of transportation will be broken down in the course in approximately the following way:

WEEK 1: Transportation: a political-economic approach.

WEEK 2: Geographical milieu: spatial interaction, the example of wheat shipments from Vancouver.

WEEK 3: Historical milieu: (a) transportation in the pre-nineteenth century world;
(b) epoch-making innovations: the railroad

WEEK 4: (c) epoch-making innovations: the automobile and truck.

- WEEK 5: (d) other modes of transportation.
- WEEK 6: (e) transportation in the Third World.
(f) transportation in "socialist" and "social-democratic" countries.

WEEKS 7 & 8: Problems of transportation in the First World: A number of problem areas will be tackled, including -

- (i) airport location;
- (ii) air technology innovations;
- (iii) recreation;
- (iv) public transit vs. individualized transport;
- (v) freight rates;
- (vi) public legislation and regulatory bodies, etc.

WEEK 9: The political economy of transportation: a holistic analysis of the relationship of transportation to the socio-economic milieu. The future.

WEEKS 10 & 11: Orthodox transportation analysis: in contrast to the approach of the previous nine weeks, a look will be made at the trees of the transportation forest through the eyes of N. American and W. European geographers:

- (i) the Northwestern approach;
- (ii) stocks;
- (iii) network analysis;
- (iv) flows.

Approaches to "problem" areas, especially urban transportation.

WEEKS 12 & 13: STUDENT REPORTS

REQUIRED TEXT:

There is no text to cover weeks 1-9 and we will have to rely on various Library Reserve materials (see below).

Weeks 10 and 11 are covered, in a "liberal"-critical way by:

M.E. Eliot Hurst, Transportation Geography, McGraw Hill, 1974.

LIBRARY MATERIAL:

The following material is on 24 hour Reserve in the Library:

Baran, P. & P. Sweezy, Monopoly Capital, Monthly Review Press, 1966, espec. Chapter 8.

Budden, S. & J. Ernst, The Moveable Airport: The Politics of Government Planning, Toronto, 1973.

Bugler, J., "Wanted: A Labour Party Transport Policy", New Statesman, September 1975, Vol. 90, No. 2323, pp. 361-2.

Eliot Hurst, M.E., I came to the city...essays on the urban scene, Houghton-Mifflin, 1975, espec. pp. 261-292.

- Fromm, Gary (ed.), Transport Investment and Economic Development,
Brookings Institute, 1965.
- Harvey, D., Social Justice and the City, Edward Arnold, 1973.
- Huckfield, L., "Labour Study Group: A New Transport Policy",
Socialist Commentary, 1975.
- Ives, R., G.W. Lloyd & L. Sawyers, "Mass Transit and the Power
Elite", Radical Political Economics, Vol. 4, 1972, pp. 68-77.
- Marx, K., Capital, Volume 2, especially chapters 3 & 14.
_____. , Grundrisse, (Penguin edition, 1973), pp. 522-44.
_____. & F. Engels, Selected Correspondence, London: Martin Lawrence
Ltd., 1934, pps. 83-84; 118, 358-60; 385; 497-501; 516-17.
- Needham, B., "The Cost-Benefit Fallacy", Official Architecture and
Planning, Vol. 34, 1971, pp. 47-49.
- Pendakur, S. City, Citizens and Freeways, Vancouver, 1973.
- Purdy, H.L., Transport Competition and Public Policy in Canada, UBC
Press, 1972.
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Economics, Vol. 7, 1975, pp. 52-68.
_____. , "Metropolitan Transportation Planning, A Review of the
Urban Transportation Problem", Radical Political Economics,
Vol. 2, 1970, pp. 69-74.
- Studnicki-Gizbert (ed.), Issues in Canadian Transport Policy,
Macmillan, 1974.
- Sweezy, P., "Cars and Cities", Monthly Review, Vol. 24, No. 11,
1973, pp. 1-18.
- U.S. Senate. Hearings before the subcommittee on antitrust and
monopoly of the Committee on the Judiciary, S. 1167. Part 4A
(an appendix) -- "American Ground Transport", 1974.
- Williams, R., Communications, Penguin, 1966.

2. URBAN TRANSPORTATION - SOME INITIAL READINGS

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Geographical Journal, 137,(1971), 468-504.
- Arnstein, S.F., "A ladder of citizen participation in the U.S.A.",
Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 35 (1969), 216-24.
- Bookchin, Murray, Post-Scarcity Anarchism. (Berkeley: Ramparts Press,
1971).
- Budden, S. & Ernst, J., The Movable Airport: The Politics of Government
Planning (Toronto: 1973).

- Eliot Hurst, M.E., Transportation Geography: Comments and Readings. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1974).
- Goodman, Robert, After the Planners (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971).
- Harris, Nigel, "Urban England", Economy and Society, 3 (1974), 346-354.
- _____, "China's cities", Economy and Society, 4 (1975), 106-115.
- Harvey, David, "Class-monopoly rent, finance capital and the urban revolution", Regional Studies, 8 (1974), 239-255.
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- Ives, R., Lloyd, G.W. & Sawers, L., "Mass transit and the power elite", The Review of Radical Political Economics, 4 (1972), 68-77.
- Kellett, J.R., The Impact of Railways on Victorian Cities. (University of Toronto Press, 1969).
- O'Connor, J., The Fiscal Crisis of the State. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973).
- Rappaport, Roy A., "Restructuring the ecology of cities", Io, 14 (Earth Geography Booklet No. 3), New York.
- Rieser, Richard, "The territorial illusion and behavioural sink: Critical Notes on Behavioural Geography", Antipode, Vol. 5, No. 3 (1973), pp. 52-57.
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THE SPORTS OF SAVAGES

Strange to say, most savages, whether in Africa or Asia or America, are too serious to care much for games as we know them. The South Sea Islanders have their wonderful surfboards with which they mount the crest of a long breaker and come shooting in toward shore; the American Indians have their saddle-bags and lacrosse; and almost all savages compete in trials of strength of various kinds. But it may be fairly said that most savages are either actually fighting, or else idling around in a very unenergetic way; so that they know nothing of sports like ours, which are the products of civilized leisure.

It is extremely interesting, though, to note how readily the worst savages will take to certain of our games if they are taught in the right way. This was shown recently in the Philippine Islands. A certain hill tribe of Igorotes was giving much trouble to the authorities. These half-savage men were robbing and killing their neighbors. They were restless. They hadn't enough to do. And they hated the American soldiers.

An officer in our army in the Philippines believed that he could improve the attitude and habits of the Igorotes; and he had a novel and remarkable scheme for doing so. His plan was to go among the trouble-makers in a friendly manner, and set them to playing American games and competing in American sports.

