

Dead Dogs Never Die

Cães Mortos Nunca Morrem

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It has been suggested that the decisive reason Hegel and Marx will never die is because to overcome Hegel and Marx means to overcome capitalist society. This is why, in the end, each of their projects remain actual: what Hegel developed in his *Phenomenology of Spirit* and *Science of Logic* and what Marx developed through the ‘critique of political economy’ contains, even if under different categories, the wager for how to understand our own capitalist society. Despite the fact that there has been a long development in both ‘philosophy after Hegel’ and ‘critique after Marx’, these two thinkers remain more inscribed and actualized in those successive attempts than they are buried and beaten beneath them.

The precise internal affinity between Hegel and Marx—that both, it might be said, endeavored to understand social mediation—is nevertheless still today unclear. Attempts to escape from a certain Hegelianism within Marxism made the relation all the more opaque. France and Italy in the mid 1960s, for example, witnessed an attack not only upon traditional Marxism, but also against the prevailing narrative of Hegel and Marx as an inversion of the idealist dialectic into its materialist heir and in the turning of Spirit ‘from its head onto its feet’. However, Critical Theory and Western Marxism had already emphasized that the relation of Hegel and Marx is not simply one of idealism vs. materialism since both of them sought to overcome this kind of dualistic opposition and that any simple ‘turnaround’ is only grasping at straws. For instance, Adorno writes the following in his lectures on *Negative Dialectics*: ‘In idealism immediacy is vindicated as a stage of the concept by

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its internal history, while for materialism that same history becomes the measure not merely of the untruth of concepts, but even more of immediacy in being. Common to both is the emphasis on the history that has congealed in the objects.' (Adorno, 2008: 206) To complicate the idealism-materialism dichotomy even further, Lukács, writing in *The Young Hegel*, will go so far as to say that 'if we look a little deeper, we see that [Hegel's] true subject is the phenomenological dialectic of the commodity-relation, and that he is investigating both its objective nature and its subjective implications in its relation to the consciousness of man in capitalist society.' (Lukács, 1975: 500)

While in France the new readings of Marx in the arena of structuralism and later post-structuralism, and in Italy the operaist and later post-operaist interpretations, were open attempts to escape the Hegelianism of traditional Marxism, around the same time in Germany there began a so-called phase of reconstruction of the critique of political economy. This new adaptation reconstructed not only *Capital* and its central categories, but also the notion of critique and Marx's method of development and exposition. This required a renewed understanding of the Hegel-Marx relation, the dialectical method and the common categories like contradiction, form, unity, movement etc. Further, Hegel research during this period in Germany also began close readings and underwent its own phase of reconstruction. An ambitious effort of its own, it also influenced the interpretive reconstruction of Marx's *Capital*.

In recent decades, the Anglo-Saxon world, arriving late but wielding strong contributions, started expanding the debate, making pragmatic use of the best from the different tendencies. Among this discourse is an approach that generally understands the continuity between Hegel and Marx as disclosing a system of categorial relations within a given social order, and that together, their use of a dialectical method of exposition holds the key for conceptualizing the essence of capitalist social reality. This reconstructed relation of Hegel and Marx adopts, with its own varied interpretations, the general perspective that Hegel's *Science of Logic* is structurally homologous with Marx's *Capital*, an affinity consisting in a 'systematic dialectic,' whereby the expositional ordering of the categories are arranged to conceptualize an existent concrete whole. This reading, which emphasizes the immanent logical derivation of one category to the next, positions itself in contrast to

an ‘historical dialectic’ for which the sequence of categories corresponds to their appearance in history, that is, a causal succession of linear historical stages derived from a historical reconstruction of social praxis.

Similar debates had already emerged within Italy, France and especially Germany during the 1970s, in which the logical and/or historical status of the categories of *Capital* was heatedly contested. Away from an historicist reading of dialectics—itself derivative from comments by Engels and Second International Marxism—Germany in particular bore witness to the emergence of the value-form analysis which elicited further discussion on the question of whether the categories of *Capital* could be deduced in a purely logical fashion through an immanent progression or through an historical inquiry which holds the categories to derive from historical development. These debates revolving around Marx’s mode of presentation [*Darstellung*] also invoked more general questions in other discourses about necessity, freedom and contingency within social praxis.

If the eulogy has yet to be written for the Hegel-Marx relation, it is because the ghost of *Capital* returns with Hegel’s Spirit and that Marx’s own ‘specters’ (Derrida) will not be exorcised until the traumas sustained within the history of Marxism successfully overcome both Spirit and *Capital*. Until then, the haunting of Hegel and Marx will continue unabated. It is with this enduring legacy that the following seventh volume of *Revista de Opinião Filosófica* has been compiled.

