

## Chapter 2: Karl Marx Test Bank

### Multiple-Choice Questions:

1. Which of the following is a “class” in capitalism according to Marx?
  - a) Protestants
  - b) Wage laborers
  - c) Villagers
  - d) All of the above
2. Marx refers to the middle-class owners of capital as:
  - a) Proletariat
  - b) Bourgeoisie
  - c) Verstehen
  - d) Veblen
3. Classes are groups of individuals who share a common position in relation to:
  - a) Their religious affiliation
  - b) How they interpret the world
  - c) The forces of production
  - d) How they consume products
4. For Marx, which of the following is a catalyst for social change and the prime mover of history?
  - a) Forces of production
  - b) Bourgeoisie
  - c) Alienation
  - d) Class struggle
5. Marx refers to propertyless wage earners as:
  - a) Proletariat
  - b) Bourgeoisie
  - c) Verstehen
  - d) Veblen
6. Marx used the term class consciousness to refer to:
  - a) An awareness on the part of the working class of their common relationship to the means of production
  - b) The alienation of the working class
  - c) The false ideology of the working class
  - d) All of the above
7. According to the authors, Karl Marx’s basic theoretical orientation would fall under the category of:
  - a) Nonrational, collective

- b) Nonrational, individual
  - c) Rational, individual
  - d) Rational, collective
8. According to Marx's materialist conception of history, ideas or consciousness is determined by:
- a) The fetishism of commodities
  - b) Forms of legitimate authority
  - c) The forces and relations of production; what individuals produce and how they produce it
  - d) The conceptual categories through which we order experience
9. Marx titled "the social, political, and intellectual life processes in general" which is born from the existing economic base, as the:
- a) Superstructure
  - b) Objective structure
  - c) Alienated structure
  - d) Base structure
10. Whose theory is Marx inverting when he states "Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life"?
- a) Antonio Gramsci
  - b) Friedrich Engels
  - c) Georg W.F. Hegel
  - d) Thorstein Veblen
11. What term does Marx use to refer to when the process of production and the results of our labor confront us as a dominating power?
- a) Class struggle
  - b) Forces of production
  - c) Alienation
  - d) Proletariat
12. What is Marx referring to when he writes "The universality of its property is the omnipotence of its being"?
- a) Power
  - b) Money
  - c) Authority
  - d) Alienation
13. Marx states the capitalist class will produce its own "grave-diggers". For Marx, who are these "diggers"?
- a) The bourgeoisie
  - b) New capitalists
  - c) Class-conscious proletariat
  - d) Owners of capital

14. What will become a fetter to the continued development of the means of production?
- Class struggle
  - Ownership of production
  - Social relations of production
  - Class consciousness
15. According to Marx, the standard on which the value of commodities is based is:
- The degree of usefulness of the commodity
  - The amount of labor time necessary to produce the commodity
  - The level of exploitation experienced by the worker
  - The exchange of private property necessary for actualizing an exchange
16. Marx defined *surplus value* as:
- Difference between the number of workers and the number of products produced
  - Difference between what workers earn for their labor and the price or value of the goods they produce
  - Difference between the number of workers and the number of consumers in the same market
  - Difference between what the workers earn across competing companies in the same market
17. Marx argues that fetishizing commodities:
- Creates the conditions necessary for developing class consciousness and thus sparking the communist revolution
  - Leads us to attribute magical, personally transforming properties to the goods we buy
  - Leads workers to endow machines with human qualities and assign the source of their exploitation to technology and the production of commodities
  - Increases the surplus value produced during the production process
18. The cycle of exchange for the typical wage earner as outlined by Marx resembles which pattern?
- M-C-M
  - M-C-M-C
  - C-M-C
  - C-M-C-M
19. Raw materials, machinery for production or even more generally money, in Marx's economic framework, are all considered:
- commodities
  - goods
  - capital
  - surplus

### True/False Questions:

1. Marx believed that capitalism was *morally* a good system; but that *economically*, it was doomed to fail.
  - a) True
  - b) False
2. Marx believed that capitalism was a necessary stage in the transition toward socialism/communism.
  - a) True
  - b) False
3. As discussed by the authors, Marx's basic theoretical orientation could be said to be individualist and nonrational.
  - a) True
  - b) False
4. The superstructure consists of everything non-economic such as legal, political, and educational systems.
  - a) True
  - b) False
5. Marx's arguments stems from his agreement with Hegel on the real basis of the progression of human societies.
  - a) True
  - b) False
6. The dominant economic class controls only a society's means of material production.
  - a) True
  - b) False
7. It will be the proletariat who "chokes" on the overabundance of goods produced by ever increasing industrial efficiency.
  - a) True
  - b) False
8. From Marx's perspective, the "grave-diggers" are a class conscious proletariat.
  - a) True
  - b) False
9. Capitalists derive their profit from the surplus value workers earn for them.
  - a) True
  - b) False
10. The two factors of a commodity according to Marx are its use and surplus values.
  - a) True

b) False

**Short Answer Questions:**

1. What role does private property play in Marx's discussion of the inevitable communist revolution?
2. What role does class consciousness play according to Marx in the evolution of society?
3. How do property and ideas prevent or promote social change? Select a passage from the primary reading that illustrates your view.
4. How is Hegel's dialectical process different from Marx's theory of history?
5. According to Marx's materialist conception of history, what is the relationship between property and ideas or consciousness?
6. Explain the following types of *estrangement* under capitalism as outlined by Marx, using concrete examples:
  - a) man from man
  - b) man from nature
  - c) man from self
7. What does Marx mean when he writes "...money is thus the object of eminent possession"?
8. In what way do private property relations become "fetters" on the forces of production?
9. Discuss Marx's concept "the fetishism of commodities" from *Capital*.

