

Summary of articles

Where do we go from here?, by Duncan K. Foley

Duménil and Lévy's *Economics of the Profit Rate* makes major contributions to our theoretical and empirical understanding of advanced capitalist economies. Questions and problems for further research raised by their work concern their definition of stability, the relation of finance to production, the role of the profit rate in the Great Depression, the secular rise in real wages and the pattern of technical change in the U.S. economy, econometric problems identifying low frequency macroeconomic patterns, and the relation of the corporate revolution to macroeconomic performance.

Journal of Economic Literature classification numbers : E11, N12, B24.

Une dynamique économique sans théorie?,
by Carlo Benetti and Jean Cartelier

G. Duménil and D. Lévy emphasise the role of the rate of profit in the dynamics of capitalism. They claim both a rehabilitation of Classical economics and a new account for the American historical experience. Our comment concerns only the theoretical point. We question first the general validity of their theory. With their restrictive hypotheses, global stability of general equilibrium would hold and neoclassical economics would do the job as well as Classical economics. Whatever the interest of their model may be, DL do not demonstrate its superiority over the mainstream dynamics, as far as general results are concerned. Our second point is a discussion of their treatment of money and credit.

Journal of Economic Literature classification numbers : E30.

À propos de la prétendue spécificité de l'approche classique,
by Nicolas Gravel

In this paper, I question Duménil and Lévy's claim that the so-called "classical approach" provide an alternative to the standard Arrow-Debreu framework in Microeconomic Theory. More specifically, it is argued that the two main propositions set forth by the "classical" approach — equality amongst equilibrium profit rates and independence of equilibrium prices from household's demands — are, respectively, congenial to the Arrow-Debreu general equilibrium model and a (very) particu-

lar case of this framework. Moreover, I argue that Duménil and Lévy's disequilibrium models are *ad hoc* and, for this reason, can not serve as microeconomic foundations for the behaviour of the economic system out of equilibrium.

Journal of Economic Literature classification numbers : D00, E1.

La revanche d'Adam Smith, by Michel De Vroey

In my contribution to this symposium, three themes are considered. First, I discuss Duménil et Lévy's conception of equilibrium and evaluate their claim of having provided a general disequilibrium theory. Second some elements for a comparison between theirs and the Walrasian methodology are given. Finally, I claim that, for all its Marxian rhetoric, their work belongs to a Smithian or Hayekian line of research.

Journal of Economic Literature classification numbers : E30.

Une pensée classique moderne, un débat fondamental,
by Gérard de Bernis

The book by Duménil and Lévy is re-opening the fundamental debate between the traditional production and exchange points of view, which are opposed like two disciplines, differing as much as regards the topic as the method. The first point of view sets the profit as the core of the analysis from which one can build the alternation between phases of accumulation stability and phases of instability. The authors propose a fruitful periodisation of american capitalism which opens up new lines of research, such as the historical transformations of the space of the american productive system (the indissociable time and space), the "representativeness" of the american capitalism, or the conditions which allowed the United States to get out of the interwar years crisis.

Journal of Economic Literature classification numbers : B12, O51, P10.

Vrais et faux dilemmes, by Gérard Duménil and Dominique Lévy

This article responds to five critical reviews (by Carlo Benetti and Jean Cartelier, Gérard de Bernis, Duncan Foley, Nicolas Gravel, and Michel De Vroey) of our book *The Economics of the Profit Rate*. In addition to a commentary relating more directly to the history of economic thought, two among these reviews emphasize the foundations of economic theory; two others include discussions of theory and empirics. We confront Michel De Vroey's remarks questioning the classical and Marxist character of our inspiration, and justify our reference to both

equilibrium and disequilibrium. An attempt is made at the refutation of the traditional viewpoint of orthodoxy put forward by Nicolas Gravel, with respect to both the description of behaviors and the definition of Walrasian equilibrium. To the heterodox fundamentalist views of Carlo Benetti and Jean Cartelier, we contrast the constant interplay between theory and facts, while their objections to our treatment of money seemingly rest on several misinterpretations that we challenge. Duncan Foley's suggestions concerning the development of our models toward more complex frameworks are welcome, as well as his requests concerning more explicit historical analyses. The dialog is also easy to establish with Gérard de Bernis whose concern is primarily to explore the relationships between his historical analysis in terms of "régulation", and the investigation in the book.

Journal of Economic Literature classification numbers : A10.