

It is inevitable that Negri will be compared to that other Italian political prisoner Antonio Gramsci, but a perspective more opposed than Negri's to that summarised in the slogan 'pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will' is difficult to imagine. Gramsci's perspective exhibits a profound dualism of mind and matter in which the former transcends and escapes the totalitarianism of the latter. For Negri, constituent power does not appear intermittently only then to disappear beneath the domination of constituted power, any more than communism is a distant goal beyond the horizon of the present. Just as for Spinoza, every society, even the most despotic, rests on the power of the multitude, so communism, for Negri, is immanent in capitalist societies, the power of the collectivity of labour. There exists a war between classes as long as there are capitalist social relations and capitalism perpetually recreates its adversary. It is this insurmountable antagonism that allows us to think critically and freely. The power of the multitude explodes in Negri's book, the deferred exhilaration of a time when the balance of forces favoured labour's fight to reclaim life and time from capital. It remains to be seen if its power is sufficient to lessen the domination of constitutional illusions and the superstition of the market that so weighs on the mind of the present generation.

JOHN REES, *The Algebra of Revolution: The Dialectic and the Classical Marxist Tradition*. London: Routledge, 1998

Reviewed by KEVIN B. ANDERSON

This is a study of Marxism and dialectics from a more-or-less orthodox Trotskyist perspective. In addition to using Trotskyism as his overall perspective, the author attempts to show that Trotsky himself made a major contribution to dialectics, alongside such thinkers as Hegel, Marx, and Lukács. This is a rather unusual departure in the study of dialectics and, as I will argue below, it is the most problematic feature of the book.

Rees proceeds in a more or less chronological format, beginning with a chapter on Hegel, then ones on Marx, Lenin, Lukács, and finally, Trotsky. Presumably, the chapter on Trotsky (1879–1940) comes after the one on Lukács (1885–1971) in order to place the former as a sort of conclusion to the entire volume.

In the chapter on Hegel, Rees suggests, correctly in my view, that 'Hegel's name has been missing from those periods when the fortunes of a genuine revolutionary Marxism have been in decline' (p. 13). Rees also shows some appreciation for a point often missed by orthodox Marxists, Hegel's critique of the Jacobin Terror. He argues that 'this may seem like a collapse into a straightforward conservative opposition to change but it is not' because 'Hegel is beginning to see that the human mind cannot simply impose rationality on a chaotic reality' (p. 29). This chapter succeeds in demonstrating some of the revolutionary quality of Hegel's thought and in placing him in the context of his time, but, ultimately, exhibits some serious flaws as a discussion of the core features of Hegelian dialectics.

Moreover, there are some surprising lapses. For example, the date of publication of the first parts of Hegel's *Science of Logic* is given incorrectly as 1808, only one year after the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, not 1812. Far more seriously, Rees makes what he calls 'the Hegelian triad of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis' (p. 39) into the core of his dialectic. On this point, Michael Inwood wrote recently in a standard reference work on Hegel: 'To Fichte, we owe . . . the triad "thesis-antithesis-synthesis," often wrongly attributed to Hegel.'¹ Allen Wood was more scathing: 'To use this jargon in expounding Hegel is almost always an unwitting confession that the expositor has little or no first-hand knowledge of Hegel.'²

As is well known, Hegel worked with a concept of first and second negation, with respect to which he writes: ' . . . care must be taken to distinguish between the *first*

negation as negation *in general* and the second negation, the negation of the negation: the latter is concrete, *absolute* negativity, just as the former on the contrary is only *abstract* negativity.³ In focusing as he does on the non-Hegelian and more lifeless concept of thesis-antithesis-synthesis, Rees ignores Hegel's own attack on the category of synthesis: 'The very expression *synthesis* easily recalls the conception of an external unity and a *mere combination* of entities that are *intrinsically separate*.'⁴