**Essay Questions:**

1. Define Hegel's dialectical process. Explain its significance in relation to Marx's theory of history. Also explain its significance on Marx's basic theoretical orientation.
2. Define Marx's concept of "species being." Discuss its significance in relation to his concept of alienation. Use specific quotes from the "Economic Manuscripts" for support.
3. Explain in detail Marx's general formula for capital. In your explanation define and relate the connection commodities and surplus value have to the general formula.

4. Explain Marx's line "a commodity is therefore a mysterious thing simply because in it the social character of men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour..."

### Answer Key

#### Multiple Choice Questions:

1. b
2. b
3. c
4. d
5. a
6. a
7. d
8. c
9. a
10. c
11. c
12. b
13. c
14. c
15. b
16. b
17. b
18. c
19. c

#### True/False Questions:

1. b
2. a
3. b
4. a
5. b
6. b
7. b
8. a
9. a
10. b

#### Essay Questions

1.
  - Hegel saw change as the motor of history. For Hegel, change was driven by a dialectical process in which a given state of being or idea contains within it the seeds of an opposing state of being or opposing idea.

- The resolution of the conflict produces yet a new state of being or idea. This synthesis, in turn, forms the basis of a new contradiction, thus continuing the process of change.
- The essence of reality lies in thought or ideas because it is only in and through the concepts that order our experiences that experiences, as such, are known.
- Reality is a product of our conceptual categories or consciousness and thus has no existence independent of our own construction of it.
- The stages of history or reality are then defined by progressive stages in the negation of the prevailing conceptual ordering of experience.
- The utopian aspect of this development is found in the assertion that humankind's knowledge will reach the perfected state of "Pure Reason" or "Absolute Idea" in which freedom takes the form of self-knowledge.
- Marx depicts the unfolding of history as a progressive, dialectical process that culminates in a utopia of freedom and self-realization.
- However, Marx breaks decisively from Hegel by insisting that it is *material* existence—not consciousness—that fuels historical change.
- The inversion of Hegel fuels Marx's rational, collective orientation

2.

- For the wage earner, work is alienating because it serves solely to provide the means (i.e., money) for maintaining her physical existence.
- Instead of labor representing an end in itself—an activity that expresses our capacity to shape our lives and our relationships with others—private ownership of the means of production reduces the role of the worker to that of a cog in a machine.
- The worker is an expendable object that performs routinized tasks. Put in another way, for Marx, working just for money—and not for the creative potential of labor it—is akin to selling your soul.
- Because the worker is alienated from the process of production as well as the product of his labor, he becomes inescapably alienated from *himself*.
- Torn away from the object of his labor, he is unable to realize the essence of his creative nature or "species being" through his work. Finally, the worker becomes alienated from the rest of humanity, just another commodity to be bought and sold.
- Sample quotes include:
  - "This fact expresses merely that the object which labour produces—labour's product— confronts it as *something alien*, as a *power independent* of the producer. The product of labour is labour which has been congealed in an object, which has become material: it is the *objectification* of labour."
  - "(3) *Man's species being*, both nature and his spiritual species property, into a being *alien* to him, into a *means* to his *individual existence*. It estranges man's own body from him, as it does external nature and his spiritual essence, his *human being*."

3.

- A cycle of exchange Marx labeled "M-C-M." By definition, the capitalist enters into economic exchange already possessing **capital** (raw materials, machinery for production) or, more generally, money (M). Seeking to expand her business and profits, the capitalist converts her money into a commodity (C) by purchasing additional machinery, raw

materials, or labor. The capitalist then uses these commodities to produce other commodities that are then sold for money (M). Hence, the meaning of the slogan, “It takes money to make money.”

- For the proletariat, the cycle of exchange takes an inverse path. Take a typical wage earner, for example. The worker enters into the labor market possessing only his labor power, which he sells as a commodity (C). His commodity, labor, is then exchanged for money (M) or a wage. The worker then takes the money and spends it on the commodities (C) necessary to his survival. The circulation of commodities here follows the pattern C-M-C.
- Commodities have use-values and exchange-values. Surplus value is the source of a capitalist’s profit which allows them to have money to begin with in order to make money.

4.

- Commodity fetishism refers to the distorted relationship existing between individuals and the production and consumption of goods. However, in fetishizing commodities, Marx argues that we treat the goods we buy as if they have “magical” powers. We lose sight of the fact that *we* create commodities and, in doing so; grant them a power over us that in reality they do not hold.
- Fetishizing commodity production also prevents laborers from holding capitalists accountable for their growing dissatisfaction. Instead, workers will assign the source of their increasing exploitation not to the capitalists who benefit from it, but to the new technology.