We begin with Fred Moseley’s ‘The Universal and the Particulars in Hegel’s *Logic* and Marx’s *Capital*’ which seeks to identify the precise meaning behind Marx’s famous confession in a 1858 letter to Engels where he writes: ‘[w]hat was of great use to me as regards method of treatment was Hegel’s *Logic*’. (Marx, 1983: 248) While composing what came to be known as the *Grundrisse*, Marx here refers to the service provided by Hegel’s method in developing his own theory of profit. Moseley contends that the logical relation between surplus-value in general and its particular forms were patterned after Hegel’s moments of universality and particularity respectively. After first outlining two levels of abstraction within Marx’s *Capital*—the first entailing the production and determination of the total surplus-value while the second to the distribution of surplus-value and the division of the predetermined total surplus-value into individual parts such as

equal rates of profit, commercial profit, interest and rent—Moseley argues that the total amount of surplus-value determined in the first stage is methodologically presupposed in the subsequent stage of the distribution of predetermined magnitudes of surplus-value. For Moseley, this logical progression from the determination of the total amount of surplus-value to the determination of its individual parts follows Hegel's Logic of the Concept in his *Science of Logic*, particularly in the dialectic of universality and particularity. With a philological review of the various drafts of *Capital*, relevant letters, passages from the *Grundrisse* and *The Holy Family*, Moseley argues that Marx maintained a Hegelian logical structure for this theory of the production and distribution of surplus-value insofar as *capital in general* (the production of surplus-value) corresponds to Hegel's moment of *universality*, while the competition between *individual capitals* (the distribution of surplus-value) corresponds to Hegel's moment of *particularity*.

Christian Schmidt's 'A "Phenomenology of Capital"' follows and, while continuing Moseley's discussion on the methodological continuity between Hegel and Marx's *Capital*, fruitfully diverges from the commonplace focus on the *Science of Logic*. Instead, Schmidt takes Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* as paradigmatic of Marx's exposition of the categories unfolding through their own levels of abstraction and immanent determinations and argues that 'Marx wrote or at least intended to write a "Phenomenology of Capital."' Schmidt begins by outlining the significance of phenomenology within the 19th century and the difference the category holds between Hegel and Husserl. He further traces the appearance of phenomenology within economics and the circle of Young Hegelians around Proudhon. Schmidt argues that for both Hegel and Marx the phenomenological method proceeds with an initial immediacy of knowledge that progressively grounds the mediated determinations of its necessary appearance. For Marx in particular, this mode of exposition allows him to develop the concrete whole of the capitalist economy with increasing complexity and, as Schmidt writes, it is a scientific approach that discerns fundamental economic structures from immediate abstractions.

The collection continues with an extract from Christopher J. Arthur's forthcoming book *The Spectre of Capital: Idea and Reality*. Within this essay, astutely titled 'With What must the Critique of Capital Begin?', Arthur

continues a discussion initially found within the eighth chapter of his *The New Dialectic and Marx's Capital* (2004). His contribution begins with a reconstructed relation between use-value and exchange-value that concludes with a *dual ontology* of economic life: a realm of transcendental *ideality* established by the abstractions of exchange that supervene upon the material world and its relations. This realm of ideality set up by the exchange of commodities suspends the use-value of commodities in the moment of their circulation and only restores their qualitative existence within the moments of production and consumption. Through a dialectic of presence and absence, the abstractions of value give concrete instantiation to their pure empty forms, allotting presence in and through absence, or in Arthur's words, give 'the shadow substance'. Arthur's own dialectic of the value-form is a logical development that is, he contends parallel, or 'homologous' to Hegel's categories within the *Science of Logic* insofar as the forms of exchange generate pure forms abstracted from their content while articulating the inner structure of a totality and fundamentally establish the requisites for the actuality of the real world. As Arthur writes:

It is in this context that I can answer the big question: how can Hegel's ontology serve as a guide in the critique of capital? It can, precisely because in an important respect capital is ideal. The abstract beginning of the dialectic is itself constituted by capital's abstracting from production when it throws commodities on the market.

For Arthur, the self-movement of thought found within Hegel's *Science of Logic* follows a similar rather than identical development in the self-movement of capital. Within its opening pages, the 'upward spiral' of Being into Nothing and their unity in Becoming and thereafter in Determinate Being [*Dasein*] holds for Arthur the methodological insight for the inverted concretization of value's emptying formalism, described as a 'downward spiral' of a 'hellish dialectic' that alternatively starts from Nothing and acquires Being.

Elena Lange however takes Arthur's 'Systematic Dialectic' framework to task in the essay which follows. Previously published in in volume 3 issue 2 of *Crisis and Critique*, Lange's essay 'The Critique of Political Economy and the 'New Dialectic': Marx, Hegel and the Problem of Christopher J. Arthur's 'Homology Thesis'', while not a response to Arthur's particular contribution to

this volume, nevertheless confronts problems operative in his general approach. In a successful transitioning of the present volume away from issues surrounding the *methodological* inheritance of Hegel and Marx into the implications of the *substance* of Hegel's philosophy, Lange criticizes what is viewed as Arthur's 'perfunctory' interpretation of Hegel's *Logic* within the context of important contributions to Hegel scholarship over the last decades. She also problematizes Arthur's application of Hegel's dialectic to Marx's presentation of the value form, as well as his reading of Marx's relation to Hegel more generally. Lange first evaluates Arthur's methodological dismissal of the alleged premature place of abstract labour within *Capital's* presentational architecture. She argues that this leads Arthur to misrepresent both the intent of *Capital's* opening immediate appearances as well as the exposition's critical force as a critique of the fetish character of the forms of value. Lange then confronts Arthur's adoption of specific categories from Hegel's 'Doctrine of Being', 'Doctrine of Essence' and 'Doctrine of the Concept' and their application to *Capital*. For Lange, Arthur's approach remains unclear and selectively arbitrary when appropriating Hegel's categories without giving proper credence to the substance of their systematic place.