More importantly, Rees fails seriously to discuss Hegel's core dialectic of negativity, which the young Marx called 'the moving and creative principle'⁵ of Hegel's whole philosophy and to which the mature Marx referred explicitly in the conclusion of *Capital*. There, Marx wrote that as the revolution comes, the 'expropriators are expropriated,' a process of which he writes: 'This is the negation of the negation.'⁶ More recently, in a work Rees dismisses too easily as 'more or less directly applying Hegel's categories to the modern world' (p. 108), Dunayevskaya wrote: 'What makes Hegel a contemporary is what made him so alive to Marx: the cogency of the dialectic of negativity.'⁷ In virtually ignoring these issues, Rees has given us a truncated and sometimes schematic interpretation of Hegel, relying too often on dubious secondary sources such as Franz Mehring (hardly a Hegel scholar) and failing to engage sufficiently either Hegel's original texts or those of Hegel scholars and interpreters.

The chapter on Marx and Engels begins with a strong statement on their debt to Hegel:⁸ 'Marx and Engels never forgot how much they owed to the Hegelian dialectic – its notions of totality, contradiction, alienation, and its sense of historical change' (p. 63). This is good, as far as it goes. A bit later, however, Rees makes a very questionable reading of Marx's famous 1843 statement in the 'Contribution to a Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*' to the effect that 'theory also becomes a material force once it grips the masses'. Rees tells the reader that 'Marx's point was *simply* that *theory alone* was inadequate' and that such a 'point' is 'precisely the opposite of Hegel's approach' (p. 69, some of the emphasis added). Here, Rees misreads both Marx and Hegel.

First, let us look at it from the side of Hegel, who did not argue that theory alone is adequate, as Rees suggests here. For example, in the penultimate chapter of the *Science of Logic*, Hegel seemed to place what he calls the 'practical idea' at an even higher level than what he terms the 'theoretical idea'. He wrote that the 'theoretical idea . . . lacks any determination of its own' and is thus an abstract universal without a 'determinate content and filling'. Hegel added: 'But in the practical Idea it is the actual that confronts the actual', leading to a form of subjectivity that has 'a certainty of its own actuality and the non-actuality of the world'.⁹ Lenin, reading this passage in 1914, became quite excited at what he saw as a form of revolutionary subjectivity, here con-

necting Hegel's argument to situations when 'the world does not satisfy man and man decides to change it by his activity'.¹⁰ (Rees later discusses Lenin's embrace of the practical idea but seems unaware that Lenin is here responding directly to Hegel.) On the basis of the same passages in Hegel's *Science of Logic*, Lukács also singled out this issue, writing that 'Hegel provides a . . . detailed explanation of concrete superiority of the practical over the theoretical idea'.¹¹ Of course, Hegel went on to point to the one-sidedness of the practical idea without the theoretical idea, something both Lukács and Lenin skipped over.¹² For Hegel, however, this is the transition to the chapter on the absolute idea, the one that concludes the *Science of Logic*. That chapter begins as follows: 'The absolute Idea has shown itself to be the identity of the theoretical and the practical Idea. Each of these by itself is one-sided . . .'.¹³ All of this has little to do with any notion that theory alone is adequate.

Now, let us look at it from the side of Marx. Marx's point is not 'simply' that theory alone is inadequate. Yes, theory alone is inadequate, but I believe that Marx's statement – 'theory also becomes a material force once it grips the masses' – needs also to be read as one suggesting the *need* for theory. To clarify this question, let us consider two other passages in the same Marx text, ones that Rees does not cite. A few paragraphs before writing that 'theory also becomes a material force once it grips the masses', Marx polemicalised against those who would rush too quickly to practice and away from philosophy. 'The practical political party in Germany', he wrote, demanded the 'negation of philosophy' and 'it believes that it can achieve this negation by turning its back on philosophy'.¹⁴ Marx, however, concluded that this was the wrong road; one could not go beyond philosophy 'without actualizing it'.¹⁵ Then, in the penultimate paragraph of the essay, after he had for the first time in his work pointed to the working class as the revolutionary subject within capitalist society, Marx returned to the argument about the need for philosophy: 'The *head* of this emancipation is *philosophy*, its *heart* is the *proletariat*. Philosophy cannot be actualized without the abolition [*Aufhebung*] of the proletariat; the proletariat cannot be abolished without the actualization of philosophy'.¹⁶ Based on these various passages and the essay as a whole, I believe that Marx's text can be read as a strong argument for the practicality of dialectical philosophy and equally for the inadequacy of political movements that lack a grounding in it. There is, in short, a complex interaction between philosophy and revolution here, not simply a transition from philosophy to revolution.

