IV. Four tasks of Emancipatory Social Science

Task #1: Normative Foundations

1. Interests versus Justice: what is the point?

2. Three Principles
   
   1. Equality/Fairness: In a just society all persons would have broadly equal access to the material and social means necessary to live a flourishing life.
   
   2. Democracy/Freedom: In a fully democratic society, all people would have broadly equal access to the necessary means to participate meaningfully in decisions about things which affect their lives.
   
   3. Community/Solidarity: People should cooperate and help each other not simply because what they personally get out of it, but also out of a commitment to the wellbeing of others and a moral obligation that this is the right thing to.

Task #2. Diagnosis & Critique of capitalism

Task #3. Alternatives

- Limits of possibility different from natural limits
- Alternatives that emerge endogenously and prefigure future possibilities: immanent future
- Evaluation triplet: desirability, viability, achievability

Task #4. Transformation – lecture 4

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**Capitalism: Basic structure & dynamics**

1. A note on concepts & definitions
   
   - Words // Levels of abstraction of a definition // Concepts and Theories

2. Capitalism: the contrast space
   
   - Mode of production vs other ways of classifying societies.
   - Capitalism vs other modes of production

3. Two approaches within the Marxist tradition for developing a definition of capitalism
   
   3.1 Capitalism as a distinctive form of market society:
      
      - Simple commodity production: \( C \rightarrow M \rightarrow C \)
      - Capitalist commodity production: \( M \rightarrow C \rightarrow M' \).

   3.2. Capitalism as a distinctive organization of production. The basic structural definition has two dimensions:
      
      (1) Class relations. (2) mechanism of economic coordination

3.3 Complexity – two forms:

   - Capitalism is mixed with a variety of non-capitalist forms: hybrid systems
   - There are many different types of capitalism -- laundry list versus theoretical typology

4. Capitalism: core dynamics

   4.1. The key sources of dynamism
      
      (1) Capitalist competition: (a) Lower costs and increase productivity; (b) New products & markets
      (2) Class conflict

   4.2 Contradictions within these dynamics

      *Definition:* (1) Chains of effects of a given process disrupt the functioning of the process. (2) Multiple functional requirements of system in which satisfying some conditions undermine others.

4.3 The “surplus absorption” problem

4.4 An ambiguity in the analysis: From profits to relentless capital accumulation

   Three explanations for capitalist imperatives of growth:
   
   - Economies of scale
   - Aggregate political and economic instability from lack of growth
   - Motivations of capitalists, rather than structural imperatives