

Spring 1987  
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## Political Economy & Cultural Anthropology

### I. Poverty & Progress: Malthus

Utilitarianism's Five Variants (Parsons)

Malthus, the Demographic Transition, and Social Structure

Ecosystem, Carrying Capacity, System Breakdown/Transformation

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### II. Modes of Production & Pre-Capitalist economic formations: Marx

Social Formations and modes of production

Relations of production and forces of production

Use Value, Exchange Value, Money, and Commodity Fetishism

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#### Slave Mode of Production

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#### III. Evolution of Trade and Exchange

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Bazaars, Fairs, Markets: politics, social-moral arenas, transacting cultural difference

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Usury: static versus dynamic money

- Hyde, Lewis. Ch 7, "Usury", in *The Gift*.
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- Premchand. Godan. Jaico.
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Trade Diasporas, East India Companies, Colonialism, Underdevelopment, World System

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- Steensgaard, N. *Asiatic Trade in the Seventeenth Century*. Chicago.
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IV. Labor: Industrial & Artisanal

- Bertaux, Daniel & Isabelle Bertaux-Wiame. *Artisanal Bakery in France: How it lives and why it survives*. In F. Bechhofer & B. Elliott, ed., *The Petite Bourgeoisie*. St. Martins.
- Piore, Michael & Charles Sabel. 1984. *The Second Industrial Divide*. Basic. Ch. 2
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Y. Capitalism Revisited

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- Harvey, David. "Paris 1850-1870" *Consciousness & the Urban Experience*
- Piore, M. & C. Sabel. *The Second Industrial Divide*
- Schudson, M. "Advertising as Capitalist Realism"
- Simmel, Georg. *The Philosophy of Money*.
- Taussig, Michael. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*.
- Aronowitz, S. *The Crisis in Historical Materialism* Praeger 1981

1. How does structural socio-economic change occur? Consider the explanatory force of:
  - population (Malthus, demographic transition, long agricultural cycles)
  - modes of production (constraints on expansion, internal contradictions, articulation of)
  - solvent and integrative force of money and the market (the functions of money, the dynamics and constraints of the several forms of exchange -- balanced exchange, gift-giving, redistribution, administered trade, spheres of exchange, unequal exchange [formal equality, substantive inequality], usury (static versus dynamic wealth, fair versus unfair price of money/risk), commoditization and the separation of use value, exchange value, sign value;
  - the structuring and/or veiling/mystifying force of cultural symbolic, literary, folkloric, or ideological "play" (Herodotus' Tale of Gyges, Aristotle's economics, Berber qanun, pigs and carne-vals, masks and potlatch, gold bugs and pounds of flesh, craft ideologies, commodities as signs and as capitalist realism, value systems or semiotic sets of food/cloth/fashion).
  
2. What are the political effects of economic arrangements? Sketch out the debates about the roles
  - of money (Aristotle, Gyges, Merchant of Venice, usury debates);
  - of gift exchange and commodity exchange (Mauss, Appadurai, Silverman, Baudrillard)
  - of labor organization (mass production, craft production; peasant organization, capitalist agriculture)
  - of trade diasporas, versus colonialism, versus neo-colonialism (Curtin, Corbridge)
  - of market regulations (administered trade, bazaars and fairs, Lloyd's, merchant castes in S. India)
  
3. Compare the conditions for reproducing the structure and the long-term structural change of:
  - agricultural production in France 14- 19th centuries (LeRoy Ladurie)
  - artisanal bakeries in France, 1870- 1970 (Bertaux and Bertaux)
  - industrial mass production (Piore & Sabel)
  
4. What critical function(s) does the idea of modes of production (or their articulation) play? What are the alternatives to using this idea?
  
5. What can be said about the cultural form(s) of modern capitalism?
  
6. What role(s) does/do the cultural, semiotic, literary, folkloric, or ideological play in charting the history of political economy? Consider the Ring of Gyges, the Grail stories, the Merchant of Venice or Poe's Gold Bug, Sahlins' analysis of American culinary preferences, and Diana Yreeland's staging of museum shows.
  
7. Contrast Marcel Mauss' sociological worries about modern capitalism, and the semiotic or cultural worries about modern capitalism of such writers as Sahlins, Baudrillard, and Silverman. How, if at all, do they relate to the classical worries of the writers surveyed by Corbridge?

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