In his discussion of Marx's 1844 *Manuscripts*, Rees emphasises the essay on alienation. Although he ties alienation too closely to private property, here bending Marx somewhat, he also touches on some of this essay's humanist implications when he discusses Marx's critique of a society in which workers are not only exploited economically, but are also denied the chance to engage in something uniquely human, free conscious

activity. It is truly surprising, however, that in a study of Marxism and dialectics there is no substantial discussion of another important essay in the 1844 *Manuscripts*, 'The Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic'.

In taking up the dialectical structure of *Capital*, Rees begins by attacking the 'long tradition of denying or underplaying both the dialectical nature of, and the influence of Hegel on, Marx's mature economic writings' (p. 99). At the same time, however, he is overly anxious (here in a polemic against Tony Smith) to attack the view that *Capital* 'can only be understood' through its 'logical structure' (p. 109), rather than also historically. Unfortunately, the framework for discussion that Rees puts forth has little to do with the historical-dialectical structure of Marx's book.

Rees fails to consider the fact that *Capital* begins, not with a discussion of the historical origin of commodities, but with their most developed form, one that includes commodity fetishism. This is also related to Rees's rejection of Chris Arthur's 1997 critique of Engels's category of simple commodity production in pre-capitalist society as a forerunner of the commodity under capitalism. Arthur shows that this concept cannot be found in Marx's own work, but was later taken up as a central category by the Stalinists as well as Ernest Mandel. Marx placed the whole part on primitive accumulation, the more historical part, at the end of Volume One. Here, at least, the logical or dialectical form does overshadow the historical element.

Rees, however – here following Engels – writes that Marx begins his analysis of capitalism 'with simple commodity production' (p. 112), with the commodity at the time of 'the birth of capitalism from the womb of feudalism' (p. 113). I do not believe that such a reading of *Capital*, Volume I can be borne out by the text. Marx, as is well known, began chapter one by defining the capitalist mode of production as one in which wealth appears as 'an immense accumulation of commodities'.¹⁷ The wealth of pre-capitalist societies and even transitional forms like mercantilism did not appear predominantly in the form of commodities, but rather as landed property. Further on in Chapter One, in the fetishism section, Marx described capitalist society as one in which human relations take on 'the fantastic form of a relation between things',¹⁸ once again a feature not yet predominant in the early stages of capitalism, let alone in commodity trading within pre-capitalist societies. By attempting to impose the category of simple commodity production on the first chapter of *Capital*, Rees seriously distorts the dialectical structure of Marx's argument.

There is an important historical framework underlying the first chapter of *Capital*, but not the one Rees suggests. It is found in the sharp contrast Marx drew between the capitalist mode of production and all previous social forms. In the fetishism section, after Marx had developed the forms of value and labour in the upside-down and rei-

fied world of capitalism, he gave two examples of how the process of production worked in societies based on use value production alone. These he sharply contrasted to modern capitalism. These examples, added only in the post-1867 editions of *Capital*, after the Paris Commune,¹⁹ were the medieval Western European system and the communal forms of production in peasant households across a wide variety of societies. The latter had a 'spontaneously developed division of labour', based on 'differences of sex and age'.²⁰ Here, Marx was concerned not only with pre-capitalist historical forms, but also with non-capitalist societies and remnants of them in his own period. Anticipating his writings in the 1880s on the Russian *mir* and his *Ethnological Notebooks* from the same period, Marx also referred to 'communal property' not only in the past, but as existing 'to this day in India' and elsewhere, 'sometimes only as remnants'.²¹ Marx's final historical trajectory moved from the present to the future, where commodity fetishism was replaced in a revolutionary manner by 'an association of free human beings, working with the means of production held in common'.²² Thus, far from a development from simple commodity production to modern capitalism as a continuum, Marx throughout stressed the historical rupture between capitalism and all forms of pre-capitalist society, as well as between capitalism and the new human society of the future. Dunayevskaya characterised Marx's dialectic as one of 'total diremptions – absolute, irreconcilable contradictions'²³ and there is such a radical diremption between capitalism and all other forms of production operating here, one that Rees unfortunately misses.