His scheme worked wonderfully well. Before long he convinced the hill men that he was friendly; and he soon worked up enthusiasm for the sports he could teach them. The climax was a regular track meet, to which the savages came from miles around. There was climbing the greased pole; there were tugs of war, and running races, and wrestling, and spear-throwing and many other events. And the result was the introduction of a new idea into the lives of these men, a new idea of what to do with spare time and spare energy in place of mischief-making.

(From: The New Wonder World: a Library of Knowledge. Vol. 6).



It is our intention to promote discussion of the issue of academic freedom in geography, beginning with the next newsletter. Please send us your thoughts and experiences.

SOCIALIST PRACTICE

There are many potential arenas for socialist practice by geographers within the university and in the community. Members of the USG at Simon Fraser have participated in a variety of organizations and projects ranging from committee work in student unions and presentation of departmental seminars to preparation of high school educational materials, work within food and socialist book cooperatives, and research for resident groups. We would like to reserve some space in the newsletter for any USG members to report on and analyse the kinds of political activities in which they have participated. The first article will be a brief discussion of some of the housing research that has grown out of our experience with the Vancouver Geographical Expedition.

Tenant Organizing in Vancouver:

The Vancouver Geographical Expedition no longer exists as a formal organization. Sometime last spring it became apparent that the organization had outlived its usefulness and was draining more energy than it was releasing. Yet, members of the USG at Simon Fraser are still participating in several political organizations in the Vancouver community.

The Expedition was formed in the summer of 1973 as a loose coalition of politically and theoretically inexperienced left liberals, socialists, and even conservatives who felt that as geographers we could make a contribution to the battle for neighborhood control within the city. We received a tremendous amount of help from Bill Bunge and the students in the Toronto Geographical Expedition. Many of the ideas for our initial projects - studies of children's recreation space, neighborhood traffic flows, and property ownership - were directly borrowed from what we had read about and experienced in Toronto.

For over a year and a half the organizational form of the Expedition was appropriate to our needs. Membership expanded, new projects were initiated and we made a great number of contacts in the general political and research community of Vancouver. Yet we were unable to contribute significantly to class struggle in the neighborhood of Grandview that we had specifically designated as 'The Expedition Area.' I believe there were three main reasons for this:

1. During the time the Expedition was expanding there was very little political activity on the part of community groups existing in the area. Thus we had no easy way to meet and work with large numbers of residents.
2. As students we (correctly) felt that we could not initiate community organization. We were outsiders who could only make a partial contribution. This was compounded by the fact that despite the existence of an Expedition House within the neighborhood, most of our members lived throughout the city and all of us had to spend a considerable amount of time at the university which is located miles away literally on an isolated mountain top.
3. As a result of lack of contact with active working people and our own inexperience, many of our projects were ill conceived. They required

too much time in gathering detailed information that could be of only limited political use. And they were often too spatially limited to provide interesting theoretical contributions which might have sustained at least our academic interests.

Yet, despite the limitations of our effectiveness, we were able to gain a great deal of experience concerning where to find information on a wide variety of topics and how to (and how not to) analyse and present it. These topics included local and regional transportation, children's recreation, neighborhood and labour history, land use mapping, property ownership, and corporate research. Some of our research and much of our experience has been used during the past few months as community groups and tenant organizations seem to be reawakening in response to the growing housing crisis, wage controls, and a general tightening of Federal and Provincial social services.

Two such organizations are RUSH (Renters United for Secure Housing) and the Grandview Tenants Association. These are residents groups that have formed in the working class neighborhoods which are currently being redeveloped to accommodate 'luxury' condominiums for executives and swinging singles. In Kitsalano on the west side of the downtown, members of RUSH have worked through a series of organizations and have become increasingly radicalized through several years of experience in fighting developers and City Hall. Under the title of the West Broadway Citizen's Committee, in 1974 they were able to win election to the Kitsalano Resource Board which provides various community groups with Provincial funds. They were also able to get a temporary downzoning of their neighborhood. During this period their attention was focused on the municipal Planning Department and the City Council. Their base of support in the community, which had been solidly established through all sorts of effective anti-developer demonstrations and activities, began to erode and with it they lost the few concessions they had gained from the city. Ultimately they decided to resign in protest from the Resource Board and to spend their full energies on organizing tenants through RUSH.

The East End of the city has only recently been discovered by the redevelopers. Its Grandview Tenants Association is much less experienced and many of its members still believe that the municipally funded local area planning program and the Provincially funded Resource Board are viable focuses for political activity.

During the last two years geographers from Simon Fraser have provided information concerning intercorporate connections and property ownership to residents in both neighborhoods. We have also written newspaper articles and participated in public seminars describing various aspects of the plan to make Vancouver an 'Executive City'. These have been tied to specific struggles over evictions and demolitions. More importantly we have shown a number of people how they can do their own community research.

Many research skills are easy to learn and we have found that residents gain a deeper understanding of the nature of the problem they are responding to simply by going down to City Hall and seeing where different kinds of information is kept. The land registry and company records offices with their \$1.00 per file fees are mini-courses in the unequal access to information available to low income residents and wealthy real estate corporations and speculators. Even the public library takes on new meaning as its directories, newspaper clippings, indices, records of legislative hearings, pamphlets, and catalogues reveal various aspects of the process of urban development.

The time spent taking residents down to these facilities is useful in several ways. First it helps to demystify expertise and increases the number of people who can do basic property ownership research. Secondly, it enables the researcher to get to know and to learn from those involved with specific issues. Third, it provides an opportunity to discuss the underlying causes of the problem at a level which is often not possible (or necessarily desirable) at action oriented meetings.

In addition to work that some of us have done concerning specific conflicts, the USG as a whole created the first computerized landlord data bank available to residents in the Vancouver area. We gained access to a list of the owners and locations of all apartment buildings in the city containing four or more legal suites. In Canada this is sold in several major cities by a private company named TEEL&A. The information, which had been arranged by the street address of the buildings, was keypunched using the standard KWIK bibliography program format (landlord=author, apartment address=title, landlord's address=keyword). The program was run first according to the 'author' index. This produced a file of each landlord proudly identified with all of the properties he or she owned in his or her own name. The program was also run according to the 'keyword' index and revealed many shy landlords who were using the same registered address to manage or own properties under several different names. These lists are currently being circulated among a variety of resident groups throughout the metropolitan region. On the basis of the information these add concerning their own neighborhoods, the lists will be revised to reveal further corporate connects and property holdings.

Already the landlord project has exposed several surprising connections that have been of use to groups fighting evictions. It is also serving as a mechanical address labeller by the Grandview organization. Notices are being sent to all the apartment units in the neighborhood informing tenants of the organizations activities. Letters have also been mailed to all the landlords in the area asking them to inform the organization's free rental aid program of any vacancies they may have.