The volume continues with a contribution by fellow editor Frank Engster who extends his work from *Das Geld als Mass, Mittel und Methode: Das Rechnen mit der Identität der Zeit* (2014). For Engster, Hegel's category of measure acquires paramount significance as the culmination of Being not simply as a moment in the development of Hegel's *Logic* but as indicative of the social being of existence within capitalism. Within his essay 'Spirit, Logic, Capital and the Technique of the Measure', Hegel's *Geist*, *Logic* and the capitalist mode of production are argued by Engster to each ground a method of presentation that accords with their own development held together by a technique of measurement. This technique, inherited by the natural sciences, gives objectivity to the world with its own relations of determined magnitudes and is subjectively represented through knowledge. As Engster continues, measure discloses the *form* of both objectivity and subjectivity as it constitutes the phenomenological presentation of the objectivity of subjectivity as *Spirit*, the pure logic of the objectivity of being by the subjectivity of the Concept, and the objectivity of capitalist society by

quantitative values and their valorisation. In Hegel's *Phenomenology*, the measure is self-consciousness, in his *Logic* it is the concept of Being, and in Marx's *Capital*, the measure is money. Engster argues that the technique of measure is an anonymous and unilateral 'gift' that propels forward the development of Spirit, Logic and Capital. For Engster, the 'gift' of measure is both given within the measuring process it itself establishes while giving objectivity to subjectivity and which Hegel and Marx develop through their respective logics.

From there, the collection proceeds to 'Hegel, Marx and Freedom' by Andreas Arndt, a previously unpublished contribution that weans from questions of method towards a substantive affinity between Hegel and Marx on the issue of the realization of freedom. Arndt begins by grounding Hegel's philosophy as a philosophy of freedom, specifically as the institutionalized actualization of freedom within an historical development. Here we find an investigation into the concept of free will and right, civil society as the organization of the need satiation and labour as the step beyond the immediacies of nature. After establishing how it is that the historical development and realization of freedom appears within the sphere of the objective Spirit, Arndt poses the question of how Hegel's system of needs, exemplified within the bourgeois economy of civil society, may conflict with his concept of Ethical Life [*Sittlichkeit*]. As Arndt makes clear, Hegel's own category of the 'rabble' demonstrates how a political community may be compromised by the mechanics of civil society. The limitations of civil society are then contrasted with Marx's own insight on social emancipation and the realization of freedom through the 'liberation of the proletariat'. Following Hegel, Marx has it that the principles of freedom are suspended by the contradictions of civil society and in the institution of bourgeois private property. The freedom of property within bourgeois society, while appearing as a law of *appropriation*, is in truth a law of *expropriation*. Relying on Marx's more sober formulations, Arndt concludes that Marx inherits Hegel's programme for the regulated limitation of civil society through the state.

We conclude the volume with a contribution unlike any of the others by Fredric Jameson. To be published in English in volume 131, no. 2 of *PMLA*, Jameson asks the question of what Hegel can hermeneutically say about

Marxist literary criticism. Jameson draws on categories from the 'Doctrine of Essence' of the *Logic* in particular to examine William Gibson's cyberpunk *Neuromancer* (1984). He proceeds through an allegorical interpretation of contemporary capitalism through the movement of categories through the dialectic of Identity-Difference and Opposition-Contradiction-Ground illustrated through Gibson's work. As he writes, '[i]n literary criticism, this attention to dialectical opposites can alone offer a productive way out of the unsatisfactory alternatives of the insistence on a single meaning or the interminable enumeration of "themes".'

As a whole, the following volume incontrovertibly captures the passage between two generations of scholars in the investigative field of the Hegel-Marx relation. With focus on both the methodological and substantive affinity between Hegel and Marx, we find here a collection that from varied direction attempts to uncover an internal relation between Hegel's philosophy and Marx's critique of the capitalist mode production. It can be said without controversy that Hegel's categories and their movement ontologically characterize both implicitly and explicitly the immanent structures and antagonisms of society itself. From the 'manure of contradictions' said by Marx to emit from Ricardo's political economy (Marx, 1989: 274) we discover also the allure of Hegel's philosophy as a knowledge of a contradictory present for both thought and reality. Further, it is Hegel who invaluablely demonstrates how it is that knowledge becomes *critique* when measured against itself rather than any external standard—that is, by becoming self-conscious. These essays thereby validate the fertility of evermore posing the riddle of why it is that to stare into Hegelian philosophy is to unrelentingly hold fast, knowingly or not, to the problems of capitalist society. For this, the dead dogs refuse to die so long as their object remains intimately connected to our own tumultuous situation.

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