In the Lenin chapter, Rees engages both the crude early work *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (1908) and the more important *Philosophical Notebooks* (1914–15), showing some of the differences between the former and the latter. In his discussion of the *Philosophical Notebooks*, he devotes most of his attention to the categories of being and essence, leaving aside for the most part the lengthiest part of the *Notebooks*, the pages covering the notion or subjective logic. It is here, however, that Lenin moved the furthest from his earlier crude materialism. Nonetheless, Rees does not shy away completely from discussing some of Lenin's core statements on dialectics, including his critical appropriation of some of Hegel's idealist categories. Rees cites and then discusses one of the more dramatic of these appropriations, where Lenin wrote, at this point breaking with his own earlier crude materialism and that of his generation of Marxists: 'Man's consciousness not only reflects the world, but creates it' (cited on p. 190). Lenin had moved a long way from the crude form of reflection theory he had developed in 1908, in which consciousness was a mere reflection of the material world: 'The recognition of theory as a copy, as an approximate copy of objective reality, is materialism'.²⁴ Rees acknowledges that consciousness is important for revolutionary subjectivity and writes as well here that 'abstraction can be a method of seeing reality

more clearly' (p. 190). However, he too quickly moves away from this rather interesting dialectical point to a discussion of Lenin on the practical idea where, as mentioned earlier, he seems unaware that Lenin is discussing Hegel on practice, rather than simply giving his own views. This, in turn, allows Rees to jump to what he considers to be the key, the vanguard party as the repository and generator of revolutionary consciousness.

The chapter on Lukács takes up some of the originality of *History and Class Consciousness*, but unsurprisingly, given Rees's overall perspective, he attempts to defend Engels against Lukács's critiques. One feature of this chapter that separates it from most other discussions of Lukács is the fairly lengthy treatment of Lukács's ultra-vanguardist concept of the party, something with which Rees identifies. But all of this is in keeping with the overall standpoint of Rees's book.

The chapter on Trotsky as dialectician is the most problematic, especially since it seems to form a conclusion to the whole study. Where an earlier generation of orthodox Trotskyists might have found the mechanical materialism that I believe characterises Trotsky's philosophical position to be more congenial, Rees belongs to a younger generation, one that reached political and social awareness after the 1960s, during a period when Marx's debt to Hegel, the writings of the young Marx, and the whole corpus of writings sometimes termed Western Marxism were a given. Thus, rather than making a mechanical materialist attack on post-1960s Marxist philosophy and calling for a return to 'basics', i.e. mechanical materialism, as an older generation of Trotskyists might have done, Rees attempts instead to 'place Trotsky very firmly in the "Hegelian" Marxist tradition' (p. 263). This is quite a stretch, as the discussion below will try to suggest.

In his Trotsky chapter, Rees succeeds in showing that Trotsky was passionate about the word dialectics, that he, for example, strongly admonished his American followers when they openly attacked dialectics from a pragmatist or empiricist standpoint. But Rees does not make his larger case very convincingly. To be sure, Trotsky produced dialectical analyses of social processes, for example the law of combined and uneven development. He wrote very little, however, on the dialectic proper. In this regard, Rees acknowledges that 'Trotsky's philosophical writings are often short and their meaning compressed' (p. 285). In addition, I will argue below that Trotsky's writings on dialectics broke no new ground and in many ways represent a backward move from what had been developed by Lenin and Lukács, let alone Marx himself.