Our ultimate objective for the list is to get different tenant groups to work together to organize apartment blocks owned by the same corporations throughout the city. In this way the groups can attempt to deal directly with the landlords and build their own effective strength. The Vancouver experience has revealed that marches and petitions and speeches at City Hall can serve useful publicity and educational purposes at times, but small groups which do not have solid constituencies become counter-productive, weekly circuses of fewer and fewer people. These constituencies can be built only on the basis of careful organizing and occasional success in stopping evictions and forcing back rent increases.

Tenant organizing by itself will not solve the housing crisis, but it can effectively provide a number of people with both a window revealing the underlying processes of capitalist development and the organizational experience necessary for its radical transformation.

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One of the purposes which has already been established for the Newsletter is the dissemination of information on work completed or in progress by individuals or groups within the U.S.G. To achieve this purpose we feel that it is useful to publish bibliographies of work completed by socialist geographers. Hopefully readers will contribute articles, references, biographies or bibliographies which they have found useful. To initiate the series this edition will focus upon some of the work of Keith Buchanan. We have been in contact with him and have asked him to contribute to further issues. This bibliography is a brief introduction to his work and is arrayed chronologically.

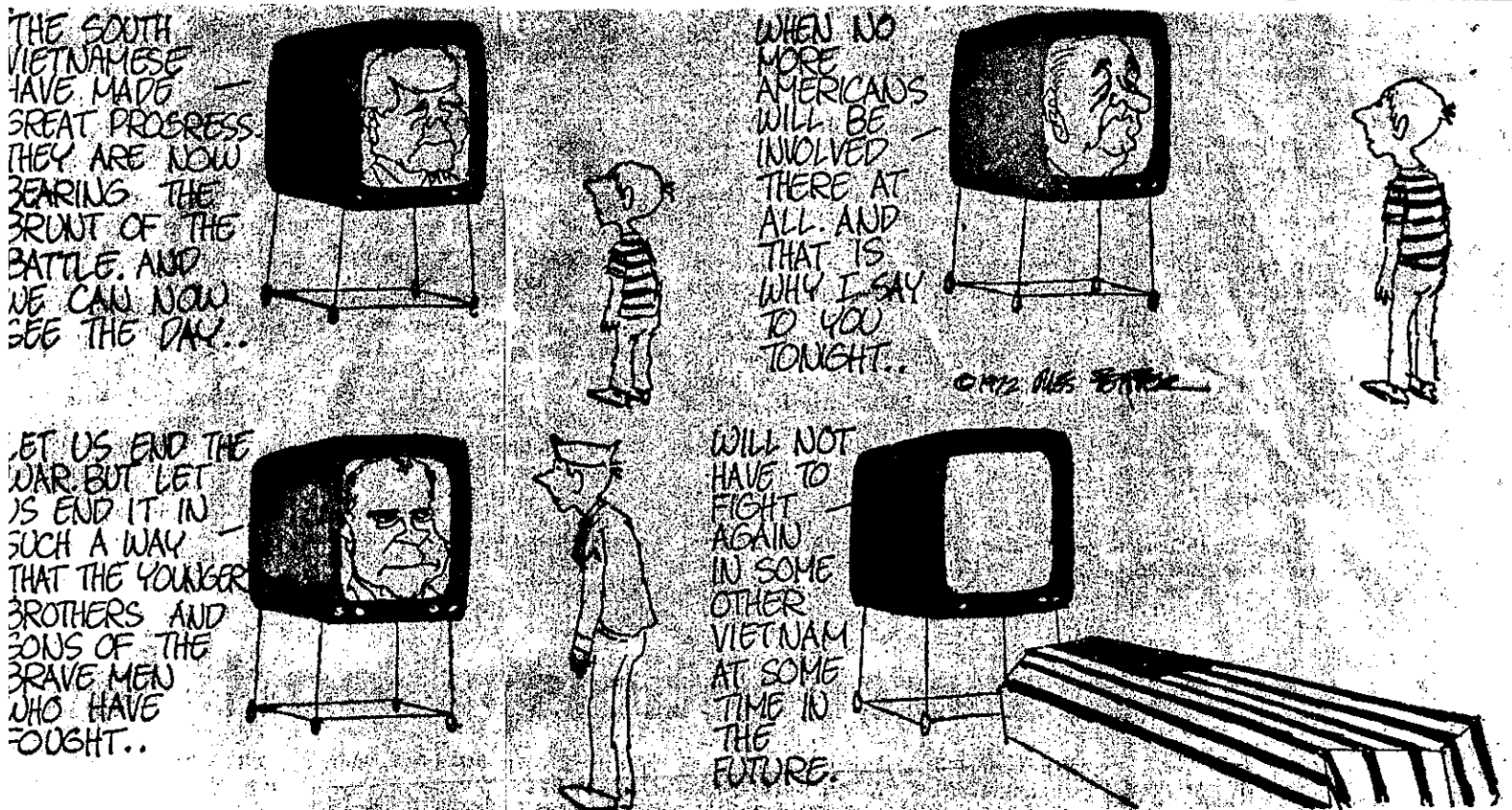
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THIS IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON MARX'S THEORY OF CIRCULATION BY BERNARD CURTIN (S.F.U.)

MARX'S THEORY OF CIRCULATION

In this issue we include the first part of a three part presentation of the theory of circulation to be found in the writings of Karl Marx. The work is an edited version of section of what is thought to be the first geographical thesis dealing with this topic. It is written by Bernard Curtin.

It is hoped that the presentation here will both prove useful to geographers and that it will serve to generate discussion of, and further research, in the general area.

The first segment, included in this issue of the newsletter, deals with Marx's concept of the commodity, in order to establish the conceptual framework for subsequent analysis. Following this the topics of (1) exchange and circulation over space, and (2) the contradictions inherent in this process, will be examined.

THE COMMODITY

The basic aim of this segment is to develop and comment upon some of the major concepts which Marx uses to analyse commodity production and exchange. For Marx the wealth of capitalist societies "presents itself as an immense accumulation of commodities" (Marx, 1972, p. 43). (1). Consequently it becomes important to define exactly what a commodity is, how it changes in nature and form over time and finally what the role of a commodity is in capitalist society.

Capital, Marx frequently notes, is a unity of the production and circulation of commodities. The commodity then is the basic cell of bourgeois society.

The commodity, although apparently quite a trivial and simple thing, is, Marx maintains, a mystical and enigmatical thing (phenomenon); indeed, for Marx, it is much more than a matter-energy entity; it is, he says, a representation of human labour. Commodities, no matter how varied they may be, are, when we strip away their specific physical and chemical properties and when we abstract from the specific types of labour that created them, the products of human labour. The commodity, in other words, is the condensed expression of human labour. "When looked at as crystals of this social substance common to them all, they are--values." (Marx, 1972, p. 46). In other words, value is abstract, undifferentiated human labour.

