
With a title evoking Marx, this book is a serious, comprehensive, readable, meticulously researched and argued tome on income and wealth inequality. Translated into English from the original French publication, the book has garnered rave reviews for Piketty (Paris School of Economics). Piketty's thesis is that in modern, dynamic market economies the returns to tightly held capital exceed those for wages or in the economy (GDP) as a whole, thus inevitably increasing inequality. The author argues that the respite--approximately 1914 to the 1970s, when inequality declined as wage gains outstripped rewards to capital--was an aberration, not a trend. The author's solution is steep global taxes on investment income and wealth. Worldwide concerns about inequality have taken center stage in recent years, and this volume will feed left-right scholarly and populist debates about the inherent contributions and contradictions in capitalism. With its 600 pages of prose and 100 pages of bibliographic aids, including endnotes and tables, this book cannot--and should not--be ignored. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates and above; general readers.