In the two places in his writings where Trotsky devoted some attention to dialectics, his 1933-5 notebooks and his last book, *In Defense of Marxism* (1939-40), he gave the subject only a cursory treatment.²⁵ In the latter, he attempted to sum up dialectics:

'Hegel in his *Logic* established a series of laws: change of quantity into quality, development through contradictions, conflict of content and form, interruption of continuity, change of possibility into inevitability, etc'.²⁶ There are several problems here. First, these categories have little relation to the actual content of Hegel's book; he may have arrived at them second- or third-hand. Second, what was arguably the most central dialectical category for Marx, negation of the negation, one that runs through the whole of Hegel's text, is not mentioned. Nor is the relation of subject to object, so crucial to Lukács. Fourth, none of what Trotsky evidently considered to be the principal laws of dialectics would seem to refer to self-developing human subjects shaping history, arguably so crucial to both Hegel and Marx. Trotsky's laws of dialectics could apply as easily to inanimate objects as to conscious human subjects.

Unfortunately, Trotsky tended to reduce the dialectical perspective to that of a flexible rather than a static view of society and history. Even this was put rather mechanically: 'Dialectical thinking is related to vulgar thinking in the same way that a motion picture is related to a still photograph'.²⁷ This latter formulation can also be found in the 1933-5 notebooks, but, there, he at least admitted to himself that this was 'badly expressed'.²⁸ Why then publish this formulation without qualification several years later? In the notebooks, Trotsky did devote a few pages to the direct study of Hegel's *Science of Logic*,²⁹ but he did not get very far into the text before he stopped. Once again, his main point was how 'Hegel exposes the failure of static thinking'.³⁰

At one point in the notebooks, Trotsky began to move toward a more profound view: 'The dialectic of consciousness (cognition) is not merely a reflection of the dialectics of nature, but is a result of the lively interaction between consciousness and nature'.³¹ But he did not develop this point any further. As Philip Pomper, the editor of the notebooks suggests, 'Trotsky's impatience with philosophical texts' probably accounted for the extreme brevity of his treatment of Hegel and dialectics.³²

Some four decades ago, in his pioneering study of Soviet Marxism during the 1920s, the intellectual historian David Joravsky argued that Trotsky shared with Nikolai Bukharin a fundamentally 'mechanistic outlook' toward Marxist philosophy. Joravsky wrote, for example, that in 1925 Trotsky 'tried to persuade a congress of chemists that they had no cause to feel strange towards Marxism, for they were Marxists themselves . . . without realizing it' because of their materialistic and scientific approach toward reality.³³ Despite Rees's attempts to argue the contrary, I remain convinced that Joravsky has characterised Trotsky's philosophical position accurately. Trotsky's later writings continue such a mechanistic emphasis, with many, many parallels drawn between dialectics and theories of natural science such as Darwinism, little said about core categories such as consciousness and negativity, and no treatment whatsoever of subjectivity.

Despite these major limitations of Trotsky's work on such a core issue as dialectics, I am not suggesting that we should dismiss his work as a whole. Until his brutal assassination in 1940 at the hands of the Stalinist apparatus, Trotsky produced several original political analyses, for example on China in the 1920s, on fascism and the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s, and on anti-Semitism during the last years of his life. (The latter writings, where he moved away from his earlier more economic views on the subject, have usually been treated with embarrassed silence by his followers.)³⁴ But Trotsky never confronted seriously the new work on dialectics that began to appear in the 1920s and 1930s. There is no evidence that he ever read Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (first Russian edition 1927), let alone works such as Lukács's *History and Class Consciousness* (1923). He appears never to have made more than a cursory study of Hegel's own writings and it is not even clear that he read Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks* (first published in 1929–30). For all of these reasons, I conclude that his work on dialectics was little more than a footnote in the history of Marxism, and not a terribly illuminating one at that.

Those of Trotsky's early followers, like C.L.R. James and Raya Dunayevskaya, who became interested in the young Marx, Lenin's notebooks, or in subsequent writings such as Lukács's work or as Marcuse's *Reason and Revolution*, and who were also interested in studying Hegel directly, soon fell out with more orthodox Trotskyists of the time. The latter tended toward the more mechanistic materialism of their founder.