The commodity represents the logical and necessary starting point of the present study for the following reasons :-

1) Under capitalism most of the products of human labour assume the form of commodities. (Marx, 1972, p 43)

2) The commodity is also one of the basic cells of economic geography . This is apparent in the writings of geographers contemporary with Marx, although at that time this area of study was usually known as Commercial Geography.

For the conventional positivistic Economic Geographer, the nature of the commodity occasions no surprise; it is taken as given, it is a simple matter-energy entity produced by the factors of production - land, labour, capital, and entrepreneurship. The economic landscape becomes a set of points or objects located in space with flows of commodities and people between production, selling and consumption points. The terminology of most of the current textbooks is that of the mechanics of Newton: cause, effect, impact, attraction, interaction, friction. Some have, and still do, emulate in some of their models, the Newtonian formulation of gravity.

Contradictory Nature of the Commodity

(a) Definitions

The raw materials that make up the environment are not given to us in easily useable forms. They must be transformed by human labour into something more convenient and useable. This process of transformation is the process of producing products or use-values (objects of utility that satisfy some human want).

Marx defines commodity as any good or service which requires the expenditure of labour to prepare it for the market and the production of which was motivated solely by the desire to sell it in the market. However there is much more to the concept than appears at first (1). In one of his famous summary paragraphs in Capital Marx writes:

"The antithesis, use-value and value; the contradictions that private labour is bound to manifest itself as direct social labour, that a particularised concrete kind of labour has to pass for abstract human labour; the contradiction between the personification of objects and the representation of persons as things; all these antitheses and contradictions which are immanent in commodities, assert themselves, and develop their modes of motion, in the antithetical phases of the metamorphosis of a commodity."

(Marx, 1972, p. 115)

What at first sight seems a simple concept is in fact a tissue of contradictions. As Marx notes:

"Commodities first of all enter into the process of exchange just as they are [i.e. as use-values]. The process then differentiates them into commodities and money, and thus produces an eternal opposition corresponding to the internal opposition inherent in them, as being at once use-values and values."
(Marx, 1972, p. 106)

Thus the exchange process which resolves these internal contradictions creates an external opposition which differentiates the commodities into "commodities" and "money". This distinction will be made clearer in a subsequent section .

Further, Marx directs our attention to the difference between a "product" and a "commodity" or between "production for use (that is for the producers) and production for exchange" (Sahlins, 1972, p. 82). A product is anything that is produced to be consumed either by its direct producer or some of his/her dependents or its legal owner. A commodity, on the other hand, is something (whether material good or a service) that is produced to be exchanged. A process of exchange mediates between production and consumption. Clearly there are going to be significant economic, social, political, and geographic differences between a society in which the majority of the production is for exchange and a society in which production is for direct consumption.

(B) Capitalist production and commodities

Marx repeatedly notes that commodity production constitutes one of the outstanding features of the capitalist mode of production. He writes:

"It produces its products as commodities. The fact that it produces commodities does not differentiate it from other modes of production; but rather the fact that being a commodity is the dominant and determining characteristic of its products."
(Marx, 1971a, p. 879)

Extremely important is the fact that labour-creativity itself is also a commodity that is sold and bought like any other commodity. Thus, we are not dealing with either the tribal, slave, feudal, or even self-employed worker. We are dealing with the modern wage labourer who, unlike the slave, is not bought and sold, but who sells his labour-creativity or labour-power for a specified number of hours each day if capital wants to use it. But the commodity, by its very nature, is produced to be exchanged, "It realises itself only in the process of exchange"

(Marx, 1970, 1970, p. 43). In sum, the entire capitalist system rests upon exchange-value.

It is only when products are produced as commodities that their values became an object of serious consideration. With exchange, values became important because the producers who exchange want to know how much of commodity A should be exchanged for commodity B. Therefore, the concept of magnitude of value (forces itself) begins to impinge more and more upon the consciousness of the producers.

(C) Historical Context

We live today in a society dominated by the production of commodities for exchange. Most people accept this as the normal and natural way of conducting activities. However, Polanyi argues that we fail to appreciate how recent and how historically specific is the establishment of the fully-developed "market economy" or "market system". (Polanyi, 1957, pp. 4-41). The latter, Polanyi writes, "... is an institutional structure, which as we all too easily forget, has been present at no time except our own, and even then it was only partially present" (Polanyi, 1957, p. 37). Under capitalism commodity production becomes universal.

The transformation to this system from an earlier (pre-capitalist) economy is so complete that it resembles more the metamorphosis of the caterpillar than any alteration that can be expressed in terms of continuous growth and development. (Polanyi, 1957, p. 42).

For Polanyi, the change to a fully-developed market economy was so revolutionary that he termed it "the great transformation." This fully-developed capitalist mode of production constituted a radical rupture with pre-capitalist modes of production.

The importance of this event must be stressed since economic geographers and, more surprisingly, historical geographers, fail to recognise that markets for all commodities, including human-creativity, have not been an eternal condition of the human species: for geographers, production is production whether it is communal, slave, feudal, or capitalist production. For Marx, production in general is an abstraction, (2) a rational abstraction, to the extent that it really brings out and fixes the elements common to all modes of production. Failure to specify or recognise the particular type of production is tantamount to seeing production relations as eternal. (3)

(D) The Exchange of Commodities

Returning to a consideration of commodities as such, the question now arises as to what constitutes an adequate criterion for exchanging commodities. Do colour, height, or weight of the commodities constitute adequate grounds for exchange? Does a red pen exchange for a red car? Does a ton of gold exchange for a ton of coal? The absurdity of such examples demonstrates that criteria relating to the physical or chemical properties of commodities do not constitute any basis for their exchange. These criteria might be used and one exchanger may be cheated. Thus, Chisholm informs us that the white traders of the Hudsons Bay Company used height as a criterion for exchange with Canadian Indians:

"In the old trapping days of the Hudsons Bay Company, at the time when beaver skins were of great value in Europe, a trade gun would buy from the Indians as many beaver skins as could be piled upon either side of it".
(Chisholm, 1960, p. 117)

When human beings first began to engage in such commercial exchanges, the criteria described above were often used, but as exchange becomes more frequent and regular, they were abandoned. Value (abstract, undifferentiated labour) is the common criterion (quality) that permits commodities to be exchanged for one another. Once we have established this, then we can ask what quantity of this quality do the commodities to be exchanged possess. Or, as Aristotle puts it, "exchange cannot take place without equality, and equality not without commensurability" (cited by Marx, 1972, p. 65). When it is said that a certain quantity of one commodity can be exchanged for a certain quantity of another, this:

"tells us that in two different things, ... there exists in equal quantities something common to both. The two things must therefore be equal to a third, which in itself is neither the one nor the other. Each of them in so far as it is an exchange-value, must therefore be reducible to this third."
(Marx, 1972, p. 45)

This third thing, Marx argues, is abstract human labour. If we strip away the chemical and physical properties of use-values and the specific types of labour embodied in them, "... there is nothing left but what is common to them all; all are reduced to one and the same sort of labour, human labour in the abstract." (Marx, 1972, p. 46)

At this point we must note that when Marx analyses the commodity in Part 1 of "Capital" vol. 1, he is not examining the capitalist mode of production. For analytical purposes, he assumes simple commodity production:

"... where the labourers themselves are in possession of their respective means of production and exchange their commodities with one another."

