



## Classes (Verso Classics)

*Erik Olin Wright*

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Class analysis and class struggle are central concepts in Marx's social theory yet, notoriously, Marx never wrote a systematic exposition of these terms during his lifetime, and succeeding generations have had to piece together interpretations from his many scattered references and discussions. The problem of trying to develop a Marxist class analysis on this basis has been made all the more acute by changes in the class structure of advanced capitalism, for these have thrown up a bewildering range of new social strata which seem to be difficult to reconcile with the many traditional understandings of class.

In *Classes*, Erik Olin Wright, one of the foremost Marxist sociologists and class theorists, rises to the twofold challenge of both clarifying the abstract, structural account of class implicit in Marx, and of applying and refining the account in the light of contemporary developments in advanced capitalist societies. Recentring the concept of class on the process of exploitation, Wright discusses his famous notion of "contradictory class locations" in relation to the empirical complexities of the middle class, and he provides an analysis of class structure in "post-capitalist" societies. Wright then goes on to draw out the implications of his approach and to submit it to detailed empirical testing with the use of a trans-national survey of class structure and consciousness.

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