It is noteworthy that Rees's book has appeared in this period. This suggests a growing awareness among Marxists that philosophical rather than only political or economic answers are needed to confront the challenges of today. In my concluding remarks, however, I would like briefly to interrogate a category that underpins this book and many other writings by revolutionary Marxists today, the category termed classical Marxism.

The classical Marxist tradition is usually said to include Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg, and sometimes Engels. To maintain this category, one needs to merge together thinkers who had some profound differences among themselves. Rees does so when he writes: 'For Lenin, Luxemburg, Lukács, Gramsci, and Trotsky, the revolutionary potential of the working class was bound . . . to the need to build a "party of the new type" modelled on the Bolshevik experience' (p. 301). The problem with such a statement is that there is little evidence that Luxemburg, for example, advocated Bolshevik models of organisation. Nor did Marx himself work with such vanguardist types of organisation, as is well known.

More to the point, concerning the subject matter of this book, dialectics, there are even greater differences on dialectics than on the party among those Rees takes up as exem-

plars. Yet, these differences are not acknowledged fully. As I argued above, Trotsky had little interest in dialectics, aside from pro forma defences of it when it came under open attack (the same was true of Luxemburg). Engels, Lenin, and Lukács each wrote extensively on dialectics, yet there are major differences among them. Lukács, as is well known, explicitly attacked Engels's concept of dialectics of nature. Many have also argued that Engels's conceptions of dialectic exhibited fundamental differences from those of Marx, that they were in fact mechanistic. Lenin and Lukács each returned independently to Hegel, something Luxemburg and Trotsky did not do. Lenin, however, kept his return to Hegel largely a secret, not only from the public, but also from his Bolshevik colleagues. His work on dialectics, for all of its creativity, was also marred by some problems, including a privileging of the practical idea. Engels was seemingly unaware of Marx's *1844 Manuscripts*, as was Lenin. Lukács wrote on them only belatedly and Trotsky avoided them completely, even though they were published in Russian by 1927 and in German by 1932. The first serious analysis of them was Marcuse's in 1932.³⁵

Concerning dialectics, therefore, and perhaps even more generally, I believe that we need to question the category of classical Marxism. Instead, we should carry out a critique of Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg, and Lukács, none of whom measured up to Marx. Not only did they not measure up to Marx or to Hegel on dialectics; in many cases, they propagated distorted and mechanistic concepts in their place. Therefore I would like to put forward the idea, here following Dunayevskaya's more recent formulation,³⁶ that we view them instead as post-Marx Marxists in a pejorative sense. As Dunayevskaya suggested in her later writings, the great post-Marx Marxists who were revolutionary theoreticians as well as political leaders – Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, and Luxemburg – each in different ways failed to develop a truly dialectical perspective rooted in Hegel. Today, I believe, we need to subject them to critique as part of rethinking our relationship to Hegel and to Marx themselves. Such a critique need not be dismissive, for we will need to learn from both the achievements and the limitations of a group of thinkers who stand between us and the founders of the modern dialectical perspective, Hegel and Marx.

Notes

¹ Inwood 1992, p. 12.

² Wood 1991, p. xxxii. See also Mueller 1958; Kaufmann 1964.

³ Hegel, 1969, pp. 115–16.

⁴ Hegel 1969, p. 589.