(Marx, 1967, p. 175)

Thus there is production of commodities, a well developed division of labour and the different commodity producers exchange their commodities among themselves. The labourer, however, is not a wage-labourer and is not separated from his/her means of production: commodity production is prior to capitalism, but as noted capitalism is the commodity producing society par excellence.

At this point we must return to the concepts of value alluded to in earlier subsections. Now when discussing simple commodity production Marx assumes that the likelihood that commodities will exchange according to their relative magnitudes of value is very great. However, when he analyses the capitalist mode of production, he states emphatically that although the exchange-values of commodities are regulated by their values, the likelihood of commodities exchanging at their exact values is very slim.

To this point, value, use-value and exchange-value have been introduced. However for Marx "exchange-value" is in fact merely the phenomenal form of value or the form value assumes in an exchange relationship with another commodity of a different use value. This can lead to some confusion since Marx himself had asserted that the commodity is a unity of its use-value and exchange-value: "Every commodity has a two fold aspect - use value and exchange-value" (Marx, 1970, p. 27). Upon closer reading, however, it is evident that for Marx a commodity is not a use-value and an exchange-value; rather:

"When ... we said in common parlance that a commodity is both a use-value and an exchange-value, we were, accurately speaking wrong. A commodity is a use-value object of utility, and a value."
(Marx, 1972, p. 66)

In other words, we observe "exchange-value", the phenomenal form, which in fact is the form of value, and which in its turn is the "form of social labour in a commodity-producing society". When we know this Marx sees no harm in the expression, "exchange value," as we see it for what it is, an abbreviation.
(Marx, 1972, p. 66).

Money

For Marx, money must be initially comprehended as a commodity, and a commodity, it will be recalled, possesses both use-value and value. Yet money is no ordinary commodity as it possesses a number of particular and peculiar characteristics which it is necessary to consider briefly. These peculiarities of the money commodity are manifested, for Marx, in the varying functions which money is called upon to fulfill. He recognises three major functions: a measure of value, a means of circulation and a store of value.

Measure of Value: The first function of the money commodity, Marx notes, is to:

"... supply commodities with the material for the expression of their values, or to represent their values as magnitudes of the same denomination, qualitatively equal and quantitatively comparable. It thus serves as a universal measure of value."

(Marx, 1972, p. 97)

In other words the initial function of the money commodity is as a means for the expression of quantitative relationships, in terms of value, between all other commodities. It is through the exercise of this specific function that gold, "... the equivalent (4) commodity par excellence, becomes money" (Marx, 1972, p. 97).

Means of Exchange: Exchange as the social circulation of matter, or more properly, "the circulation of materialised social labour", introduces the dynamic component to the world of commodities. The necessity of such movement was noted earlier and exchange is the form in which it is manifest. The characteristics of this form and its implications will be elaborated upon in a subsequent segment; for the moment we are concerned with the function of money in facilitating this movement.

Two important points must be made concerning this role of money. The first of these relates to the superficial appearance that the exchange of commodities results from the movement of money. Marx notes that:

"Again, money functions as a means of circulation only because in it the values of commodities have independent reality. Hence its movement, as the medium of circulation, is, in fact, merely the movement of commodities while changing their forms."

(Marx, 1972, p. 117)

Secondly, the introduction of movement in the guise of money introduces, at the same moment, the concept of time; as movement necessitates time as well as space. The introduction of time simultaneously introduces the necessary contradictions of time. Thus:

"if the interval in time between the two complementary phases of the complete metamorphosis of a commodity [C-M-C] become too great, if the split between sale and purchase become too pronounced, the intimate connexion between them, their oneness, asserts itself by producing a crisis."
(Marx, 1972, p. 115)

Whilst the existence of such a possibility is a logical implication of the function of money as a means of exchange, Marx is quick to point out that the actual realisation of such possibilities involves the consideration of many other forces and relationships.

Store of Value (Means of Saving): The contradiction just noted necessitates that the money commodity fulfill the additional role of a store of value. It is with the addition of this function that the money commodity is placed firmly in history. Thus, in schematic form, Marx traces the logic of the emergence of the money commodity and the expansion of its sphere of activity. This is related directly, but in a dialectical fashion, to the mode of production (Marx, 1972, pp 139-140 for examples). At the same time the material form taken by the money commodity is transformed; from coins to notes to credit. The spatio-temporal consequences of this process, for Marx, were expressed in exchange on a global level:

"it is only in the markets of the world that money acquires to the full extent the character of the commodity whose bodily form is also the immediate social incarnation of human labour in the abstract."
(Marx, 1972, p. 141)

Fetishism

Marx stresses that there is nothing mysterious in the fact that the products of labour are use-values which are created by different types of human labour. There is nothing mysterious in the fact that the products of human labour are values. Nor is there anything mysterious in the fact that the magnitude of value of a commodity is a function of the amount of socially necessary labour time embodied in that commodity.

"Whence, then, arises the enigmatical character of the products of labour, so soon as it assumes the form of commodities?"
(Marx, 1972, p. 76)

Marx answers that the products of labour assume an enigmatical character precisely because they take the form of commodities. When private commodity-producers exchange their commodities their:

"... relation ... to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour."
(Marx, 1972, p. 77)

What happens when producers exchange their commodities is that:

"... a definite social relation between men ... assumes in their eyes the fantastic form of a relation between things."
(Marx, 1972, p. 77)

This way of perceiving human relations, Marx calls 'Fetishism', which becomes re-inforced when commodities habitually exchange for money (paper or gold) instead of being directly exchanged. A certain precious metal or just printed slips of paper now seem to possess the magical quality of being able to buy all available commodities. And they seem to have these qualities just because they are use-values, because they are simple pieces of metal or mere scraps of paper. In turn like a fetish, money (a commodity with a definite function) rules the world. Fetishism Marx sees as analogous to what happens in the "mist enveloped" regions of the religious world:

"In that world the productions of the human brain appear as independent things endowed with life, and entering into relation both with one another and the Human Race."
(Marx, 1972, p. 77)

A few pages later, Marx continues:

"The whole mystery of commodities, all the magic and necromancy that surrounds the products of labour as long as they take the form of commodities, vanishes ... so soon as we come to other forms of production."
(Marx, 1972, pp. 80-81)

He cites the example of a communal mode of production in which:

"... the means of production [are owned] in common, [and] in which the labour-power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the combined labour-power of the community."
(Marx, 1972, pp. 82-83)

The economic structure of such a society is transparent. In such a social formation it is obvious that the community has to allocate its labour time in such proportions so as to produce the different products it needs to survive. Through a process of trial and error it succeeds in allocating its time efficiently. It is also obvious that such a society has to devise a set of rules to distribute its total social product:

"One portion serves as a fresh means of production and remains social. But another portion is consumed by the members as means of subsistence."
(Marx, 1972, p. 83)

In such a society:

"The social relations of individual producers, with regard both to their labour and its products are ... perfectly simple and intelligible."
(Marx, 1972, p. 83)

In other words, once we investigate what happens in other modes of production, we can understand what occurs within a commodity-producing (i.e. capitalist) society.

