



Theories of Surplus Value (Great Minds Series)

By Karl Marx

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Marx's Theories of Surplus Value is the fourth volume of his monumental Das Kapital (Capital) and is now available exclusively from Prometheus and Humanity Books. Divided into three parts, this lengthy work reviews classic economic analyses of labor and value (Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, and others), focusing on the concept of "surplus value"—the difference between the full value of a worker's labor and the wages received for this labor. This is a key concept for Marx since in his view the capitalist maintains power through controlling surplus value. This complete, unabridged edition is now available in one volume.

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Editorial Review

Language Notes

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From the Publisher

The present edition contains in full both the main text of THEORIES OF SURPLUS VALUE--to which the table of contents compiled by Marx refers and which gives a connected exposition of the "history of the theory" from James Steuart to Richard Jones--and the digressions supplementing this main text which are in notebooks V, XV, XX, XXI, XXII and XXIII. These supplementary sections are put in the form of appendices, in order not to interfere with the sequence of the exposition given in the main text.

About the Author

Karl Marx was born in Trier, Prussia, on May 5, 1818, to an intellectual Jewish family. At 17 he enrolled at the University of Bonn and a year later transferred to the University of Berlin, where he became interested in the philosophy of G.W.F. Hegel. In 1841, Marx obtained his doctorate in philosophy, having presented a thesis on post-Aristotelian Greek philosophy. As a young graduate deeply involved with the radical Hegelian movement, Marx found it difficult to secure a teaching post in the autocratic environment of Prussian society. In 1842 he became editor of the Cologne newspaper "Rheinische Zeitung", but his probing economic critiques prompted the government to close the publication, whereupon Marx left for France. While in Paris, Marx quickly became involved with emigre German workers and French socialists, and soon he was persuaded to the communist point of view. His first expression of these views occurred in the ECONOMIC AND PHILOSOPHIC MANUSCRIPTS OF 1844, which remained unpublished until 1930. It was during this brief initial stay in France that Marx became associated with Friedrich Engels. For his radical political activities, Marx was expelled from Paris toward the end of 1844. He moved, with Engels, to Brussels, where he was to remain for the next three years, except for occasional short trips to England. Here Marx wrote the manuscript for THE GERMAN IDEOLOGY (1845, coauthored by Engels) and the polemic THE POVERTY OF PHILOSOPHY (1847) against idealistic socialism. Marx later joined the Communist League, a German workers group, for which he and Engels were to become the primary spokespersons. In 1847 Marx and Engels were asked to write a manifesto for the league conference in London. This resulted in the creation of the COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, one of the most influential popular political documents ever written. Its publication coincided with a wave of revolutions in Europe in 1848. Marx returned to Paris in 1848 but soon after left for Germany, where in Cologne he founded the "Neue Rheinische Zeitung", a radical newspaper that attacked Prussian rule. As revolutionary fervor waned, the government suppressed his paper and Marx fled to England in 1849. He remained in England absorbed in his work until his death on March 13, 1883.

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