- ⁵ Marx 1961, p. 176.
- ⁶ Marx 1976, p. 929.
- ⁷ Dunayevskaya 1989, p. 7. In the interests of full disclosure, let me mention that I knew and worked with Dunayevskaya.
- ⁸ One could easily question their near fusion in this chapter.
- ⁹ Hegel 1969, p. 818.
- ¹⁰ Lenin 1961, Volume 38, p. 213.
- ¹¹ Lukács 1975, p. 350.
- ¹² For discussions, see the 'Introduction to the Morningside Edition' in Dunayevskaya 1989, Dunayevskaya 2001, and my own study of Lenin and Hegel (Anderson 1995).
- ¹³ Hegel 1969, p. 824.
- ¹⁴ Marx 1994, p. 62.
- ¹⁵ Marx 1994, p. 63.
- ¹⁶ Marx 1994, p. 70.
- ¹⁷ Marx 1976, p. 125.
- ¹⁸ Marx 1976, p. 165.
- ¹⁹ See my article on the 1872–5 French edition of *Capital*, where I describe some of this process as well as the publication of all of the various editions of *Capital*, Volume I in the *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*, which make these alterations more visible than before (Anderson 1997).
- ²⁰ Marx 1976, p. 171.
- ²¹ Marx 1976, p. 171.
- ²² Marx 1976, p. 171, translation slightly altered, rendering Marx's word 'Menschen' more precisely as 'human beings' rather than 'men'.
- ²³ Dunayevskaya 1989, p. 93.
- ²⁴ Lenin 1961, Volume 14, p. 265.
- ²⁵ I leave aside here the most problematic aspect of *In Defense of Marxism*, its defence of the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact and of the Stalinist régime's invasion and brutal occupation of Finland, the Baltic countries, and eastern Poland.
- ²⁶ Trotsky 1970, p. 51.
- ²⁷ Trotsky 1970, pp. 50–1.
- ²⁸ Trotsky 1986, p. 97.
- ²⁹ Possibly, he was influenced to read some of Hegel's *Logic* by Lenin's studies in his 1914–15 *Philosophical Notebooks*, but there is no hard evidence of this.
- ³⁰ Trotsky 1986, p. 103.
- ³¹ Trotsky 1986, p. 101.
- ³² Trotsky 1986, p. 39.
- ³³ Joravsky 1961, p. 97.

- ³⁴ For example, even Pierre Broué (1988) fails to mention them in his serious 1000-page intellectual biography of Trotsky. One recent exception to this silence is Enzo Traverso's study of Marxism and anti-Semitism (1994).
- ³⁵ See Marcuse 1973.
- ³⁶ See Dunayevskaya 1991; 1996.

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JOSEPH MCCARNEY, *Hegel on History*
 London: Routledge, 2000
 Reviewed by TONY SMITH

This book appears in a Routledge series intended to 'painlessly introduce students to the classic works of philosophy'. While no serious work on Hegel could truly be painless, McCarney's accessible discussion of the main themes underlying Hegel's philosophy of history should indeed prove immensely helpful to students. But this superb book is no mere introductory guide. McCarney covers most of the important debates regarding the basic categories and underlying assumptions of Hegel's position, defending his own interpretations with arguments that are invariably cogent and clearly stated. We have here an example of that all too rare species, a work of interest to both the specialist and the novice.

Of course, no relatively brief work on a complicated topic could be expected to be comprehensive. Choices must be made. McCarney's choice was to emphasise the conceptual underpinnings and broad substantive claims of Hegel's philosophy of history at the cost of downplaying the details of his theory. Students must turn elsewhere for assistance in understanding exactly why, for example, Hegel thought that Ancient Rome's contribution to historical development went beyond that of Ancient Greece. But an extended discussion of such details probably would have forced McCarney to drop other sections. And there are no obvious candidates for deletion.

Hegelian method

Most readers of this journal are probably less interested in Hegel's theory for its own sake than for its relationship to historical materialism. No one disputes that Hegel's thought played a significant role in Marx's intellectual development. But different currents in Marxian theory diverge wildly in their interpretation and evaluation of Hegel. McCarney himself does not explicitly explore the Hegel/Marx relationship here. But, if McCarney's reading of Hegel's philosophy of history is accepted, a number of prominent Marxian perspectives on this relationship must be rejected.

In the standard reading of Hegel by Marxists, a reading which Marx himself accepted, the ultimate agent of history for Hegel is Spirit (or 'the Idea', or 'Reason', or 'God'), a bizarre metaphysical Supersubject. One line of thought, beginning with Feuerbach