NOTES

(1) The concepts, like "commodity" are mere words. In Althusser's terms, "... every word is of course a concept, but every concept is not a theoretical concept." (Althusser and Balibar, 1970, p. 146)

(2) Abstraction is Marx's method of penetrating beneath the empirically measurable phenomena which surround us. He believed that it was necessary to come to a full comprehension of these underlying structural relationships before attempting to analyse their concrete manifestations in the "real" world. In keeping with this philosophy, Marx criticized political economists who attempted to discuss the empirical relationships between, for

TOPICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY - IMPERIALISM

This issue of the Newsletter contains the first of what we hope will be a continuing series of bibliographies. It is our hope that these installments will build up into a comprehensive bibliography on subjects of interest to socialist geographers. Readers are therefore urgently requested to contribute to current issues or to promote further areas. These bibliographies may be compiled and published at a later date. Other topics now being prepared are Human Nature and Alienation, Urban Political Economy, Anarchist Geography, Tourism, Women and Migration. This Newsletter contains the first part of a bibliography on Imperialism, Part II will appear in the next edition.

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example, wages and profits, before they had anything but an accountant's understanding of the meaning of either. Such an understanding cannot be expected to have universal validity over time and space. Its material, concrete manifestations are constantly changing, and ultimately such changes feed back and alter the underlying structures themselves. Hence the dialectical nature of such relationships. This understanding has import for economic geography because of the latter's failure to recognise the importance of the deep structure of an economy.

(3) This is precisely the confusion that C. T. Smith, in "An Historical Geography of Western Europe (1967), stumbles into. For Smith, the differences between slave, feudal, and capitalist production are not significant.

(4) The "equivalent": for Marx the equivalent is the material form in which the value of another commodity is expressed e.g. 20 yards of linen = 1 coat. The coat is the equivalent form of the value of 20 yards of linen. Marx develops this concept from its use in a simple two commodity system, into the evolution of the universal equivalent or money. (Marx, 1972, pp. 61-62)

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"UNEASY LIES THE HEAD ..."

The Government constantly informs the people
 How difficult it is to rule. Without Ministers
 Corn would grow down into the earth not from it,
 Not one lump of coal would come out of the mines
 If the Minister of Fuel were not so wise.
 Without the Pope no woman would get pregnant.
 Without the Minister of Defence
 There would be no war. And whether the sun
 Would rise early without the Prime Minister's permission
 Is open to question—and if it did, it would
 Probably be in the wrong place.

It is equally difficult, the technocrats tell us,
 To run a factory. Without the shareholders
 The walls would fall down and the machines
 Would simply rust away, they say.
 And even if by some miracle ploughs could still
 Be manufactured, they would never find their ways to the farms
 Without the subtle words which the advertising agencies
 Write for the farmers: who
 Would inform them that ploughs exist?
 And what would
 Happen to the farms if there were no landowners? Surely
 Rye would be sown where potatoes
 Had already been planted.

If ruling were simple
 Enlightened Parties like our present leaders would be unnecessary.
 If workers knew how to run their machines
 And farmers could tell the difference between
 Their land and a breadboard
 One would need neither shareholders
 Nor landowners.
 Only because all of us are dumb
 Do we need a few who are shrewd.

Or, might it be that
 Government is so difficult only
 Because exploitation and lies take some learning too?

Bertholt Brecht (Svendborger Gedichte)

Freely translated by George Cross and Elizabeth M... ..

" FROM THE BOOKSHELVES "

(Books, Articles and notes of interest)

R.T. Naylor: The History of Canadian Business 1867-1914,
Toronto, 1975.

Elaboration of Naylor's earlier work connecting Canadian external linkages with Imperial centres and the resulting nature of the Canadian Bourgeoisie.

R.H. Hilton: The English Peasantry in the later Middle Ages,
OUP, London, 1975.

Further reflections on the Feudalism/Capitalism debate

C.Hill: Change and Continuity in the 17th Century England,
London, 1975.

E. Kamenka & R.S. Neale: Feudalism, Capitalism and Beyond,
London, 1975.

M. Hechter: Internal Colonialism: the Celtic Fringe in British National Development 1536-1966, Univ. of California Press, 1975.

Interesting collection of information on the Celtic fringe - poor theoretical framework of special interest to Historical Geographers.

F.J. Hobsbaum: The Age of Capital 1848-1875,
London, 1975.

Perry Anderson: Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism,
New Left Books, London, 1975.

Lineages of the Absolutist State,
New Left Books, London, 1975.
(Also Humanities Press, New York)

Two important Marxist contributions on the analysis of European history from classical times to the 18th century - deals with transition from the slave mode of production to Feudal mode of production - stresses dichotomy between Western and Eastern Europe - well worth a look.

For critical review see:

P.Hirst, "The Uniqueness of the West", Economy and Society
Vol. 4 No. 4 1975.

B. Hindness & P.Q. Hirst: Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production
Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1975.

Please Send More Contributions!!

MIGRATION IN LATE CAPITALISM: A NOTE ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A SEVENTH MAN, BY JOHN BERGER AND JEAN MOHR.

By Jim Overton

"To outline the experience of the migrant worker and to relate this to what surrounds him--both physically and historically--is to grasp more surely the political reality of the world at this moment. The subject is European, its meaning is global. Its theme is unfreedom. This unfreedom can only be fully recognised if an objective economic system is related to the subjective experience of those trapped within it. Indeed, finally, the unfreedom is that relationship." (Berger and Mohr, 1975)

A Seventh Man is a book of words and images about the departure, work and return of the approximately eleven million workers who are migrants to north-western Europe (excluding Britain) from former colonies, southern Europe, etc. Of this number, women make up probably some two million; however, the book does not deal with their special situation.

In capitalist society, for most people their labour-power is a commodity which they are forced to sell on the market in order to live. In what approaches an economy of universal commodity production, however, labour-power is a special commodity in that it can create more value than it needs to reproduce and produce itself; this surplus value being appropriated by the owners of the means of production.

In such a system, people who are not able to find a buyer for their 'special commodity' are often condemned to abject poverty and hopelessness. This situation is especially prevalent in underdeveloped areas where small-scale independent commodity production in agriculture, for example, has been destroyed by the penetration of capital--a situation often hastened and intensified by such "development" schemes as the Green Revolution. Lack of opportunity to sell their labour-power, due to the absence of industry, etc., means that the dispossessed peasants form a vast reservoir of labour. Capitalist underdevelopment, therefore, creates the objective conditions which force people to migrate, and there is no shortage of people who are prepared to leave their homes and families for an opportunity to be used by capital.

"To be underdeveloped is not merely to be robbed or exploited: it is to be held in the grip of and artificial stasis. Underdevelopment not only kills; its essential stagnation denies life and resembles death. The migrant wants to live. It is not poverty alone that forces him to emigrate. Through his own individual effort he tries to achieve the dynamism that is that is lacking in the situation into which he was born." (Berger and Mohr, 1975, p. 32)

The migrant acts according to the bourgeois ethic that insists that poverty is a state from which an individual or society escapes by enterprise. This myth contrasts with the reality of the situation which is that underdevelopment is a condition of locked, inescapable poverty in which capitalism holds nearly half the world (Berger and Mohr, 1975, p.26).

That large numbers of people are allowed to leave underdeveloped countries (if only temporarily) is a result of a specific set of circumstances in the capitalist metropolises. A labour shortage has developed in the centres of capitalist production and accumulation in Western Europe in the last 25 years. As a result of extensive accumulation of capital there has been a consequent increase in demand for labour. One of the things the accumulation was based on was an expansion of internal markets by increasing wages. Rising incomes led to a greater demand for services. Indigenous workers moved increasingly into higher-paid and higher-status jobs in both direct production and the service, marketing and administrative sectors of the economy. As a result of this a vacuum was created at the base of the hierarchy of jobs. A related aspect of the development process was the declining birth rate in the advanced capitalist countries. Population growth could, therefore, not fill the vacuum. The import of labour was consequently a vital necessity for capital accumulation. Migrant labour has increasingly been used in jobs with low pay and poor conditions and a situation is rapidly approaching in some countries where virtually all unskilled manual jobs are being done by imported labour. This does not, of course, necessarily mean that the people doing the jobs are unskilled, but only that the people working have been willing to have their status and skills downgraded in order to obtain a job. It also means that contrary to popular belief immigrant workers do not compete with indigenous labour for jobs.

In order for accumulation to proceed, capital needs a supply of the right kind of labour-power. In the peripheral underdeveloped areas of Europe capital can pick and choose amongst the crop of people who queue for an opportunity to sell their labour-power. Recruitment centres spring-up:

"Just as agencies now in Istanbul or Athens or Zagreb arrange contracts whereby workers go to Cologne or Brussels, so in early 19th century Britain, agents were set up by the Poor Law Commissioners to recruit the unemployed in the villages of the south-western counties of England and dispatch them to Manchester." (Berger and Mohr, 1975, p.108)

People are reduced in the process to abstract sets of characteristics; they are reified. Only the 'best' are chosen; the strongest, the tallest, the fittest, the most skillful, etc. Of course the screening process also provides a means of keeping out 'undesirables' and potential trouble-makers:

"The migrant worker comes to sell his labour-power where there is a labour shortage. He is admitted to do a certain kind of job. He has no rights, claims, or reality outside his filling of that job. While he fills it, he is paid and accommodated. If he no longer does so, he is sent back to where he came from. It is not men who immigrate, but machine-makers, sweepers, diggers, cement-mixers, cleaners, drillers, etc. This is the significance of temporary migration. To rebecome a man (husband, father, citizen, patriot) a migrant has to return home. The home he left because it held no future for him." (Berger and Mohr, 1975, p. 58.)

The temporary migrant worker is an especially valuable resource for the advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe. These countries do not bear the cost of producing (creating) the labour power. The workers can be constantly changed if they become ill, old or undesirable, and, if conditions change and they are no longer needed, the recipient countries can easily get rid of them and so not have to bear the burden of supporting them during unemployment. In addition, the fact that many migrants may be more politically innocent, or less proletarianised, means that they may be more easily exploited. At a class level the existence of a sub-proletariat, or the division of the working class on the basis of sex, ethnic origins or any other means helps to raise the rate of exploitation (keeping down wages for all). Discrimination has an economic basis in capitalism.

Migration also serves an important stabilising function in underdeveloped areas. It acts as a safety-valve relieving unemployment and averting the possibilities of disturbances. Flows of money to underdeveloped areas may appear to benefit those areas; however, such funds may be used to import consumer goods and thus strengthen ties of dependence with the developed countries, or invested in small capitalist enterprises or individual commodity production which at some later date may be penetrated by capital.

Theory is vital not only for understanding but as a basis for political action. Any theory of migration must describe its laws of development and show how the situation is a logical outcome of a particular social formation. As Nikolinakos notes, it cannot be ahistorical and abstract and one-sided in its formulation. It must consider the many facets of migration from varying perspectives and at varying levels. It must consider not just economic, but also political, social, and demographic factors and the relationships between them. It must relate the general economic level, the structural needs of advanced capitalism, to the particular manifestations of these needs at other levels, including the level of individual perception. Attempts to build such theory show up for what it really is much of the superficial, sterile, distorting, mystifying, and inhuman rubbish which is called "migration theory" in geography. (See Abler, Adams and Gould for example.)

A Seventh Man demonstrates what capitalism as a total system does to the people trapped in its web. It relates in a remarkable and effective way the subjective experiences of migrant workers to the objective needs and conditions of that system. It lays bare the essential nature of the system and of migration and in doing so provides a penetrating critique of those apologists for the system who see migration as a 'natural' adjustment in the harmonious functioning of the system.

As noted by another reviewer this book is an important step in the evolution of new techniques of communicating the nature of capitalism. This is important because:

"Capital assails us in all our senses and at once and to fight it we must comprehend it in all our senses - and at once ..." (Sivanandan, 1975, pp. 90-91).

FOOTNOTE

It may be useful to note some aspects of the development of migrant, of contract labour in China for comparison. (Some 12 million people in the late 1950's according to Lewis, 1971, p.404). The 1950's saw a situation in which there was a vast rural-urban migration, without the possibility of absorbing the people in working in urban industry. The short term solution to the problem was that 'the cities had to be made almost besieged fortresses against the potential rural invasion' (Harris, 1972, p. 112). This was done by controls on migration which included identity cards, travel warrants, work permits, and ration cards, as well as police checks on the urban borders and the hunting down of illegal migrants. (Of course, where pressures to migrate exist and controls prohibit, there will always be an 'underground railroad'). To ensure that the control of migration did not cause a situation in which there was insufficient labour to maintain industrial expansion, or a situation where labour shortages would allow urban workers to bid up wages, a system of temporary or contract workers was introduced. The migrant worker system provided the authorities with a great deal of control. Trouble-makers could easily be expelled as could the aged - thus avoiding the paying of pensions. Also, the import of cheap labour could be used to break resistance by urban workers to their wishes. As in Western Europe, however, the system was not without its problems. Permanent workers saw migrants as a constant threat. They would compete for jobs and could be used to keep wages down, etc. Even though contract workers were usually employed in the unskilled and most unpleasant jobs. Also, the conditions of the imported workers were appalling compared with those of the permanent workers, especially in the area of accommodation.

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ALSO FROM THE PRESS

Haiti Hotel Features "Decadence."

Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier didn't show up as promised, but his sister, Nicole, did. So did the cream of Haitian society and a gaggle of Beautiful People - 1,500 in all- for the opening night party of a new retreat for the rich, billed by its owners as "the most extraordinary, lascivious and decadent place in the world." It is Habitation Leclerc, a \$1.8 million hilly hideaway nestled amidst almond trees, magnolias, breadfruit and palms on a 15-acre estate that was once owned by Pauline Bonaparte Leclerc, the fun-loving sister of Napoleon. "When I say decadent, I don't necessarily mean sex," said Oliver Coquelin, president of the resort, who also founded such fashionable watering holes as New York's Le Club, Ondine, Cheetah and Hippopotamus. "For me, decadent is just a beautiful way of life, where everything is beautifully lazy, and all you have to do is to raise your hand and you get service." Decadent could also mean that the \$150-a-day-per-couple paradise is surrounded by some of the worst squalor in the Western hemisphere, and that tumbledown shacks of Haitians- whose per capita income is around \$80 a year -can readily be seen by guests who might happen to be sipping a rum punch around the swimming pool. But the management is quick to point out that the natives are friendly, and anyway, the resort is surrounded by a stone wall, which has chunks of glass embedded in its top. "My friends are always saying, 'How do you dare live in that country. You'll get killed, you'll get mugged, you'll get robbed,'" Lawrence Peabody of the Boston Peabodys, co-owner and interior designer of the resort, said shortly before the party began. "I tell them, 'I can't stand the poverty in the United States.' I say, 'Look, here the people are smiling. If nothing else, they can always pick the fruits and vegetables if they get hungry.'" Almost 2,000 Haitians stood outside the gates of the resort as the guests arrived for the party. One 15-year-old Haitian girl was run over by a car and had to be rushed to a hospital.

According to Coquelin, the resort was financed by two \$400,000 loans, one from a New York bank, the other from the Agency for International Development, and several million from 14 backers, including Giovanni Angellino, George Plimpton, the Duke of Bedford, Prince Egon von Furstenberg, Mick Jagger, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Roger Vadim and Baron Edmund de Rothschild.

FILL IN THE BLANKS:

1. (a)witches (b)Lancashire
2. (a)socialist geographers (b)Vancouver

The greatest news from the country is of a huge pack of _____ (a) _____ which are lately discovered in _____ (b) _____ whereof it is said 19 are condemned and at least 60 already discovered; there were divers of them of good ability, and they have done much harm.

(Apologies to Sir William Pelham, 1634).

BOLSHEVISM AND THE LAWS OF PROPERTY

By Homer Hoyt. (From According to Hoyt)

The Russian revolution was a lesson in the anatomy of nations. The slender nerve filaments that control the huge corporate bodies of material wealth and the institutions of Church and State were laid open before the eyes of the world. This dissection taught us not only that nations possess a central nervous system, but that a shock to a vital part of this nervous system will cause the disintegration and paralysis of a mighty empire. Chief among these vital points is the system of distributing wealth, or rather the laws of property and contract which control the distribution of that wealth. Recent events in Russia have demonstrated that a sudden shock to the laws of property may shatter the structure of credit which rests on the foundation of stability in property values, that it may deaden the nerves of business enterprise, kill the specialization, interdependence and large-scale production which absolutely rely on mutual confidence, stop the wheels of transportation, and carry the entire nation centuries backward to the crudities of medieval barter. Business men will not venture on unknown seas without chart or compass; the spirit of industry dies when the terror of plunder, pillage, and violence runs riot through the land. As industry languishes, and respect for the laws of property disappears, the demoralization is communicated to other stable institutions like marriage and religion, and they go down before the savage onrush of the primitive instincts that seek a long-denied gratification. Idleness, profligacy, and the gambling spirit attack the soul of a nation like a dry rot; world contacts established by peaceful intercourse are broken; and the fine gold of civilization, accumulated by centuries of careful saving, is dissipated in a wild orgy of revolution.

The very masses of the people who hoped to gain from the disturbance they created, lose their employment, their small capital, their peace of mind, their liberties, and their health; as industries close their doors, as the fountain of justice becomes polluted, and as disease, unrestrained by the enforcement of hygienic regulations, stalks abroad through city and country. The people who pull down the temple of property, perish like Samson, under the falling columns.

This dismal picture does not present a moral for the United States--at least not yet. The laws of private property cannot be overturned suddenly by a fiat of either people or State, unless the ground has been prepared. As long as the masses of the people benefit from the continuance of the existing order or as long as the masses have not much to gain from an equal division of the country's resources, business men and lawyers can safely boast of the unvarying stability of the laws of property. But if the disparity should ever become sufficiently great, the ground underneath our feet will begin to tremble and the distant roar of the coming deluge will be heard. If the concentration of wealth under the legitimate rules of the game should proceed to the point where a few toil little and enjoy disproportionately little, then there will come into existence a reason for revolution. Then the seeds of Bolshevism and the I.W.W. will be carried over the land with the speed of the whirlwind and their crop

will come soon and it will be bitter. The breaking-point is finally reached in every case of growing concentration of wealth. It was reached in France in 1789; it was reached in Russia in 1917.

Although the menace to us is yet far distant, it behooves us to take warning and to relieve the growing pressure by reversing the tendency toward concentration. The gradual restrictions in inheritances, the guarantee of better living conditions to labor, shorter hours and higher pay will not register any violent effect on our economic or social system. Such reforms will also probably prevent the gradual emergence of two poles--one the pole of concentration of wealth and the other the pole of poverty--that finally causes the electric shock of revolution.

Since the forces that affect the lives of nations traverse centuries in their course, wise statesmen who have the enduring stability of our country at heart must be unusually alert to detect the first germs of the peril that may threaten America in the far distant future. The adjustment of our legal balance wheel so that it will maintain the proper equilibrium between labor and capital, will prevent the formation of a social environment that is favorable to Bolshevism.



**ALL POWER
TO
THE PEOPLE !**

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(the market mechanism) is "an organizing principle of such usefulness in a complex society that if we had not inherited it, its inventor today would be honored as one of the great benefactors of mankind."

Gerhard Colm, "Why Public Finance," National Tax Journal, Vol. 1, No. 3 September 1948, p. 197, ~~as quoted~~
as quoted by W.H. Anderson, Financing Modern Governments.

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